

## The Location of God

Among God's attributes there is His amazing ability to be omnipresent.

That is, to be everywhere present and at the same time.

That must have been a great comfort to David when he wrote Psalm 139:8-10--- **"If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me."**

However, for the nation of Israel as a whole, God's presence was inseparably linked with a definite location.

Actually, this concept of *location* grew out of a special request Solomon made during the dedication of the temple.

It's true, he began his prayer by recognizing the fact that God was omnipresent.

2 Chronicles 6:18 **"But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!"**

But then, for his own sake and for the sake of his people, he made this special request:

V 19-21 **"Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You: "that Your eyes may be open toward this temple day and night, toward the place**

**where *You* said *You would* put *Your* name, that *You* may hear the prayer which *Your* servant prays toward this place. "And may *You* hear the supplications of *Your* servant and of *Your* people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven *Your* dwelling place, and when *You* hear, forgive."**

And from that time on, the temple became the focal point for prayer.

And this principle of location was so ingrained in Daniel's prayer life that he was willing to face a den of lions rather than change it.

Daniel 6:10 **"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem (and consequently toward the temple) he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave**

**thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days."**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

And not only was God's location important to Israel, but Israel's location was important to God.

Yes, the time would come when Egypt would no longer be a fit place for His people.

The time would come when God would bear them on eagle's wings, rescuing them from slavery, and, more importantly, bringing them to Himself.

But herein was a problem.

How could a righteous God dwell in the midst of a sinful people?

Well, in the normal sense, He could not.

That's why He commanded Moses to build a tabernacle that would be located in the midst of their camp.

There, in the holy of holies, surrounded by a structure that spoke of His Son's attributes in every aspect of its creation, He would be able to dwell amongst the people He loved.

However, the very reason for its existence was almost eclipsed before it ever came into existence.

You see, in Moses' absence, Israel sinned greatly, worshiping a golden calf, and even attributing God's mighty works to this dumb idol.

Exodus 30:4 **"---and he (that is Aaron) fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"**

And quite understandably, God threatened to destroy the entire nation and replace its citizens with Moses' descendants.

Just think, as a descendant of Abraham,  
Moses could have been a father of the  
Chosen People!

However, this potential benefactor chose  
rather to become a faithful intercessor,  
and **"the LORD relented from the harm  
which He said He would do to His people."**

Yes, for Moses' sake, God was willing to  
spare Israel, but He was no longer  
willing to dwell amongst them.

Exodus 33 1-3 **"Then the LORD said to Moses,  
"Depart and go up from here, you and the  
people whom you have brought out of the  
land of Egypt, to the land of which I  
swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,  
saying, 'To your descendants I will give  
it.' "And I will send My Angel before  
you, and I will drive out the Canaanite  
and the Amorite and the Hittite and the  
Perizzite and the Hivite and the**

**Jebusite. "Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey;"**

Yes, for the sake of the fathers, and for the sake of His promises, this disobedient people would enjoy all of God's blessings, but with this important difference:

**"---for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people."**

And even today, many Christians seem to be completely satisfied with such an arrangement.

They don't smoke, they don't drink, and they don't get into trouble, but where is that longing for a closer walk with Christ?

So what is more important, God's *blessings* or God's *presence*?

Well, Moses was convinced it was God's presence.

In fact, he wasn't willing to take another step without it.

Exodus 33:15 **"Then he** (that is Moses) **said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here."**

Once again, God was willing to satisfy the longings of Moses' heart.

He *would* go up with them.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Centuries later . . . Jesus had waited until the last night in the upper room to break the news.

Their dusty walks up and down the highways and byways of Israel would soon be coming to an end.

On receiving this news, the disciples must have been as devastated as Moses had been.

But, in actual fact, Jesus wouldn't be leaving at all.



No, on the very heels of this shocking announcement, He said---"**I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."**

And on the strength of that wonderful promise, He was able to add---"**I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you."**

Yes, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, He would continue to accompany them in the days ahead.

In fact, His last words before ascending into heaven were these---"**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "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."

A great commission, but with an even greater provision---"I am *with you* always, even to the end of the age."

And even today, He assures us "where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Yes, Moses was right.

It is absolutely essential that God go *with* us.

And what is true of the Father is equally true of the Son.

Yes, Jesus' presence is essential for our peace and for our progress, as He told

His disciples---"**without Me you can do nothing.**"

But with the Lord's presence dwelling within us---"**we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.**"