

The Greatness of God

Whenever we experience negative circumstances isn't it our first inclination to rush into prayer for God to fix our problems?

God wants us to see that He is the answer to our deepest needs.

When David faced great enemies he focused on God, -- all knowing, everywhere present, and powerful with extreme precision.

David begins in Psalm 139 by affirming God's greatness and ends with prayer for guidance.

PSALM 139

- 1 O LORD, You have searched me and known *me*.
- 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You understand my thought from afar.
- 3 You scrutinize my path and my lying down,
And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 Even before there is a word on my tongue,
Behold, O LORD, You know it all.
- 5 You have enclosed me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.
- 6 *Such* knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is *too* high, I cannot attain to it.

I. The Omniscience of God. - He knows!

David begins with praise to God for who He is.

He Knows: He is omniscient and knows everything about me.

The best definition of God's omniscience, knowledge and foreknowledge is simply put: "God Knows!"

There is nothing He does not know - to the point that He cannot learn.

Though limitless the universe and gloriously grand,
He knows the eternal story of every grain of sand.

David starts by listing all the things that God knows about him.

1 O LORD, You have searched me and known *me*.

He knows...

When I sit down – relax.

When I rise up – activities of life

All my thoughts –

He even anticipates our thoughts before they are thoughts.

3 You scrutinize¹ my path and my lying down,
And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.

4 Even before there is a word on my tongue,
Behold, O LORD, You know it all.

He knows...

He knows our words and deeds, thoughts and motives,

He knows us inside and out. Yes, as David wrote, “YOU KNOW IT ALL.”

There is no escaping God’s omniscience. He is a guard surrounding us. **He knows** all potential areas of destruction and surrounds us with His protecting hand. The picture is of a hand under us, cupping over us.

5 You have enclosed me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.

¹ To examine or inspect closely and thoroughly.

His knowledge of us is so infinite that it is beyond understanding.

6 *Such* knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is *too* high, I cannot attain to it.

Because God is eternal the future as well as the past are completely open to His view. AS THE WRITER TO THE HEBREWS SAYS,

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. (Heb. 4:13)

Incomprehensible God

JOB SAID WHEN HE SPOKE WITH GOD,

“Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.”

(Job. 42:3)

Trying to understand God’s infinite knowledge is beyond us.

David’s way of saying it is by declaring it ‘too wonderful for me.’

When we turn to God He is more than understanding of us

and past understanding to us.

– it is *too* high, I cannot attain to it

ISAIAH WROTE that someone who comes to God must set aside his thoughts and ways because God’s are much higher.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” Is. 55:6-9

An old saying,

“When God seems far away, guess who moved.”

Most of our problems are the result of wrong thoughts.

Confession is agreeing with God, “saying the same thing.”

GOD KNOWS AND HE IS THERE...

II. The Omnipresence of God – He’s There!

In our emotional stress we may wonder where God has been.

Since he could have stopped the problem before it even started,

WHERE WAS HE?

When Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, died,

they said, “IF ONLY JESUS HAD BEEN THERE.”

David addresses the question: “Where is God, especially when I need Him,” with another question, “IS THERE ANYWHERE GOD IS NOT?”

- 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit?
 Or where can I flee from Your presence?
- 8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there;
 If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.
- 9 If I take the wings of the dawn,
 If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,
- 10 Even there Your hand will lead me,
 And Your right hand will lay hold of me.
- 11 If I say, “Surely the darkness will overwhelm me,
 And the light around me will be night,”
- 12 Even the darkness is not dark to You,
 And the night is as bright as the day.
 Darkness and light are alike *to You*.
 God is in all places at one and the same time.

PANTHEISM says, “God is the same as His creation.”

“The creation is god.”

The God of the Bible is separate and distinct from His creation.

He is omnipresent – all present.

Attribute of Immensity – more than omnipresence.

“Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee”

(2 Chr. 6:18)

He’s There!

David says, “Can we hide from Him?”

We cannot!

Not only does He know where you are hiding, [because He knows] but He is there.

THEN DAVID LISTS THE PLACES WE COULD TRY TO HIDE:

Heaven – You are there.

Sheol – (disembodied state) – He’s there too.

Wings of the dawn – rays of morning sun that streak across the heavens from East to West at 186,000 miles per second.

Travel to the remote corners of the universe at the speed of light.

He’ll be waiting for you. -- “*What took you so long?*”

Get into a submarine and go live in the deepest and remotest parts

of the sea. You’ll find that God will have been there from before the time of creation.

10 Even there Your hand will lead me,
And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

IF YOU SAY, “Let’s hide in the dark. Maybe God won’t see us...”

11 If I say, “Surely the darkness will overwhelm me,
And the light around me will be night,”

12 Even the darkness is not dark to You,

And the night is as bright as the day.
Darkness and light are alike *to You*.

God is inescapable

Pascal wrote, "HIS CENTER IS EVERYWHERE, HIS CIRCUMFERENCE IS NO WHERE."

GOD IS ALL KNOWING, ALL PRESENT, AND ALL POWERFUL

III. God is Omnipotent – He works!

This Psalm is not about David, but about the greatness of the God of David. He ponders God's great power and skill in making him.

- 13** For You formed my inward parts;
You wove me in my mother's womb.
- 14** I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully
made;
Wonderful are Your works,
And my soul knows it very well.
- 15** My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;
- 16** Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;
And in Your book were all written
The days that were ordained *for me*,
When as yet there was not one of them.

Here David praises the work of His great God, as he examines the marvelous development of a baby in his mother's womb.

William MacDonald writes,

In a speck of watery material smaller than the dot over this i, all the future characteristics of the child are programmed – the color of his skin, eyes and hair, the shape of his facial features, the

natural abilities he will have. All that the child will be physically and mentally is contained in germ form in the fertilized egg.²

Radmacher said of this single cell that it would develop:

“...60 trillion cells, 100 thousand miles of nerve fiber, 60 thousand miles of vessels carrying blood around the body, 250 bones, to say nothing of joints, ligaments and muscles”³

David’s inspired Psalm speaks of God’s divine engineering of himself as a baby when God formed his inward parts.

The brain has the capacity for recording facts, sounds, odors, sights, touch, pain, the ability to recall, power to make computations, seemingly endless flair for making decisions and solving problems.

Every part of the body is knit together in the womb.

Weaving of muscles, sinews, ligaments, nerves, blood vessels, and bones in the human frame.

David breaks out in praise to God for His marvelous works.

14 I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Wonderful are Your works,
And my soul knows it very well.

The marvels of the human body:

Orderliness, complexity, beauty, instincts, and inherited factors.

How can anyone trained in natural science fail to be a believer and a worshiper of an infinite Creator?

² William MacDonald, *Believers’ Bible Commentary*, p. 770.

³ MacDonald quotes Radmacher’s lecture, p. 770.

He works!

David continues with a review of how key unformed substances his body were skillfully prepared.

God had a pre-plan for our lives.

Then God had a plan for our lives on earth.

- 15 My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;
16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;
And in Your book were all written
The days that were ordained *for me*,
When as yet there was not one of them.

The new birth is a perfect parallel to someone's physical birth.

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:8-10)

David brings special attention to God's careful planning for his birth.

- 17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
18 If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand.
When I awake, I am still with You.

David affirms God's prior knowledge and plan for everything in his life.

How precious are His thoughts!

He is a true artist – attention to the minutest details.

When I awake ... - moment of birth

- Numberless steps of planning and implementing.
- Nine months of waiting.
- Finally the baby is born – ***“I'm still with You.”***

The Omnipotent God is with him as his Sustainer, Protector and Guide.

After David praises God as the God who knows, who is there, and who works, he responds in prayer.

David's Response: openness, vulnerability, no secrets

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me and know my anxious thoughts;
24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me,
And lead me in the everlasting way.
Ps. 139:23-24

Struggles often bring us to our knees.

There we find that God is greater than our trials.

ONE DAY a great multitude came against Judah, and Jehoshaphat prayed.

O OUR GOD ... WE ARE POWERLESS BEFORE THIS GREAT MULTITUDE WHO ARE COMING AGAINST US; NOR DO WE KNOW WHAT TO DO, BUT OUR EYES ARE ON YOU. 2 Chr. 20:12

Are there hurtful ways in us?

When we're in need we are open for God to search us and make us right.