

A Lord's Day Snippet!
Biblical And Southern Studies
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511

1 In all my vast concerns with Thee,
In vain my soul would try
To shun Thy presence, Lord, or flee
The notice of Thine eye.

2 My thoughts lie open to the Lord
Before they're formed within;
And ere my lips pronounce the word,
He knows the sense I mean.

3 O wondrous knowledge, deep and high,
Where can a creature hide?
Within Thy circling arms I lie,
Enclosed on every side.

4 So let Thy grace surround me still,
And like a bulwark prove
To guard my soul from every ill,
Secured by Sovereign love.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

The Presence of Majesty

“Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence.”

Psalm 139:7

What is the Psalmist saying in this passage? Psalm 139:7-10 makes us aware of the presence of the majestic God. Just consider the following questions based on this passage. Is there anywhere you can go to get away from the Spirit of God? Is there any place you can run to escape God's presence? In answer to those questions the Psalmist says, “If I ascend to heaven—*There you are!* If I were to make my bed in hell—*There you are!* If I took to flight in the morning and my flight took me to the uttermost reaches of the sea—There your right-hand controls and takes hold of me! Yes, *There you are!*”

What is this glorious passage telling us? God is above us, God is around us, God is in us, and God is in every place, which is the invisible footprints of this omnipresent God. What if God had eyes, “For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is there iniquity hid from mine eyes” (Jer. 16:17). In this anthropomorphism (which is a figure of speech by which the Bible attributes human parts, actions, affections, or emotions to God) Jeremiah is telling us that God is present and He is omniscient or knows everything. Since God is infinite, He has no limits. This means that God's presence is without restriction; this means He is everywhere present. He is in all things without being trapped, above all things

without being remote, under all things without being confined, beyond all things without being constricted.

“All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do” (Heb. 4:13). He sees us because He is present, but it is described in an anthropomorphic way. All of our lives are in the presence of God though we may not recognize it. David recognized God’s all-pervasive presence in our text. Yes, wherever he was, whether as a shepherd boy or as a king or running from his enemies, he could say, “God—There you are!”

“The doctrine of the divine omnipresence personalizes man’s relation to the universe in which he finds himself. This great central truth gives meaning to all other truths and imparts supreme value to all his little life. God is present, near him, next to him, and this God sees him and knows him through and through. At this point faith begins, and while it may go on to include a thousand other wonderful truths, these all refer back to the truth that *God is, and God is here*” [A. W. Tozer].

Dear soul, look out, look up, look in, look around and God is always present there. Should this cause you concern? No indeed! Just consider, when you are about to do wrong, God is present; when you are in the slough of despond God is there; when sorrow causes your cheeks to entertain tears God is there; when loneliness seems to overwhelm you God is there; when your earthly comforters fail God is there; when shrouded in the darkness of night, God is there; when sleep seems to be in vain, just think God is there. How comforting to contemplate the truth “My God is always here!” We are truly never alone. “Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” (Ps. 121:4). Darkness and light are the same to the ever-present God, “Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee” (Ps. 139:12). God is present without restrictions!

When we think of the all-presence of God we are drawn into His immensity—“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” (Jer. 23:24). God’s immensity is not to be confused with largeness, but it means He is everywhere and at all times present. We are reminded “that the entire indivisible essence of God is at every moment of time contemporaneously present to every point of infinite space” [A. A. Hodge].

Yes, we have an always present God in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We have an always present Saviour who promised, “Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28:20). Wow! How blessed are the children of Zion? Like Israel in the wilderness, He is our pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. James Montgomery wrote:

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.

Hodge (that is A. A.) noted, “God may be conceived of as present in any place, or with any creature, in several modes, *first*, as to His essence; *second*, as to His knowledge; *third*, as manifesting that presence to any intelligent creature; *fourth*, as exercising His power in any way in or upon the creature. As to essence and knowledge, His presence is the same everywhere and always. As to His self-manifestation and the exercise of His power, His presence differs endlessly in different cases in degree and mode. Thus, God is present to the church as He is not to the world. Thus, He is present in hell in the manifestation and execution of righteous wrath, while He is present in heaven in the manifestation and communication of gracious love and glory.”