

## **PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS**

### **Psalm One Hundred And Thirty-Nine - God's Pathway For Making Upright Character Evaluations (Psalm 139:1-24)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. We should not be **judgmental** (Mtt. 7:1), but we **are** to make **judgments**, Mtt. 7:5; 1 Cor. 11:31!
- B. However, caught *between* these truths, the believer can **doubt** if he is too judgmental or too lenient in viewing his own innocence or that of others with whom he is to make such character judgments.
- C. Psalm 139:1-24 reveals God's pathway for making upright character evaluations so that we make the judgments we need to make without being errantly judgmental with others:

#### **II. God's Pathway For Making Upright Character Evaluations, Psalm 139:1-24.**

- A. The psalmist, David, apparently struggled with doubts about his own innocence in a matter in which he had taken the position that his opponents were wrong and he was innocent (as follows):
  1. In verses 20-22, David expressed to God his **aversion** of men he viewed as being wicked:
    - a. In verses 21-22, the NIV and KJV state David confessed he "hated" (*saney*') the wicked enemies (Kittel, ed., *Biblia Hebraica*, p. 1096; B.D.B., *Hebrew-Engl. Lexicon of the O.T.*, p. 971).
    - b. This expression is **not** a reference to unjust ill-will promoted by a depraved man, but the expected **aversion** with resulting **separation** that understandably comes when the upright man must of necessity withdraw from fellowship with the wicked, *Theol. Workbook of the O.T.*, v. II, p. 880.
  2. Accordingly, David called on God to slay these wicked men, and separated himself from them, 139:19.
  3. **However, as seen in David's call for God to examine his heart to see if there be any wicked way in him in verses 23-24, David had some apparent DOUBT concerning his innocence or stand.**
- B. Thus, David was led by the Holy Spirit into God's Pathway for making upright character evaluations, whether those evaluations dealt with judgments on his own uprightness, or on that of others around him:
  1. Step One - Trust God's omniscience to **know** whether evil exists in us or another, 1-6 with 23-24.
    - a. David admitted that God had thoroughly examined and known all about him, v. 1.
    - b. God knew all about David's acts (2a) and thoughts (2b) so that God knew all about him (v. 3).
    - c. This knowledge is so great that before David ever spoke a word, God totally knew what he would say, a knowledge that was overwhelming for David to consider, Ps. 139:4-6.
  2. Step Two - Trust God's omnipresence to **find** evil that lies in us or another, 7-12 with 23-24.
    - a. David considered the fact that he could not escape the presence of the Spirit of God, v. 7.
    - b. Whether in the highest heaven or lowest grave, God was there, Ps. 139:8.
    - c. David realized that if he traveled at the speed of light from the eastern sky's dawn across the sky to settle down in the depths of the far reaches of the Mediterranean Sea in the west of Palestine, all at the speed of light, God would already have been there ahead of him to lead and grasp David, 9-10!
      - d. If he would say that the darkness of the sea's depths would hide him from God, David knew that this claim would be fruitless, for God views the night as the day alike, 139:11-12.
  3. Step Three - Trust God's omnipotence to **deal** with evil in us or another, 13-18 with 23-24:
    - a. Picking up on the theme of being in the darkness at the bottom of the Mediterranean, David dwells on the power of God that formed him in the utter darkness of his mother's womb, Ps. 139:13.
    - b. In fact, God formed the intangible as well as tangible parts of David, and recorded in His book all the parts of each when as yet they had not come into being, Ps. 139:14-16!
    - c. While dwelling on and appreciating the power of God (vrs. 17-18a), David comes out of prophetic trance and discovers that God is still with him, an added evidence of His power, verse 18b!

***Lesson:*** *In doubting if he had been fully accurate in either judging or exonerating either himself or others, David asked God to use His omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence respectively to know, find and deal with all involved to give him an edifying conclusion!*

***Application:*** *(1) We can rely on God's attributes to evaluate and exonerate or critique character judgments we make to yield a productive solution to our doubts involved. (2) Also, verses 13-18 are a strong argument in favor of the personhood of the unborn, unformed PERSON of the human fetus!*