



## Pray with the Psalm 130

### *Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart*

1. LORD, you have searched me and known me!
2. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.
3. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.
4. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.
5. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.
6. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.
  
7. Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?
8. If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!
9. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
10. even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.
11. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,"
12. even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.
  
13. For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
14. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.
15. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
16. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.
  
17. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!
18. If I would count them, they are more than the sand.  
I awake, and I am still with you.
19. Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me!
20. They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain.
21. Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?
22. I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies.
23. Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!
24. And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

It is possible to flow into another's prayer. We suggest that you do so with the author of Psalm 139, who knows that we can talk to God and tell him everything that is on our hearts. Before praying with this psalm, you can do like him: talk to God spontaneously. God asks you: "How are you?" and you answer him. This familiarity with God, this believer experiences it. He knows that God is the one to whom you can talk, to whom you can confide, whom you can question and even to whom you can reproach! Familiarity with God to whom one says "you", then reading this psalm, feeling how you can make it your own or not. **How does it reach you? What feelings does it provoke in you?**

Finally, use the following leads to help you:

*Prayer proposed by Sister Michèle Jeunet.*

#### **First lead**

It is not necessarily easy to get into the intelligence of this psalm: to express familiarity, the author uses the words of addiction. We may find it difficult to accept them, we may imagine a God who sees everything, who knows everything, a god who watches over us...

*Is this how we understand them or do we welcome it differently? Let's sound our heart and talk to God about this.*

#### **Second lead**

Thus, we understand better that the psalm begins with: "You have searched me".

An affirmation, a statement, but is it a joy or a fear? But the psalm ends with "try me". In the prayer of this psalm, I invite you to look at the path taken by this believer as he moves from a situation in which you can do nothing to a personal request, to something you want, to a strong desire.

*What has allowed him to make this passage?*

#### **Third lead**

There may be another difficulty in praying this psalm: verses 19 to 22. Here is one possible track: "wicked, men of blood, adversaries, enemies"

*Who are they? Not particular people, but that which in each of us draws us away from God, which is opposed to a free friendship with him, that evil which roams and destroys and from which no one is unharmed, those false images of God which prevent us from welcoming God in confidence.*

#### **Fourth lead**

Another difficulty is verse 16: "in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them".

Does God have a great book in which the number of our days is fixed in advance according to God's arbitrariness?

This image is dangerous for us because it leads to fatality and is not worthy of God, leading to a God manipulative of our lives.

*So how can we understand this verse? Perhaps the answer is in verses 18 and 24: "I am still with you". Whatever the length of our lives, God is with us each one to lead us "in the way everlasting".*

#### **Fifth lead**

Gather in your heart this magnificent verse: "for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" verse 14 (translation from the Jerusalem Bible) or "outstanding, the amazing being that I am" (liturgical translation). A way of welcoming ourselves as God sees us, a wonder, a prodigy. And if we need to exchange our gaze on ourselves, often too severe, for his, full of tenderness and love.

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