

Encircled by Your Presenceⁱ

1. O God you have come searching for me. You know me inside and out. You know where I rise up and where I fall. Before I think them, my thoughts are already clear to you.
2. The track of my journey you discern ahead of me. All the pathways my life shall take are known to you.
3. Indeed, before I speak them the meaning of every word is understood by you. Philemon 1-21
4. I am encircled by your presence, embraced by your hands.
5. These things I can hardly grasp, O my God, they transport me to heights beyond myself.
6. Is it possible, then, to be absent from your presence? Is there anywhere I could escape your presence?
13. I am grateful to you for the artistry of my own creation. I realize that I have been carefully crafted by you.
14. Nothing about me has been hidden from your presence. While I was quietly being woven together from my own ancient sources,
15. Knowingly you have shaped the unfinished product even in the womb. Step by step you have been guiding all stages of my completion, from their beginning to their end.
16. Your awareness of me is infinite, O God. It is limitless. It transcends everything I know.
17. Trying to calculate the sum total of your awareness is useless. It would take an eternal lifespan as long as yours
18. So, my desire is this, that you would destroy all the evil that lies within and without me. Blot out my bloodthirst for wickedness.

ⁱ NOTE:

At the core of this Psalm is a deep longing for God and the search to find the meaning of life. These create the essential elements that make humans religious creatures, unwilling to remain “simply human.”

MEDITATION:

So much of the language of this Psalm is deeply personal. As you read through it what parts of it speak concerning your own longings and desires? What parts of it express your own sense of self most clearly?

The note, meditation and the translation for this Psalm is taken from “Ancient Songs Sung Anew: The Psalms as Poetry” by Lynn C. Bauman