



Throughout the scriptures we read and learn that God is an “omnipresent” God. The term “omnipresent” literal means to be everywhere, at the same time, at all times. It also means to be “all enveloping.” The scriptures do not expressly use the word “omnipresent,” however they describe this aspect of God many times. David writes in Psalm 139:7, “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or

*whither shall I flee from thy presence?” In Jeremiah 23:23, 24 the Lord, Himself, declares, “Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? <sup>24</sup> 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.”*

Even though we as disciples of Jesus and sons and daughters of the Most High God express our belief in the omnipresence of God, we can never fully grasp the concept of this aspect of God’s being. To be honest, I don’t think that we will ever be able to fully understand this along with other aspects of God such as His “omniscience” (all knowing), “omnipotence” (all powerful), etc. However, the fact remains, whether we totally understand it or not, God is “omnipresent” – everywhere, at the same time, at all times. In Hebrew, this aspect of God as being “omnipresent” is called “HaMakom” which literally means, “the Place.” It is actually one of the names of Yahweh – “HaMakom,” the Place. You may be asking yourself, “How does this relate to our understanding concerning God being omnipresent?” Well, let’s continue our discussion and see.

The Hebraic aspect of God’s omnipresent nature, HaMakom, is expressed in Jewish culture at what may seem to be an “odd” time. It is expressed to those who are mourning the death of a family member during the time when they are “sitting shiva.” The custom of “shiva” has long been a part of Jewish culture and tradition. The term “shiva” comes from the Hebrew word for “seven.” The Talmud states that it originated back in Genesis. They cite Genesis 7:10 concerning the time period that Noah waited to leave the ark. He waited seven days until the flood had subsided. They also cite Genesis 50:10 in which Joseph and his brothers mourned the death of their father Jacob for seven days.

When a Jewish person passes they bury the body as soon as possible immediately following the death of the individual. The time of “shiva” begins immediately after the burial and continues for the next seven days. The family gathers in a house (usually the house of the deceased) where friends and relatives will come and pay their respects and offer their condolences. It is at this time where many of those that come to do this, if not all, would recite this Hebraic prayer to each member of the grieving family.

***“HaMakom** yenachem et'chem b'toch shar avay'lay Tzion vee'Yerushalayim”*

*(“May **the Omnipresent** comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem”)*

In the Jewish tradition this simple prayer calls upon God to come and bring His comfort to those who are grieving and are in mourning. After all, there is only One who can truly understand the pain and anguish of an individual who is grieving the loss of their spouse or the loss of their son or daughter, mother or father. There is only One who can truly offer true comfort because He is the Comforter. Only our loving Father, who knows the secrets of our heart, is truly capable of fathoming such grief and then providing true comfort.

But why do they use the name “HaMakom” - the Omnipresent (literally, “The Place”) in this prayer of consolation? In calling upon “HaMakom” they pray that the person grieving would be blessed with a renewed awareness of God’s all enveloping presence, even in the grief-stricken place in which they are now in -- for that place, too, is HaMakom, the place of God.

So what does this all have to do with God being omnipresent? Why use the term “HaMakom - the Place?” When we think of the word “place” we automatically think of some type of geographical location such as a room or an area. We think of some kind of space that is to be used to contain or hold something. When used in reference to God, in which He is actually called and named “HaMakom,” it means that everything is contained and found in Him. God is not, and can never be, contained in anything. In other words God is **never in a place** put rather **He is “the Place” – HaMakom.** That is why we as believers in Jesus and sons and daughters of the Most High God are now “in Him.” Our identity is now found “in Him.” All that we are and ever will be is found “in Him.”

In John 14:1-3, as Jesus was imparting His final words to His disciples at the Last Supper, He told them, “*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to **prepare a place for you.** And if I go and **prepare a place for you,** I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*” Jesus was telling His disciples then and to all of His disciples throughout the ages, as well as to us today, that because of what He did at the cross, through His resurrection and ascension, He did it all for the purpose of restoring the relationship that was broken and bringing us back to that “Place,” back to the very presence of almighty God.

That “Place” (HaMakom) that Jesus refers to in John 14:1-3, is to be experienced by every believer on that day when Jesus returns for us, whether it be when we pass on from this life or upon Jesus’ second coming, whichever occurs first for the believer. However, experiencing that “Place” in God, HaMakom, may also be experienced every day in the believer’s life while on this earth. Through Jesus and by His blood we have access to being in the presence of God. We have access to HaMakom because through Jesus we are now in Him. We have been baptized into the Body of Christ. His spirit dwells within us and we now dwell within Him. How mind boggling and how awesome is that!!! Don’t even try to figure it out. It just is!!!

Our God is everywhere, at all times. He is omnipresent. It is not just a description of our God but it is who He is – it is His name - HaMakom. He is always there. It infers that He is the ultimate source of all things. All things originated from Him and all things were created by Him and to Him and for Him. Paul states in Romans 11:36, “*For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.*”

The scriptures refer to the “place” where God “dwells” in different ways. They call it His “pavilion” (Psalm 27:5; Psalm 31:20.) They refer to it as His “shelter” (Psalm 91:1). It is referred to as a place of refuge (Psalm 46:11). It is also referred to as the “secret place” of the Most High God. (Psalm 18:11; Psalm 81:7). All of these references when first looked at seem to tell us that God is “in” something; that there is a place that could actually contain Him and His presence. However, as mentioned previously and I ask you now, is there a place that can possibly contain an infinite, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent God? If we examine this with the understanding that all things were made by Him and are in Him then we must conclude that these terms are actually metaphors concerning God’s omnipresence. When the scriptures speak of these “places” where He “dwells,” they actually refer to God, Himself. These places - the “pavilion,” the “shelter” the “secret place” - are all to be found **in Him.** He is the “Place” – HaMakom. Let’s take a look at one of these “places” that are in HaMakom.

The term “secret place,” is translated from the Hebrew word, “cether” (sā'•ther) which means to be under a covering; to be hid, protected; being under the “umbrella” of God’s providential care; being in the presence of God; to take refuge in God. In the New Testament it comes from the word – “kryptē” (krü'p-tā) which means a crypt, a covered way, vault or cellar. In both definitions it refers to a place of safety and it infers that it is a good place to be. The question that arises from this is that if it is such a good place to be,

then why would God make it such a secret? Well, you see. That's just it. It really should not be a secret to the born again child of God. But where is it? How do I get there?

The answer is twofold. First, as we mentioned previously, through Jesus and the born again experience, we are already in HaMakom. Through Jesus we have rightful access to that "secret place." Second, is through worship. Worship is the place where the Most High dwells. He inhabits the praises and worship of His people. So, you see, it really isn't so secret. It is only secret to those whose attitude of heart towards the Living God is not correct. It is a secret to those whose lifestyle, in all that they do, is not a lifestyle of true worship in all they do. In short it is a secret to those who truly do not know their God. However, the worship that allows us to be in HaMakom is a worship that comes from a heart filled with true awestruck love, amazement and wonder. A worship where there is a genuine heart to heart, "deep calling to deep" relationship. That is the "secret place" of HaMakom.

Many times during our times of worship, I believe, we sincerely but yet erroneously, desire and cry out for God to come into our midst. That sounds so wonderful and is sometimes needful in times of prayer and intercession. However, when we truly worship Him as the true worshippers that He delights in and seeks after, our God desires to bring us to His "Place" in Him – in His heart. It is His desire to "take us to His place." It is there where we can experience our God in all of His fullness and glory. It is there where we can see things the way He sees them that will assist us in our times of prayer and intercession, as well as just living life in general. It is there in that "Place" (HaMakom) where we find true comfort, strength, joy and peace.

Many times when I am blessed to have the opportunity to facilitate times of worship, that is what I ask and desire of God – not so much that He comes into our place (our midst) but rather that He would delight in the attitude of our heart of worship so much so that He "takes us to His place" – HaMakom. We must remember that worship is not just times of singing and music but most importantly, true worship is a lifestyle and attitude of heart of obedience and desiring to live out the lifestyle that was role modeled to us by Jesus.

Yes, it is possible to be in two places at once. You can be at work, or at school, or in the marketplace, or in the gym, or outside in the yard and yes, even be in church, and also be in that "secret place" as long as the attitude of your heart is to do whatever you are doing as unto Him as an act of worship. That secret place is a place of true worship and communion with the "Most High God." It can be a time of intimacy no matter where you are or whatever place you may find yourself to be in while in this temporal world.

As we mentioned at the beginning of our discussion, our God, Yahweh Adonai, truly is omnipresent. The facts are in – Jesus has gone to "prepare a place" for every believer in Him who has now been restored back into relationship with the One who is "the Place." Our God is always there. He never leaves us nor forsakes us. There is no place we can go that He is not there. We cannot run or hide our face from Him because He is always there wherever we may try to run or hide. He is the greatest comforter in our times of stress and grief because He is always there. That is why He calls Himself the "I Am that I Am" simply because He is what He says He is. These facts alone should bring tremendous comfort to the heart of the believer as we journey through this life on earth. "*Let not your heart be troubled,*" for as sons and daughters of the Most High God, through the blood of Jesus, we have a place in the heart of "the Place" – HaMakom.