

AlbertMohler.com

# No Ordinary God—No Heavenly Spectator

*Our concept of God inevitably determines our philosophical worldview. The question of the existence or non-existence of God is primary, but so is the question of God's power and character. Theologians speak of the "attributes" of God, meaning the particulars about God's revealed nature. If we start with the right concept of God, the worldview will be properly aligned. If the concept of God is sub-biblical, the worldview will be sub-biblical as well.*

**Thursday, June 17, 2004**

Our concept of God inevitably determines our philosophical worldview. The question of the existence or non-existence of God is primary, but so is the question of God's power and character. Theologians speak of the "attributes" of God, meaning the particulars about God's revealed nature. If we start with the right concept of God, the worldview will be properly aligned. If the concept of God is sub-biblical, the worldview will be sub-biblical as well.

What more does the Bible reveal about God's nature? God not only knows all, but He is everywhere at once. God is always near to us, and we cannot escape His presence. We refer to this as God's omnipresence. King David knew this, and asked: "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 take 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 139:7-10] God's omnipresence reminds us that all creation is His, and that He is never far from us.

Stephen Charnock saw this clearly when he explained that "God is essentially everywhere present in heaven and earth. If God be, He must be somewhere; that which is nowhere, is nothing. Since God is, He is in the world; not in one part of it; for then He would be circumscribed by it: if in the world, and only there, though it be a great space, He were also limited."

There is far more to say, for God is not only omnipresent and omniscient, He is also omnipotent. The Lord is almighty and holds all power. In the Old Testament He is revealed as El Shaddai—God almighty. As Nebuchadnezzar reminds us, "no one can ward off His hand." He is the source of all that is, and of every power. There is no power in heaven or on earth which can thwart His plans, frustrate His will, or force His hand.

Kings and earthly leaders may think themselves powerful, but like Nebuchadnezzar they will discover their limits. Nations exult in their power, but, as the prophet Isaiah stated, "All the nations are as nothing before Him, they are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless." [Isaiah 40:17] This is a cogent and prophetic word to our own nation. The Lord is the only all-powerful One, and all the nations will one day bow before Him. No force, no power, no king, no president, no nation, nor even all the powers of the universe combined can stay His hand or force His action.

In his vision, the Apostle John saw the great multitude of heaven "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." [Revelation 19:6, KJV]

We cannot speak of God as if there could be anything He cannot do. God is not doing the best He can under the circumstances—He is the all powerful One, whose power and might cannot be thwarted or reduced.

God is revealed to us in terms of these biblical attributes, such as omniscience and omnipotence. To these already listed must be added His faithfulness, goodness, patience, love, mercy, supremacy, grace, glory, infinitude, majesty, wisdom, and wrath.

At the foundation of all these attributes are two great truths of which we must be ever mindful. The first of these is God's total, final, and undiluted sovereignty. Our Lord is not only the Creator of all—He rules over all. God's sovereignty is the exercise of His rightful authority. His omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence are the instruments of His sovereignty. Nebuchadnezzar's great discovery was that there is one true sovereign of all creation—and His name is not Nebuchadnezzar. The one true and living God is the sole sovereign, and He shares His sovereignty with no other power. What was Nebuchadnezzar's response? "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

Job discovered this when he was called to answer God. Was God really able to rescue Job, and was He really sovereign after all? Job knew, and he rightly answered, "I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted." [Job 42:2] The sovereignty of God is one of the most compromised doctrines within the church, and this is to our everlasting shame. So many who think themselves Christians believe in a God who means well, but cannot seem to make His will determinative, or a God who is needy, and requires our help to accomplish His will, or a God who is not quite sure what He wants done in certain circumstances. This may be the God of much modern theology, but this is not the God of the Bible.

---

Content Copyright © 2002-2010, R. Albert Mohler, Jr.

