

Psalm 139:7-10

God is Everywhere

Open your Bible to...

Ps. 139:7 Where can I go from Your Spirit?
 Or where can I flee from Your presence?
Ps. 139:8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there;
 If I make my bed in Sheol (the grave), behold, You are there.
Ps. 139:9 If I take the wings of the morning,
 And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Ps. 139:10 Even there Your hand shall lead me,
 And Your right hand shall hold me.

Pray

Intro

✓ God is everywhere

We add another “omni” to our continuing series on the attributes of God...

...this time looking at the omnipresence of God!

When we say that God is omnipresent we mean that God is present everywhere...

All of Him
Everywhere
All at once
Close to everything
Next to everyone

There is nowhere that God is absent.

Yet, God is not part of His Creation.

Rather, He is above and beyond what He has created.

That is to say He Transends His Creation.

Those are important distinctions because the Biblical revelation of God's nature is very different from the false religious concepts of God and the vain philosophies of Man.

Ex. Omnipresence

Omnipresence does not mean that God is the Universe...

...that's what we call pantheism the idea that God and Creation are one inseparable being.

That's what Hinduism, the Greek Stoics whom we read about in the New Testament, Carl Sagan, Elon Musk, and the Jedi believe.

The Force in the Star Wars mythology is pantheistic.

You'll know a pantheist when you hear him or her say something like...

"All is God, and God is all."

Secondly omnipresence does not mean that God is in the Universe...that's what is called panentheism, or sometimes bipolar theism!

That's the belief that God and the Universe are two poles of One being.

Where God the Spirit is one pole—the "mind" of God and the physical universe is the other pole—His "body"!

Christians need to know that the Bible rejects both pantheism and panentheism because the omnipresent God is separate from His Creation...

He is both above and beyond it—or if you would like to use the fancy theological word you would say that He transcends His Creation.

But the Bible also tells us that at the same time the transcendent omnipresent God Who is everywhere, all at once...

...is also able to act in His Creation.

He is able to divide the sea, cause the sun to move backwards, protect His servants from a fiery furnace, and most importantly show up on Earth as a human being!

In fact, many would suggest that the Incarnation is the greatest example of God working in His Creation.

That's why the angel told Joseph and Mary that Jesus would be called Emmanuel, which means...“God with us”...for in Christ, God in fact entered into His Creation!

If you want to impress your barista this week you would tell him/or her that God is immanent.

Not imminent (with an “l” after the m’s)—which means, something about to happen.

Rather, immanent (with an “a” after the m’s)—which means, that God is able to enter into and act within the world He made.

So, the God of the Bible is not part of His Creation as pantheists and panentheists wrongly believe...

Nor is He somehow restricted in His ability to act in, and with His Creation as deism claims.

Rather, the God of the Bible exists outside of His Creation and yet is able to act in His Creation whenever, and wherever He pleases...

...because He is omnipresent—everywhere all at once!

The Biblical Foundation for God's Omnipresence

✓ Biblical foundation

Well you never want to take Pastor Paul's word on any subject without checking to see if what I say is firmly established on the foundation of God's Word.

Rather like the Bereans you'll want to look and see if the Bible in fact testifies that God is omnipresent!

In addition to our opening scripture (Psalm 139) a great place to start would be 1st Kings where at the dedication of the new Temple in Jerusalem, Solomon prayed...

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!"
1Kings 8:27

Solomon here acknowledged that God cannot be boxed into any physical space like a Temple, no matter how magnificent it might be...

Because He is greater and more immense than all that He has created!

We might also consider Proverbs 15:3, where we read...

*“The eyes of the Lord are in every place,
Keeping watch on the evil and the good.”*

That is, there is no place that is hidden from God because He is in every place!

Speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, God confirms what the psalmist penned, and Solomon prayed when He declared...

*“Am I a God near at hand,” says the Lord,
“And not a God afar off?
Can anyone hide himself in secret places,
So I shall not see him?” says the Lord;
“Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says the Lord.
Jeremiah 23:23-24*

Jesus affirmed His omnipresence at the Great Commission when He promised the disciples...

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the
Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe
all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I
am with you always, even to the end of the
age.” Amen.”
Matthew 28:19-20*

And finally in His last words to the disciples Jesus boldly declared that He and God the Father would come to live inside anyone who would place their trust in Him!

“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” ~ John 14:23

Clearly, if God is able to indwell every believer, any place, and for all time...

...then He must be omnipresent.

So based on the testimony of Scripture we can be confident that God is omnipresent...

...that all of Him, is everywhere, all at once!

The Implications of God's Omnipresence

√ Implications

Because God is One indivisible Spirit it follows logically that God doesn't have one part of Himself in one place, and another part of Himself in another place...

...like a game of divine Twister, where God has His hand in Antarctica and His foot on Mars!

That's because God doesn't have parts!

He is One in His essence.

Therefore, God doesn't have fingers, toes, a head, and a body to spread around the Universe!

He is pure Spirit and as such is unlimited by physical and material boundaries.

Therefore, all of God is really, actually present everywhere, all at once.

All of Him is present in the smallest molecule and at the same time all of Him is present in the entire universe!

There is no place that He isn't present!

Or, as one author described it...

"There is no such thing as a private moment."

All that we do and say is seen and heard by God!

As the psalmist declared in our opening text there is nowhere on earth, under the earth or anywhere in the universe that we can hide from God's presence...

...because He's already there!

✓ God's enemies learned this truth the hard way!

In 1st Kings 20 we read about the on-going war between Israel and Syria.

God demonstrated His great power by giving the much smaller army of Israel victory over the much larger, better equipped and more powerful army of Ben-Hadad.

The following year the Syrians again attacked Israel, but with a new strategy! The king's advisors told him...

““Their gods are gods of the hills. Therefore they were stronger than we; but if we fight against them in the plain, surely we will be stronger than they.”

1Kings 20:23

The strategy of the Syrians reveals their poor theology.

They believed that there were many different gods and goddess who each ruled over a specific domain.

A sky god, a water god, a mountain god, etc.

Thus they concluded that one god would be stronger in the mountains, and a different god would rule over the plains.

So the king's advisors figured that since they got whopped in their first battle in the hills...

...then clearly they figured that the God of Israel must be weak on flat land!

God's answer as rendered in Pastor Paul's paraphrased version reads...

Wrong!

More accurately God said...

“Thus says the Lord: “Because the Syrians have said, “The Lord is God of the hills, but He is not God of the valleys,” therefore I will deliver all this great

*multitude into your hand, and you shall know that
I am the Lord.’ ” ~ 1Kings 20:28*

And that’s exactly what happened! The much smaller army of Israel once again decimated the Syrian army because God was with them in the valley, in the plain and on the mountains because He is as Isaiah declared...

“the God of the whole earth” ~ Isaiah 54:5

He is everywhere, all at once, and is therefore able to deliver His people from any enemy on any terrain!

Objections to God’s Omnipresence

✓ Objections

Many Bible students have wondered how to reconcile God’s omnipresence with the reality of Hell—the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20).

That is, many believe that part of what makes the Lake of Fire so awful is that God is not there.

But if God is not present in Hell then He cannot be omnipresent!

We be better check the scripture to see what God says!

We look first at Revelation 14:10, which tells us a little bit about the eternal future of the Antichrist. John tells us that...

*“He (the Antichrist) shall be tormented with fire and
brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in
the presence of the Lamb.”*

Well there you go!

The Lamb of God, Jesus God the Son, Who Himself is omnipresent, is present in Hell—case closed!

Ah, but someone might respond that in 2nd Thessalonians Paul seems to say that those who reject Christ will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire (Hell) separated from God!

“...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power...”

Well that sure sounds like God isn't in Hell!

So which is it? Is God in Hell or not?

The solution to what appears to be a contradiction is that the Greek word that Paul uses for “presence” in 2nd Thessalonians is prosopon...

...which means “face”.

Thus, 2Thess 1:9 would be better rendered...

“These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the Face of the Lord.”

As the American Standard Version, JB Phillips, and Wycliff translated it.

That is, God will be present in Hell because He is omnipresent as attested by Rev. 14:10...

...but those in Hell will not experience the beauty & the blessing of His “Face” as Paul writes here in 2Thes. 1:7-9.

Ex. Let me illustrate!

Think about the Aaronic blessing recorded in Numbers 6:24-26

When I say...

“The Lord bless you and keep you...

How would you respond?

“The Lord make His face shine upon you,

Ah! The idea is that when God turns His Face toward you, His blessings shine upon you!

But if He turns His face away from you, then His blessings are no longer shining upon you.

Just like in the ancient kingdoms of men when an earthly king turned his face toward you it was a sign that you had his favor.

But, if he turned his face away from you—you were in trouble!

So Paul isn't saying that God is not in Hell, rather He is saying that those who are in Hell will not experience His blessings nor will they be aware of His presence...

...because His face is not turned toward them.

So, God is everywhere, all at once...

...even in Hell because He is omnipresent!

The Blessings & Benefits of God's Omnipresence

✓ Blessings & Benefits of God's Omnipresence

God's omnipresence should be a great comfort to every child of God...

...and a constant terror to every person who rejects Him!

Here again there are many blessings of God's omnipresence that belong to us who know Him are too numerous to reckon so I will focus on only four.

1) His omnipresence should be a comfort to the child of God

Because God is everywhere all at once, we can be comforted in the knowledge that He will...

Provide for our every need ~ remember Hagar when she ran out of water in the desert (Genesis 21:14-19).

Protect us from every conflict ~ remember the Hebrew children who were not alone in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:25).

Comfort us in our every trial ~ remember when Stephen faced death for his testimony for Christ (Acts 7:55-56).

He will be with us in every place that He sends us ~ remember Jacob's stunned observation when he awoke from his dream...

"Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." (Genesis 28:10-17)

Ap. Resonates with me because it was the first evidence of my salvation

While there were probably many evidences of my salvation after I became born-again the first that I was aware of was God's omnipresence.

Let me explain—before I met Jesus I hated to be alone!

I would go to great extremes to make sure that I was never alone with my thoughts.

I wanted to be surrounded by people, noise, anything that would keep me from being alone with my thoughts because it only heightened my sense of my aloneness.

However, I clearly remember very soon after I got saved sitting by myself, reading my Bible, when I realized that while no one was home...

For the first time in my life I was okay with being alone because I recognized the reality that Jesus was with me!

I was no longer afraid of silence nor of being by myself.

Because I knew in the depth of my soul that I wasn't alone at all and never would be again because Jesus had taken up residence in my life!

Where I once hated being alone after I got saved I found that I cherished quite times when the house was empty...

...because it was then that I could sense the Lord's presence in a profound, beautiful, and comforting way wherein I could say with the psalmist...

"In Your presence is fullness of joy." ~ Psalm 16:11

Saints do you know that joy? It is one of the many benefits and blessings of a relationship with Jesus...

...Who comes to live within you when you surrender your life to Him!

- 2) His omnipresence should give us hope in our times of deepest sorrow

God's omnipresence means that He is with you in the midst of every sorrow and suffering that we will experience in life.

God is with you when you have been abandoned by your spouse who has chosen to live with another person...

...that He, the Lover of your soul, might encourage you in the knowledge that He will never leave you nor forsake you.

God is with you when wildfires have incinerated your home and all that you have worked so hard to gain...

...that He might point you to the eternal Home that He has prepared for you.

God is with you when you or a loved one has been abused or assaulted...

...so that He can bind up your wounds so that when you are healed you will be equipped to comfort others with the comfort that He has given you.

In every pain, grief, and threat God's omnipresence assures us that He will carry us safely through to a brighter future!

- 3) His omnipresence keeps us in times of disobedience

We might call to mind the wayward prophet who sought to escape God's plan for his life by sailing to Tarshish.

But God was there in the midst of the sea where He prepared a great fish to bring Jonah back to a place of obedience.

So too in our lives and the life of every prodigal child God is with us. There is no place we can run, ride, sail or fly that God isn't already there waiting for us.

That was what the poet Francis Thompson discovered! He writes that when he sought to throw off his Christian upbringing by fleeing his native England for the New World...

...that after the long vogue across the Atlantic that he found God waiting for him on the dock in New York city!

Thompson called Him "the Hound of Heaven!"

So be encouraged saints that once He has your scent that there is nowhere and no place that you can run where He will not already be waiting with open arms to receive you back into His love!

- 4) His omnipresence reminds us that we have access to God everywhere

God's omnipresence tells us that we do not have to climb some mountain height, nor traverse the earth to reach a holy city to fellowship with God.

For there is literally no place on earth nor in the universe that is more holy or sacred than any other.

For God is everywhere, and where God is, that place is holy!

That was Moses' revelation in the desert when he came across a bush that burned without being consumed. As he

approached that strange sight he was stunned to hear the voice of the Divine say...

“Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.”

Exodus 3:5

In a similar way when Jesus corrected the Samaritan woman's theology He told her...

“Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father... But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.” ~ John 4:21 & 23

That is, it's not the location of our worship that is important, rather it is His presence...and He is present everywhere!

Thus whenever you cast your mind to the Throne of Grace whether it be in your closet, your car, or on the trail where you stop to pray...

...that place is transformed into the Holy of Holies where God's glory burns as bright as it did in the desert and Solomon's Temple!

For wherever you pray—God is there because He is omnipresent!

✓ Terror to the wicked

But to those who reject the Lord His omnipresence should a constant terror!

For all of the same reasons that God's omnipresence is a comfort to those who love Him...

...the same all-surrounding presence of God should strike fear into the heart of the wicked!

For God's omnipresence warns the wicked that...

They have no place to hide because He is inescapable!
They cannot commit any secret sin for He is there!
Their wickedness cannot be covered for He sees it all!

For no transgression is hidden from Him Who fills space and time! Of the wicked God would ask...

*"Can anyone hide himself in secret places,
So I shall not see him?" says the Lord;
"Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says the Lord."
Jeremiah 23:24*

However, the scripture reveals that the wicked console themselves with their own self-deceit! The psalmist tells us that in their secret cave the criminal, the terrorist and the rapist say to themselves...

*"The Lord does not see, Nor does the God of Jacob
understand." ~ Psalm 94:7*

Ah, but John tells us in the Revelation that every thought, word, and deed done by the wicked is carefully recorded in a book that will be read at the last judgment!

When all the unmarked graves where the murderer hoped to hide his victims will be uncovered.

The threats whispered in the ear of children by every pedophile will be broadcast for all to hear.

Every wickedness done in the darkest jungle by the drug cartels will be exposed.

Because there is nothing hidden from Him Who is everywhere, all at once! That knowledge alone should be sufficient to scare the “Lake of Fire” out anyone!

Close

✓ God is omnipresent

To the believer this morning—because God is omnipresent...

All of Him
Everywhere
All at once

We can be confident that He is able to keep His promise to never leave us nor forsake!

To the unbeliever this morning—because God is omnipresent...

Close to everything
Next to everyone

Including you! This morning He stands at the door of your heart gently, but persistently knocking with the desire to have sweet fellowship with you!

But He will not force the door open.

You must choose to open the door of your heart to let Him in.

Do it today for you know not what tomorrow will bring!