

# Psalm 139:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

## Analysis

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**For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.** The Hebrew קָנָה (qanah, 'possessed') means to create, acquire, or form—God's sovereign ownership begins at conception. **Reins** (קְלִיָּה, kilyah) refers to the kidneys, anciently considered the seat of emotion and moral character; God forms not just the body but the inner person. **Covered** (סָקַק, sakak) means to weave, knit together, or screen—depicting God's meticulous, protective craftsmanship in the womb.

This verse grounds the sanctity of human life in divine creative action before birth. God is not a distant observer but an intimate artisan, personally fashioning each person's physical and moral constitution. The pronoun *my* emphasizes David's personal wonder: the Creator of the cosmos cares about the details of one human embryo.

## Historical Context

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David wrote this psalm (likely mid-10th century BC) reflecting on God's omniscience and omnipresence. Ancient Near Eastern cultures recognized prenatal life but lacked Israel's doctrine of personal divine creation. The Mosaic law protected the unborn (Exodus 21:22-25), and the prophets affirmed God's prenatal calling (Jeremiah 1:5).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's personal involvement in forming you in the womb shape your understanding of your identity and purpose?
2. What implications does verse 13 have for how we view the beginning of human life and personhood?
3. How should the reality that God 'possessed' (created and owns) your innermost being affect your daily choices?

## Interlinear Text

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בְּ	בָּ	רִ	אֶ	תָּהָ	רִ	קָנָ	תִּתְ	כְּלִיּ	תִּ	תְּסַפֵּ	נִ	בָּ	טָן
H3588	H859							H3629					H990

אֶתְנִי:

me in my mother's

H517

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 1:5** (Parallel theme): Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

**Psalms 119:73** (Parallel theme): Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

**Isaiah 44:2** (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.

**Job 31:15** (Parallel theme): Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?

**Isaiah 46:3** (Parallel theme): Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb:

**Psalms 71:6** (Parallel theme): By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee.

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