

Psalm 139

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

A. Searched and known (v. 1): O LORD, you have searched me and known me!

B. David's thoughts and ways (vs. 2-3):

You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

C. His words (v. 4): Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.

D. God acts toward him and is close to him (v. 5): You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

E. God's knowledge is too high to reach (v.6): Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

F. God can see and know him in any place he might go (vs. 7-12):

Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?

a. If I ascend to heaven, you are there!

b. If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!

c. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

d. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.

F.¹ God knows him from forming him and his days (vs. 13-16):

a. For you formed my inward parts;

b. you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

c. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

c.¹ Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

b.¹ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

a.¹ Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there were none of them.

E.¹ God's thoughts are too many to count (vs. 17-18): How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.

D.¹ May God act toward the wicked so that they are far away from him (v. 19): Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me!

C.¹ The words of the wicked (v. 20): They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain!

B.¹ David's thoughts and ways – his loyalty to God (vs. 21-22):

Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD?

And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?

I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.

A.¹ Search and know (vs. 23-24): Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

Parallels:

A. "searched" and "known," forms a bookend or inclusion with A¹ "search" and "know"

B. a focus on the David's thoughts and ways (God knows them); it has several "you" statements

B.¹ a focus on the David's thoughts and ways (he expresses his loyalty to God); it has several "I" statements

C. the words of David; it has the name "Yahweh"

C.¹ the words of the wicked; it alludes to the name "Yahweh" via Exodus 20:7 - the third commandment on taking Yahweh's name in vain

D. God's action in relation to David and the closeness of God to him

D.¹ a request for God to act in relation to the wicked and the desired distance of the wicked from him

E. God's knowledge transcends – it is too high to reach

E.¹ God's thoughts transcends – it is too many to count

F. God knows David because he can see and know him wherever he might go; God knows him geographically considered

F.¹ God knows David because he formed him and his days; God knows him chronologically considered

Within F. - two questions and four hypothetical situations; a. heaven and c. may have some parallel in the connection between heaven and traveling through the sky; b. and d. may have some parallel in that Sheol is a/the place of darkness

Within F.¹ - a. and a.¹ have a word for "formed" which makes a bookend or inclusion for this subsection; b. and b.¹ both talk of God as weaver; c. and c.¹ both speak of God's wonder in making the writer