July 10, 2022 **“*God’s Perfect Knowledge of Man*”** Psalm 139 Pastor Billy Burchfield

O LORD, you have searched me [thoroughly] and have known me.

2 You know my downsitting and my uprising; You understand my thoughts afar off (Matt. 9:4; John 2:24, 25).

3 You sift *and* search out my path and my lying down, and You are acquainted with all my ways.

4 For there is not a word in my tongue [still unuttered], but, behold, O Lord, You know it altogether (Heb.

4:13).

5 You have beset (hedged) me *and* shut me in—behind and before, and You have laid Your hand upon me.

6 Your (infinite) knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high above me, I cannot reach it.

7 Where could I go from Your Spirit? Or where could I flee from Your presence?

8 If I ascend up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol (the place of the dead), behold, You

are there (Rom. 11:33).

9 If I take the wings of the morning or dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

10 Even there shall Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me and the night shall be [the only] light about me,

12 Even the darkness hides nothing from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light

are both alike to You (Dan. 2:22).

13 For You did form my inward parts; You did knit me together in my mother’s womb.

14 I will confess *and* praise You *for* (I)*You are fearful and wonderful and* for the awful wonder of my birth!

Wonderful are Your works, and that my inner self knows right well.

15 My frame was not hidden from You when I was being formed in secret (and) intricately *and* curiously

wrought [as if embroidered with various colors] in the depths of the earth (a region of darkness and

mystery).

16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance, and in Your book all the days (of my life) were written before

ever they took shape, when as yet there was none of them.

17 How precious *and* weighty also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them (Ps. 40:5!)

18 If I could count them, they would be more in number than the sand. When I awoke, (could I count to the

end) I would still be with You.

19 If You would (only) slay the wicked, O God, and the men of blood depart from me (Isa. 11:4);

20 Who speak against You wickedly, Your enemies who take Your name in vain (Jude15)!

21 Do I not hate them, O Lord, who hate You? And am I not grieved *and* do I not loathe those who rise up

against You?

22 I hate them with perfect hatred; they have become my enemies.

23 Search me [thoroughly], O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts (anxieties)!

24 And see if there is any wicked *or* hurtful way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

**Omniscience**: divine attribute of perfect knowledge. Relates to Himself and to all beyond Himself.

**Omnipresence**: God is free from the laws or limitations of space. God is a spirit, and His infinite presence is to be regarded in the dynamical sense rather than in the sense of a substance infinitely extended.

**Omnipotence**: Absolute power; essential to the perfection of His being. He is able to do everything that is in harmony with His wise and holy and perfect nature.

The Bible Exposition Com

* *The omniscience of the Lord (139:1–6)*
* *The omnipresence of the Lord (139:7–12)*
* *The omnipotence of the Lord (139:13–18)*

**Psalm 139**

God’s omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence are the subjects of David’s meditations in this beautiful psalm. In this psalm David asked God to examine him thoroughly to affirm his innocence. His first meditation is on God’s knowledge, that every aspect of his life was searched out and controlled by what the Lord knew. He then realized it was impossible to escape from such omniscient control, no matter how far or fast he might go, for God is everywhere. David then stated that God has such control over him because in His power He created Him secretly and planned his life with great care. On the basis of these meditations, David then affirmed his loyalty to God and prayed for God to prove him by examining him.

The thought that darkness cannot conceal anyone from the Lord (vv. 11–12) brought to David’s mind this meditation in verses **13–18**: God knew all about him when He created him in his mother’s womb. Verse 13 begins with “For,” indicating that this strophe (vv. 13–18) explains the preceding two strophes (vv. 1–6, 7–12): since God can create a person, He certainly knows him intimately and is with him everywhere.

**139:13–14**. The theme of verses 13–18 is announced here: the Lord (**You** is emphatic in Heb.; cf.

v. 2) **created** him **in** his **mother’s womb**. The language is figurative in that creating and knitting describe God’s sovereign superintendence over the natural process of reproduction (on knitting; cf. Job 10:11).

This fact prompted the psalmist to break forth in **praise** over the thought of how marvelously he had been **made**. Even David’s rudimentary knowledge of the marvels of the human body led him to be in awe and wonder. The words **wonderfully** and **wonderful** are mindful of God’s marvelous knowledge (Ps. 139:6).

**139:15–16**. Then David stressed certain features of God’s superintendence over him. In the womb he **was woven together** (lit., “embroidered”; cf. “knit,” v. 13, suggesting his veins and arteries). When he was being formed in the womb he was as remote to the human eye as the lower part **of the earth** (cf. comments on Job 1:21). But God **saw** every detail. David’s **frame** means his skeleton and his **unformed body** is his embryo. Moreover, God prerecorded **all the days** of the psalmist before he was even born. This statement may mean that God determined how long he would live, but in view of verses 1–4, it more likely refers to everyday details. God marvelously planned out his life.

God knew not only David’s actions; He also knew his motivations (**thoughts)**.

***Afar***: refers to space and time.

in verse 4. Before the psalmist could frame **a word on** his **tongue**, the **Lord** was thoroughly familiar with what he was about to say.

if he could fly at the speed of light (**the wings of the dawn**) from the east across the sky to the west (**far side of the** Mediterranean **Sea**) he could not escape from the Lord.

God’s presence then began to take on a new meaning for the psalmist, as if the light were dawning on him. Now, he stated, the **hand** of the Lord would lead and comfort him.