Many preachers, Bible scholars and common people believe that God is omnipresent, that is, present everywhere. According to this view, he's in every place at all times. What does the Bible tell us?



Is God omnipresent, or present everywhere?

EXAMINING CLAIMS OF OMNIPRESENCE

"Even if they dig their way into Sheol, my hand will take them from there. Even if they go up to heaven, I will bring them down from there. Even if they hide on top of Mount Carmel, I will look for them and take them from there. Even if they hide from me at the bottom of the sea, I will command a sea snake to bite them" (Amos 9:2-3 GWT). These verses are often used to assert God's being omnipresent. However, Amos is using figures of speech to illustrate the futility of thinking that anyone can escape from Almighty God's judgment.

The Psalmist asks: **"Yahweh . . . Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I lift up the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me." (Psalm 139:1,7-10 LSB).** At first glance it appears that Yahweh is present everywhere. However, if we look at it closely we can see that is not the case. The

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psalmist asks, “Where can I go from Your Spirit?”. Yahweh’s spirit represents God’s presence.

Amos 9:2-3, Psalm 139:7-10 and Jeremiah 23:24 do not mean that Yahweh God is omnipresent, as many claim. These scriptures indicate that Yahweh God can **“send”** his **“spirit” (Psalm 104:30 NRSV)** anywhere, anytime, to do anything he wants done.

The thought of **Psalm 139:7** is similar to **Jeremiah 23:24, “‘Can a man hide himself in hiding places So I do not see him?’ declares Yahweh. Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?’ declares Yahweh” (LSB)**. Yahweh can see anywhere and everywhere by means of his holy Spirit.

BIBLICAL PROOF YAHWEH IS NOT OMNIPRESENT

“So He said, ‘Go forth and stand on the mountain before Yahweh.’ And behold, Yahweh was passing by! And a great and strong wind was tearing up the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before Yahweh; *but* Yahweh *was* not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, *but* Yahweh *was* not in the earthquake. Then after the earthquake a fire, *but* Yahweh *was* not in the fire” (1 Kings 19:11-12 LSB). These scriptures plainly state that Yahweh was not in the wind, earthquake, or fire, even though he caused these to occur. From this we have clear proof from the scriptures that God is not omnipresent. Did Yahweh literally pass by in front of Elijah? No, he didn’t need to, as we will see in the next subtopic.

WHY YAHWEH DOES NOT NEED TO BE OMNIPRESENT

“Look down from your holy dwelling, from heaven” (Deuteronomy 26:15 CSB). God is referred to as existing in heaven, seeing everything from there, without the need to be omnipresent.

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“Hear from heaven, your dwelling place” (1 Kings 8:43 NIV). God is referred to as existing in heaven, hearing everything from there, without the need to be omnipresent.

“Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account” (Hebrews 4:13 NIV).

“Yahweh is in His holy temple; Yahweh’s throne is in heaven; His eyes behold . . . the sons of men. Yahweh tests the righteous” (Psalm 11:4 LSB). In both of these scriptures, God is referred to as existing in heaven, seeing everything and being able to test and judge all people everywhere from there, without the need to be omnipresent.

“The eyes of Yahweh are in every place; watching the evil and the good” (Proverbs 15:3 LSB). Yahweh’s “eyes” are obviously not literally everywhere, but the metaphor helps us to understand that he sees everything from his location in heaven.

“Take away their breath, they perish and return to dust. Send forth your spirit, they are created and you renew the face of the earth” (Psalm 104:29-30 NAB). God is so powerful that he can accomplish anything he wants to, any time he wants to, any where he wants to, by means of his spirit, without having to travel to various locations in person. In the case of the natural phenomena that Elijah experienced (above), Yahweh’s spirit represents him, and accomplishes Yahweh’s work.

For more information related to this subject, please see the following article on this website:

“Has Anyone Ever Seen God?” –
https://bibleauthenticity.com/has-anyone-ever-seen-almighty-god/

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