

# God is Omnipresent

The Character of God—part 8

August 19, 2018

## **DAY 1: God is fully everywhere.**

*Jeremiah 23:24 (RSV) Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the LORD.*

1. Omnipresence means God is fully present everywhere. He is not limited by time or space.
2. But He is not spread out thinly, like a thin glob of mayo on a big sandwich.
3. He is not bound to one particular place, not is there somewhere where He isn't.

4. Sometimes we say that God is “here.” Sometimes we say that God is in heaven. Both are correct, simultaneously!

5. Sometimes we think of God being too small, limited to *our* time and place. But God reminds that is not true. Stephen quotes from Isaiah 66:1-2...

*Acts 7:48 (RSV) Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, <sup>49</sup> ‘Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?*

*<sup>50</sup> Did not my hand make all these things?’*

6. Conversely, sometimes we imagine that God is “too busy” to be concerned with me, here. That is also thinking God too small!

*Isaiah 41:10 (RSV) ...fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.*

7. Do you tend to think of God as too small? Do you tend to see Him as distant, and not “close by” (Isaiah 41:10) or do you tend to see Him as near but not too strong (Acts 7:48-50)?

8. What strikes you from today's verses?

## DAY 2: "With" us and "in" us

1. In the Old Testament, God repeatedly tells His people that He is **with** them. In the New Testament, God repeatedly tells us that He lives **in** His people.

2. When Moses was at the end of his rope trying to lead the Hebrew people to the promised land, he was ready to give up. He was confused, discouraged, and in need of God being triumphant in his situation. Listen to his prayer...

*Exodus 33:13 (RSV) Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thy sight, show me now thy ways, that I may know thee and find favor in thy sight. Consider too that this nation is thy people."*

3. Underline each piece of Moses' prayer.

4. How would you summarize his prayer?

5. How would you expect God to answer this prayer?

*Exodus 33:14 And he said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."*

6. Does God's answer to Moses' prayer surprise you? How?

7. But God is also in His people!

*Galatians 2:20 (RSV) I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who **lives in me**; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

*1 Corinthians 6:19 (RSV) Do you not know that **your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you**, which you have from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup>you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

8. In this next passage, you have both God being in heaven and in His people.

*Colossians 3:1 (RSV) If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.*

<sup>2</sup> *Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.*

<sup>3</sup> *For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

<sup>4</sup> *When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

9. What strikes you about God being *with* us and *in* us?

### **DAY 3: David ponders the omnipresence of God**

1. King David had his share of trouble, including death threats, and real attempts on his life. One of his sons usurped the throne and was plotting how to do David in.

2. In some seasons of his life, David was on the run from King Saul, hiding in the wilderness, hiding in caves, hiding in the mountains, constantly on the run.

*Psalms 139:7 (RSV) Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?*

3. And now he begins to ponder the possibility of finding some place where God would not be.

*Psalm 139:8 If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there!*

a. “Sheol” is an image for hell. What is David wondering?

*Psalm 139:9 If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,  
<sup>10</sup> even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*

b. What strikes you about his thoughts in this verse?

*Psalm 139:11 If I say, "Let only darkness cover me, and the light about me be night,"  
<sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not dark to thee, the night is bright as the day; for darkness is as light with thee.*

c. What strikes you about his thoughts in this verse?

4. These verses give three distinct extremes of the impossibility of running away from God’s presence.

a. If David is in heaven, or even if David found himself in what we would consider hell on earth, God would be there!

b. If it seemed as if David had retreated to the ends of the earth, by sea, away from every religious practice, the place of worship, and priests, God would be there!

c. If David found himself in the darkest places of depression, where no “light” seemed to shine in his life, God would be there!

5. What strikes you from today’s verses?

## DAY 4: God is with us through the worst of events

1. The setting for this psalm is unknown. Some Old Testament scholars believe it was written by descendants of the priests, following the return of Israel out of the Babylonian captivity.

*Psalms 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, an **ever-present** help in trouble.*

*<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, <sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Selah*

*<sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.*

*<sup>5</sup> God is **within** her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.*

*<sup>6</sup> Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts.*

*<sup>7</sup> The LORD Almighty is **with** us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*

*<sup>8</sup> Come and see the works of the LORD, the desolations he has brought on the earth.*

*<sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear, he burns the shields with fire.*

*<sup>10</sup> "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."*

*<sup>11</sup> The LORD Almighty is **with us**; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah*

2. The theme for the psalm is both the first verse and the last verse. How would you sum up the message of this psalm?

3. The psalmist depicts several harrowing seasons of life where God helped the people through. For each of these crises, what did God do?

a. "Trouble" (verse 1)

b. Life-altering, seismic changes to their land and living situations (verses 2-5)

c. National disasters, wars, when defeat seems sure (verses 6-9)

4. After nine verses of reminiscing on the presence and power of God, what does the psalmist invite us to do in verse 10? What is his point? Why should we do this?

5. What strikes you most from Psalm 46?

## **DAY 5: The presence of God is intensely personal**

1. The presence of God is not just a *truth*. The presence of God is entirely personal.

*Isaiah 43:1 (RSV) But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.*

*<sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters **I will be with you**; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.*

*<sup>3</sup> For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.*

*<sup>4</sup> Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life.*

*<sup>5</sup> Fear not, **for I am with you**; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you;*

2. In this passage, God speaks to the people about big time trouble. **Underline** where He tells them not to fear.

3. Along with the presence of the Lord, God describes His heart and love for the people. Go back and circle the words and phrases that depict and describe the love of God.

4. God's love is not just a pie-in-the-sky good feeling emotion. God's love is depicted in historical actions. What actions do you notice in this passage?

5. What strikes you most from this passage?

6. What strikes you most about the omnipresence of God?