

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? (Psalm 139:7)

Sermon to God's witnesses at Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas, on July 10, 2022.

I ask you to allow this brief aside from the main text of my sermon today:

Every day since the U.S. Supreme Court leaked their decision overruling Roe v. Wade, the news outlets in this country report that six out of ten Americans favor abortion. (Somehow that is their strong argument in support of killing unborn babies?!? Yes, and a super majority of his brothers favored killing Joseph, and that made it okay? (Genesis 37)). Working with those numbers, six out of ten; I looked up the current population of this country: 330,000,000 Americans occupy this country at this time. That makes 198,000,000 bloody people currently alive in this country. **Psalm 5:6**: "*Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.*" It is only reasonable to conclude and declare: God Abhors America! **Psalm 26:9**: "*Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men[.]*" **Psalm 55:23**: "*But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.*" **Psalm 59:2**: "*Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.*" Certainly we can hear these words ringing down through the halls of heaven from **Jeremiah 9:9**: "*Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*" The Lord has to take this personally in light of His pronouncements on the issue such as from **Psalm 127:3**: "*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*" It is at this time when I can see the operation in full swing as described in **Isaiah 30:33**: "*For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.*" Where are these 198,000,000 people going

to reside for eternity? He is now bringing them down to the pit of destruction and he has the mechanics and the know-how to get it done. Check out this picture: this earth mover is as big as a large building; it can create some huge space for a pit. This 198,000,000 is just a drop in the bucket when considering the full tally.



On November 7, 2021, I began a series on the attributes of God, starting with his infinity. At that time I suggested that in order for our proper understanding of the Almighty God, as he has revealed himself, we must understand his "Infinity." When we say that God is "infinite", the meaning is, that he is unbounded and unlimited, unmeasurable or immense, unsearchable and not to be comprehended. This attribute mainly respects and includes the "omnipresence" and "eternity" of God. Today, I want to talk about his omnipresence.

I've led off this sermon from **Psalm 139:7**. In fact, Psalm 139 could be subtitled, "the Omnipresence of God." See what I mean here:

*« To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. » O LORD,
thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest
my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my
thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying
down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not
a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.
Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand
upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high,
I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up
into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold,*

thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. 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. Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies. 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.

As to verse 7, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" let me add this:

Look at these similar verses: **Jeremiah 23:23-24**: “*Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.*” **Amos 9:2**: “*Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down[.]*” **Hebrews 4:13**: “*Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*”

Spurgeon’s Treasury of David on Psalm 137:7: “... from the immediate, actual, constant presence of God he cannot be withdrawn. We must be, whether we will it or not, as near to God as our soul is to our body. This makes it dreadful work to sin; for we offend the Almighty to his face, and commit acts of treason at the very foot of his throne. *Go* from him, or *flee* from him we cannot: neither by patient travel nor by hasty flight can we withdraw from the all surrounding Deity. His mind is in our mind; himself within ourselves. His spirit is over our spirit; our presence is ever in his presence.”

Thomas Adams: “That exile would be strange that could separate us from God. I speak not of those poor and common comforts, that in all lands and coasts it is his sun that shines, his elements of earth or water that bear us, his air we breathe; but of that special privilege, that his gracious presence is ever with us; that no sea is so broad as to divide us from his favour; that wheresoever we feed, he is our host; wheresoever we rest, the wings of his blessed providence are stretched over us. Let my soul be sure of this, though the whole world be traitors to me.”

John Mason: “The presence of God’s glory is in heaven; the presence of his power on earth; the presence of his justice in hell; and the presence of his grace with his people. If he deny us his powerful presence, we fall into nothing; if he deny us his gracious presence, we fall into sin; if he deny us his merciful presence, we fall into hell.”

The "Omnipresence" of God, or his ubiquity, which, as it is included in his infinity, must be strongly concluded from it. If God is infinite, that is, unbounded with respect to space and place, then he must be everywhere. This is to be proved from his power, which is everywhere: as appears, not only in the creation of all things, as the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, the earth, and the ends of them,

and all that is in them. (See e.g., **Nehemiah 9:6**, **Proverbs 16:4** and **26:10**, **Isaiah 44:24**, **Jeremiah 10:12**, **John 1:3**, **Acts 14:15** and **17:24-25**, **Colossians 1:16**) It is also proved from his providence, supporting and sustaining them; for not only the creatures have their being in him, and from him, and therefore he must be near them; but "*he upholds all things by his power.*" (**Hebrews 1:3**). They consist in him (**Colossians 1:17**), he provides for them, and preserves them all; and which is the argument the apostle uses to prove that he is not far from them, **Acts 17:24-26,28**: "*God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; ... For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.*"

The omnipresence of God may be argued from the distributions of his goodness to all (**Psalm 145:9**); to angels and glorified saints, who partake of his special favors; to all men on earth, to whom he does not leave himself without a witness of his kindness to them (**Acts 14:17**), giving them food and raiment (**Deuteronomy 10:18**), and all things richly to enjoy (**1 Timothy 6:17**); he is present among them, and opens his hand (**Psalm 145:16**) and plentifully and liberally communicates to them (**Psalm 65**; **James 1:5**). As well as from his universal government of the world by his wisdom; for his kingdom rules over all, the kingdom of nature and providence is his, and "*he is the Governor among the nations*" (**Psalm 22:28**). And as he is everywhere by his power and providence, so he is by his knowledge; all things are naked and open to him (**Hebrews 4:13**), being all before him (**Hebrews 4:13**), and he present with them (**1 Kings 8:27**); though he is in the highest heaven (**1 Kings 8:27**), he can see and judge through the dark clouds (**Psalm 18**; **Job 22:13**; **Proverbs 15:3**), and behold all the inhabitants of the world, and their actions (**Psalm 33:14-15**). And since these attributes of power, wisdom, and knowledge, are no other than his nature, or than himself, he must be everywhere by his essence. This is most clear from the omnipresence of the divine nature in Christ, who, as a divine person, was in heaven, when he, as man, was here on earth, **John 1:18** and **3:13**: "*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*" "*And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that*

came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” Indeed, unless he was omnipresent, he could not be in whatsoever place two or three are gathered together in his name (**Matthew 18:20**), or be in the midst of the candlesticks, the churches, or with his ministers, to the end of the world, **Revelation 1:11-20** and **Matthew 28:20**. For though this is to be understood of his gracious presence, yet unless he was omnipresent, this could not be vouchsafed to all the saints, and all the churches, in all ages, at different places, at the same time; as when they are worshipping in different parts of the world.

Now if God, personally considered, or in any one of the divine Persons, is omnipresent, then God, essentially considered, must be so. The presence of God may be observed in a different manner; there is his glorious presence in heaven, where he, in a most eminent manner, displays the glory of his majesty to angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. **Matthew 18:10**: *“Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”* See **Hebrews 12:23**. And there is his powerful and providential presence with all his creatures, giving them being, and supporting them in it (**Acts 17:25**; **Colossians 1:16-20**). And there is his gracious presence with good men (**Titus 1:8**), regenerating (**Titus 3:5**), sanctifying (**1 Corinthians 1:30**, **Hebrews 10:10,14**), comforting (**2 Corinthians 1:3**), and refreshing them (the word is “rest”; see **Matthew 11:28-29**); dwelling in them (**2 Corinthians 6:16**), carrying on his work of grace in them (**Philippians 2:13**), to fit them for himself in glory (**Isaiah 29:16**). And all suppose his omnipresence.

This attribute is most clearly expressed in several passages of Scripture, including **Psalm 139:7-10** where the Psalmist asks, *“Whither shalt I go from thy Spirit?”* for *“God is a Spirit”*, **John 4:24**. *“Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?”* Not his gracious presence, for a good man would never seek to flee from that, nothing being more desirable to him. **Psalm 4:6-7** *“There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.”* **Psalm 51:11**: *“Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.”* This refers to his essential presence, which is everywhere; it is in the Hebrew text “from thy face”; and face signifies the essence and nature of God, which is invisible and incomprehensible, **Exodus 33:20**: *“And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.”*

Then the Psalmist goes on to enumerate all places that could be thought of to flee to, and yet God was there; "*If I ascend to heaven, thou art there.*" Could he by any means climb up to heaven, there God is in all the glory of his Majesty; there is his palace (**Psalm 45:8**), his habitation (**Isaiah 63:15**), and his throne (**Isaiah 66:1**). "*If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there.*" Whether the place where the wicked are turned, and the apostate angels cast; there God is sustaining them in their being, pouring in his wrath into their consciences, and continuing the punishment inflicted on them. Or whether the grave is meant, which is sometimes the sense of the word used, and is a bed to saints, **Job 17:13**. There God is watching over their dust, preserving it from being lost, in order to raise it up at the last day (**Job 19:25-27; John 6:39; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**). "*If I take the wings of the morning*", and fly as fast as the morning light, which soon reaches the furthest parts of the earth; or as the rays of the sun, which dart from east to west, at its rising, instantly; "*and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea*"; in the most remote islands of it, or in the uttermost parts of the western shore; "*even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*" There should he experience the providential goodness and special favor of God to him; who leads (**Psalm 5:8; Psalm 23:2-3; Psalm 61:2; Psalm 80:1; Isaiah 40:11, etc.**), guides (**Psalm 48:14; John 16:13**), and upholds (**Isaiah 41:10**) his people at the ends of the earth (**Psalm 65:5; Psalm 98:3**), where some of them sometimes are, and where they have his presence. See, e.g., **Isaiah 45:22**: "*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*" And **Isaiah 24:16(a)**: "*From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous.*" See a like enumeration of places in **Amos 9:2-3**.

Another passage of scripture, proving the Omnipresence of God, is in **Isaiah 66:1**: "*Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.*" So immense is he that he sits upon the one, and treads on the other: "*Where is the house that ye build unto me?*" or where can a house be built for him? What place can be found for him he is not possessed of, and does not dwell in already? Stephen, the proto-martyr, produces this to prove, "*Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?*" That is, cannot be included in them, and limited to them, since he is everywhere, in heaven and in earth, **Acts 7:48-50**.

But nowhere is the Omnipresence of God more expressly declared than in **Jeremiah 23:23-24**. "*Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not afar off?*" Indeed, he is both; he not only observes persons and things in heaven, which may be thought at hand, and near him; but persons and things on earth, and those at the greatest distance; he is as near to, and as present with the one as the other; and he sees and knows all that is done by them, as if he was at their elbow. Therefore he adds, "*Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him, saith the Lord?*" As some might foolishly imagine, supposing him to be limited and confined to heaven above, and was not present to see what was done below; especially in the dark and distant places of the earth: "*Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?*" Not only with inhabitants, and with all things, the effects of his power and goodness; but with his nature and essence, this exceeds all bounds of place and space. Hence the Jews call God by the name of "Makom," place; because he fills all places, and is contained in none; he is infinite.

Isaiah 57:15 "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

I love you. Amen.