

## A Lord's Day Snippet!

### Biblical And Southern Studies

*H. Rondel Rumburg, ThM, DMin*

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How from Thy presence should I go,  
Or whither from Thy Spirit flee,  
Since all above, around, below,  
Exist in Thine immensity?  
If up to heaven I take my way,  
I meet Thee in eternal day.

In me Thy workmanship display'd,  
A miracle of power I stand,  
Fearfully, wonderfully made,  
And framed in secret by Thine hand:  
I lived, ere into being brought,  
Through Thine eternity of thought.

Search me, O God! and know my heart;  
Try me, my inmost soul survey;  
And warn Thy servant to depart  
From every false and evil way;  
So shall Thy truth my guidance be  
To life and immortality.

**James Montgomery (1771-1854)**

### The One Who Understands My Thoughts

*"O LORD ... thou understandest my thought afar off."*

Psalm 139:2

Not only is God majestic by His presence in and around and where we are, but He is also majestic in understanding our minds, how we think. There is a saying, "Has it ever occurred to you that nothing ever occurred to God?" We mortals are greatly handicapped in grasping that there is a Being who has complete and perfect knowledge which certifies that there is nothing new for Him to learn or that could be added to that knowledge. Our God knows everything to be known or that is knowable. Yes, He knows us better than we know ourselves. Actually, if there were any minute detail that God did not know or forgot He would not be God! It is difficult for mortals to grasp that the God of eternity is infinitely perfect, comprehensively intelligent, infallibly knowledgeable. We have to use human language, which is limited, to describe this knowledge which is "instant." Even using the word "instant" shows our handicap because it is a time reference for the eternal now. God

has all possible knowledge in perfection, and He knows Himself who is the source of all that is, thus resulting in perfect comprehensive knowledge.

Depraved men want a crippled God to manipulate and rule over, feeding Him with knowledge which they seek to control. How little is mankind compared to the God who fills heaven and earth. God is never limited in what He knows, He is never surprised by anything that happens, He never has an emergency, He does not lack for information, He only asks questions for our information because He knows our very thoughts. This is to our advantage: “No talebearer can inform on us, no enemy can make an accusation stick; no forgotten skeleton can come tumbling out of some hidden closet to abash us and expose our past; no unsuspected weakness in our characters can come to light to turn God away from us, since He knew us utterly before we knew Him and called us to Himself in the full knowledge of everything that was against us” [Tozer].

Knowing that our God has such infinite, impeccable knowledge is to His glory and our advantage as we just noted. This makes our relationship to the all-knowing God personal. Yes, He knows when we sit down, when we get up, what we know, and every word we speak (Ps. 139:2, 4). “‘Thou understandest my thought afar off.’ Before it is my own it is foreknown and comprehended by Thee. Though my thought be invisible to the sight, though as yet I be not myself cognizant of the shape it is assuming, yet Thou hast it under thy consideration, and Thou perceivest its nature, its source, its drift, its result. Never dost Thou misjudge or wrongly interpret me: my inmost thought is perfectly understood by Thine impartial mind. Though Thou shouldst give but a glance at my heart, and see me as one sees a passing meteor moving afar, yet thou wouldst by that glimpse sum up all the meanings of my soul, so transparent is everything to Thy piercing glance” [Spurgeon].

What else does He know? He knows our secrets (Ps. 44:21), and He searches out our deceitful hearts (Jer. 17:9-10). The word “heart” in Hebrew usually refers to our entire consciousness: what we think, how we understand, what triggers our emotions, what pricks our consciences, etc. We are warned to diligently guard our hearts (Prov. 4:23). We need to capture our thoughts and bring them captive in obedience to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). The God who knows our minds and thoughts by His Spirit directed Paul to this conclusion, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Phil. 4:8). Our thought-life should be on those things. Perhaps we are being incentivized to think our thoughts knowing that our God knows our thoughts. We are to think God’s thoughts after Him as did the famous scientist Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) who realized this from such passages as “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Ps. 19:1). He sought to capture God’s revealed thoughts in sacred Scripture

and bring them captive for Christ. Yes, it is true that God's thoughts eclipse our thoughts (Isa. 55:8-9), but what He has revealed to us through His Word should be our focus. Kepler reiterated, "Since we astronomers are priests of the highest God in regard to the book of nature, it benefits us to be thoughtful, not of the glory of our minds, but rather, above all else, of the glory of God."

Stephen Charnock the profound Puritan writer on God's attributes noted, "My thought,' that is, every thought, though innumerable thoughts pass through me in a day. The divine knowledge reaches to their source and fountain, before they are our thoughts. If the Lord knows them before their existence, before they can be properly called ours, much more doth He know them when they actually spring up in us; He knows the tendency of them, where the bird will alight when it is in flight; He knows them exactly; He is therefore called a 'discerner' or criticizer of the heart: Heb. 4:2."

And William Greenhill helps us as well, "Not that God is at a distance from our thoughts; but He understands them while they are far off from us, from our knowledge, while they are potential, as gardeners know what weeds such ground will bring forth, when nothing appears. Deut. 31:21, 'I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swore.' God knew their thoughts before they came into Canaan, what they would be there. And how can it be, but that God should know all our thoughts, seeing He made the heart, and it is in His hand (Prov. 21:1), seeing, 'we live, and move, and have our being' in God (Acts 17:28); seeing He is through us all, and in us all (Eph. 4:6). Look well to your hearts, thoughts, risings, whatever comes into your mind; let no secret sins, or corruptions, lodge there; think not to conceal anything from the eye of God."