

## STUDIES IN PSALMS

the *lowly*. How this strikes a note not unknown to David, because probably taught him by Samuel, may be seen by reference to 18:20-27 with our Exposition thereof.

But, as the third stanza makes us feel, we have not done with David—the historical David—who, by little turns of expression peculiarly his own, lets us know that, while he is not yet finally out of *trouble*, he is confident that his covenant God *will complete all things on his behalf*. As in the earlier psalms of David which passed under Hezekiah's co-editing care, so this also is well handed over to *the Chief Musician*, which makes us feel quite at home, satisfied that the choirs will be well instructed how to deal with this addition to their Temple treasures.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is suggested by the sudden reappearance of psalms ascribed to David?
2. "There are many possible reasons" why these psalms of David are so late in appearing. Discuss at least one possible reason.
3. The literary critic is quick to see another author or redactor in any difference in expression. Show how this is a false practice.
4. This psalm well illustrates II Samuel 17. How?
5. A new thought concerning David is found in the second stanza. What is it?
6. "He who began a good work will perfect it." How does this thought apply to David?

## PSALM 139

### DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

An Individual submits Himself to Jehovah's All-Searching Eye.

### ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-6, Jehovah's Knowledge considered as Taking into View every Form of Human Activity. Stanza II., vers. 7-12, There is No Escaping that Knowledge by Distance or Darkness. Stanza III., vers. 13-18, Based upon the Creatorship of each Individual, Jehovah's Knowledge rises

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to Precious Purposes Realisable by Fellowship with Him in a Higher Life. Stanza IV., vers. 19-24, The Lesson thus Learned produces a Passionate Espousal of Jehovah's honour, which feeling, however, is Jealously Guarded by Prayer.

(Lm.) By David—Psalm.

- 1 Jehovah! thou hast searched me and knowest:—
- 2 Thou knowest my downsitteing and mine uprising,  
thou understandest my purpose from afar.
- 3 My journeying and my resting hast thou traced out,<sup>1</sup>  
and with all my ways art thou familiar.
- 4 When (as yet) there is no speech in my tongue  
lo! Jehovah thou knowest it all.
- 5 Behind and before hast thou shut me in,  
and hast laid upon me thine outspread hand.
- 6 Too wonderful is thy<sup>2</sup> knowledge for me,  
inaccessible! I cannot attain to it.
- 7 Whither can I go from thy spirit?  
or whither from thy face can I flee?
- 8 If I ascend the heavens there art thou,  
and if I spread out hades as my couch behold thee!
- 9 I mount the wings of the dawn,  
settle down in the region behind the sea
- 10 Even there thy hand leadeth me.  
and thy right hand holdeth me.
- 11 If I say—"Only let darkness shut me in,<sup>3</sup>  
and the light about me be night"
- 12 Even darkness would not darken from thee,  
and night like day would shine,—  
so the darkness as the light.
- 13 For thou thyself didst originate the first rudiments of my  
being,<sup>4</sup>  
didst weave me together<sup>5</sup> in the womb of my mother.
- 14 I thank thee that thou hast shewn thyself fearfully  
wondrous,—<sup>6</sup>

1. So Sep. Or (Heb.): "winnowed."

2. "Thy" in Sep. and Vul.

3. So Gt. M.T.: "bruise me."

4. ML: "my reins."

5. Or (less prob.): "screen me."

6. So it shd. be (w. Sep. and Syr.)—Gn.

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- wonderful are thy works,  
and my soul knoweth [it] well.
- 15 My frame<sup>7</sup> was not hid from thee  
when I was made in secret,  
was skilfully wrought<sup>8</sup> in the underparts of the earth.<sup>9</sup>
- 16 Mine undeveloped substance<sup>10</sup> thine eyes beheld,  
and in thy book all of them were written—  
even days preordained,—  
and for it<sup>11</sup> one among them.
- 17 To me then how precious thy purposes O GOD!  
how numerous have become their heads!
- 18 I would recount them—beyond the sands they multiply!  
I awake—and my continued being<sup>12</sup> is with thee.
- 19 Wouldst thou O God slay the lawless one!—  
then ye men of bloodshed depart from me!—
- 20 Who speak of thee wickedly,  
have uttered for unreality thy name.<sup>13</sup>
- 21 Must not I hate them who hate thee O Jehovah?  
And them who rise up against thee must I not loathe?
- 22 With completeness of hatred do I hate them,  
as enemies have they become to me.
- 23 Search me O GOD and know my heart,  
try me and know my disquieting<sup>14</sup> thoughts;
- 24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me,  
and lead me in a way age-abiding.<sup>15</sup>

(Lm.) To the Chief Musician.

7. Ml.: "my bone."

8. If the initial "r" in Heb. was an accidental repetition from the previous word (wh. ends w. that letter), then we might render the word so shortened: "I arose." And this might convey a double allusion to race origin and individual origin.

9. "The secret laboratory of the origin of earthly existence"—(Cp. Job 1:21, Sir. 40:1)—Del.

10. Ml.: "my ball"—as yet unrolled! Br. conjectures *grl* (instead of *glm*) "my lot."

11. Namely, "for my undeveloped substance": "one among them," namely, "among preordained days." So, prob., if w. Del. we prefer the Heb. marginal reading (in one recension) *welo*=*waw*, *lamed*, *waw*; otherwise, if we follow M.T., *welo*'=*waw*, *lamed*, *aleph* (same pronunciation), we must say: "And NOT one among them."

12. Ml.: "my continuance."

13. So *Gt.*: cp. Exo. 20:7.

14. Cp. 94:19.

15. That is, "a way enduring or holding on to the ages." In contrast with the "way" that "vanishes," 1:6. Cp. "the path of life," 16:11.

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PARAPHRASE  
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O Lord, You have examined my heart and know everything about me.

2 You know when I sit or stand. When far away You know my every thought.

3 You chart the path ahead of me, and tell me where to stop and rest! Every moment, You know where I am!

4 You know what I am going to say before I even say it.

5 You both precede and follow me, and place Your hand of blessing on my head.

6 This is too glorious, too wonderful to believe!

7 I can *never* be lost to Your Spirit! I can *never* get away from God!

8 If I go up to heaven You are there; if I go down to the place of the dead, You are there.

9 If I ride the morning winds to the farthest oceans,

10 Even there Your hand will guide me, Your strength will support me.

11 If I try to hide in the darkness, the night becomes light around me!

12 For even darkness cannot hide from God; to You the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are both alike to You.

13 You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body, and knit them together in my mother's womb.

14 Thank You for making me so wonderfully complex! It is amazing to think about. Your workmanship is marvelous—and how well I know it.

15 You were there while I was being formed in utter seclusion!

16 You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day was recorded in Your Book!

17, 18 How precious it is, Lord, to realize that You are thinking about me constantly! I can't even count how many times a day Your thoughts turn towards me!<sup>1</sup> And when I waken in the morning, You are still thinking of me!

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Literally, "how precious are Your thoughts to me."

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19 Surely You will slay the wicked, Lord! Away, blood-thirsty men! Begone!

20 They blaspheme Your name and stand in arrogance against You—how silly can they be?

21 O Lord, shouldn't I hate those who hate You? Shouldn't I be grieved with them?

22 Yes, I hate them, for Your enemies are my enemies too.

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart, test my thoughts.

24 Point out anything You find in me that makes You sad, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

## EXPOSITION

This beautiful and heart-searching psalm may be conveniently regarded as resolving itself into four Stanzas of six verses each, as set forth in our Analysis.

I. *Jehovah's Knowledge considered as taking into view every form of human activity.* A survey which includes a man's *downsitting* when his day's work is done, his *uprising* when his night's rest is over, and his chief *purpose* during the twenty-four hours; which traces his *journeying* from place to place, his *resting* at noon and at night, and his *ways* of deporting himself wherever he may be,—may be said to touch in general terms on all the forms which individual activity can assume. If, to these specifications, are added those processes of the mind which prepare for *speech*, and which prompt and guide the *tongue* in its utterance,—we may conclude that nothing of importance remains uncomprehended in this brief enumeration. Nevertheless, there is yet another aspect under which individual activity may be viewed; and that is, its narrow limitation. There are on every side bounds which it cannot overpass; an individual's *downsittings* and *uprisings* can only attain a certain number, and then they must cease; and so with all his forms of activity. Such limitation is graphically set forth in the simplest and most picturesque language: *Behind and before hast thou shut me in, and hast laid on me thine outspread hand.* This reflection, by so far, enhances the thoroughness of Jehovah's knowledge of me. He knows all the movements I can make, and he himself strictly limits those movements; which emphasises the main point, which is, that Jehovah knows every individual thoroughly: knows, with first-hand knowledge; as the result of personal search and tracing and testing; knows, by anticipation, even the as yet unspoken words that are coming. It is not

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surprising that the psalmist realises how such knowledge surpasses any knowledge which he himself possesses: *Too wonderful is thy knowledge for me.*

II. *There is no Escaping that Knowledge by Distance or Darkness.* The psalmist first tests the question, whether by *Distance* he can hide himself from God. No: not by distance: whether the distant *height*, or the distant *depth*, or the distant *breadth*: the distant and dazzling height of *heaven*; or the dim, dark depth of *hades*, the underworld of the dead; or the hazy remoteness of the shores and islands *behind* the *hinder* Mediterranean *Sea*: escape to any of these distances will be no escape from Jehovah; who is above, below, beyond; present everywhere—present, in the diffused vitality of his *spirit*, present, in the personal capacity of revealing his *face* in wrath or love. The poet is only testing the question in all the forms his thoughts can appreciate. He does not say he wishes to escape: in fact, he almost implies that he does not; for, in putting the case, merely to test the possibility, he rather assumes the love than the wrath of the Omnipresent One: *There, thy hand leadeth me, and thy right hand holdeth me.* But, if he *would* escape, he *could* not—that is his main point.

Having tested the question of escape from God's knowledge by means of "Distance," he next propounds the question whether by means of *Darkness* such escape were possible. Again he concludes in the negative. *Darkness is no darkness to Jehovah.*

III. *Based upon the Creatorship of Each Individual, Jehovah's Knowledge rises to Precious Purposes realisable by Fellowship with Him in a Higher Life.*

This comprehensive summary of the third stanza of our psalm is not more comprehensive than the particulars which it seeks to express. Nevertheless, being highly charged with meaning, it may be helpful to draw out its main points in the form of three distinct propositions.

1. Jehovah's knowledge of men is based upon his creatorship of each individual.

2. His creatorship of each individual comprehends benevolent purposes with respect to them.

3. His benevolent purposes with respect to each individual require for their realisation the advantages of a higher life than the present.

1. *Jehovah's knowledge of men is based upon his creatorship of each individual.* The causal word *For*=*Because*, which

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opens this stanza, strictly and properly leads up to this conception: "Thou hast such an intimate knowledge of me as neither change of activity, nor distance, nor darkness can obstruct, *because* thou didst make me: *because* I am thy creature: *because* thou art my creator." This is the first strong and clear point in this third stanza of our psalm. Observe that it is clearly and strongly expressed. It is expressed by almost every form of language by which the idea could be conveyed: *He originated the first rudiments of my being*. Then he carries on the formative work so begun: *He wove me together*. He constructed my *bony framework*. Moreover he yet further advanced his handiwork to completion, by *skilfully* imparting the whole *variegated web-work* of nerves and blood-vessels. We need not trust too much to a single form of expression; but it may safely be said that at least three times over in this short paragraph is Jehovah's creatorship of the human body affirmed. Sum them all up, and put them in their proper connection of thought, by saying: He knows me thoroughly because he made me. He made, not only my spirit, but my body also.

We are not going too far when we individualise, and say: "He made *me*. He made *my* body." We are not going too far, because *precisely that* is what the psalmist says.

But does he not also generalise, and speak of the origin of the *race* under cover of the origin of the *individual*? The correct answer to that plausible question would seem to be this: Yes, he does also generalise; but without withdrawing his individualisation. He refers to the *literal mother's womb* of the individual, as well as—probably and allusively—to the figurative mother's womb here glanced at under the terms *underparts of the earth*. We need not deny the allusion. It is the easiest and happiest way of accounting for the introduction of that remarkable expression; which it may be observed is also found in the Septuagint and Vulgate: As the race was originally brought forth out of the underparts of the earth, so the individual is, at birth, brought forth from the maternal concealment answering thereto. But such an allusion does not dominate the passage: the psalm distinctly and repeatedly affirms the Divine Creatorship of the body of each individual human being.

The importance of this teaching will be evident to every thoughtful mind. The consequences which follow from it may, without exaggeration, be described as tremendous. To say that BEHIND EVERY HUMAN BIRTH DIVINE CAUSATION IS IMPLIED is to

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make a statement which may undoubtedly be abused. But, on the other hand, still more deplorable consequences will result from denying it. The alternative—that of cutting any single creature adrift from its Creator—must at all costs be avoided.

Jehovah created the race: Jehovah creates every individual of the race. Jehovah is the Father of our spirits—doubtless with special immediateness, beautifully symbolised by the directness with which each breathing thing draws its breath from God. But, though not without creaturely intervention, yet through “the fathers of our flesh,” Jehovah’s creatorship takes effect: his power and wisdom and love are operative in the production of our individual bodies also. It is this which the third stanza of our psalm so strongly teaches, and the more thoroughly and fearlessly we appropriate the solemn thought, the more shall we have ultimate cause for rejoicing.

Jehovah knows me thoroughly, because he made me; and he made my body as well as my spirit—he made the whole man, the entire compound psychic individual.

This is not to say that even he, at my first birth, brought a clean thing out of an unclean; but it is to say, that my first birth, with all its drawbacks, lays a foundation for a second: a second birth whose very object will be to bring a clean thing out of an unclean. Creation may be followed by destruction; but that is not its object. Creation may be followed by salvation.

2. *Jehovah’s creatorship of each individual comprehends benevolent purposes respecting each.* What is it but Jehovah’s individual creatorship which calls forth the significant line which now comes before us?

To me, then, how precious thy purposes, O God!

Having employed the word “purpose,” in ver. 2, in relation to man, we are bound in consistency to use it now, in ver. 17, in relation to God, the word being the same in the original. God has not only “thoughts” about us when individually creating us, but purposes, and because these purposes are *precious*, therefore we must assume them to be benevolent; purposes of good and not of evil; of salvation, and not of destruction. Some, indeed, prefer the qualifying word “weighty” here instead of “precious”; but as “precious” is the more customary and obvious rendering, we shall hold ourselves warranted to abide by that more inspiring word until driven out of it. Inasmuch, however, as the immediately following context confirms the preferred and



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customary rendering, we have no fear of being driven out of the welcome conception of a benevolent Divine purpose in connection with every human birth.

It is quite true that the psalmist with great emphasis asserts the individuality of his own appreciation of God's benevolent purposes in his creation. *To me, then, how precious!* and he had every right to do this. "*To me, knowing thee as I know thee;*" "*To me, then, considering this matter as I have done, and pondering deeply upon it as I have pondered,—how precious thy purposes are!*" But is this to shut others out from the same appreciation; or, is it, rather, to invite them to follow him? Let us beware of narrowing the ground of the exclamation so as to cut it away from under any man's feet. Suffice it, then, to observe—that the psalmist neither says nor implies, "Because I am a good man, therefore are thy purposes such as they are, therefore are they precious to me." No! the whole spirit of the stanza, and of the psalm hitherto, suggests the simpler and broader ground: "Because I am a man, and because thou didst make me to be a man, therefore are thy purposes to me as man so precious."

3. *Jehovah's benevolent purposes with respect to each individual require for their realisation the advantages of a higher life than the present.* Nearly everything here turns on the bearing of the word *awake*; although something also turns upon the fact that the words *I am still* may give place to a more literal rendering, *my continuance*, which more literal rendering may justly assume the significant form, *my continued being*, as we see from Ps. 104:33: *I awake—my continued being is with thee.* Chiefly, the decision turns upon the scope or intention of the word *awake*. Does the psalmist intend to imply that he had nearly or quite fallen asleep under the weight of his profound meditation, but that when he roused himself he still found himself revolving the old problem,—found him *with God* in the sense of still thinking about him? Or does he rather rise to a higher thought—that of awaking to a higher life than the present?

We may and must dismiss the former as purely fanciful: there is nothing sleepy about what has gone before—all is alert, wakeful; with no indication even of weariness in the mind of the psalmist. Besides which, there is something essentially feeble in reducing the weighty words *with thee* to mean no more

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than thinking about thee; since they more properly mean in company with thee—in thy presence.

On the other hand there are attractive parallels for investing the word “awake” with a far richer meaning; such as, “Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust” (Isa. 26:19), “many of the sleepers in the dusty ground shall awake” (Dan. 12:2), and especially—

As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness,  
I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.

—Ps, 17:15.

Who can deny that, so to understand the words of our psalm, is to bring its third stanza to an altogether worthy conclusion? The whole context is strong, and favours a strong conclusion. Particularly strong and suggestive are the two lines falling between the two great words *purposes* and *awake*: *how numerous have become the heads of them, namely thy purposes; and—I would recount them—beyond the sands they multiply.* Only regard the *purposes* as finding final culmination in the bestowment of IMMORTAL LIFE; only regard the *awaking* as being the GREAT AWAKING to that life; and then this multiplication of the Divine “purposes” is abundantly accounted for. The “purposes” culminating in the Great Awakening naturally multiply on both sides of that climax: on this side, and on that; as leading up to it, and as carrying us beyond it. He who “purposes” to bestow on me immortality, will he not “purpose” to prepare me for that priceless boon? Will he not “purpose” redemption, “purpose” sanctification, “purpose” the necessary discipline of suffering, “purpose” victory over temptation? So that we may well exclaim, *How numerous the purposes leading me up to the Great Awakening!* And again, will that Great Awakening not itself lead on to further and higher and still multiplying results? Does Jehovah “purpose” to awake me to an idle, sterile life? When I am awakened, will there be nothing for me to do, no lost ones to seek and save, no new worlds to conquer, no new victories to achieve, no new songs to sing, no new book of nature’s secrets to open? Verily, it is as the psalmist says, *How the heads of coming possibilities in the future multiply beyond the sands?*

On every ground, therefore, are we emboldened to conclude, that this *Awaking* is THE GREAT AWAKING TO IMMORTALITY. On the ground of the utter feebleness of the *alternative view*, which fancies that this wakeful psalmist fell asleep; on the ground

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of the felt *preciousness* of these Divine *purposes*; and on the ground of their abundant *multiplication*, which can never so prolifically multiply as when clustered about Jehovah's greatest gift, age-abiding life:—on all these substantial grounds we choose this conclusion, and rest in it, that the climax of this third stanza does really mean—I *awake* to immortal life—and find that *my continued being* is to be enjoyed in fellowship *with thee* my loving Creator!

IV. *The lesson thus learned produces a Passionate Espousal of Jehovah's honour: which feeling, however, is Jealously Guarded by Prayer.*

That is what we really have here, in the final stanza of our psalm: let us brush aside everything which hinders our seeing it.

Granted that the language employed is, some of it, such as we could not use: simply because we are not in the psalmist's circumstances. What were those circumstances?

As this question necessarily throws us back on the problem of authorship, it may be permitted us to say: that this "Study" was commenced under the impression that DAVID HIMSELF was the Writer of the whole of this psalm, the manifest difference in tone between the first three stanzas and the last being sufficiently accounted for by the easy supposition, that three-fourths of the psalm were written by David in his comparatively early and untroubled days, and the last part, after his days of conflict had set in; but that, on closer consideration of the peculiar language of the fourth stanza and contemplation of the circumstances—the whole state of things—thereby implied, the modified conclusion was reached, that, while David probably wrote the major part of the psalm, namely its continuously calm stanzas one, two, and three, being probably the whole original psalm, and abundantly entitling the psalm as a whole to bear his honoured name, it was his descendant HEZEKIAH who, having drunk in the existing psalm, in letter and spirit, then added to it the present fourth stanza. The sufficient reason for this modification may be allowed to stand thus: the fourth stanza does *not exactly suit* any known circumstances through which David passed, but *does exactly and most wonderfully fit* the peculiar condition of things which existed in the days of Hezekiah. So much for clearness being premised, the case may be thus stated, looking steadfastly and with a single eye to the exact language of this the fourth stanza of the psalm.

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These are the words of a responsible King in Israel: with a foreign invader trampling down the land; leaving his subjects little chance of exercising the most ordinary rights of citizenship, and still less of maintaining the appointed central worship in Jerusalem; many of the Levites being beleaguered in the cities where are their homes, and consequently being unable to ascend to the holy city to attend there to their sacerdotal duties. All this, observe, simply because of this same Invader—this lawless foreigner—who will, if he can, dethrone Israel's rightful monarch, and draw the people away from their allegiance to Jehovah himself. And now the question is:—If, under these circumstances, the King prays—*Wouldst thou, O God, slay the lawless one!* is he doing wrong? Deserves he to lose our sympathies? Can we condemn him? Note, that he does not propose to *slay the lawless one* himself; he merely commits him to the judgment of God: *Slay him, O God!* Is that a wrong prayer for Israel's King, under such circumstances.

But let us be at pains to take in the whole situation. There is a war-party in Israel, who are prepared to rush forward into *blood-shed*, with or without Jehovah's permission. We know them; we have met with them before: we have heard their peace-loving King lament that he dwelt among them: bitterly complaining of them in such terms as these, "*I am peace; but when I speak, they are for war!*" (Ps. 120). These are the men to whom the devout monarch here says threateningly in a significant aside: *then, ye men of blood-shed, depart from me!* As much as to say, "Once the Lawless One is slain by God's hand, your excuses for plunging into a wilful war will be silenced; and, depend upon it, I shall hasten to rid myself of your hated presence in my Court."

Not only was there a war-party in Israel, but that war-party was composed of *profane* men—men *who spake* of Jehovah *wickedly*, who tried to maintain *falsehoods* by the irreverent use of *his* holy name: men, in a word, who *hated* Jehovah! Those are the men whom this praying, Jehovah-loving monarch has to confront. And we ask, was he wrong in drawing a line at them? Could he do otherwise than exclaim, in loyalty to the God whom he adored and loved: *Must I not hate them who hate thee, O Jehovah?* There is no paltry, personal animosity in the language. In point of fact, these men might have been the king's own enemies, but of that he takes no account. Wholly on public grounds—solely for Jehovah's

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sake—he *accounts* them as his own enemies. That—no more, no less—is what the language expresses.

And so we claim to have brushed aside all obstructions to the reception of the large and solemn lesson here conveyed. It is an object-lesson; and is nothing less than this: That when a man rightly appreciates the *precious purposes* which his Creator cherishes towards him, then is he propelled by the highest moral compulsion to love him in return; to vindicate his honour; and to count his Creator's enemies as his own.

Yet, in such a passionate espousal of Jehovah's honour, there undoubtedly lurks a subtle danger; lest the public hate should take up into itself personal animosity; let an abhorrence of men's godless principles and animus should overlook the yet lingering preciousness of their personalities, not yet, it may be, wholly corrupt and finally abandoned.

And it is submitted, that this is one of the finest things in this matchless psalm; namely, that the psalmist is fully aware of this danger; and makes a determined stand against it, by voluntarily submitting himself to the searching eye of his heart-searching God; imploring to know whether there is in him—even by way of mixed motives—*any hurtful way*; and seeking to be Divinely *led into a way*—up to and through the great Awakening—to the pure life that shall *abide to the ages*.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Perhaps this is the most meaningful of all the psalms. Please read it and the exposition on it with this thought in mind. Discuss why you believe this psalm has meaning for you.
2. Someone said, "for the Christian, nothing happens in his life by accident, all is under God's hand of intent." The first six verses of this psalm surely confirm this thought. Discuss.
3. Not only does God know all my movements, "he himself strictly limits those movements," discuss this thought.
4. Does man have a strong temptation to run away and hide? Why? Is this true of all men?
5. There are various attempts to get away from God . . . to put distance between you and God. Discuss some modern-day applications of this.
6. Every fifth man in America is emotionally sick—i.e. ac-

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- ording to some statistics—is this an attempt to escape God in the darkness? Discuss other forms of darkness. *Most of all*; discuss not only the futility of this effort but the needlessness of it.
7. What a tremendous thought! Not only did God create man, but He took a personal interest in creating each one. Discuss how very complete is the interest of our Creator in each one of us.
  8. What is involved in the expression the “underparts of the earth”?
  9. God has a plan and purpose for every life, is this taught in this psalm? Discuss.
  10. How do the first and second births relate?
  11. How is the word “precious” used in this psalm?
  12. How is the word “awake” here used?
  13. The multiplicity of the purposes of God is a strong argument for immortality. How so?
  14. Rotherham has an interesting thought about the writing of the fourth stanza. Discuss.
  15. Who was the “lawless one”? Why to be slain? Was this merciful?
  16. What protection did the psalmist seek against the lawless one?

## PSALM 140

### DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Deliverance from Slandorous and Violent Enemies  
Implored and Expected.

### ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-3, Rescue from Violent Slanderers Besought. Stanza II., vers. 4, 5, The Plottings of the Slanderers Indicated. Stanza III., vers. 6-8, Personal Relation to Jehovah and His Past Mercies Pleaded. Stanza IV., vers. 9-11, Prayer becomes Impassioned Imprecation. Stanza V., vers. 12, 13, Calm Assurance at length comes of Complete Vindication.

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(Lm.) A Psalm—By David.

- 1 Rescue me Jehovah from evil men,  
from the man of violent deeds wilt thou preserve me: