



*The Teaching Room*

**PSALM 139:  
DAVID'S ROAD MAP  
TO RELATIONSHIP**

**A FOUR-PART SERIES WITH REVEREND  
DARREN MCCLELLAND**

**INCLUDING QUESTIONS FOR MEDITATION  
AND STUDY POINTS**

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# Psalm 139: David's Road Map To Relationship

Let's begin with Psalm 139, one of David's most intimate Psalms, and a poetic masterpiece that proclaims God's love and care in creating each of us, while inviting Him to cast His holy searchlight upon our hearts and lives. As we study out these verses, pray that God, through the Holy Spirit, would illuminate these verses and help you cultivate and fortify deeper intimacy with God as Father.

## Psalms 139:1

**(KJV) To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.**

**(NIV) For the director of music. Of David. A psalm. You have searched me, LORD, and you know me.**

It is worth noting that Psalm 139 ends with a prayer request to God to search him and know and convict him of any hidden sin, and this psalm opens with a proclamation that God has answered David's raw and vulnerable prayer. These prayer requests and answers work both ways because Psalm 139 is all about relationship, child to Father and Father to child. Indeed, God desires that we each come to know Him as Father more and more through His Word, through His Spirit, and through Jesus.

In fact, it is Jesus who models this deeper intimacy with His Father in heaven as He teaches His disciples how to pray, and how to address God as Father in **Luke 11:1-13**:

*And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

For David, even amidst a land of myriad idols and man-made philosophies, there was but one God, one Lord for David. David gives us supernatural insight into a holy God that Fathers His

children perfectly, intimately. David knew this God because God first knew and loved David, all of him. The vocabulary used here is personal and relational.

God has searched David:

châqar  
*khaw-kar'*

A primitive root; properly to *penetrate*; hence to *examine* intimately.

God has known David:

yâda'  
*yaw-dah'*

A primitive root; to *know* (properly to ascertain by *seeing*); used in a great variety of senses, figuratively, literally, euphemistically and inferentially (including *observation, care, recognition*; and causatively *instruction, designation, punishment*).

If you are saved through Jesus, God's Son, God searches you and He knows you, beloved.

### **Luke 12:7**

*But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.*

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Is your relationship with God one in which you love and trust Him enough to allow Him to search you and know you?

## **Psalms 139:2**

**(KJV)** *Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.*

**(NIV)** *You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.*

While verse 1 is a testimony and statement of God's overall investigative power over our lives, we are about to learn how deep, profound, and comprehensive is His watch over David and over all of His children.

When you finally sit on the edge of your bed after a long day, God knows the hour, minute, and second you rest your weary body on that bed. *Before* you do, in fact. When you open your eyes and when you rise in the morning to greet the dawn and seize the day, God knows what time it is - He already has the day's path cleared for you.

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: When you awake in the morning, and when you go to bed at night, are you aware of God's presence and care over your day? If not, what could you do to be more aware of Him?

When he was thirteen, my son Jordan once asked me how God could know our thoughts, intimating that no one could know our thoughts. Well, only God can and does know our thoughts, and that's a good thing! It should be cause for both fearful reverence and rejoicing -

that He loves us anyway, despite the tens of thousands of unbelieving and negative thoughts that travel down our mind's highway every hour! And His mercy and grace is one more reason to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. (Mark 12:30)

David often spoke to God not only out loud, but from his mind and heart. Indeed, it is how each of us prays without ceasing through the Holy Spirit. Prayer is like breathing to the born-again Christian:

**1Thessalonians 5:17** *Pray without ceasing.*

Perhaps in our mind's eye we perceive God in heaven, in glory, to be far away. This is what David believed. But God revealed to David that He perceived his every thought, his every unspoken cry, all his unexpressed anxiety and fear. God perceived it all from afar. Oh, loving, intimate, compassionate God!

## **Psalms 139:3**

**(KJV)** *Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*

**(NIV)** *You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.*

I want to introduce you to Derek. Derek represents all our ways, our whole life and lifestyle. The whole deal! This Hebrew word encompasses all the desires, attitudes and priorities that order our steps and drive the course of our lives.

derek

*deh'-rek*

*a road (as trodden); figuratively a course of life or mode of action.*

As I was praying over this verse, the words *all my ways* really stood out. That God discerns our going out to school, work, church, or wherever, and then back home - I get that, as other verses in this psalm indicate, no problem for God. But *all my ways*? This unsettled me, because these three words point to our overall motives, desires, actions, and lifestyle. If we are to walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), the Holy-Ghost conviction comes hard and fast upon our North American Christian priorities and lifestyles.

Oh God, wretched, spoiled child that I am. Conform me to the image of your Son. Don't leave me in this state of apathy. The work that you began in me, perform it until the day of Christ Jesus! (Philippians 1:6)

Amen.

## **Psalms 139:4**

**(KJV)** *For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.*

**(NIV)** *Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.*

We need go no further than the Book of James to learn the power of the tongue. Because I have been called of God to teach, and because Scripture explains Scripture, I will simply read this passage and let the Holy Spirit do the rest:

**James 3:1-12**

*Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.*

David's desire was be holy, not only in deed, but in speech; and not only in public, but in private. This is the heart of a man after God's own heart:

**Psalms 101:1-8 Of David. A psalm.**

*I will sing of your love and justice; to you, LORD, I will sing praise. I will be careful to lead a blameless life— when will you come to me? I will conduct the affairs of my house with a blameless heart. I will not look with approval on anything that is vile. I hate what faithless people do; I will have no part in it. The perverse of heart shall be far from me; I will have nothing to do with what is evil. Whoever slanders their neighbor in secret, I will put to silence; whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart, I will not tolerate. My eyes will be on the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; the one whose walk is blameless will minister to me. No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence. Every morning I will put to silence all the wicked in the land; I will cut off every evildoer from the city of the LORD.*

I pray that this would be our heart's desire also. God can help stop up the floodgates of pride and profanity springing from our hearts to our minds to our tongues:

**Proverbs 4:23** *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

**Psalms 141:3** *Set a guard over my mouth, LORD; keep watch over the door of my lips.*

\*STUDY POINT: Recall some instances in your life when you wish you could have taken back the hurtful words you spoke to someone you love. Write down and memorize at least six Scripture verses that will stop your tongue from hurting others, from dishonouring and misrepresenting your Saviour and Lord Jesus.

Speaking for myself, the vitriol I used spew out as a new Christian came from my old life in sin, but I knew my anger and self-loathing speech had to go. God gave me these verses to fight off these evil words before they reached open air:

### **James 1:19-21**

*My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.*

### **Psalms 139:5**

**(KJV)** *Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.*

**(NIV)** *You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.*

David had no one in the wilderness. Read this passage in 1 Samuel 23:14-29 as David wanders in wilderness strongholds:

### **1 Samuel 23:14-29**

*David stayed in the wilderness strongholds and in the hills of the Desert of Ziph. Day after day Saul searched for him, but God did not give David into his hands. While David was at Horesh in the Desert of Ziph, he learned that Saul had come out to take his life. And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God. "Don't be afraid," he said. "My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this." The two of them made a covenant before the LORD. Then Jonathan went home, but David remained at Horesh. The Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah and said, "Is not David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hakilah, south of Jeshimon? Now, Your Majesty, come down whenever it pleases you to do so, and we will be responsible for giving him into your hands." Saul replied, "The LORD bless you for your concern for me. Go and get more information. Find out where David usually goes and who has seen him there. They tell me he is very crafty. Find out about all the hiding places he uses and come back to me with definite information. Then I will go with you; if he is in the area, I will track him down among all the clans of Judah." So they set out and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the Desert of Maon, in the Arabah south of Jeshimon. Saul and his men began the search, and when David was told about it, he went down to the rock and stayed in the Desert of Maon. When Saul heard this, he went into the Desert of Maon in pursuit of David. Saul was going along one side of the mountain, and David and his men were on the other side, hurrying to get away from Saul. As Saul and his forces were closing in on David and his men to capture them, a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Come quickly! The Philistines are raiding the land." Then Saul broke off his pursuit of David and went to meet the Philistines. That is why they call this place Sela Hammahlekoth. And David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of En Gedi.*

We each have seasons of profound aloneness, even when there are people around. The sense of closeness indicated in this verse is not a feeling. We apprehend it by faith, as David did. Feeling the closeness of God amidst profound isolation and depression, loneliness, and fear may be a supernatural gift to you today. But even if God seems far away in the natural, His Word, His Promise is enough to carry you through this dark time. David proclaimed God's

promise of His enveloping presence - probably out loud - and the reality of God's surrounding love and care could not have been more real.

It's your promise for today, beloved. Believe it, speak it, experience God by faith.

## **Psalms 139:6**

**(KJV)** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

**(NIV)** *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.*

Let's look at this verse as pure praise! So much of Who God is, what He has done, and how He reveals Himself to us, is really beyond our capacity to understand in the natural. But through the Holy Spirit's illumination of Holy Scripture, we catch glimpses of His glory, and we are forever changed. David confessed to his inability to understand God's comprehensive love and care and detail over His life. David spent the balance of his life composing over 73 psalms of adoration and praise to God from which we can glean not just a cursory knowledge of God, but discover a wide-open gateway to knowing God intimately, and enjoying Him for all eternity.

- Reverend Darren McClelland

# PSALM 139: David's Road Map To Relationship

## Psalm 139:7-12

We have been discovering how deep and rich is Psalm 139 *relationally*. But also, for countless centuries, scholars have been gleaning more about how God relates to His creation *theologically*. Let's begin with a preface from the late Dr. Vernon McGee:

This is a theological psalm in that it reveals something of the attributes of God in relation to His creation. It reveals His omniscience, His omnipresence, and His omnipotence. These are what I call four-cylinder words, but they simply mean that God is all-knowing (omniscient), He is everywhere present (omnipresent), and He is all-powerful (omnipotent). God can do anything that is the object of His power. Sometimes the ridiculous question is asked, "Can God make a rock so big that He cannot lift it?" The answer to that is that God never does anything ridiculous.

Amen, Dr. McGee. So, as we study out the text, keep an eye out for where the text is describing one of these three attributes of God - His omniscience, His omnipresence, and His omnipotence. This is important to the relational aspect of God also, as we can learn how God *actually* communicates with His creation. The fact that He is sharing these wondrous attributes with us is evidence that our Father God wants us to know Him intimately.

## Psalms 139:7

**(KJV)** *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*

**(NIV)** *Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?*

The question-and-answer, hide-and-seek nature of God pervades the whole canon of Scripture. It is God's Father heart to raise children that will learn to ask. It is these children of His that seek, and who find. (Matthew 7:7). Before we proceed any further, let's look at two verses that address two attitudes of asking.

### James 4:1-4

*From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

### Matthew 7:7-11

*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give*



*good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

Do you see it? Do you see the contrast between these two passages? In the passage from James, God is condemning the self-centred, covetous, worldly kinds of prayers that spring from a heart that is not right with God. The prayer of asking that God loves is in the second passage in Matthew. Here we are asking with the humble, innocent heart of a child, trusting that our Daddy in heaven loves us and knows exactly what we need.

**\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION:** In which attitude of prayer from above do you find yourself today? Why do you think this is?

In Psalm 139:7, we see the same childlike heart in David as he ponders and wonders at God's everywhere-present power. David is asking God and giving Him praise in childlike awe. This verse also speaks to the very real carnal tendency of humans to run away from God. We see this in the Garden of Eden, to the extent that God calls out to Adam, "Where are you?"

**Genesis 3:9** *And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

Adam was hiding. Adam was on the run! Read Genesis 3 to witness the beginning of our sinful sprint from Almighty God.

And what about Jonah. Prophet receives assignment from God, rejects the assignment and...oh...there he goes! He's a runner too!

**Jonah 1:2-3** *"Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me." But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD.*

You and I run every day, and not just a two-mile jog, but our incessant need to be busy and ignore God, essentially giving Him the leftovers of our time - the time that *He* affords us so that we may live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:28) Stop! Stop running!

Beloved, we are a people on the run. In this verse David is standing still and beholding His Everywhere Father. Time to stop and get to know our Heavenly Father again...

## **Psalms 139:8**

**(KJV)** *If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.*  
**(NIV)** *If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.*

David here continues to worship God with childlike faith, trusting that as high as David could fly to the moon and the stars, or as low as David could swim to the depths of the deepest ocean, there God would be. So much for running, folks! Our running in any direction only exhausts *us*! God is already aware of our destinations of rebellion. With that said, could we just stop running from Him altogether, and stay in His holy presence on our knees?

## **Psalms 139:9**

**(KJV)** *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;*

**(NIV)** *If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,*

Many English translations of this verse bring forth the poetic word pictures that David is imagining. I often think of a world traveller, traversing the globe, seeking adventure and feigning peril in the urban and actual jungles of the world. Wherever we go... *wherever* we go, God is there.

## **Psalms 139:10**

**(KJV)** *Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*

**(NIV)** *Even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.*

This verse moves me. No more do we envision a religious God in hot pursuit across land and sea, after the unrepentant sinner bent on finding refuge in a modern Babylon. No, this is the true and living God who, through Jesus, has become our Father in heaven and chased us down in His mercy and love, if only to guide us back to Himself, to hold us close, and never again let us run away.

We are all prodigals, beloved. Give thanks and praise to God that wherever home is for you, God is already there waiting to receive you, and to hold you fast.

## **Luke 15:11-32**

*Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for*

*you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' "My son," the father said, "you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."*

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Can you recall a season of life when you were clearly on the run from God - in little ways or big ways? How did He get your attention, and bring you back to Himself again?

## **Psalms 139:11**

**(KJV)** *If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.*

**(NIV)** *If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"*

1 John, a book of black and white contrasts, has much to say about hiding in darkness, and walking in light.

### **1John 1:5-10**

*This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

We perceive as sinful humans that we can deny access to our holy Creator to the sinful compartments of our lives, simply by closing a door or building a wall or turning off a light. But verse 11 teaches us that God has no darkness in Him or around Him. He dwells in unapproachable light:

**1Timothy 6:16** *who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.*

So darkness to us is essentially sin and self-deception. And a dark heart is a hard heart. Dangerous place to be? Oh yes, and be sure, beloved, that we are not hiding *anything* from God:

**Proverbs 15:3** *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*

### **Galatians 6:7-8**

*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*

To study out this verse in another way, the darkest night of our soul is not dark to God at all. Jesus, who is the light of the world, is always there to take our hand and rescue us from our

dark places into His marvellous light - just as He did at our point of greatest need, our need for salvation:

### **Colossians 1:12-14**

*Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*

### **Psalms 139:12**

**(KJV)** *Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.*

**(NIV)** *even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.*

QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: You may have sin habits and patterns that you have been hiding in darkness for many years. Ask God for the courage to bring these sins into the light, so that He can wash you, cleanse you, and help you crucify these sins daily.

\*STUDY POINT: Meditate on Colossians 1:12-14, in context of Paul's prayer for the Colossians believers. (Colossians 1:9-14) In two columns, compare David's references to light and dark in Psalm 139:11-12 with Paul's references to light and dark in his prayer.

The power of proclamation of God's Truth cannot be denied! David's declaration of who God is should strengthen our faith and resonate in our spirit.

Hallelujah!

God's light shatters the hopeless hue of our dark world as we shine forth and walk in the light as He is in the light. (1 John 1:7)

- Reverend Darren McClelland

# Psalm 139: David's Road Map To Relationship

## Psalm 139:13-18

We are continuing to camp out in Psalm 139, and if you have felt somewhat uncomfortable with the level of intimacy our emotive King David expresses here, keep in mind that It is God's desire to know and love us like no one else can. We are learning from David's rich text here that God is all-knowing, all-seeing, all-covering - everywhere, all the time. His promise to us:

### Hebrewa 13:5

*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

Ah, contentedness! What a gift the follower of Jesus possesses! God's faithful provision of Himself and everything we need for life and godliness:

### 2Peter 1:3-4

*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Beloved, God desires that we be content in *Him!* That we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus:

### 2Peter 3:18

*But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

And oh, believer, that we seek first His kingdom priorities and His righteousness, that He may add all the rest! (Matthew 6:33)

Let Him be your all and all, your everything. He is sufficient for you!

Apostle Paul expounds on the joy of being content, and the sorrows of covetousness:

### 1Timothy 6:6-10

*But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

So why this Scriptural detour around Psalm 139?

Well, NEWS FLASH:

God saved us for relationship. Not for running religious laps around His love. It's *all* about His love:

### **Matthew 22:37**

*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

Back to David. His whole life was God. God had captured his heart. Listen to the meticulous detail and care with which God had knit together David in his mother's womb:

## **Psalms 139:13**

**(KJV)** *For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.*

**(NIV)** *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.*

My wife Sheri is a craft maker par excellence. Her skill with needlework, sewing, creating jewelry, multi media art, and on and on, is astounding. A gift from our creative God for certain! God's creative work in creating each one of us in our mother's womb is described in David's psalm as a type of embroidery or needlework - as in Psalm 139:15, we were each *curiously wrought* (KJV) which is the word *raqam* in Hebrew.

If you ever regarded yourself as less than loved, less than valued, less than uniquely knit together on purpose *for* the purpose of being loved by a caring, creative Creator - the Word of God is about to sweep you off your feet in awe and wonder. Listen with open ears and open heart, beloved:

## **Psalms 139:14**

**(KJV)** *I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*

**(NIV)** *I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

David recognized that it was good news indeed to know that God made him with reverent care and distinguished him from every other person on earth. *I will praise thee*, David declares in awe and wonder, as he considers the great love and care God has lavished upon him. This truth in love terminates the hatred and lies that David's adversaries had flung at him.

I wonder right now if you have ever been a David in the wilderness - rejected, targeted, intimidated, bullied, outcasted, abused, falsely accused? Like Jesus, David had been through torture at the hands of his enemies, even those closest to him. Through his raw and honest testimony in the Psalms, we get a vivid picture of the kind of men we would call *enemies*:

### **Psalms 10:7**

*His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.*

### **Psalm 31:13**

*For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.*

### **Psalm 58:4**

*Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;*

Strange then that David's warfare was so waged in his heart and mind as he rejected the lies of his adversaries, and embraced the truth of His Creator and Lord.

*Enemy lines, listen...I am fearfully and wonderfully made, knit together in my mother's womb. And what's better is I know my Creator, I know my God! And He knows my name and calls me a man after His own heart. Enemy, know that I am created by, loved, protected, sent, and saved by my triumphant God through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ His beloved Son. All future communication and accusation will have to be passed by Jesus. In Jesus' name I declare and pray!*

Beloved, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1) You no longer have to accept the lies levelled at you by the Evil One. You belong to God.

### **Psalms 139:16**

**(KJV)** *Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.*

**(NIV)** *Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.*

Let's redefine conception, folks. While a man and a woman can certainly conceive and give birth to the miracle of a newborn baby, God has already ordained each one of us to be born, and to die. We are *His* idea! Just as God stood before creation of the world (Genesis 1:2), He stands before His created ones, before they are created - each unique and created for relationship. To say that God goes before us is an understatement!

### **Psalms 139:17**

**(KJV)** *How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!*

**(NIV)** *How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them!*

What kinds of thoughts might God be thinking towards David, towards each of us? Might he be engrossed in the technical minutiae of creating the cells that make up our vastly complex created-on-purpose bodies?

Just for the sake of irony, we will quote astronomer and atheist Carl Sagan, on the subject of human cells. Get ready...

A single human chromosome (DNA molecule) contains 20 billion bits of information. How much is that? What would be its equivalent, if it were written down in an ordinary printed book in modern human language? Twenty billion bits are the equivalent of about three billion letters. If there are approximately six letters in an average word, the information content of a human chromosome corresponds to about 500 million words. If there are about 300 words on an ordinary page of printed type, this corresponds to about two million pages. If a typical book contains 500 such pages, the information content of a single human chromosome corresponds to some 4,000 volumes. "It is clear, then, that the sequence of rungs on our DNA ladders represents an enormous library of information. It is equally clear that so rich a library is required to specify as exquisitely constructed and intricately functioning an object as a human being."

So, we couldn't blame God if His thoughts toward us were relegated to the creation and maintenance of our miraculous bodies. But those of us who have accepted God's only Son as Saviour and Lord have come to know God as Father, as Love, as Lord, and David cannot even count the number of thoughts that God has toward him.

But, beloved, we're learning, aren't we? As we dig deeper into Scripture, God is revealing more of His thoughts toward us:

**Jeremiah 29:11-14**

*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.*

Be encouraged, beloved! You are valued. You are loved.

- Reverend Darren McClelland



# PSALM 139: David's Road Map To Relationship

## Psalm 139:19-24

We continue to look at Psalm 139, a psalm of David that is so rich in theology, so deep with relational vocabulary. In writing this psalm, King David really helps us to go deeper with God. These verses, dear Christian, are truly the way to cultivate a deeper relationship with our Father God.

To meditate on these verses day and night, to internalize this vocabulary of intimacy, is to be rooted and grounded and fruit-bearing, as the Psalmist in Psalm 1:

### Psalm 1:1-9

*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

God has been so gracious as to give us, His children, Holy Scripture not only for instruction in righteousness, but to help draw close to Him, that He may draw close to us:

**James 4:8a** *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.*

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: In the past, what methods have you used to draw close to God, or to prepare your heart for private communion with Him? Why is Scripture such an important way to draw close to God?

As we prayerfully study out the last six verses of Psalm 139, God will show us great and marvellous things from His law:

**Psalm 119:18** *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*

## Psalms 139:19

**(KJV)** *Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men.*

**(NIV)** *If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!*

When we align our hearts with God, we will love what God loves, and hate what God hates. We as believers in Jesus Christ are not unaware that there is a raging battle going on in the heavenly realm for the souls of men, women, and children - who will live the balance of their lives as God's children through Jesus, or remain in the deceptive clutches of the Evil One, the Father of Lies. The battle rages on...

### 2Corinthians 10:3-6

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and*

*bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.*

It is worth noting that the battle Paul is talking about in this passage is against the unbelieving, unrepentant, stubborn hearts of those still dead in their transgressions. It is a spirit, the spirit of the world. King David is addressing this spirit and those in whom murderous revenge (David's enemies?) and wickedness dwell. These are the enemies of God, and David, being a man after God's own heart, hates what and whom God hates.

We balance all of David's demands for justice against the wicked with the merciful nature of God, in that it is not God's desire that any perish, but that all might come to a saving knowledge of God:

### **2Peter 3:9**

*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

But there are those who are stubborn, who have hardened their hearts against God, who refuse to repent and receive salvation through Jesus. In Psalm 139:19, David is imploring God to slay these wicked ones. It is important that we understand that this is not the justice that our world dispenses - spiteful, vengeful, murderous revenge. No, no. This is God's perfect justice, even as He is perfectly just. King David so perfectly expresses here the heart cry for justice that resonates across our world today. Only God can and will administer justice that is in accordance with His character. We are wise when we allow Him to convict and judge on our behalf:

### **Romans 12:19**

*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

\*STUDY POINT: Using your concordance, look up and write down all of the passages in the New and Old Testaments where God extends mercy when He could have administered justice.

As God's children, we also align our hearts with God's Word - loving what He loves, and hating what He hates. The names and numbers of those opposing David here are not as important the fact that God is presenting a picture here of good (David the God follower) and evil (David's God opposing enemies).

### **Psalms 139:20**

**(KJV)** *For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.*

**(NIV)** *They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name.*

The text in the two versions above present the wickedness of David's enemies through their speech. Their hatred for God is manifest through what they say. Jesus teaches us in the New Testament that out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. There really is no hiding the true wickedness in our hearts:

### **Jeremiah 17:9**

*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

The contents of our hearts spill out through our words:

### **Luke 6:45**

*A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*

As believers we are to guard our hearts, that is control what we input into our eyes and ears, so that our outward life - our behaviours, decisions, and words - do not bring dishonour to God:

**Proverbs 4:23** *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: What practical and spiritual safeguards do you have in place in your life to guard what goes into your eyes, ears, and heart?

### **Psalms 139:21**

**(KJV)** *Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?*

**(NIV)** *Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?*

Here it is again. This alignment with the heart of God that caused God to call David a man after his own heart:

### **Acts 13:22**

*And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.*

Let me say at this point that David is addressing the rebellious in his sphere of opposition, while God is painting here a grim picture of those who rebel and rebel and rebel against Him their whole lives, even as He holds out the free gift of salvation through His Son Jesus:

### **John 3:16**

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Isn't it tragic that these rebellious people spend their whole lives kicking against God, only to come to the end of their lives realizing they have forsaken the Lover of their souls in exchange for a lie. And under the abusive hand of the Father of Lies. God will still forgive them if they repent on their death bed, but oh, the pain of wasted years enslaved to rebellious flesh!

Even as David was aligned with God through His Word, and experienced the favour of God through it, we have the very same powerful privilege to be right in the will of God whenever we pray and are in agreement with His Word:

**John 15:7**

*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*

It shall be done, dear Christian!

And how important it is to sit in God's presence with His Word and simply and humbly agree with Him! Not all prayer time, not all devotional time, needs to be filled with sound of our own voice! Let God speak, beloved!

**Ecclesiastes 5:2**

*Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.*

**Psalms 139:22**

**(KJV)** *I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.*

**(NIV)** *I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies.*

God's enemies are David's enemies! The hatred of which David speaks here is God's hatred - not spiteful, vengeful, murderous hatred.

**Psalms 139:23**

**(KJV)** *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:*

**(NIV)** *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.*

What a contrast here in David's tone. He has become quiet and open before God. David has also shown us the gateway to true repentance. Repentance requires conviction of the Holy Spirit. And conviction comes only as we give God access to the deepest parts of our hearts. The parts that no one else sees. But God even sees the conception of evil in our hearts:

**James 1:13-15**

*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

He sees, and hates, the devious thoughts and deeds that come as a result of this conception:

**Proverbs 6:18**

*An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,*

The good news is that once God shines His holy searchlight on our hearts, we are able see our sin for what it is, repent, and ask God for forgiveness, which He grants to us instantly:

### **1John 1:9**

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

## **Psalms 139:24**

**(KJV)** *And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

**(NIV)** *See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Perhaps the word *wicked* in this verse puts you off a little bit. You see, the flesh and the pride of life (1 John 2:16) does not like to perceive itself as wicked, maybe bad, but not wicked. Our holy God, however, sees our sinful conceptions, desires, and thoughts for precisely what they are - wicked. This is why we appeal to our Holy God in the name of our eternal Saviour Jesus, Who is our Righteous Advocate (1 John 2:1) and He leads us back to the path of righteousness, where God dwells, forever.

### **John 3:17**

*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

Beloved in Jesus, we conclude this study in Psalm 139 with the beautiful truth of the Gospel - that God sent His Son into our world and into our lives not condemn, but to save. And we see here the heart desire of God for His children to see their sin for what it is, forsake it, and receive God's forgiveness through Jesus. What a wonderful miracle that once we have been forgiven, our relationship with God is restored and refreshed by the Holy Spirit.

David's words in this psalm were inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21) and when we memorize and meditate upon these words, we are by faith in His Word - our road map - drawn into alignment with the very heart of God.

In this way, you and I can be like David - children after God's own heart.

Hallelujah!

- Reverend Darren McClelland

# **THE TEACHING ROOM**

## **Psalm 139: David's Road Map To Relationship Series Overview Questions**

- 1. What new attributes of God did you learn from this series?**
- 2. How will this knowledge change how you relate to God?**
- 3. Going forward in your walk with God, what spiritual habits might you change or implement after going through this series?**
- 4. What verses or passages stood out for you that you might want to memorize or meditate upon to further fortify your walk and witness with Christ?**
- 5. What verses or passages in this series challenged you or perhaps you think need more time and study?**
- 6. If you had to summarize the theme of this series in one sentence, in your own words, what would you write?**