



# *Knitted and Known*

PSALM 139



SHORELINE.CHURCH

APRIL 2022

WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP COMMUNITY

# Introduction

We live in a culture full of expectations. You can't stand in line at the grocery store without expectations blasting at you from the magazine stand. By the magazines' standards, you should be happy, stress-free, fit, healthy, strong (emotionally and physically), well-organized, energized, and anything else they'd like to sell you. These worldly, unattainable standards have created a silent rivalry - chiefly among women - for decades, now reaching new heights with social media.

One consequence of this competition is that we don't let people truly know us. We present to the world a carefully curated personality to make ourselves acceptable. There's an underlying fear that *if they knew the real me, they wouldn't love me*. This fear of being vulnerable can keep us away from relationships and fan the flames of our anxiety. On the other side of that, all the behind-the-scenes prep work causes our focus inward, on ourselves.

## So, what does it mean to be fully known and loved?

This month we're studying **Psalm 139**. In this psalm, we'll learn how deep God's knowledge of us is, how we are safe with Him, and that no matter our hearts' condition, His love will never leave us. God does not operate by the world's standards, His expectations are simply for us to abide in Him.

The word omniscient is easily tossed around by believers. We know that God knows all, but it takes on a different tone when we say, "God knows all of me." To think of all the intricacies of the human mind and soul and the complexities of our emotions, knowing God knows them could cause anyone to feel vulnerable, exposed, or unworthy.

The author of this psalm, King David, had a history of sin in his life that no one would have posted about, but still, God used his life as part of our story as believers. David tried, like we all do, to hide his sin from those around him. He wanted to be seen as the leader God anointed him to be, to be what everyone expected of him. But, he was a flawed man. God knew from the beginning that there would be controversy and pain in David's life, and yet the line of our Savior is traced back to his throne.

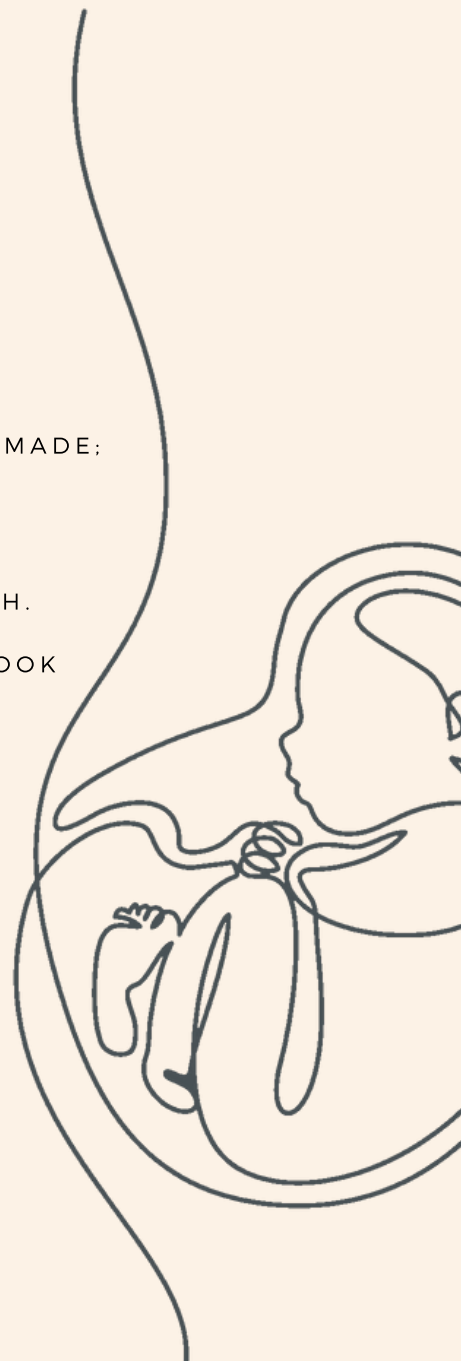
We will read this month that God searches us, knows us, is never away from us, forms us, and protects us. When David contemplates the care and attention to detail God took to create him, he's moved to humble awe of his Creator.

Let's work this month to shift our focus away from the world's false expectations and toward our awe-inspiring God. Our God who always has been and forever will be, who makes something from nothing, who exists everywhere, and knows everything. Let's take all the attention we've placed on our comparisons, competitions, and self-evaluations and place that attention where it belongs - on our awesome Heavenly Father.



# Psalms 139

- 1 YOU HAVE SEARCHED ME, LORD,  
AND YOU KNOW ME.
- 2 YOU KNOW WHEN I SIT AND WHEN I RISE;  
YOU PERCEIVE MY THOUGHTS FROM AFAR.
- 3 YOU DISCERN MY GOING OUT AND MY LYING DOWN;  
YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH ALL MY WAYS.
- 4 BEFORE A WORD IS ON MY TONGUE  
YOU, LORD, KNOW IT COMPLETELY.
- 5 YOU HEM ME IN BEHIND AND BEFORE,  
AND YOU LAY YOUR HAND UPON ME.
- 6 SUCH KNOWLEDGE IS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME,  
TOO LOFTY FOR ME TO ATTAIN.
- 7 WHERE CAN I GO FROM YOUR SPIRIT?  
WHERE CAN I FLEE FROM YOUR PRESENCE?
- 8 IF I GO UP TO THE HEAVENS, YOU ARE THERE;  
IF I MAKE MY BED IN THE DEPTHS, YOU ARE THERE.
- 9 IF I RISE ON THE WINGS OF THE DAWN,  
IF I SETTLE ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE SEA,
- 10 EVEN THERE YOUR HAND WILL GUIDE ME,  
YOUR RIGHT HAND WILL HOLD ME FAST.
- 11 IF I SAY, "SURELY THE DARKNESS WILL HIDE ME  
AND THE LIGHT BECOME NIGHT AROUND ME,"
- 12 EVEN THE DARKNESS WILL NOT BE DARK TO YOU;  
THE NIGHT WILL SHINE LIKE THE DAY,  
FOR DARKNESS IS AS LIGHT TO YOU.
- 13 FOR YOU CREATED MY INMOST BEING;  
YOU KNIT ME TOGETHER IN MY MOTHER'S WOMB.
- 14 I PRAISE YOU BECAUSE I AM FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE;  
YOUR WORKS ARE WONDERFUL,  
I KNOW THAT FULL WELL.
- 15 MY FRAME WAS NOT HIDDEN FROM YOU  
WHEN I WAS MADE IN THE SECRET PLACE,  
WHEN I WAS WOVEN TOGETHER IN THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH.
- 16 YOUR EYES SAW MY UNFORMED BODY;  
ALL THE DAYS ORDAINED FOR ME WERE WRITTEN IN YOUR BOOK  
BEFORE ONE OF THEM CAME TO BE.
- 17 HOW PRECIOUS TO ME ARE YOUR THOUGHTS, GOD!  
HOW VAST IS THE SUM OF THEM!
- 18 WERE I TO COUNT THEM,  
THEY WOULD OUTNUMBER THE GRAINS OF SAND—  
WHEN I AWAKE, I AM STILL WITH YOU.
- 19 IF ONLY YOU, GOD, WOULD SLAY THE WICKED!  
AWAY FROM ME, YOU WHO ARE BLOODTHIRSTY!
- 20 THEY SPEAK OF YOU WITH EVIL INTENT;  
YOUR ADVERSARIES MISUSE YOUR NAME.
- 21 DO I NOT HATE THOSE WHO HATE YOU, LORD,  
AND ABHOR THOSE WHO ARE IN REBELLION AGAINST YOU?
- 22 I HAVE NOTHING BUT HATRED FOR THEM;  
I COUNT THEM MY ENEMIES.
- 23 SEARCH ME, GOD, AND KNOW MY HEART;  
TEST ME AND KNOW MY ANXIOUS THOUGHTS.
- 24 SEE IF THERE IS ANY OFFENSIVE WAY IN ME,  
AND LEAD ME IN THE WAY EVERLASTING.



# Hem Me In

Begin by reading *Psalms 139:1-6*. Underline all the verbs that describe how God perceives our actions.

In this beginning strophe, David declares the omniscience of God. There is no action we make that He does not already know about. In verse one David writes that God searches us; however, if God is omniscient, why does He search us if He already knows what's there?

We were created in God's image, and He models for us behaviors for us to follow: He continually and perfectly creates, works, loves, and searches. Although He has nothing to learn, He models for us to search. As God searches us minute by minute we are invited to search Him back. What a great invitation we have to search a limitless God!

Look up *1 Corinthians 13:12*. Will we ever know God like He knows us?

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The theologian Matthew Henry puts it this way, "It is the light of heaven only that will remove all clouds and darkness from the face of God."

Reading that verse and corresponding commentary, what are you most excited to learn about God once we stand in His eternal light?

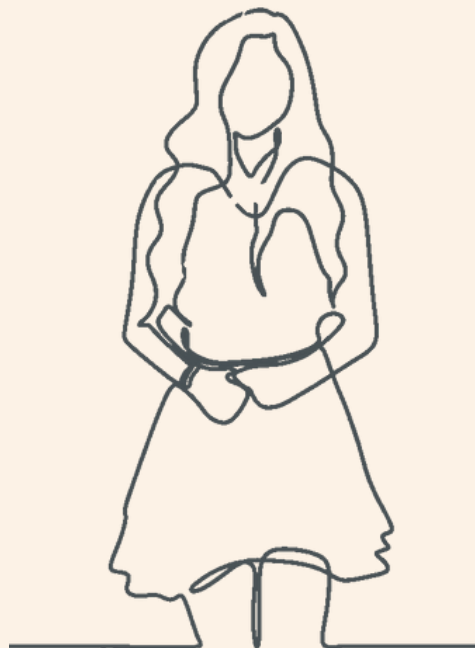
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Verse five reads, "You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me." The word "hem" can be translated in a variety of ways from the original Hebrew, but in the context of this psalm, it is widely translated into "encircled" or "enclosed." God has always had us in His grasp from before the foundation of the world, into eternity, and every moment in between.

In the diagram below, place brackets on either side of you as your past and future, and a line over the top of you, to show God's hand, to represent how you are never out of God's range of sovereignty.



Write out *Psalms 139:6* on the following lines.

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How does it encourage you to know that a God so big cares about that which is as small as our mundane comings and goings?

Take a moment to pray a prayer of thanksgiving that God never tires of searching you, lovingly revealing what He finds.

# A God of No Limits

Read Psalm 139:7-12.

Hiding is a natural response to shame for us as humans. Our first examples of humanity, Adam and Eve, hid when they realized their sin. Still today, we retreat into our safe areas when we feel embarrassment and shame for our behaviors. David knew all too well about hiding, from enemies and his sin. This is not simply poetic language, but he is declaring the omnipresent power of our God, from personal experience.



Fill in the blanks from *Psalm 139:8*, then label the correct blank on the diagram.

If I go up to the \_\_\_\_\_ you are there. If I make my bed in the \_\_\_\_\_ you are there.

Let's look at v. 9.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

What direction do we turn to to find the dawn? \_\_\_\_\_ (fill it in on diagram)

The sea for David was the same direction as for us here on the coastline of the Pacific. Which direction is that? \_\_\_\_\_ (fill it in on diagram)

What are the first two words of v. 10? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you had an “even there” experience when you felt the leading of God although you thought you were too far away?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Read vv. 11-12. Darkness offers a false promise of protection: if no one can see you, you can be whatever creation you want to be, you can create a lovable and enviable persona that no one would want to walk away from. That's what Satan wants us to believe, that we are not lovable in the light. We are only acceptable if we hide our flaws from everyone around us.

God's light does not exist the way light does on earth. Light rays, as we know them, cannot bend so whatever they hit creates shadows, areas of darkness. God's light penetrates us in a way that nothing is hidden from Him. When we become believers, we are welcome into that eternal light of God where shadows don't exist. When we call on Him, we will never walk in darkness. And with all our imperfections on display, He says, “*Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord shines over you!*” (*Isaiah 60:1*).

# Lovingly Knitted

Read *Psalms 139:13-14*. What are the first words in v. 14?

David says, "I praise you..." In these verses, David is reflecting on the greatness of God, bolstering his own confidence in God's love and closeness. God created David, knew every part of David, every dark corner, and still loved and blessed him. When considering the wonderful works of God, including himself, David is moved to praise.

What happens when you meditate on the intimacy, care, and love offered to us by an all-powerful God? Conversely, what happens when you meditate on yourself and how you measure up to the magazine expectations?

Do you struggle with worldly expectations? How?

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Fill in the blanks from *vs. 14*:

...your works are \_\_\_\_\_, I know that \_\_\_\_\_.

List your favorite wonderful works of God.

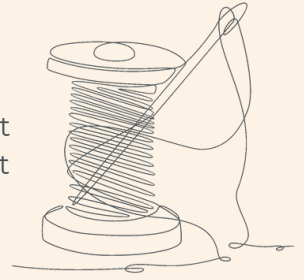
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We often look up to the mountains and out onto the ocean, maybe even the otters and dolphins, and exclaim the mighty works of God, and yet we often speak ill of God's favorite creation that we stand in each and every day.

What step can you take right now to value the creation that you are, not by worldly standards, but by the view of the One that gave you life?



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Read *Psalms 139:15-16*. In these verses, David continues the story of his beginning.

The phrase "unformed body" comes from the Hebrew word "gōlem" which refers to the embryo or fetus. David praises God that even while he was too small even for his mother to know of his existence, God had already made a plan and written it down.

Sit and ponder the truth that God not only had a plan for you when you were still "unformed" but was so confident in His creation that He wrote it down! How would walking in that confidence change the way you thought about yourself? The way you thought about God?

Read *verses 17-18*. When you read the phrase "precious thoughts" what does that stir up in you?

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God's good thoughts of us never end. Even while we sleep, God continues His precious words over us. And then when we awake, we can go into our day in the promise of His eternal protection.

Take time now to journal a prayer acknowledging God's wondrous works created in you. Sit in awe of His greatness and infinite measure of love for you.

# Search Me

Read verses 19-24. Notice the drastic shift our psalm has taken? David has gone from praise to lamentation of the evil around him. And isn't that just like our lives today? In one moment, we praise God for all He is and has done, and in the next, we are overwhelmed by the evil around us.

David had real physical enemies. He was not only hunted down by Saul but also spent most of his reign at war with the countries and tribes around Israel. His name was slandered and his integrity questioned. David knew all too well the threats that came against those that follow the truth.

We might not struggle with physical enemies but we do need to be on guard for the fight that is always surrounding us.

Look up *Ephesians 6:12* and fill in the blanks.

For our \_\_\_\_\_ is not against \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, but against the \_\_\_\_\_, against the \_\_\_\_\_, against the \_\_\_\_\_ of this \_\_\_\_\_ world and against the \_\_\_\_\_ forces of in the \_\_\_\_\_ realms.

Take time now to journal a prayer acknowledging God's wondrous works created in you. Sit in awe of His greatness and infinite measure of love for you.



Paul doesn't continue to say "it's a scary world out there so just shrink down and try to let it pass!" Read *Ephesians 6:13-18*. What does Paul say we should do?

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We need to fight against evil, but as John Piper says, "There is a kind of hate for the sinner (viewed as morally corrupt and hostile to God) that may coexist with pity and even a desire for their salvation." As we seek God's protection, we pray for the softening of the world's heart towards Jesus.

In verse 24 David asks God to see if there is any "offensive way" in him. The Hebrew word used for "offensive way" is *ōṣēḇ* and also carries with it the meaning of idol. The fight is not always outside our door but often lurks in our flesh. We need to frequently ask God to search us for any idol in our life that is causing a distraction in our walk with God.

Until the time that Jesus returns and our salvation is made complete by joining Him in heaven, we will live in a world full of wickedness. We will hear the misuse of God's name, watch as people rebel against the will of their Creator, and we will struggle with our own offensive ways. We need to daily guard ourselves against these threats to be sure that we do not fall into a trap of sin or apathy.

But remember, in this, there is a joy - joy that in this struggle, we are never alone.

## *Meditate and Respond*

Pray the following verse and allow yourself time to sit and meditate on His response. Rejoice that even as we live through trials and pain we will always know the way to everlasting peace and comfort!

**SEARCH ME, GOD, AND KNOW MY HEART;  
TEST ME AND KNOW MY ANXIOUS THOUGHTS.**

**SEE IF THERE IS ANY OFFENSIVE WAY IN ME,  
AND LEAD ME IN THE WAY EVERLASTING.**

PSALM 139:23-24 (NIV)





# Resources



## WORSHIP PLAYLIST

YOU KNOW ME by Steffany Gretzinger, Bethel Music

<https://youtu.be/cVVIMQved8k>

YOU NEVER LET GO by Matt Redman

<https://youtu.be/NM14VZVu0og>

SEARCH MY HEART by Hillsong UNITED

[https://youtu.be/zKPadxY\\_nII](https://youtu.be/zKPadxY_nII)



## WOMEN'S MENTORING

Are you wondering how you can intentionally connect with other women? How to find blessings in your current season of life? How to continue to grow spiritually? Join us on Sunday, **May 15th from 2 pm – 4:30 pm** in the Parkside Room to learn more about the Women's Mentoring Ministry.

For questions or more information, email [mentoring@shoreline.church](mailto:mentoring@shoreline.church).

<https://shoreline.church/womens-mentoring/>



## JOIN OUR PRAYER WALL

Post a prayer request and join us in praying for the women in our Women's Discipleship Community. This page will be private to just our group!

[www.shoreline.church/prayer-wall](http://www.shoreline.church/prayer-wall)