



"REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found, and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

"Series of Six" Lesson 5

A selection of Psalms for meditation

This week we will be studying Psalm 139, a favorite psalm to many. Psalm 139 is from the fourth book of psalms, corresponding to the book of Deuteronomy. This psalm is classified as wisdom poetry and has been referred to by various titles, such as "a wise man's prayer," "a hymn to the all-knowing God," and "the personal concern of God."

It's important to remember that "psalm" means "praises," and the central theme of the entire book is praise and worship; God is worthy of worship because of who He is, what He has done, and what He will do. Although this psalm is full of theology, which is simply "the study of the nature of God," or the "science of God," it is a personal prayer and cry of worship of the psalmist. It has been said that this is one of the most profound statements of personal faith in the psalms, stemming from the author's own personal experiences.

Psalm 139 is also classified as an "imprecatory" psalm, which means a psalm which "invokes divine judgment on one's enemies." We will talk about this more when we come to verses 19-24.

Remember to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you understanding as you study His Word. This psalm should bless your socks off! Have a great week of study and may you be encouraged and uplifted as you see God through the lens of Psalm 139.

First Day

1. Read Psalm 139:1-24. Do you see any repeated words, thoughts, or phrases? Does your Bible tell you who the author is? Who it was written to?

2. What is the main thought? What verse would you call the "key" verse?
3. What title would you give Psalm 139?
4. This psalm can be broken down into four sections. Give the main thought of each section and write the key verse that supports the main thought.
 - A. Verses 1-6
 - B. Verses 7-12
 - C. Verses 13-18
 - D. Verses 19-24
5. What are your first overall impressions or thoughts of this psalm? How does it speak to your heart?

It is believed that David is the author of this beautiful psalm, which was dedicated to the "Director of Music." "To The Chief Musician" appears in fifty-five psalms, showing us that there is a collection of psalms used by the conductor of music in the temple for various occasions. It is designed to lead us into worship, even though it is filled with a great amount of theology. David is pouring his heart out with praise because God is so wonderful!

That's it for today. May this psalm fill you with wonder and awe for the God who "formed your inward parts." See you tomorrow, ladies.

Memory Verse of the Week: "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well."
Psalm 139:14

Second Day

Review your memory verse. Do you know that His works are marvelous?

1. Read Psalm 139:1-6. How many personal pronouns do you find in these verses?

In these verses, David is praising God for His *Omniscience*, which means "having total knowledge; knowing everything." From his experience and relationship with God, David firmly believes that God sees and knows everything about him. John Phillips said, "Nowhere else in Scripture does the Holy Spirit give us such a detailed exposition of the three most essential attributes of God: His omniscience, His omnipresence, and His omnipotence."

2. From these verses, what specifically does God know about us?

The word *searched* literally means "to pierce through." It also has the idea of searching for treasure. In his book, Gleanings in the Godhead, Arthur W. Pink wrote, "God ... knows everything; everything possible, everything actual, all events, all creatures of the past, the present, and the future. He is perfectly acquainted with every detail in the life of every being in heaven, in earth, and in hell ... nothing escapes His notice, nothing can be hidden from Him, nothing is forgotten by Him ... He never errs, never changes, never overlooks anything."

3. He knows our thoughts, our ways, and our words. Does that knowledge encourage you or scare you?
4. Why would this knowledge threaten or scare someone, especially an unbeliever?
5. God knows us in a personal way. He sees us as individuals. Does He see the pain you're in? Does He know the hurt you feel, or the challenges that frighten you? Does He care?

5. What is David saying in verse 5? What does "hedged" mean?
6. Read Matthew 10:30. What else does He know?
7. God knows every word that we speak and the motive behind it. What did Jesus say in Matthew 12:36?
8. Read James 3:1-12. What does James say about the tongue? (Have you been using words that honor Him?)
9. How does knowing that nothing takes God by surprise, because He sees and knows all, make you look at the things you're facing in your life any differently? How does this knowledge change your attitude?
10. David wraps up this section about God's knowledge with a realization. What does he say in verse 6? How does that compare with Paul's words in Romans 11:33?

The Hebrew word for *knowledge* means "that which is beyond our ability to understand or comprehend." David was in awe of the reality of who God is. It brought him confidence rather than worry.

11. How should knowing that God is so well-acquainted with you help you pray more honestly to the Lord? How should it bring you more confidence?

Let's end here for today. Remember that God knows every detail of our life, every hair on our head, and every thought on our mind -- and still loves us! (I'm speaking for myself here!) Praise God for His indescribable love.

Third Day

Work on your memory verse.

1. Read Psalm 139:7-12. What's the main point? Is it possible to run away from God? Can you think of anyone in the Bible who tried?

This section reminds us of God's *Omnipresence*, which is "the state of being everywhere at once; present everywhere simultaneously." David was amazed that no matter where he went, God was there. He wasn't saying that he was trying to run from Him. He was saying there was no point in running from Him. He wasn't saddened by that thought, he was comforted by it.

2. Again, how can that either thrill you or threaten you?

David was saying that death couldn't hide us from God. He is on both sides of the grave, so to speak (vs 7-8). Whether we go up or down, high or low, He is there. David then goes on to say that not only can't you go north or south, you can't go east or west. In verse 9, the "wings of the morning" speak of the dawn that rises in the east, and from Israel the far side of the sea was the west.

3. Can God see through the dark? What does David say about that?
Also read Psalm 27:1.

4. Read John 1:1-9, 8:12, and 1 John 1:5-7. What do these verses say about "light"?

5. What kinds of things do people try to hide from God?

6. Is there any area of your life that you are trying to "hide" something from Him? Do you have a secret closet that you haven't opened up and allowed the Lord to clean out? Ask the Lord to shine His light in there today. Understand that He actually does see it, so you may as well come clean. 😊

7. Because He is light and He lives in us, what are we called to do? Read Ephesians 5:8 and Philippians 2:15. What does that mean?

8. Instead of hiding "from" God, we are told to "hide" in Him. What does that mean? (Read Psalm 17:8 and Colossians 3:3.)

9. Are you "hiding" in Him, or are you hiding "from" Him?

Perhaps you've been running from the Lord, trying to escape Him. Maybe you've wandered away, trying to escape from the bright light of God's presence. Maybe you're even trying to hide "from" life. The Lord is calling you back to Him ... He's always ready to receive you home! Wherever you're running, He's already there waiting for you. Come back and find your strength and hope in God.

10. Read Luke 15:11-32. Briefly explain the story. What character do you most identify with right now, and why?

We'll stop here for today. So far we've seen that God is *Omniscience* and *Omnipresent*. I pray that these attributes of God excite and thrill you. I pray that you are encouraged over how much He loves and cares about you. He will never leave you or forsake you. Ever! (Hebrews 13:5)

Fourth Day

Work on memorizing your verse of the week. Let it sink down deep in your heart.

1. Read Psalm 139:1-24, focusing on verses 13-18. What's the main thought in this section? Briefly explain this section in our own words.

This section of Scripture is more than amazing. Eugene Peterson said, "In the presence of birth we don't calculate, we marvel." Warren Wiersbe said, "The greatest evidence of God's power is human birth." These verses display God's *Omnipotence*, which means "having unlimited power, authority, or ability; almighty." God not only knows everything, He made everything and controls everything. David is thinking of the power of God in forming him before he was even in the womb. He says he was *fearfully* made. That means he was "shuddering with astonishment."

2. What does this section reveal about how much God cares for us? Also read Psalm 40:5.
3. Does God have plans for your future? What does this section say about that? Also read Jeremiah 29:11 and Proverbs 16:9.

God cares about human life. He creates it, plans it, forms it, and sustains it. The fetus in the womb is a uniquely created and formed individual, perfectly made by God. Wiersbe said, "When we contemplate human birth, our first response ought to be reverence. The God of the galaxies is the God who is concerned about

the color of the baby's hair and the genetic structure of a yet unborn child. We ought to bow in reverence before God and worship Him, because each individual child is a part of His handiwork. We don't understand why some children are born handicapped or exceptional in some areas. But God does."

4. **YOU** are fearfully and wonderfully made. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and Romans 12:1. Are you valuing the life that God created? How are you taking care of it?

5. Not only has God created you, He has given you gifts and talents. He has a plan for your life. Are you using those gifts? Are you seeking Him when you make plans, or do you simply "follow your dreams"?

5. Do you value the life of the unborn child? There have been millions of babies aborted already. Can you stop and pray that the Lord would protect the rights of the unborn babies and the sanctity of the womb?

Perhaps you have had an abortion in the past. Many women aren't presented with the truth before they move ahead with the procedure. I know there are many that carry the guilt of abortion for years. 1 John 1:9 says that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He wants to forgive you, cleanse you, and make you "white as snow." (Isaiah 18) You don't have to carry the guilt of it any longer. Give it to the Lord.

While studying Psalm 139, I came upon a website for a ministry called "Psalm 139 Project." I don't know enough about it to endorse it, so let me make that clear. But the purpose of it intrigued me. Their object was to "open the window to the womb" by providing ultrasound machines to pregnancy centers. They say that

6. Besides abortion, what are some other ways our society fails to value life?
7. God doesn't stop caring about us once we're formed. We are the objects of His constant care. All the thoughts He has towards us can't even be numbered. How often are your "thoughts toward Him?" Is He constantly on your mind? Do you run to Him for guidance, counsel, advice, wisdom, and comfort? If He created you, and knows all about you, why not run to Him?
8. How can understanding how powerful He is change your perspective? Is there something in your life that you think He just can't do? Read Luke 1:37. Is your problem too big for Him?
9. Write your last thoughts on this section. How did it speak to you?
10. Write a prayer to the Lord. Are you in awe of His works? Do you marvel at His handiwork? Tell Him so.

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory.

Today we'll wrap this psalm up with the last few verses. Let's see what else David has to say.

1. Read Psalm 139:1-24, focusing on verses 19-24. Why do you think there is such a sudden thought and tone change? Why is David so mad?

David wanted no part with the wicked; no part with those who hated the living God. He had been so in awe of God's power in creation, etc, that it seems that he couldn't believe that others would actually speak against the Lord who created them. James Montgomery Boice said, "So taken was he with the greatness of God that he wanted nothing to endanger his relationship to God." David's hatred for his enemies was a result of his zeal for God.

2. Did David want God's righteous justice or personal vengeance? What's the difference?

Psalm 139 is known as a "vengeance" psalm. In these psalms, the writers are freely expressing their minds to God about how they feel, yet they weren't crying out for personal vengeance. They call for divine justice, not human revenge. We are called to "be angry, yet sin not." (Ephesians 4:26) We can be angry at sin and the workers of unrighteousness. But we must make sure our motives are pure, seeking the justice of God and for Him to be glorified, rather than for any type of personal gain or desire. We are called to "walk in the Spirit" even in our anger. David was angry at Saul (Psalm 59), but he never took personal revenge. We can leave vengeance to God (Romans 12:9).

3. Do you hate sin as much as David does? When you see the injustice in the world, does it turn your stomach? Does it anger you enough to cry out to the Lord for His justice to be served, hitting your knees in prayer? But do you also pray that God's enemies would turn to Christ? (Matthew 5:44)

4. After his outburst, he quickly asks God for something in verses 23-24. What five things does he ask for?

David isn't afraid to ask God to turn him inside out. He wants to know the deep motives of his heart. I like what Job asks God in Job 31:6, "Let me be weighed in a just balance, that God may know my integrity."

5. Read Jeremiah 17:9-10. What does it say?

The word "*search*" means "to dig in a mine and find ore." "*Try*" means to "test metal in a furnace." David wants God to do serious work on his heart, inviting painful surgery.

6. Are you ready to pray that type of a prayer, asking God to penetrate the very core of your heart? Are you ready? Why can it be so scary?

7. What's David's ultimate goal in verse 24?

8. Reflecting back on the entire psalm, how does it comfort us?

In his book Prayer, Praise and Promises, Warren Wiersbe gives his thoughts on "God's thoughts" that I thought were great. (Did you get that?) I wanted to share them with you in hopes that you will also be blessed.

God's Thoughts

- A. **God's thoughts are personal:** (verse 17) They concern you and me. He knows all about us. They are more than mere thoughts; they include His purposes and His care.
- B. **God's thoughts are precious:** (verse 17) Precious means "weighty, valuable." His thoughts of us are tailor-made and unique, making them valuable. His thoughts are deep (Psalm 92:5) and higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8).
- C. **God's thoughts are practical:** (verse 23-24) After meditating on His attributes, we can ask God to show us the areas in our lives that aren't bringing Him glory and honor.
- D. **God's thoughts are vast and inexhaustible:** (verse 17) The Hebrew word for "*sum*" is plural. Thus, His thoughts keep growing.
- E. **God's thoughts are unfailing:** (verse 18) Even while we're asleep, God is working out His plans for us.

9. Which one of the above specifically ministers to your heart today?

10. How did this Psalm challenge you this week? Are there any changes you plan to make in your life as a result?

"Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; And Your thoughts which are towards us cannot be recounted to You in order; If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

Psalm 40:5