

Psalm 139:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

Analysis

Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off—God's omniscience extends to the mundane rhythm of daily life: sitting down and standing up, the bookends of every human activity. The Hebrew *binah* (בִּנָה, 'understandest') suggests discernment of what lies beneath the surface. God perceives our thoughts while they're still 'afar off'—before they fully form, while still inchoate desires and half-formed intentions.

No moment is too trivial for divine attention, no thought too fleeting to escape God's notice. This verse demolishes the false dichotomy between 'sacred' and 'secular'—all of life unfolds under the watchful eye of Him who numbers our hairs (Matthew 10:30). The God who governs galaxies attends to whether you sit or stand.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern religions often portrayed gods as distant, capricious beings requiring elaborate rituals to gain their attention. David's portrayal of YHWH as intimately aware of mundane human actions was radically counter-cultural, emphasizing the covenant God's personal involvement with His people.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How would your daily routine change if you lived consciously aware that God knows your every sitting and rising?
2. What 'afar off' thoughts—barely-formed desires or intentions—might God be discerning in you right now?
3. Do you compartmentalize your life into 'spiritual' and 'ordinary' moments, forgetting that all moments are known to God?

Interlinear Text

אַתָּה	דַּעַת	שְׁבַת	לִזְמָן	בָּנְתָה
H859	Thou knowest	my downsitting	and mine uprising	thou understandest
	H3045	H3427	H6965	H995
מִרְחָזָה	לְרֹעַ			
my thought	afar off			
H7454	H7350			

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 9:4 (Parallel theme): And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

2 Kings 19:27 (Parallel theme): But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

Psalms 94:11 (Parallel theme): The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

Luke 9:47 (Parallel theme): And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

Isaiah 37:28 (Parallel theme): But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

Proverbs 15:3 (Parallel theme): The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Psalms 56:8 (Parallel theme): Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?

Zechariah 4:10 (Parallel theme): For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

Genesis 16:13 (Parallel theme): And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

2 Kings 6:12 (Parallel theme): And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.