

Handout on James Montgomery's Poem Redux on Psalm 139

Poem on Psalm 139 by James Montgomery (1771-1854)

imprisoned by for a poem on Fall of the Bastille.

He was the son of Moravian Pastor & Missionary

Montgomery published the missionary journals of

Daniel Tyerman in 1831 in two volumes titled:

Journal of Voyages & Travels Around the World by the Rev. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, Esq., Deputed from the London Missionary Society to Visit Their Stations in the South Sea Islands, Australia, China, India, Madagascar, and South Africa between the years 1821 & 1829 updated in 1841 with a section on African Slavery



Searcher of hearts! to thee are known
The inmost secrets of my breast;
At home, abroad, in crowds, alone,
Thou mark'st my rising and my rest,
My thoughts far off, through every maze,
Source, stream, and issue—all my ways.

How from thy presence should I go,
Or whither from thy Spirit flee,
Since all above, around, below,
Exist in thine immensity?

If up to heaven I take my way,
I meet thee in eternal day.

If in the grave I make my bed
With worms and dust, lo! thou art there!
If, on the wings of morning sped,
Beyond the ocean I repair,
I feel thine all controlling will,
And thy right hand upholds me still.

"Let darkness hide me", if I say,
Darkness can no concealment be;
Night, on thy rising, shines like day;
Darkness and light are one with thee:

For thou mine embryo form didst view,
Ere her own babe my mother knew.

In me thy workmanship display'd,
A miracle of power I stand:
Fearfully, wonderfully made,
And framed in secret by thine hand;

I lived, ere into being brought,
Through thine eternity of thought.

How precious are thy thoughts of peace,
O God, to me! how great the sum!
New every morn, they never cease:
They were, they are, and yet shall come,

In number and in compass more
Than ocean's sands or ocean's shore.

Search me, O God! and know my heart;
Try me, my inmost soul survey;
And warn thy servant to depart
From every false and evil way:

So shall thy truth my guidance be
To life and immortality.

