

Thinking About God's Thoughts

One of the many blessings of life are those unplanned times of fellowship when encountering friends and families within the Lord's household, and the conversations that arise from those meetings. I met with a good friend recently that shared their reflections on the Psalms. Although they could not recall the specific chapter and verse, they began explaining the verse to me almost like an artist would draw a picture. This person was overwhelmed with the concept of the verse and began "giving the sense" of the passage. He used terms like 'God's thoughts' and 'being more in number than the sand', etc. I commented, "Oh! It sounds like you're referring to Psalm 139:17". At this juncture a third party listening to our conversation might have thought the dialogue a bit senseless and irrational. I believe we were both struggling for terminology to elucidate the passage, however it was evident our descriptions fell short, understandably, for it is written, "Thy commandments are exceeding broad." (Ps. 119:96)

"How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee." — Psalm 139: 17, 18

This Psalm enlarges upon the omniscience of God. It shows that God's eye has always rested upon us, and is resting upon us now. We are made to see that God knew all about us before we were born, and that he now reads our most secret thoughts, and that our unspoken words are all known to him. It is a very solemn and profound thought that God should be everywhere. It should be a constant cause of joy to reflect that our best Friend is never away from us, that our Protector's hand is never removed, and that the great observant eye of divine love is never closed. May we all have that grace that enables us to know He is a present God!

The passage first speaks of God's thoughts toward us: **"How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them!"** Some would want to think that the world is like a watch; God in eternity past wound it up, and then went to sleep, letting the world spin oblivious to His control. But no! I am glad that it is not so; I do not like the idea of being left unobserved without my Heavenly Father's personal supervision. I like to be in a world that is really God's garden, a part of his own homestead in which He dwells, and where I am always directly under the glance of His eye.

God's thoughts of us are very numerous. According to our text, the sum of them is very great; how great, the psalmist does not say. The number of God's thoughts is so vast that, even if you could count the sands on the seashore, yet you could not count the thoughts of God concerning you. How important this makes us poor creatures, when we remember that God thinks of us! Kings and monarchs may see us as grasshoppers, but we can rejoice that God actually thinks of us, and thinks of us often; no! – constantly! Our names are written on the palms of His hands! (Is. 49:16) David said, "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me." (Ps. 40:17) Jesus said to his disciples, "Your Father knows what things you have need of before ye ask Him," proving that He had thought about them, and had looked upon them with a careful eye, and observed all their needs. God does indeed think upon his people, and His thoughts concerning them are very numerous.

He looks upon us as a father looks upon his child, with intense affection; pitying us when we stray; chiding us for our wrongdoing. He is always aiming at that which will promote our ultimate perfection. "He has not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." (Ps. 103:10) How often he has screened us from trouble and given us songs in the night. David said, "Thy gentleness has made me great." (Ps. 18:35) God looks far ahead, and He takes eternity into the compass of His thoughts; He judges what is best to do for us, not merely for an hour, or a week, or a month, or even of a whole life below, but he puts eternity into the scale of His thoughts and orders all things well for everlasting ages. Furthermore, God's thoughts don't end with His thinking, but become incorporated into action and thus it is accomplished. "Even into your old age will I carry you: I have made, and will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." (Is. 46:4) "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (Ps 23:6)

How amazing, profound, and delightful it is to be thought of by God! But someone might say, "Is it not frightening to think that God's eye is always upon me?" It is not terrible to me; I am overwhelmingly elated that it should be so, and I pray with David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if

there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” (Ps. 139:23)

The believer should wish to get more and more closely under the inspection of his Heavenly Father; the thoughts of God towards him should charm and delight him. Does God really think of me from the moment when I wake in the morning, and all through the day, until sleep overtakes me? Does He keep on thinking of me while I lie asleep, and leave me subject to poor wandering thoughts that come in my dreams? Be thankful that He condescends to think of us even then. “How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God”, even during the night watches.

David says, “when I awake, I am still with thee.” This seems to infer that, although we may have lost consciousness of God’s presence while we slept, our recollection of His thoughts toward us are immediately restored when we awake. Perhaps you have lain awake meditating on His presence and holding fellowship with God, fallen asleep, only to awake pondering the same thoughts, going on where you left off the previous eve, and realizing He was still there! Spurgeon commenting on these verses said, “I trusted thee when I fell asleep, and in the morning I awoke to find thee still my Friend.”

His thoughts toward us are ‘precious’; in the Hebrew referencing ‘rare jewelry’. “How rare are His thoughts” toward us! The thoughts of God are rare thoughts, which cannot be found anywhere else. The thoughts of angels, or the thoughts of perfect spirits above must be something very wonderful; but consider the thoughts of God! If I were told that some angelic messenger was sent to think of me all day and all night long, that he was my Master’s servant to watch over me, I would have great delight in the thought; yet that would be a pathetic thing compared with the fact that God thinks upon me, and watches over me. The Lord told Moses that his angel should go before the people through the wilderness; but you may have noticed how Moses pleaded against such a decision: “If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.” We do not need an angelic presence in the least as much as we need God’s presence and thoughts. Within God’s thoughts concerning us is something rare and wonderful indeed; and this should be our thinking about it; that there is no other thought that can for a moment be compared with it.

“Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou have done, and Thy thoughts which are to us: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: if I were to declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.”

– Ps. 40:5 –