



Attributes of God

Book 2

Thy Name is Everlasting

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Forward

God is patient and he is kind. "The Lord is slow to anger," because He is GREAT IN POWER

God is peaceful. He is perfect and personable. He is a God of justice and of love.

Throughout the ages, men have sought for God while looking at traits, not of God. As you study these few of many God traits, may you find, that this God of love will listen and sustain you.

Chapter 11

The Justice of God

Webster's defines **JUSTICE** as the maintenance or administration of what is **JUST** (acting or being in conformity with what is morally upright or good) especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments

Justice is God's fair and impartial treatment of all people. The **justice of God** is a necessary correlate of His holiness or moral excellence. Since God is infinitely and eternally perfect, He must be impartial in His judgments and always treat His creatures with equity. Or as Abraham affirmed...

Far be it from Thee to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from Thee! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly? (Genesis 18:25).

God is just, and He always acts in a way consistent with the requirements of His character as revealed in His law. He rules His creation with rectitude, He keeps His word, He renders to all His creatures their due. God is **just** and fair, completely rational and predictable in His dealings, without any shadow of capriciousness.

Nelson's New Illustrated Dictionary adds:

As a God of justice (Isaiah 30:18), He is interested in fairness as well as in what makes for right relationships. His actions and decisions are true and right (Job 34:12; Revelation 16:7). His demands on individuals and nations to look after victims of oppression are just demands (Psalm 82). As Lord and Judge, God brings justice to nations (Psalm 67:4) and "sets things right" in behalf of the poor, the oppressed, and the victims of injustice (Psalm 103:6; 146:6, 7, 8, 9). For the wicked, the unjust, and the oppressor, God as supreme Judge of the earth is a dreaded force. But for all who are unjustly treated, God's just action is the reason for hope."

New Unger's Bible Dictionary comments that "The **justice of God** is both an essential and a relative attribute of the divine existence. It is a necessary outflow from the holiness of God. It is that in a positive form that is negatively described as holiness, or separateness from evil. And, further, it is the holiness of God as

manifested and applied in moral government." (Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

Easton's Bible Dictionary defines

"**Justice of God** — that perfection of His nature whereby He is infinitely righteous in Himself and in all He does, the righteousness of the divine nature exercised in His moral government. At first God imposes righteous laws on His creatures and executes them righteously. **Justice** is not an optional product of His will, but an unchangeable principle of His very nature. His legislative **justice** is His requiring of His rational creature's conformity in all respects to the moral law. His rectoral or **distributive justice** is His dealing with His accountable creatures according to the requirements of the law in rewarding or punishing them (Psalm 89:14 Treasury of David comment). In remunerative justice He distributes rewards (James 1:12; 2 Timothy 4:8); in vindictive or punitive justice he inflicts punishment on account of transgression (2Thessalonians 1:6). He cannot, as being infinitely righteous, do otherwise than regard and hate sin as intrinsically hateful and deserving of punishment. "He cannot deny himself" (2Timothy 2:13). His essential and eternal righteousness immutably determines him to visit every sin as such with merited punishment."

IS GOD UNFAIR? All His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He. —Deuteronomy 32:4

We can endure life's wrongs, knowing that God will make all things right.

"God's rod of mercy is ever in His hands outstretched; His sword of **JUSTICE** is in its scabbard, held down by that pierced hand of love which bled for the sins of men. "The Lord is slow to anger," because He is **GREAT IN POWER**."

"Now, when the sinner is brought to the bar, Jesus appears there Himself. He stands to answer the accusation. He points to His side, His hands, His feet, and challenges **JUSTICE** to bring anything against the sinners whom He represents; He pleads His blood, and pleads so triumphantly, being numbered with them and having a part with them, that the Judge proclaims, "Let them go their way; deliver them from going down into the pit, for He hath found a ransom."

Commenting on **Isaiah 54:11** Spurgeon writes that...

"Our eternal hopes are built upon the **JUSTICE** and the faithfulness of God, which are clear and cloudless as the sapphire. We are not saved by a compromise, by mercy defeating **JUSTICE** or law suspending its operations; no, we defy the eagle's eye to detect a flaw in the groundwork of our confidence--our foundation is of sapphire and will endure the fire."

This attribute of God is closely related to the immediately preceding one. It is that perfection of God by which He maintains Himself over against every violation of His holiness and shows in every respect that He is the Holy One.

Different aspects of it should be distinguished.

- a. **His Rectoral Justice.** This is the rectitude which God manifests as the Ruler of both the good and the evil. In virtue of this, He institutes a moral government in the world, and imposes a just law upon man, with promises of reward for the obedient and threats of punishment for the disobedient, Psalm 99:4; Isaiah 33:22; Romans 1:32.
- b. **His Remunerative Justice.** This manifests itself in the distribution of rewards to both men and angels, Deuteronomy 7:9, 12, 13; Psalm 58:11; Micah 7:20; Romans 2:7; Hebrews 11:26. It is really an expression of the divine love, dealing out its bounties, not on the basis of strict merit, but according to promise and agreement, Luke 17:10; I Corinthians 4:7.
 - c. **His Retributive Justice.** This relates to the infliction of penalties and is an expression of the divine wrath. In a sinless world there would be no place for its exercise, but in a world full of sin it necessarily holds a very prominent place. While the Bible stresses the reward of the righteous more than the punishment of the wicked, even the latter stands out boldly in Scripture, Romans 1:32; 2:9; 12:19; 2Thessalonians 1:8. (Manual of Christian Doctrine)

Torrey's Topic

The Justice of God

Is a part of his character -Deuteronomy 32:4; Isaiah 45:21

Not to be sinned against -Jeremiah 50:7

Denied by the ungodly -Ezekiel 33:17,

Acknowledge -Psalm 51:4; Romans 3:4

Magnify -Psalm 98:9; 99:3,4

DECLARED TO BE

Plenteous Job 37:23

Incomparable -Job 4:1

Incorruptible -Deuteronomy 10:17 ; 2 Chronicles 19:7

Impartial -2 Chronicles 19:7 ; Jeremiah 32:19

Unfailing -Zephaniah 3:5

Undeviating -Job 8:3; 34:12

Without respect of persons -Ro 2:11 ; Colossians 3:25 ; 1Peter 1:17

The habitation of his throne -Psalm 89:14

Chapter 12

The Long Suffering of God

Longsuffering or **patience** is a Divine Title for God, Paul referring to Him as the **God of patience** (KJV) (Romans 15:5-note). Believers are called to be imitators of God, as beloved children" (Ephesians 5:1-note) and "as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, (to) **put on** (like a garment) a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and **patience** (longsuffering), bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you." (Colossians 3:12, 13- note)

The next time you are tempted to seek revenge on one who has wronged you, recall the infinite patience and longsuffering He has granted to you! (see the study of the Beatitude "**Blessed are the merciful**" Matthew 5:7-note, Lesson 4: Matthew 5:6-8)

God is **patient** or **long-suffering** and not at all precipitous or unreasonable in His dealings with sinful, rebellious mankind. In the Old Testament, God is repeatedly described as "**slow to anger**". God's longsuffering is that power which He exercises over Himself, allowing Him to bear with sinners, forbearing long in punishing them. Nahum in his oracle against Nineveh records that The Lord is **slow to anger** and great in power, and the Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. In whirlwind and storm is His way, and clouds are the dust beneath His feet. (Nahum 1:3)

Exodus 34:6 the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, **slow to anger**

Numbers 14:18 "The LORD is **slow to anger**

Nehemiah 9:17 But Thou art a God of forgiveness...**Slow to anger**

Psalm 86:15

But Thou, O Lord, art a God merciful and gracious, **Slow to anger** and abundant in loving kindness and truth. (Spurgeon's Commentary on Psalm 86:15)

Psalm 103:8

The LORD is compassionate and gracious,

Slow to anger (Spurgeon's Commentary on Psalm 103:8)

Psalm 145:8

The LORD is gracious and merciful;

Slow to anger (Spurgeon's Commentary on Psalm 145:8)

Joel 2:13 Now return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and compassionate, **slow to anger**, abounding in lovingkindness, and relenting of evil.

Jonah 4:2

Thou art a gracious and compassionate God, **slow to anger**

In Numbers 14 Israel had spurned Jehovah refusing to believe His promise of a promised land, thus prompting Him to decree that He would "smite them with pestilence" and then would make Moses "into a nation greater and mightier" (Numbers 14:11, 12).

Moses' interceded with Him, basing his appeal on the fact that Jehovah was "**slow to anger** and abundant in loving kindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression" (Numbers 14:18), the very phrase that God had earlier applied to Himself when He passed in front of Moses declaring Himself as Jehovah, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, **slow to anger**, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; Who keeps loving kindness for thousands, Who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin... (Exodus 34:6, 7)

God's longsuffering was strikingly displayed toward sinners prior to the Flood. In Genesis, Jehovah declared that His

"Spirit (would) not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless, his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." (Genesis 6:3).

Not only did God wait patiently but He also gave the ancient world a clear witness of the way of salvation through

Noah, a preacher of righteousness. (See note 2 Peter 2:5) Luke adds that: in the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways and yet He

did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying (their) hearts with food and gladness. (Acts 14:16-17)

Paul emphasized the restraining aspect of God's patience asking the rhetorical question: What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, **endured with much patience** vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? (See note Romans 9:22)

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is **patient** toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance...15 and regard the **patience** of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you (See note 2 Peter 3:9, 2 Peter 3:15)

God's longsuffering is imminently practical, but it is not forever. How tragic that the wicked misinterpret God's longsuffering, for Solomon records that because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil. (Ecclesiastes 8:11)

Thou, O Lord, art a God **merciful** and gracious, **slow to anger (longsuffering,** KJV, NKJV) and abundant in loving kindness and truth. (Psalm 86:15)

NAVE'S TOPIC

As alluded to earlier, inherent in God's longsuffering is His power of self-restraint -- study the following passages **observing** for the truth or facts that are obvious about the patience of God, and interrogating the text with the 5W's & H questions (as utilized in **Inductive Bible Study**)

Genesis 15:16

"Then in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete."

Psalm 103:8-10

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in loving

kindness. 9 He will not always strive with us; Nor will He keep His anger forever.
10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. (Commentary on Psalm 103:8, Ps 103:9, Psalm 103:10)

Isaiah 5:1-4;

beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.
2 And He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine.
And He built a tower in the middle of it, And hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He expected it to produce good grapes, But it produced only worthless ones. 3 "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge between Me and My vineyard. 4 "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, when I expected it to produce good grapes did it produce worthless ones?

Isaiah 42:14

"I have kept silent for a long Time, I have kept still and restrained Myself. Now like a woman in labor I will groan, I will both gasp and pant.

Isaiah 48:9-11

"For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, And for My praise I restrain it for you, In order not to cut you off. 10 "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. 11 "For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.

Jeremiah 7:13,23-25

"And now, because you have done all these things," declares the LORD, "and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you but you did not answer, 23 "But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people; and you will walk in all the way which I command you, that it may be well with you.' 24 "Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in their own counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward. 25 "Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt untimely this day, I have sent you all My servants the prophets, daily rising early and sending them.

Jeremiah 11:7

'For I solemnly warned your fathers in the day that I brought them up from the land

of Egypt, even to this day, warning persistently, saying, "Listen to My voice."

Jeremiah 15:15

Thou who knowest, O LORD, Remember me, take notice of me, And take vengeance for me on my persecutors. Do not, in view of Thy patience, take me away; Know that for Thy sake I endure reproach.

Ezekiel 20:17

"Yet My eye spared them rather than destroying them, and I did not cause their annihilation in the wilderness.

Habakkuk 1:2-4

How long, O LORD, will I call for help, And Thou wilt not hear? I cry out to Thee, "Violence!" Yet Thou dost not save. 3 Why dost Thou make me see iniquity, And cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; Strife exists and contention arises. 4 Therefore, the law is ignored And justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore, justice comes out perverted.

Matthew 19:8;

He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart, Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning, it has not been this way

Matthew 21:33-41

Matthew 23:37

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

Mark 12:1-9 Luke 13:6-9,34; 20:9-16

Acts 17:30

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men

that all everywhere should repent,

Romans 2:4 (note) Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

Romans 3:25 (note) whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

Romans 9:22; 9:23 (note) What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,

Romans 15:5 (note) Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus;

Revelation 2:21 (note); 2:22 (note) 'And I gave her Time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality. 22 'Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. http://www.preceptaustin.org/Titus_19.htm - Faithful: (4103) [pistos](#)

Chapter 13

God is Love

The Baker Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology writes that...

God is love and has demonstrated that love in everything that he does. Paul compares faith, hope, and love, and concludes that "the greatest of these is love" (1Corinthians 13:13).

"God Is Love." Agape (word study) the love theme of the Bible, can only be defined by the nature of God. John affirms that "God is love" (1John 4:8). God does not merely love; he is love. Everything that God does flows from his love.

John emphasizes repeatedly that God the Father loves the Son (John 5:20; 17:23, 26) and that the Son loves the Father (John 14:31). Because the Father loves the Son, he made his will known to him. Jesus, in turn, demonstrated his love to the Father through his submission and obedience.

The theme of the entire Bible is the self-revelation of the God of love. In the garden of Eden, God commanded that "you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (Genesis 2:17). We are not prepared, then, when God looks for Adam after his sin, calling out "Where are you?" God seeks Adam, not to put him to death, but to reestablish a relationship with him. God, the Lover, will not allow sin to stand between him and his creature. He personally bridges the gap.

That seeking and bridging reaches its pinnacle when God sends his Son into the world to rescue sinners and to provide them with eternal life (John 3:16; Romans 5:7, 8; Ephesians 2:1, 2, 3, 4, 5). John declares, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16). God's love is not based on the merit of the recipient (Deuteronomy 7:7, 8; Romans 5:7-8). Because he is love, God is not willing that any person should perish, but wills that everyone repents and lives (Ezekiel 18:32; 2Peter 3:9).

God Is Love from "The Joy of Knowing God" by Richard L. Strauss

Action to Take: Look for evidence of God's love for you all throughout the day and remind yourself often that you are the object of His endless love. Tell several others during the day that God loves them.

TORREY'S TOPIC

LOVE OF GOD

Is a part of his character -2 Corinthians 13:11; 1John 4:8
Christ, the especial object of -John 15:9; 17:26
Christ abides in -John 15:10

DESCRIBED AS

Sovereign -Deuteronomy 7:8; 10:15
Great -Ephesians 2:4
Abiding -Zephaniah 3:17
Unfailing -Isaiah 49:15,16
Unalienable -Romans 8:39
Constraining -Hosea 11:4
Everlasting -Jeremiah 31:3
Irrespective of merit -Deuteronomy 7:7; Job 7:17

MANIFESTED TOWARDS

Perishing sinners -John 3:16; Titus 3:4
His saints -John 16:27; 17:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:16; 1 John 4:16
The destitute -Deuteronomy 10:18
The cheerful giver -2 Corinthians 9:7

EXHIBITED IN

The giving of Christ -John 3:16
The sending of Christ -1 John 4:9
Christ's dying for us while sinners -Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:10
Election -Malachi 1:2,3; Romans 9:11-13
Adoption -1 John 3:1
Redemption -Isaiah 43:3,4; 63:9
Freeness of salvation Titus 3:4-7 Forgiving sin -Isaiah 38:17
Quickening of souls -Ephesians 2:4,5
Drawing us to himself -Hosea 11:4 Temporal blessings -Deuteronomy 7:13
Chastisements -Hebrews
Defeating evil counsels -Deuteronomy 23:5

Shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit -Romans 5:5

Saints know and believe -1 John 4:16

Saints should abide in -Jude 1:21

PERFECTED IN SAINTS

By obedience -1 John 2:5

By brotherly love -1 John 4:12

The source of our love to him -1 John 4:19

To be sought in prayer -2 Corinthians 13:14

Chapter 14

The Lord is Merciful

Mercy is when that which is deserved is withheld to the benefit of the object of the mercy. God has demonstrated this attribute in abundance with respect to mankind. We from nearly the beginning of our existence have deserved nothing but wrath; having sinned and fallen short of eternal life in glory, we can do nothing to commend ourselves to or defend ourselves before God. But thankfully, God has been so amazing in His mercy. Over and against merely having the mercy to allow us to live out our miserable lives without destroying us instantly, God has chosen us to greatness and glory by the hand of His Son. The believer finds himself in Christ and enjoys full well the fruits of God's mercy. Source: Blue Letter Bible

TORREY'S TOPIC MERCY

INTRINSIC PART OF GOD'S CHARACTER

Exodus 34:6,7; Ps 62:12; Nehemiah 9:17, Jon 4:2,10,11; 2 Corinthians 1:3

DESCRIBED AS

Great -Numbers 14:18; Isaiah 54:7 Rich -Ephesians 2:4

Manifold -Nehemiah 9:27; Lamentations 3:32

Plenteous -Psalms 86:5,15; 103:8

Abundant -1 Peter 1:3

Sure -Isaiah 55:3; Micah 7:20

Everlasting -1 Chr. 16:34; Psalm 89:28; 106:1; 107:1; 136:1-26

Tender -Psalm 25:6; 103:4; Luke 1:78

New every morning -Lamentations

High as heaven -Psalm 36:5; 103:11 Filling the earth -Psalm 119:64

Over all his works -Psalm 145:9

IS GOD'S DELIGHT-Micah 7:18

A GROUND OF HOPE-Psalm 130:7; 147:11

A GROUND OF TRUST -Psalm 52:8

TYPIFIED BY

Mercy seat -Exodus 25:17

MANIFESTED

In the sending of Christ -Luke 1:78

In salvation -Titus

In long-suffering -Lamentations; Daniel 9:9

To his people -Deuteronomy 32:43; 1 Kings 8:23

To them that fear him -Psalms 103:17; Luke 1:50

To returning backsliders -Jeremiah 3:12; Hosea 14:4; Joel 2:13

To repentant sinners -Psalms 32:5; Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 55:7; Luke 15:18-20

To the afflicted -Isaiah 49:13; 54:7

To the fatherless -Hosea 14:3

To whom he will -Hosea 2:23; Romans 9:15,18

With everlasting kindness -Isaiah 54:8

SHOULD BE

Sought for ourselves -Psalms 6:2

Sought for others -Galatians 6:16; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:18

Pleaded in prayer -Psalms 6:4; 25:6; 51:1

Rejoiced in -Psalms 31:7

Magnified -1 Chronicles 16:34; Psalms 115:1; 118:1-4,29; Jeremiah 33:11

Exemplified

Lot -Genesis 19:16,19

Epaphroditus -Philippians 2:27

Paul -1 Timothy 1:13

Chapter 15

God is Omnipotent

OMNIPOTENCE (Psalm 68:14; 91:1, 2; 115:3; 2 Corinthians 6:18) means God is all

powerful and thus has unlimited authority & influence. He has the ability to do whatever His will dictates. Man may have the authority but not the ability to carry through. The term omnipotence is not found in Scripture but clearly is declared in Scripture (Genesis 18:14; Job 42:2; Numbers 11:23; Matthew 19:26; Revelation 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 19:6).

His omnipotence is seen in

His act of creating (Genesis 1:1, 2, 3; Psalm 33:6, 7, 8, 9).

and sustaining everything (Colossians 1:17b; Hebrews 1:3),

in His relation to mankind (Genesis 45:4, 5, 6, 7, 8; Exodus 4:11; Daniel 4:17, 25, 32; Luke 12:20; Acts 12:21, 22, 23, 24),

in His relation to the hosts of heaven (Daniel 4:35; Hebrews 1:14),

in His power over Satan and his minions (Job 1:12; 2:6; Luke 22:31, 32),

and as Commander in chief (Exodus 9:3, 4, 5, 6, 23, 24, 25, 26, 33; Psalm 107:25, 26, 27, 28, 29; Jonah 1:17; 4:6, 7, 8; Daniel 3:22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28).

Jesus said, “All authority (exousia = authority and power to act - see word study) has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” (Matthew 28:18)

Although God has all the power He cannot do that which contradicts His holy character or essence and thus He cannot annihilate Himself because He is eternal, immutable, and all wise. He cannot lie because He is the truth (Titus; Hebrews 6:18). He cannot keep His Word because He is faithful (2Timothy 2:13). God cannot be tempted by evil (James 1:13). The omnipotence of God gives every saint a firm foundation to trust Him and confidence in His ability to keep the precious and magnificent promises in Scripture.

Theologians sometimes speak of God's attributes in two categories—communicable and incommunicable. That sounds strange until you remember that

we commonly speak of communicable diseases—diseases that can be spread from one person to another, such as chicken pox. Incommunicable diseases are those that cannot be spread from one person to another, such as rheumatoid arthritis or most forms of cancer.

The Definition - With that as background, we turn now to the final "omni" attribute: omnipotence. The word means "all-powerful" and refers to the fact that God's power is infinite and unlimited. He can do with power anything that power can do. Said another way, God has the power to do all he wills to do. He has both the resources and the ability to work his will in every circumstance in the universe.

The Scripture - This doctrine is assumed everywhere in the Bible. One might easily find 500 verses that either teach omnipotence or implicitly assume it.

Although the word is not found in our modern translations, the concept might be truly said to be assumed on every page of the Bible. (It is found in the King James Version of Revelation 19:6, "For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." George Frederick Handel composed his majestic "Hallelujah Chorus" around that phrase.)

To make matters easy to understand, let's list four categories of scripture that lead us to the doctrine of omnipotence:

A. Nothing is too hard for God.

"Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you." Jeremiah 32:17

"For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37

B. No one can stop God's plans.

"I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted." Job 42:2

C. He made all things and all things serve him.

"Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you." Psalms 119:91

D. He does whatever he pleases.

"Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him." Psalm 115:3

Seven Stages of God's Power

In his commentary on Ephesians (God's New Society, pp. 139-140), John Stott shares a delightful analysis of Paul's famous benediction at the end of Ephesians 3:

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20, 21)

I am going to retrace his comments, with one or two slight changes. Let's call this the Seven Stages of God's Power.

1. He is able, for he is the true and living God.
2. He is able to do, for he is neither inactive, idle, nor dead.
3. He is able to do what we ask, for he hears and answers prayer.
4. He is able to do what we ask or imagine, for he reads our thoughts, and sometimes we imagine things for which we do not dare to ask. But he can do those things anyway.
5. He is able to do all that we ask or imagine, for he knows it all and can perform it all.
6. He is able to do more than all we ask or imagine because his expectations are higher than ours.
7. He is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine because his power is unlimited.

As a simple summary statement, we may say that there are no limits to what God can do because there are no limits to GOD.

Among the many Titles given to God in the Old Testament is one that relates directly to his omnipotence. In Genesis 17:1 God speaks to 99-year-old Abraham who has been promised a child by God. By this Time his body is "as good as dead" (see Romans 4:19, 20, 21, 22). In the face of all his very understandable doubts God reassures him by calling himself **EL Shaddai**, which means Almighty God (See study).

It was God's way of saying, "Don't look in the mirror, Abraham. Look at me. If I say you're going to have a son, it's going to happen. Age means nothing to me. I am Almighty God." (For the full sermon message see Is Anything Too Hard For God? The Doctrine of God's Omnipotence by Ray Pritchard)

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia:

"The noun "**Omnipotence**" is not found in the English Bible, nor any noun exactly corresponding to it in the original Hebrew or Greek. The adjective "**omnipotent**" occurs in Revelation 19:6 the King James Version; the Greek for this, pantokrator, occurs also in 2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7,14; 19:15; 21:22 (in all of which the King James Version and the Revised Version (British and American) render "almighty"). It is also found frequently in the Septuagint (LXX), especially in the rendering of the divine names Yahweh tsebha'oth and '**El Shadday**. In pantokrator, the element of "authority," "sovereignty," side by side with that of "power," makes itself more distinctly felt than it does to the modern ear in "omnipotent," although it is meant to be included in the latter also. Compare further ho dunatos, in Luke 1:49."

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE IS INHERENT IN HIS NAMES

Inherent in Old Testament Names of God:

The formal conception of omnipotence as worked out in theology does not occur in the Old Testament. The substance of the idea is conveyed in various indirect ways. The notion of "strength" is inherent in the Old Testament conception of God from the beginning, is already represented in one of the two divine names inherited by Israel from ancient Semitic religion, the name '**El**. According to one etymology, it is also inherent in the other, the name '**Elohim**, and in this case, the plural form,

by bringing out the fullness of power in God, would mark an approach to the idea of omnipotence. various indirect ways. The notion of "strength" is inherent in the Old Testament conception of God from the beginning, is already represented in one of the two divine names inherited by Israel from ancient Semitic religion, the name '**El**'. According to one etymology, it is also inherent in the other, the name '**Elohim**', and in this case, the plural form, by bringing out the fullness of power in God, would mark an approach to the idea of omnipotence.

Other Modes of Expression:

Some of the attributes of Yahweh have an intimate connection with His omnipotence. Under this head, especially God's nature as Spirit and His holiness come under consideration. The representation of God as Spirit in the Old Testament does not primarily refer to the incorporeality of the divine nature, but to its inherent energy. The physical element underlying the conception of Spirit is that of air in motion, and in this, at first, not the invisibility but the force forms the point of comparison. The opposite of "Spirit" in this sense is "flesh," which expresses the weakness and impotence of the creature against God (Isaiah 2:22; 31:3).

The **holiness of God** in its earliest and widest sense (not restricted to the ethical sphere) describes the majestic, specifically divine character of His being, that which evokes in man religious awe. It is not a single attribute coordinated with others, but a peculiar aspect under which all the attributes can be viewed, that which renders them distinct from anything analogous in the creature (1 Samuel 2:2; Hosea 11:9). In this way **holiness** becomes closely associated with the **power of God**, indeed sometimes becomes synonymous with divine power equals **omnipotence** (Exodus 15:11; Number 20:12), and especially in Ezekiel, where God's "holy name" is often equivalent to His renown for power, hence, interchangeable with His "great name" (Ezekiel 36:20-24). The objective Spirit as a distinct hypostasis and the executive of the Godhead on its one side also represents the divine power (Isaiah 32:15; Matthew 12:28; Luke 1:35; 4:14; Acts 10:38; Romans 15:19; 1 Corinthians 2:4).

In the New Testament: "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 18:27); "Nothing is impossible with God" (the Revised Version (British and American) "**No word from God shall be void of power,**" Luke 1:37).

Indirectly the omnipotence of God is implied in the effect ascribed to faith (Matthew 17:20 "Nothing shall be impossible unto you"; Mark 9:23 "All things are possible to him that believeth"), because faith puts the divine power at the disposal of the believer. On its subjective side, the principle of inexhaustible power finds expression in Isaiah 40:28: God is not subject to weariness. Because God is conscious of the unlimited extent of His resources nothing is marvelous in His eyes (Zechariah 8:6). http://www.preceptaustive.org/Titus_19.htm - Faithful: (4103)pistos.

Chapter 16

God is Omnipresent

This is an eminently practical attribute of God which describes His presence in every place at the same Time! As a result, there is nowhere in the universe that lies outside of God's cognition and care. God can be scoffed at, mocked at, disbelieved, impugned, spurned, blasphemed, etc., but ultimately, He is unavoidable! Every man must prepare to meet God now through the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ as Savior or later in Christ as Judge (2Timothy 4:1-note, John 5:22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27)! As **William Secker** put it "A man may hide God from himself, and yet he cannot hide from God." **Tozer** adds that "The notion that there is a God but that he is comfortably far away is not embodied in the doctrinal statement of any Christian church."

God is everywhere. His circumference is nowhere, but his center is everywhere. (Spurgeon goes on to say) I heard the story of a man, a blasphemer, profane, an atheist, who was converted singularly by a sinful action of his. He had written on a piece of paper, "God is nowhere," and ordered his child to read it, for he would make him an atheist too. The child spelled it, "God is n-o-w h-e-r-e—God is now here." It was a truth instead of a lie, and the arrow pierced the man's own heart (For more of Spurgeon's comments click [Omnipresent](#).)

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones rightly said that

This is the fundamental thing, the most serious thing of all, that we are always in the presence of God.

Thus, we are introduced to one of the more difficult doctrines of the Bible—the doctrine of God's omnipresence. "Where is God?" This is a very important question. The seeker wants to know? and so does the skeptic and so does the guilty sinner so he can run the other way. And so, does every hurting person who feels abandoned by the Almighty. "Where is God when I need Him?"

Tony Evans comments that these three attributes work in tandem: He knows what needs to be done—that's **omniscience**.

He has the power to do it—that's **omnipotence**.

He's always wherever he needs to be to do whatever needs to be done—that's **omnipresence**.

Satan is Not Omnipresent - But we're not alone in this. Only God is omnipresent. All other beings are restricted to a given place at a given Time. Satan is limited. He is not omnipresent. There is no such thing as "partial omnipresence." Because Satan is a created being, he is limited and localized in the spirit realm, as are all the angels and demons. This should give comfort to those who feel overwhelmed by attacks they believe to be Satanic in nature.

While we would surely agree that Satan works today through a vast array of spirit beings who work his infernal will, he himself is no more omnipresent than you or I.

The Lord Our God is everywhere at once.

He is everywhere present all the Time. That is a truly awesome thought.

Most people are not comfortable with an omnipresent God. That's why they have idols. They want a god they can see and feel and touch. A god they can understand. A god they can control. A god made by their own hands.

But you can't fully understand the God of the Bible. And you certainly can't control him.

God is Not Limited by Time or space - Perhaps the greatest statement of omnipresence is found in the inspiring words of Psalm 139:7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me, and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

As David contemplates how God knows him inside and out, he wonders where he might go to hide from the Lord. Heaven, hell, east, west, the far side of the ocean—it doesn't matter for the Lord is already there. What about the darkness of the night? The darkness will not deter God, for "darkness is as light to you." There are several important implications of this truth.

First, God cannot be contained in a building.

Solomon said as much in the dedication of the First Temple in Jerusalem. Sometimes I hear well-meaning people call the church the "house of God," as if his

presence somehow specially dwells in a building made by the hands of man. But a church is not a holy place in the sense that the temple was a holy place. Today God dwells among his people and in his people wherever they are and wherever they go.

Second, God cannot be localized in a city or a nation.

This truth should keep us from boasting too much in our supposed moral superiority. God is not an American nor does he exist to defend and perpetuate our form of government.

Third, God cannot be reduced to an image or a statue.

This is why the Second Commandment warns against making "graven images." It is also why the Jews refused to make any pictures, drawings or statues of God. The danger of idolatry is so great that J. I. Packer in *Knowing God* warns against the danger of religious pictures, even innocent drawings of Jesus. The truth is, we don't know what he looked like and any picture or statues meant as an "aid to devotion" may somehow lead to superstitious worship.

Fourth, he is always present whether we believe it or not.

Fifth, he is present even in the worst moments of life.

God's omnipresence means that he is there in the midst of suffering, pain, sickness, sorrow, anger, grief, bitterness, divorce, betrayal, murder, rape, sexual abuse, cancer, AIDS, abortion, warfare, famine, earthquakes, fires, floods, every natural disaster, accidents, personal loss, and at the moment of death.

Sixth, he is always available to us wherever we go, 24 hours a day.

We always have his full attention, we don't have to make an appointment, he's never too busy to hear us when we pray, he's never preoccupied with other problems

Seventh, we may rely fully on him no matter how desperate our situation may be.

God is always present everywhere in the universe –

Or consider radio waves. They are invisible yet everywhere. We don't realize

that in this room there are thousands of signals floating through the air.

Microwave, shortwave, AM-FM, TV, cellular phone, CB, police, fire, ultra-low frequency, and ultra-high frequency. Tens of thousands of signals float through the ether all around us. They are there all the Time. We aren't aware of them because we don't have a receiver tuned in to the right frequency. Likewise, God is always there, but we're not tuned in to his frequency, so we don't sense his presence all the Time.

God can be ignored but he cannot be avoided –

Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”

God promises to draw near to anyone who will draw near to him - God is always near his people. This promise is repeated in many places in scripture. Hebrews 13:5b says,

“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” In Matthew 28:20b Jesus promised, “I am with you always.”

And in Deuteronomy 31:6, as he was nearing the end of his long life, Moses reminded his people, “Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” **"Open His Eyes, Lord"** - He is also near when we least expect him. In this regard, I often think of Elisha and his scared servant at Dothan. 2Kings 6:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 tells how the mighty armies of Aram had completely surrounded the people of God at Dothan. When his servant saw the enemy drawn up on every side, he cried out in fear, "What will we do?" Elisha told him not to fear because "those that are with us are more than those who are with them" (2Kings 6:16). Then Elisha prayed that the servant's eyes might be supernaturally opened. They were, and as he looked up, he "saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (2Kings 6:17).

Something like that needs to happen to many of us. We need a glimpse of God's presence all around us—even in the midst of difficult circumstances. Maybe you don't need a new neighborhood or a new job or a new school. You need to see

the angels of God surrounding you right now!

But when he finally comes home, and she sees him for the first Time, she cries, "John, you're home." Why the change from "he" to "you"? Because John has come through the door.

Now listen to these familiar words:

"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me" (Psalm 23:1, 2, 3, 4).

Chapter 17

God is Omniscient

Omniscience is from the Latin **omnis** = “all” combined with **scientia** = “knowledge” the combination meaning to know all or to have perfect knowledge.

God’s omniscience is His knowledge of all things including actual and possible, past, present, and future (foreknowledge).

God is all knowing, and His knowledge is in no way restricted by temporal considerations. He knows and sees the past, the present, and the future with equal clarity and absolute certainty. To Him, all is the present.

God knows all things perfectly (Psalm 147:5; Job 37:16; 1 John 3:20), sees and hears everything (Exodus 3:7; 2 Chronicles 16:9; Psalm 34:15; 102:19, 20; Proverbs 5:21; 15:3; Jeremiah. 16:16), knows from all eternity the entire plan of the ages and the part of every man in that plan (Isaiah 46:9, 10, 11; 48:3, 4, 5, 6, 7; Acts 15:18; Ephesians 1:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12).

God has perfect knowledge of each individual person and of all his ways (Psalm 33:13, 14, 15; 139:1-16; Proverbs 5:21), his words (Psalm 139:4; Matthew 12:35, 36, 37),

his thoughts (1Chronicles 28:9; Psalm 94:11; 139:1, 2; Matthew 9:4), his afflictions and trials (Genesis 21:17, 18, 19; 1Corinthians 10:13; Revelation 2:9, 10, 13) and his future actions and final state (Genesis 18:19; Exodus 3:19; Isa. 44:28-45:5; Matthew 25:31, 32, 33, 34, 41; Acts 27:22, 23, 24, 25).

God’s omniscience means that nothing anyone does escapes the knowledge of God and that one day we will be called to give an account at the bar of God for God will deal with each according to the truth of his life (Romans 2:2, 3, 6; 14:10, 11, 12). For more information on the various judgments, see **The Doctrine of the Judgments**.

God's omniscience gives us confidence in prayer knowing that He will not lose our prayers and that He always knows the best answer, even knowing our needs before we ask (Matthew 6:31, 32, 33, 34; Isaiah 65:24).

The Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics has an interesting note on God's omnipotence noting that...

The quality of being all-powerful, normally understood as the power to perform any action that is logically possible and consistent with God's essential nature. Omnipotence is one of the traditional attributes of God. Many attempts to analyze this property have been made, centering on the "paradox of the stone"—a vivid illustration of the logical difficulties raised by omnipotence. The paradox of the stone begins with the question "Can God create a stone that he cannot move?" If so, there is something God cannot do (move the stone). But if God cannot create such a stone, then there also appears to be something God cannot do. The source of the paradox is the question as to whether it is possible for an omnipotent being to limit itself.

Tacit Assumption and Explicit Affirmation

Scripture everywhere teaches the absolute universality of the divine knowledge. In the historical books, although there is no abstract formula, and occasional anthropomorphic references to God's taking knowledge of things occur (Genesis 11:5; 18:21; Deuteronomy 8:3), none the less the principle is everywhere presupposed in what is related about God's cognizance of the doings of man, about the hearing of prayer, the disclosing of the future (1Samuel 16:7; 23:9, 10, 11, 12; 1Kings 8:39; 2 Chronicles 16:9). Explicit affirmation of the principle is made in the Psalter, the Prophets, the chokhmah literature and in the New Testament. This is due to the increased internalizing of religion, by which its hidden side, to which the divine omniscience corresponds, receives greater emphasis (Job 26:6; 28:24; 34:22; Psalm 139:12; 147:4; Proverbs 15:3,11; Isaiah 40:26; Acts 1:24; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 2:23).

Extends to All Spheres

This absolute universality is affirmed with reference to the various categories that comprise within themselves all that is possible or actual. It extends to God's own being, as well as to what exists outside of Him in the created world. God has perfect possession in the consciousness of His own being. The unconscious finds no place in Him (Acts 15:18; 1John 1:5). Next, to Himself, God knows the world in its totality. This knowledge extends to small as well as to great affairs (Matthew 6:8,32; 10:30); to the hidden heart and mind of man as well as to that which is open and manifest (Job 11:11; 34:21,23; Psalm 14:2; 17:2; 33:13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18; 102:19; 139:1, 2, 3, 4; Proverbs 5:21; 15:3; Isaiah 29:15; Jeremiah 17:10; Amos 4:13; Luke 16:15;

Acts 1:24; 1Thessalonians 2:4; Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 2:23). It extends to all the divisions of Time, the past, present and future alike (Job 14:17; Psalm 56:8; Isaiah 41:22, 23, 24; 44:6, 7, 8; Jeremiah 1:5; Hosea 13:12; Malachi 3:16). It embraces that which is contingent from the human viewpoint as well as that which is certain (1Samuel 23:9, 10, 11, 12; Matthew 11:22,23).

Mode of the Divine Knowledge

Scripture brings God's knowledge into connection with His omnipresence.

Ps 139 is the clearest expression of this. Omniscience is the omnipresence of cognition (Jeremiah 23:23). It is also closely related to God's eternity, for the latter makes Him in His knowledge independent of the limitations of time (Isaiah 43:8, 9, 10, 11, 12). God's creative relation to all that exists is represented as underlying His omniscience (Psalm 33:15; 97:9; 139:13; Isaiah 29:15). His all-comprehensive purpose forms the basis of His knowledge of all events and developments (Isaiah 41:22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27; Amos 3:7).

The Bible nowhere represents Him as attaining to knowledge by reasoning, but everywhere as simply knowing. From what has been said about the immanent sources of the divine knowledge, it follows that the latter is not some posteriori derived from its objects, as all human knowledge based on experience is, but is exercised without receptivity or dependence. In knowing, as well as in all other activities of His nature, God is sovereign and self-sufficient. In cognizing the reality of all things, He needs not wait upon the things but draws His knowledge directly from the basis of reality as it lies in Himself. While the two are thus closely connected it is nevertheless of importance to distinguish between God's knowledge of Himself and God's knowledge of the world, and also between His knowledge of the actual and His knowledge of the possible. These distinctions mark off theistic conception of omniscience from the pantheistic idea regarding it. God is not bound up in His life with the world in such a sense as to have no scope of activity beyond it.

Religious Importance

The divine omniscience is most important for the religious life. The very essence of religion as communion with God depends on His all-comprehensive

cognizance of the life of man at every moment. Hence, it is characteristic of the irreligious to deny the omniscience of God (Psalm 10:11,12; 94:7, 8, 9; Isaiah 29:15; Jeremiah 23:23; Ezekiel 8:12; 9:9). Especially along three lines, this fundamental religious importance reveals itself:

- (a) it lends support and comfort when the pious suffer from the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of men;
- (b) it acts as a deterrent to those tempted by sin, especially secret sin, and becomes a judging principle to all hypocrisy and false security;
- (c) it furnishes the source from which man's desire for self-knowledge can obtain satisfaction (Psalm 19:12; 51:6; 139:23,24).

Proverbs 15:3 says that The eyes of JEHOVAH are in every place, watching the evil and the good.

Chapter 18

God is a Sovereign God

Sovereignty is defined by Webster's as supreme power, especially over a body politic. It describes freedom from external control or of other controlling influences. God is the ultimate authority in every sphere and place. It follows that all creation is subject to Him and that all creation is answerable to Him. As an aside, what verb do you see in the word **sovereign**? "Reign" of course and this verb captures the essence of this divine attribute.!

The **1828 Edition of Webster's** defines **Sovereign** as Supreme in power; possessing supreme dominion; as a sovereign ruler of the universe. Supreme; superior to all others; chief. God is the sovereign good of all who love and obey him. Supremely efficacious; superior to all others; predominant; effectual; as a sovereign remedy."

Easton's Bible Dictionary says **Sovereignty** is God's absolute right to do all things according to his own good pleasure (Daniel 4:25, 35; Romans 9:15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23; 1Timothy 6:15; Re 4:11).

New Unger's Bible Dictionary says that regarding the **Sovereignty** of God, that He is under no external restraint whatsoever. He is the Supreme Dispenser of all events. All forms of existence are within the scope of His dominion. And yet this is not to be viewed in any such way as to abridge the reality of the moral freedom of God's responsible creatures or to make men anything else than the arbiters of their own eternal destinies. God has seen fit to create beings with the power of choice between good and evil. He rules over them in justice and wisdom and grace. (Unger, M. F., Harrison, R. K., Vos, H. F., Barber, C. J., & Unger, M. F. The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Chicago: Moody Press)

God's Sovereignty is a truth that touches all of life. It is a truth meant to be digested so it becomes a part of our very being. We begin with the word itself. The word "sovereign" is both a noun and a verb. As a verb it means "to rule," and as a noun, it means "king" or "master" or "absolute ruler." To say that God is sovereign means God is in Charge of the Entire Universe All the Time. In the words of the

Westminster Confession of Faith, "He ordains whatsoever comes to pass."

This doctrine brings us face to face with the problem of evil and free will. If God is sovereign, why is there evil in the universe? If man has free will, how can God be sovereign? Christians have debated these questions for centuries. Suffice it to say that God is sovereign, and you are truly responsible for all the choices you make. Often, we don't understand how they work together, but they do.

Finally, this is an empowering doctrine. If you believe God is sovereign, no mere human can intimidate you. You'll respect authority, but you won't cringe before it. What gave David the courage to go down into the Elah Valley and face that giant Goliath? He said, "I come to you in the name of the God of Israel, the Lord of hosts?" David had a God so big that Goliath was like a midget to him.

SCRIPTURES ON SOVEREIGNTY:

For the greatest benefit from the following Scriptures, read the text, not passively but instead consciously and actively "interrogating" the text (interrogate with the 5W'S & H), making a list in your life journal of what the Spirit of Christ (Ro 8:9-note) teaches you (1John 2:27, John 14:26, 16:13) about God and about man. Obey any instructions or commands you encounter, as you allow the Holy Spirit to renew your mind and to "cultivate faithfulness" (NAS, Psalm 37:3-see note). Then offer prayers and praise to your Father for graciously teaching you these profitable, eternal truths (cp 2Timothy 3:16, 17-notes). 1Samuel 2:2, 3, 54, 5, 6, 7, 8; Job 42:2; Psalm 103:19; 115:3; 135:6; Daniel 4:31, 32, 35; Isaiah 46:9, 10; 14:24, 27; 40:25; 43:13; Ephesians 1:11

God's sovereignty overrules every calamity.

Let's take a brief look at His sovereignty over historical events. Did you know that two great leaders, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and President Franklin Roosevelt, almost died before the World War II began? In December 1931, Churchill was struck by a car as he crossed Fifth Avenue in New York City. In Miami in December 1933, an assassin's bullet barely missed Roosevelt and killed the man standing beside him. Both leaders survived and contributed mightily to the defeat of Hitler. Why did they survive to lead their nations in this Time of crisis? Because God was in control back then and He is still in control. God is sovereign over nations causing their leaders to rise and to fall (Daniel 2:21; 4:32, 33, 34, 35; 5:21). The

prophet Habakkuk complained that it didn't seem right for God to use wicked Babylon to discipline Israel, but God assured him that this did not mean evil would triumph. God was in control and would one day bring about perfect justice

"Is it not indeed from the LORD of hosts That peoples toil for fire, And nations grow weary for nothing? For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea. (Habakkuk 2:13, 14).

Chapter 19

God is Transcendent

Transcendent is defined by the modern Webster's dictionary "as exceeding usual limits; extending or lying beyond the limits of ordinary experience."

The more Bibliocentric 1828 Webster's Dictionary defines **transcendent** as Very excellent; superior or supreme in excellence; surpassing others; as transcendent worth; transcendent valor. Clothed with transcendent brightness. Transcendental quantities, among geometricians, are indeterminate ones, or such as cannot be expressed or fixed to any constant equation."

Transcendence is a theological term referring to the relation of God to creation. God is “**other**,” “**different**” **from** His creation. He is independent and different from His creatures (Isaiah 55:8, 9). He is higher than and surpasses in every respect His creation. He is beyond it and not limited by it or to it. This simple understanding of this awesome attribute makes it all the more humbling & praiseworthy that His transcendence never removes Him from intimate involvement in His peoples’ lives. Remember that our transcendent God is also the omnipresent God & is never farther than a prayer away.

God’s **transcendence** and immanence (see below) are both affirmed in Ephesians where Paul writes that there is...one God and Father of all Who is over all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4:6- note)

Transcendence is the attribute of God in which He is described as distinct from His Creation while **immanence** is the idea that the creation is forever dependent on God, and He is always involved in it. Wayne Grudem writes the following in regard to God's **immanence**...God is also very much involved in the creation, for it is continually dependent on Him for its existence and its functioning. The technical term used to speak of God’s involvement in creation is the word **immanent** meaning “remaining in” creation. The God of the Bible is no abstract deity removed from, and uninterested in his creation. The Bible is the story of God’s involvement with his creation, and particularly the people in it. Job affirms that even the animals and

plants depend on God: “In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind” (Job 12:10). In the New Testament, Paul affirms that God “gives to all men life and breath and everything” and that “in him, we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:25, 28). Indeed, in Christ “all things hold together” (Colossian 1:17-note), and he is continually “upholding the universe by his word of power” (Hebrews 1:3-note)...

Deism generally holds that God created the universe and is far greater than the universe (God is “**transcendent**”). Some deists also agree that God has moral standards and will ultimately hold people accountable on a day of judgment. But they deny God’s present involvement in the world, thus leaving no place for his **immanence** in the created order. Rather, God is viewed as a divine clockmaker who wound up the “clock” of creation at the beginning but then left it to run on its own. While deism does affirm God’s **transcendence** in some ways, it denies almost the entire history of the Bible, which is the history of God’s active involvement in the world. Many “lukewarm” or nominal Christians today are, in effect, practical deists, since they live lives almost totally devoid of genuine prayer, worship, fear of God, or moment-by-moment trust in God to care for needs that arise. (Grudem, W: Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine. IVP: Zondervan, 1994 or Logos)

The Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms says that **immanence** is... The idea that God is present in, close to and involved with creation. Unlike **pantheism**, which teaches that God and the world are one or that God is the “soul” (animating principle) of the world, Christian theology teaches that God is constantly involved with creation without actually becoming exhausted by creation or ceasing to be divine in any way.

Read **Psalm 139** and you will observe that David readily accepted the apparent "paradox" (to our finite minds) of a **transcendent** God Who is also **near**. He acknowledged God as One who fills the entire universe, yet saw the Lord as constantly, pervasively present with His servants. God is **NEAR**, observing every act, conscious of our every thought. God is **TRANSCENDENT**, far above the highest heaven.

Yet God is also totally present in the saint’s "here and now", giving each of

us His undivided attention! What an awesome God we are privileged to worship & serve.

God is in all and over all. Nothing has an independent existence that transcends Him, not even Truth or Love. God is the ultimate value. He does not set, for example, the standard of righteousness; He is the standard of righteousness.

What happens when man loses sight of God's Transcendence?

"The problem that arises in a view of the world that is tacitly closed to any transcendent reality is that if suffering occurs it must be resolved in this life. That means it must be (1) justified by the conviction that everyone gets what he or she deserves, (2) justified on the basis of some compensation within life or (3) denied as unreal and illusory. Those three responses are **nontranscendent religious options**, as well as explanations within a secular worldview." (A. J. Conyers, *The Eclipse of Heaven*. Inter Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois)

Transcendence - The attribute of God that refers to being wholly and distinctly separate from creation (although always actively involved in and with it as well). The declaration that God is transcendent means that God is "above" the world and comes to creation from "beyond." During the medieval era, God's transcendence was especially emphasized, as is evident in the architecture of the great gothic cathedrals with their high, arched ceilings that lift one's gaze upward. (Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms.)

Transcendence - That which is higher than or surpasses other things. What is transcendent is thus relative to what is transcended. God is conceived by traditional theologians as being transcendent with respect to the created universe, meaning that he is outside the universe and that no part of the universe is identical to him or a part of him. To think of God as transcendent with respect to Time is to conceive him as Timeless. Immanuel Kant believed that God was transcendent in the sense of being beyond the possibility of any human experience. Theologians have usually balanced an emphasis on God's transcendence with an emphasis on God's immanence within the created world as embodied in his knowledge of and action within that world. In the twentieth century, some process theologians and feminist theologians criticized the claim that God is transcendent in favor of a view that sees God and the world as intimately united. (Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics & Philosophy of Religion)

As **Transcendent** God is independent of, above and distinct from this universe; He is outside, above, and before this Time-space universe. This is seen from the name Yahweh by which God revealed Himself to Israel in the Old Testament.

Most scholars suggest the basic meaning of this name is “I Am that I Am,” which would stress God’s transcendent independence and existence (Exodus 3:14). God’s transcendence is also expressed in the following passages:

Isaiah 46:8 Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. 9 Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient Times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;

Psalm 115:3

But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

As **Immanent** God pervades and sustains the universe, yet He is always distinct from it. He is everywhere, yet not in everything. He is personally and intimately involved, yet distinct.

Proverbs 5:21

For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He watches all his paths.

Psalm 33:13

The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men; 14 From His dwelling place He looks out On all the inhabitants of the earth.

Romans 11:34

For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? 35 Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Chapter 20

God is a God of Wrath

Wrath is "the personal manifestation of God's holy, moral character in judgment against sin. Wrath is neither an impersonal process nor irrational and fitful like anger. It is in no way vindictive or malicious. It is holy indignation—God's anger directed against sin. God's wrath is an expression of His holy love. If God is not a God of wrath, His love is no more than frail, worthless sentimentality; the concept of mercy is meaningless, and the Cross was a cruel and unnecessary experience for His Son." (Nelson's new illustrated Bible dictionary. Nashville: T. Nelson) (See also Holman Bible Dictionary)

Paul addressing even "religious" readers who may not be truly regenerate warns that "because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up **wrath** for yourself in the **day of wrath** and revelation of **the righteous judgment of God**, Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality (note: their deeds don't save them but are external evidence of internal regeneration), eternal life but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, **wrath** and indignation." (Romans 2:5-8 - notes)

God is glorified in the display of His Wrath: In Romans 9 Paul asks the rhetorical question "What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?"

Many Christians feel as if they have to apologize for this doctrine. Some think it a blemish on God's character. Others think that God's wrath is inconsistent with his love.

The Bible says more about wrath than about love. Jesus spoke more about hell than about heaven.

We may speculate as to the reasons behind those two facts, but no amount of reasoning can change the truth. The Bible is filled with warnings about God's wrath

and about eternal judgment. I would not be a faithful pastor if I did not deal with this topic. God has made no secret of his wrath, and neither should we.

The Meaning of God's Wrath - Let's begin with a simple definition of wrath as one of God's attributes. It's important to get a proper definition because when we use the word wrath we tend to think of uncontrolled anger. While that may be human wrath, it is far from the truth about God's wrath. Here's a working definition: God's wrath is his settled hostility toward sin in all its various manifestations. To say it is "settled" hostility means that God's holiness cannot and will not coexist with sin in any form whatsoever. God's wrath is his holy hatred of all that is unholy. It is his righteous indignation at everything that is unrighteous.

Please note these distinctions. God's wrath is not?

Uncontrollable rage. Vindictive bitterness. God losing his temper.

In fact, the Bible says in more than one place that God is "slow to anger" (Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 103:8). God never "loses his temper" the way we do. Wrath is God's "natural" response to sin in the universe. He cannot overlook it, he cannot wink at it, he cannot pretend it is not there.

Wrath is what happens when holiness meets sin!

Wrath is what happens when justice meets rebellion!

Wrath is what happens when righteousness meets unrighteousness!

Wrath is what happens when perfect good meets pure evil!

As long as God is God, he cannot overlook sin. As long as God is God, he cannot stand by indifferently while his creation is destroyed. As long as God is God, he cannot dismiss lightly those who trample his holy will. As long as God is God, he cannot wink when men mock his name. (For the entire sermon by Dr. Pritchard see A Forgotten Doctrine: The Wrath of God - Romans 1:18, 19, 20)

Ray Stedman writes that "It is the job of the prophet to reveal to us the character of God. The prophets unfold for us the divine attributes and each sees God in a different light. As you read through the prophets, therefore, you are seeing one facet after another, flashing like a diamond in the sunlight, of the mighty character and attributes of an eternal God. Now the attribute which the prophet Nahum was given to reveal was God's anger. There is no doctrine quite as repugnant to people today as that of the **anger of God**. This is one doctrine which many would like to forget. There are some who picture God as a kindly gentleman with a merry twinkle in his eye who cannot bear the thought of punishing anyone or judging anyone. Nevertheless, it was Nahum's task to unfold the **anger of God** and in this prophecy, the God of Sinai flashes forth in awful fury, a God before whom man must stand silent and trembling. You cannot read this prophecy without sensing something of the solemnity of this tremendous picture of God".

From **International Standard Bible Encyclopedia**:

Divine Wrath: Wrath is used with reference to both God and man. When used of God it is to be understood that there is the complete absence of that caprice and unethical quality so prominent in the anger attributed to the gods of the heathen and to man. The **divine wrath** is to be regarded as the natural expression of the **divine nature**, which is **absolute holiness**, manifesting itself against the willful, high-handed, deliberate, inexcusable sin and iniquity of mankind. **God's wrath** is always regarded in the Scripture as the **just, proper, and natural expression of His holiness and righteousness** which must always, under all circumstances, and at all costs be maintained. It is, therefore, a righteous indignation and compatible with the holy and righteous nature of God (Numbers 11:1-10; Deuteronomy 29:27; 2Samuel 6:7; Isaiah 5:25; 42:25; Jeremiah 44:6; Psalms 79:6). The element of **love and compassion** is **always closely connected with God's anger**; if we rightly estimate the divine anger we must unhesitatingly pronounce it to be but the expression and measure of that love (compare Jeremiah 10:24; Ezekiel 23; Amos 3:2).

Divine Wrath Consistent with Love: Wrath or anger, as pertaining to God, is very much more prominent in the Old Testament than in the New Testament. This is to be accounted for probably because the New Testament magnifies the grace and love of God as contrasted with His wrath; at least love is more prominent than wrath in

the revelation and teaching of Christ and His apostles. Nevertheless, it must not be thought that the element of wrath, as a quality of the divine nature, is by any means overlooked in the New Testament because of the prominent place there given to love. On the contrary, the **wrath of God** is intensified because of the more wonderful manifestation of His grace, mercy, and love in the gift of His Son Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. God is not love only: He is also righteous; yea, "Our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29); "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31). No effeminate, sentimental view of the Fatherhood of God or of His mercy and loving-kindness can exclude the manifestation of His just, righteous and holy anger against sin and the sinner because of his transgression (1Peter 1:17; Hebrews 10:29).

One thing only can save the sinner from the outpouring of God's righteous anger against sin in the day of visitation, namely, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the divinely-appointed Redeemer of the world (John 3:36; Romans 1:16, 17, 18; 5:9).

Nor should the sinner think that the postponement or the omission (or seeming omission) of the visitation of God's wrath against sin in the present means the total abolition of it in the future. Postponement is not abolition; indeed, the sinner, who continually rejects Jesus Christ and the salvation which God has provided in Him, is simply `treasuring up' wrath for himself "in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who (one day) will render to every man according to his works: to them that obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil" (Romans 2:5, 6, 7, 8, 9; 2Peter 3:10; Revelation 6:16,17; 16:19; 19:15).

God's anger while slow, and

not easily aroused (Psalm 103:8; Isaiah 48:9; Jonah 4:2; Nahum 1:3)

is to be dreaded (Psalm 2:12; 76:7; 90:11; Matthew 10:28);

is not to be provoked (Jeremiah 7:19; 1 Cor 10:22);

when visited, in the present life, should be borne with submission (2Samuel 24:17; Lamentations 3:39,43; Micah 7:9);

prayer should be earnestly made for deliverance from it (Psalm 39:10; 80:4; Daniel 9:16; Habakkuk 3:2);

It should be the means of leading man to repentance (Isaiah 42:24,25;

Jeremiah 4:8).

Certain specific things are said especially to arouse God's anger:

continual provocation (Numbers 32:14),

unbelief (Psalm 78:21,22; Hebrews 3:18,19),

impenitence (Isaiah 9:13,14; Romans 2:5), apostasy (Hebrews 10:26,27),

idolatry (Deuteronomy 32:19,20,22; 2 Ki 22:17; Jeremiah 44:3),

sin in God's people (Psalm 89:30-32; Isaiah 47:6),

and it is manifested especially against opponents of the gospel of Jesus Christ
(Psalm 2:2,3,5; 1Thessalonians 2:16).

References

Holy Bible: King James Translation Holy Bible: New Living Bible translation.

Additional comments are taken from:

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