



**“Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me”**  
(Psalm 139:5).

## **God Is All Knowing**

**Central Truth:** the all-knowing God deserves our trust.

**L289. Date:** September 1987. **Text:** Psalm 139:1-6, 17-18, 23-24.

**Topic:** God: Attributes of.

*Omniscience!* That is more than a theological principle or a philosophical proposition. It is a wonderfully practical and personal Bible doctrine.

Omniscience is another of those compound words we use to describe one of the attributes of God. It is composed of *omni*, which means “all,” and *scientia*, which means “knowledge.” Omniscience means to know all, to know everything about every person and everything.

God's omniscience includes the past, present, and future. Nothing has happened or will happen which He did not know and does not know. Thus He is “*declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done*” (Isaiah 46:10). Nothing ever happens which is a surprise to God. He has known from eternity His decreed will and our free acts.

Think of the implications of God's omniscience. What a comfort that is for the saved! God has foreknown and made provisions for us. What a threat that is to the wicked! God has foreknown and decreed their punishment.

You are no surprise to God. Your circumstances were known from eternity. He has made provision for you. Study the doctrine of divine omniscience and rejoice!

### **I. GOD KNOWS WHAT I AM DOING (Psalm 139:1-6)**

**A. He knows my person.** Read verses 1, 2 of the text and notice the

first person pronouns: *“O LORD, thou hast searched ME, and known ME. Thou knowest MY downsitte and MINE uprising, thou understandest MY thought afar off.”* God's knowledge is not limited to the great events of human history. It is specific, detailed, and personal. He knows ME and He knows YOU. Think about that!

The Bible says of Jesus, *“He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man”* (John 2:24, 25). When we consider that is true of every person who has ever lived, or will ever live, in all of human history, we must conclude, *“There is no searching of his understanding”* (Isaiah 40:28). God knows all about you and loves you just the same.

**B. He knows my position.** He is fully aware when I sit down, rise up, walk, rest, speak, or think. His personal knowledge includes common and casual acts. His knowledge embraces public and private acts. His knowledge encompasses day and night exercises. *“Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it”* (Psalm 139:6). But how it challenges me to purity and encourages me to trust!

**C. He knows my thoughts.** *“Thou understandest my thought afar off”* (verse 2). He knows my next thought before I think it. Think of that! Read the Gospel records and notice the recurring statement, *“Jesus knew their thoughts, and said”* (as in Matthew 12:25).

How can He know? God is *“he that searcheth the hearts”* (Romans 8:27). While man looks on the outward appearance, God ponders, understands, and judges what is in the heart (Proverbs 21:2). Be careful what you permit yourself to think. Give your best efforts to *“bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”* (II Corinthians 10:5).

**D. He knows my acts.** When I lie down to rest, rise up to work, or walk by the way, God knows (verse 3). *“His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings”* (Job 34:21).

A children's song admonishes little ones to be careful about how they use their hands, because their heavenly Father sees what they do. That is a good lesson for adults to learn.

**E. He knows my words.** *“There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether”* (verse 4). Such complete knowledge is the basis of Jesus' statement that people shall account in judgment for every idle word they shall speak, being justified or condemned by their words (Matthew 12:36, 37).

**F. He knows my response.** How we should stand in awe before a God of such complete and intimate knowledge (verse 6)! Let us worship Him, saying, *“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of*

*God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”* (Romans 11:33). *“The foolishness of God is wiser than men”* (I Corinthians 1:25). Let us worship and serve such a God.

## **II. GOD KNOWS WHERE I AM (Psalm 139:7-12)**

This text will be studied in greater detail next week, but a brief survey is appropriate here. God's knowledge is in full agreement with His presence.

**A. He is present here.** To get away from His presence one must leave where he is (verse 7). He is *“a God at hand, . . . and not a God afar off”* (Jeremiah 23:23). His knowledge is not that of a remote observer but of a present person. *“In him we live, and move, and have our being”* (Acts 17:28).

**B. He is present there.** Make a list of the possible places of human residence; “heaven,” “hell,” “the uttermost parts of the sea” (Psalm 139:8, 9). Would those places be apart from the presence and knowledge of God? No! *“Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me”* (Psalm 139:10). You can go to no place where God is not.

**C. He is present everywhere.** He is in the darkness and the light (Psalm 139:11, 12). *“Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD”* (Jeremiah 23:24). His personal presence with me and His personal knowledge of me dispel my fears and assure my faith. Praise God for His interest in each of us.

## **III. GOD KNOWS HOW I GOT HERE (Psalm 139:13-18)**

**A. He witnessed my development.** *“Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb”* (Psalm 139:13). There has been no moment in my existence, even in my development as a fetus, when God was unaware of me. My development then is described in these words, *“The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life”* (Job 33:4).

**B. He designed me according to His plan.** When my physical body was being formed, being yet imperfect, God knew of me. He wrote a record of my development in His book and described me before I was formed (Psalm 139:15-18). What knowledge! God knew me before my mother knew me. He described me before any human saw me. He thought of me precious thoughts before any other (Psalm 139:17). He knows how I got here.

## **IV. GOD KNOWS WHAT I AM LIKE (Psalm 139:23, 24)**

**A. He searches my heart.** *“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts”* (Psalm 139:23).

That is the reason each one should *“know. . . the God of (his) father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts”* (1 Chronicles 28:9). Such a searching and understanding is the basis of God's discipline and judgment. *“I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings”* (Jeremiah 17:10). He who knows all the affairs of hell and heaven (Proverbs 15:11) surely knows what is in the hearts of men and women.

The psalmist's prayer for God to search his heart and know his thoughts was inspired by his desire to be at peace with God. *“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me”* (Psalm 66:18). His prayer is a guide for us to pray often that God would show us any secret sin so that we might confess it and live in unhindered fellowship with God.

**B. He cleanses my fault.** The psalmist's prayer for God to search him, try him, and know him was for the purpose of discovering *“if there be any wicked way”* in him (Psalm 139:24). Why would he want his sins to be identified? He wanted cleansing.

How would cleansing from sin come? It is through *“a fountain opened. . . for sin and uncleanness”* (Zechariah 13:1). Someone may ask, “What is that fountain?” William Cowper answers in the words of his hymn, “There is a fountain filled with blood/Drawn from Immanuel's veins;/ And sinners plunged beneath that flood,/ Lose all their guilty stains.”

*“Christ . . . loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish”* (Ephesians 5,25-27).

Since saints make up the churches, Christ desires that each one would be sanctified and cleansed. The heart of the psalmist reflects the heart of each Christian in its desire to know of any lurking sin so that cleansing from it might be received and enjoyed. *“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”* (I John 1:7).

**C. He leads my steps.** *“Lead me in the way everlasting”* (Psalm 139:24) is an appropriate prayer. The everlasting way is the way God has decreed. It is the way of His perfect will. It is the way of righteousness

which God makes straight before us (Psalm 5:8). It is the way of blessing.

Let us pray often, *“Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness”* (Psalm 143:10). In response to such a prayer God will show us the way we should walk and the thing we should do (Jeremiah 43:2, 3). What a blessed thought it is to know that He who knows us best leads us daily into His fullest will.

This study has shown us that God knows all about us. He knows us personally and in the fullest detail including our thoughts, words, and acts. He knew us before we were born, while we were still developing in the womb, and designed us there according to His plan. He knows what we are like today, searching our hearts and cleansing our faults. He is personally and intimately acquainted with every detail of our lives. We are never away from His personal knowledge.

Does that disturb you? If so, you are not at peace with God. Tell Him about it and ask His forgiveness.

Does that assure you? If so, you are at peace with God. Tell Him of your assurance and thank Him for His grace.

What thoughts does God think toward you, knowing all about you as He does? Since He is a God of love and grace, He replies, *“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”* (Jeremiah 29:11). Glory!

## Questions

1. What is omniscience?
2. How does Isaiah 46:10 show the omniscience of God?
3. How does Psalm 139:1-6 show God's omniscience relating to you?
4. How is II Corinthians 10:5 a right response to God's omniscience?
5. What assurance does Psalm 139:17 give you?
6. What is the purpose of the prayer of Psalm 139:23?
7. How is Psalm 139:23 related to Jeremiah 17:10?
8. What is the *“heart”* which God searches in you?
9. What is the *“way everlasting”* in which God leads you?
10. What encouragement do you find in Jeremiah 29:11?