

**PROVERBS, USER MANUAL ON LIFE IN CHRIST
DISCOVERING GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE**

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Psalm 139:1b "...O LORD, you have
searched me and you know me." (Niv)

DAVID IS WRITING THIS PSALM NOT ONLY FOR HIMSELF BUT FOR EVERY PERSON WHO HAS EVER BEEN CONCEIVED - GOD IS REVEALING A VERY IMPORTANT TRUTH NOT JUST FOR DAVID BUT TO EVERY MAN WHO WILL LISTEN TO THE GOSPEL. JUST AS PSALM 51:5¹ TEACHES THE UNIVERSAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN SO PSALM 139 TEACHES ANOTHER VERY IMPORTANT TRUTH - **GOD HAS SET IN PLACE A PERFECT PLAN FOR EVERY MAN AND WOMAN BEFORE THEIR BIRTH.** THE PURPOSE OF THE NEXT TWO (AND FINAL IN THIS SERIES ON PROVERBS) LESSONS IS TO CONCLUDE THE MATTER OF PROVERBS ON THIS EMPHASIS - THAT GOD HAS THIS PERFECT PLAN FOR YOU AND ME AND THAT IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT FOR US TO DISCOVER HIS PLAN FOR OUR LIVES.

**GOD HAS SET IN PLACE
A PERFECT PLAN FOR
EVERY MAN AND WOMAN
BEFORE THEIR BIRTH.**

**JESUS CHRIST IS THE KEY
TO DISCOVERING GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE**

2 Cor 5:19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

IF YOU ARE LISTENING TO THIS MESSAGE TONIGHT AND HAVE NOT RECEIVED CHRIST AS PERSONAL SAVIOR, IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO KNOW THAT **YOU ARE THE OBJECT OF GOD'S REDEPTIVE PLAN NOT BECAUSE YOU HAVE LIVED A RELIGIOUS LIFE OR HAVE A CERTAIN LEVEL OF MORAL "PERFECTION" BUT BECAUSE HE LOVED YOU BEFORE YOU WERE BORN AND HAS PUT IN MOTION A PERFECT PLAN FOR YOUR SALVATION AND ABUNDANT LIFE.**

YOU CAN DISCOVER THIS WONDERFUL PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE, BUT FIRST YOU MUST RECEIVE JESUS CHRIST AS LORD AND SAVIOR. OTHERWISE YOU DEFAULT ON THE PLAN AND YOUR DESTINY IS AN ETERNITY IN HELL AS AN UNREPENTANT SINNER.

**GOD'S PLAN HAS CONSIDERED
EVERY DETAIL OF YOUR LIFE**

Psalm 139:3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

THIS IS A GREAT VERSE. **"You discern my going out..."** THE ORIGINAL IS VERY DESCRIPTIVE - THIS PHRASE HAS GOD SIFTING THE VERY DIRT OF THE *COURSE OF OUR LIFE*. LOOKING FOR EVERY DETAIL THAT WE MIGHT PASS OVER. LYING DOWN REFERS TO THE PLACE WE SLEEP. ONE CAN DRAW SEVERAL IDEAS FROM THIS - FIRST LYING DOWN CAN REFER TO THOSE TIMES IN OUR LIVES WHEN WE ARE THE MOST VULNERABLE. OUR "LYING DOWNS" ARE WHERE WE ARE LIVING (AND SLEEPING). GOD SIFTS THE DIRT OF OUR LYING DOWNS, LOOKING FOR THE "SCORPIONS" OF OUR LIVES - THOSE TIMES WHEN WE ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO FALL VICTIM.

IF THAT IS NOT ENOUGH, THE PSALMIST SAYS THAT GOD IS INTIMATE WITH THE DETAILS OF "ALL MY WAYS." THIS IS THE GOD OF LOVE AND DETAIL. NOTHING SLIPS THROUGH HIS DISCERNING EYE. WE WILL LEARN LATER HOW GOD ATTENDS TO EVERY DETAIL OF ALL OUR "WAYS."

COMPARE THESE FIRST 12 VERSES WITH 13-18 AND WE DISCOVER THAT ALL THESE WONDERFUL DETAILS OF GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR LIVES WERE SET IN PLACE *BEFORE WE WERE BORN*. WHAT A WONDERFUL COMFORT TO KNOW THAT GOD NOT ONLY LOVES US AND PROVIDES FOR OUR SALVATION, BUT LOVES US AS A FATHER WHO HAS PLANNED FOR *EVERY CONTINGENCY OF OUR LIVES*.

**THIS WONDERFUL PLAN KNOWS NO
GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES OR
LIMITS IN TIME**

¹ Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

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Psalm 139:7 **Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?**

DAVID ASKS THIS QUESTION OF HIS READERS AND THE PROCEEDS TO ANSWER IT FOR THEM. THE ANSWER IS THAT GOD'S PLAN CAN PENETRATE ANYWHERE IN HIS CREATION - EVANGELIZING AND BLESSING THE VILEST OR MOST MORAL OF REPENTANT SINNERS.

LOOK AT THE ENORMOUS SCOPE OF GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU. FIRST, WE HAVE THE VERTICAL - THE SPAN HERE IS FROM HEAVEN TO HELL - A STATEMENT OF THE INFINITE BUT ALSO ONE OF EXTREME CONTRAST (VS 8). MAY I APPLY THIS DIMENSION TO OUR EVERYDAY CIRCUMSTANCES? IT MATTERS NOT OUR SOCIAL OR ECONOMIC STATUS. WE CAN BE FROM THE HIGHEST OF SOCIETY OR BE THE LOWEST OF THE HOMELESS - THE MOST HOPELESS OF SINNERS, GOD'S PLAN - HIS REACH INCLUDES ALL! THEN THERE IS THE HORIZONTAL - THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE SEA REFERS THE SEA CRASHING ON SOME DISTANT SHORE OF AN ISLAND OR CONTINENT (9, 10). THE SCOPE OF GOD'S PLAN GOES FROM SHORE TO SHORE - ANY PART OF THE WORLD - FROM THE DARKEST PART OF AFRICA TO THE RELIGIOUSLY OPPRESSED RED CHINA, GOD IS THERE TO CARRY OUT HIS PLAN FOR ANY SINNER WHO WILL REPENT AND TURN TO JESUS CHRIST. GOD DOESN'T LEAVE HIS CHILD AN ORPHAN EITHER. IF HE CAN REACH THE SINNER BEFORE HE RECEIVES CHRIST, HE CAN CERTAINLY CARRY OUT HIS PLAN *AFTER THE SINNER BECOMES HIS CHILD*. THEN WE HAVE THE FOURTH DIMENSION - TIME. THE FROM THE WINGS OF THE MORNING TO THE DARKEST NIGHT - GOD IS THERE TO CARRY OUT HIS PLAN FOR HIS CHILD (11, 12).

MAN IS THE RESULT OF GOD'S CREATIVE GENIUS

Psalm 139:13 **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.**

WE ARE ALL THE RESULT OF GOD'S CREATIVE GENIUS. MAN IS NOT MERELY THE RESULT OF THE BIOLOGICAL PROCESS CALLED "PROCREATION." PROCREATION INCLUDES CREATION. THAT IS, GOD, HIMSELF, IS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE CREATION OF EACH UNBORN BABY² DURING GESTATION. DAVID DRAWS A WONDERFUL PICTURE OF THIS CREATIVE PROCESS IN OUR TEXT. THE PICTURE IS THAT OF THE DIVINE WEAVER, GOD, WEAVING A BEAUTIFUL TAPESTRY USING MANY DIFFERENT COLORS AND TYPES OF THREADS TO CREATE AN INDIVIDUAL PERSON WHOSE TAPESTRY IS OF GREAT WONDER AND VALUE. THAT'S YOU AND ME! WE ARE IN A REAL SENSE HIS CREATION.

BECAUSE OF SIN, MAN IS TOTALLY DEPRAVED.

Romans 3:10 **As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."**

Romans 3:23 **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**
Psalm 51:5 **Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.**

ROM 3:9-19. HOW DO WE SQUARE PSALM 139 WITH PSALM 51:5 AND ROMANS 3? ALTHOUGH EVERY MAN IS THE RESULT OF GOD'S CREATION, BECAUSE OF THE SIN OF ADAM ALL OF MANKIND HAS BEEN PLUNGED INTO TOTAL DEPRAVITY. MANY PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE TEACH ABOUT MAN'S SINFUL CONDITION. AND RIGHTLY SO, FOR MAN HAS FALLEN IN SIN IN SUCH A WAY THAT THERE IS, HUMANLY, NO POSSIBLE RETURN TO THE LORD IN FELLOWSHIP. MAN IS, WITHOUT GOD'S INTERVENTION WITHOUT GOD AND HELL-BOUND.

ROM 3:23. FALLING SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD HAS TWO ASPECTS. FIRST, WE AS SINNERS CANNOT MEASURE UP TO THE CHARACTER ("*glory*" = *gk* = *doxa*) OF GOD. THE SECOND ASPECT IS THE RECIPROCAL OF THE FIRST. WE FALL SHORT OF GOD'S *PRAISE*³. THIS IS THE SECONDARY MEANING OF *doxa* AND IS COMPLEMENTED BY PAUL'S COMMENT IN

² I do not like to use the term "fetus" as it is used by the "humanist" to de-humanize the unborn baby. I prefer the term "unborn baby."

³ Read Lenski, Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Page 249. ¶ 1.

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VS. 24. THIS TIES IN WITH THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH WHERE MAN IS DECLARED RIGHTEOUS BY GOD, BASED ON GOD'S GRACE IN PROVIDING THE COMPLETED WORK OF JESUS CHRIST, AND RECEIVES THE PRAISE OF GOD (BUT I ANTICIPATE MY NEXT POINT).

PSALM 51:5. DAVID CONFIRMS THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN. THIS VERSE IS VERY GRAPHIC. THE PICTURE HERE IS THE WRITHING AND TURNING OF AN UNBORN BABY - DURING THIS TIME DAVID SAYS THAT THE SIN NATURE WAS THERE. THIS IS TOO MUCH FOR ME TO UNDERSTAND BUT WE MUST KEEP BOTH PICTURES IN VIEW TO HAVE AN ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE CONDITION OF EVERY MAN. HE IS A VILE SINNER BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, GOD WAS THERE WEAVING HIS IMAGE IN THE UNBORN BABY. NO WONDER DAVID IS FULL OF AWE AT HIS GESTATION AND BIRTH!

GOD HAS A REDEPTIVE PLAN FOR MANKIND

Romans 3:24 *and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

ENTER GOD'S REDEPTIVE PLAN. SIN DOES NOT NEGATE THE FACT THAT WE ALL BELONG TO HIM BY VIRTUE OF HIS INDIVIDUAL CREATIVE ACTIONS. HE ALLOWED SIN TO ENTER INTO MANKIND BECAUSE HE HAD TO ALLOW FOR FREE WILL AND HAD TO ALLOW FOR THE POSSIBILITY THAT MAN WOULD, LIKE SATAN, CHOOSE TO REBEL AGAINST HIM. **WHAT HE COULD DO FOR SINFUL MAN WAS TO ENACT HIS REDEPTIVE PLAN WHEREBY EVERY MAN WOULD HAVE THE FREEDOM TO RETURN TO HIM IN HIS RIGHTFUL STATE AS A CREATURE OF HIS CREATION - MAN COULD BE REDEEMED AND BECOME A "CHILD OF GOD."**

**SIN DOES NOT NEGATE
THE FACT THAT WE ALL
BELONG TO HIM...**

SO, ON ONE HAND WE ARE THE RESULT OF GOD'S WONDERFUL CREATIVE GENIUS, BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND, WE ARE HOPELESSLY LOST AS TOTALLY DEPRAVED SINNERS. BUT GOD, STEPS IN WITH HIS MATCHLESS GRACE PROVIDES A WAY OF RETURN TO HIM THROUGH HIS REDEPTIVE PLAN. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT AT NO TIME ARE WE INDEPENDENT, COMPLETELY FREE AGENTS BUT MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN OUR OWN WAY WHICH IS HELL-BOUND OR TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S REDEMPTION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST WHICH GIVES TO US ETERNAL LIFE.

WHY IS GOD'S PLAN IMPORTANT TO EVERY MAN?

Eph 1:9 *And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,*

GOD'S PLAN IS IMPORTANT TO EVERY MAN BECAUSE WITHOUT IT MAN WILL PERISH!⁴ GOD'S PLAN IS IMPORTANT TO EVERY MAN BECAUSE IT RESTORES MAN IN RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM⁵. "THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL" IS GOD'S PLAN FOR THE REDEMPTION OF MANKIND. "GOOD PLEASURE" IS AN INTERESTING CHOICE OF WORDS. THIS WORD (IN THE GREEK) HAS THE SAME FLAVOR AS GENESIS 1:31⁶ WHERE IN THE ORIGINAL GOD WAS ENTHUSED ABOUT THE RESULTS OF HIS CREATION. GOD DIDN'T JUST CONSIDER HIS CREATION OF VERY GOOD QUALITY, HE WAS EXCITED ABOUT THE RESULTS OF HIS CREATION. IN THE SAME MANNER, GOD IS ENTHUSED ABOUT HIS REDEPTIVE PLAN FOR MAN (THIS IS WHAT "GOOD PLEASURE" MEANS). **THIS PLAN IS GREAT!** THIS PLAN IS SO GOOD THAT GOD IS EXCITED ABOUT IT.

⁴ 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.**

⁵ Eph 1:2 **Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.** Grace is all of God's provision for the sinner to bring him back in right relationship with God. Peace is the result of God's grace where the two are joined together in harmony.

⁶ Genesis 1:31 **And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.**

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Psalm 139:15 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, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

GOD HAS PLANNED OUR REDEMPTION AND THE COURSE OF OUR LIFE IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT IS PERFECT. PSALM 139 TEACHES THAT WHILE HE WAS WEAVING OUR UNFORMED BODY HE WAS ORDAINING EVERY DAY OF OUR LIVES AND HAS WRITTEN EVERY EVENT, EVERY BLESSING IN HIS BOOK. WE COULD CALL THIS GOD'S "BLESSING BOOK" FOR EACH ONE OF US. DOESN'T IT SEEM RIGHT THAT WE WOULD WANT A LOOK IN IT?

ONCE WE HAVE CHOSEN THE LORD IT IS THEN IMPORTANT FOR US TO DISCOVER GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR LIVES SO THAT WE MIGHT ENJOY ALL THE PROVISIONS AND BLESSINGS THAT GOD HAS WRITTEN DOWN IN THIS "BLESSING BOOK."

NEXT TIME, A PRACTICE APPROACH TO DISCOVERING GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR LIVES.