



O MY GOD!

OMNIPRESENT

OMNISCIENT

OMNIPOTENT

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES

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Introduction

What is God like? This is a question that has been asked throughout scripture and history alike.

In this series, we will look at the 'Big Os' of Christianity, drawing on Moses' experiences with Yahweh, the Desert and the Children of Israel in Exodus as we examine Our God Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent and O! My God.

From the New Testament, we will look at Jesus' own relationship with God in the latter part of John's Gospel and how that indeed patterns our own relationship with God, who continues true to character through the ages. We will take a quick detour into Acts as we look at the power of God poured out at Pentecost, giving energy and life to the Church.

It is Charles Wesley's hymn, *And Can it Be* and the popular usage of O! My God to punctuate modern life in colloquial usage that has led to the title of this season of studies, the guiding texts for which can be found here;

Exodus 3:1-15	The Call of Moses	God Omniscient
John 16:25-30	You Know All Things	God Omniscient
Exodus 13:17-22	The Pillar of Cloud and Fire	God Omnipresent
John 14:15-21	With You Forever	God Omnipresent
Exodus 14:5-31	The Exodus	God Omnipotent
Acts 2:1-16	Clothed with Power	God Omnipotent
Exodus 19:3-6 & Exodus 20:1-2	My Treasured Possession: <i>I am the Lord your God</i>	O! My God
John 20:17-28	My Lord and My God!	O! My God

Many Thanks to Peter Thompson who had the vision for this series and his encouragement to take on such a huge theme. Peter has also provided material for the first two studies in this booklet, which we hope you find useful and even enjoyable.

With love and prayers that God will bless you as you seek to know him;

Omniscient: The All-knowing God

Welcome

Begin by listing some methods of communication or ways by which you receive information. How many can you list? Which seem to be the most effective?

Pray and Worship (see page 11)

God had been preparing Moses for what lay ahead, but it was a shock when God called him. We should never be surprised when we hear God speaking to us. God has been preparing us for His work in His time and our response must always be to trust and follow His leading. God's voice may catch us unprepared; we are often busily occupied!

Have you ever been conscious of God speaking to you when you were not expecting it? What did you notice and how did you respond?

Read Exodus 3:1-10 in your own Bible

God can speak to us when we least expect it, but He never calls us to do anything for which He has not made preparation and has provided us with all we need. God's promises are certain. As we see the burning bush, we realise that God works in ways that are beyond our human understanding. We should never be surprised by how God works.

If we start each day with God's word then we are more open to Him speaking. Sometimes we sense 'nudges' which only are proved to be from God later. Ignoring a 'nudge' can produce a 'prod.'
Moses needed a burning bush!

Consider the many different things that God said which show how much He knew about Moses and the people of Israel.

Look at verses 7 and 8 and note what verbs are used. What does this show us about God?

What confidence can you have that God knows, cares and plans for His people? Have you any personal examples of this?

What might be the significance of Moses' job as a shepherd and what he was called to do in verse 10?

God did not change who or what Moses was. Moses was not given new strengths and abilities. Instead, God took Moses' characteristics and moulded them until they were suited to God's purposes.

Read verses 11-20

Here, we see that Moses is reluctant! (v11,13) Reluctance is usually based on lack of confidence. See how God responds by assuring Moses of His presence with him and God's commissioning of Moses. (v12,14) We are reminded that God never calls us to anything for which He has not prepared and equipped us. God will be with us.

How has God helped you to overcome reluctance to offer to do something at home, work or in church?

The name Yahweh, "*I am who I am*" expresses God's character as the dependable and faithful God who desires the full trust of his people.

What does v15 say about this name? What does it mean to you?

The Lord - "I AM", has a great track record, and has always been known to be dependable in the past.

Share stories of what God has done in the past in your own life, or that you have read in Christian biographies.

"I am" points towards Jesus.

Look up and comment on or discuss the ways Jesus uses "I am" in John's Gospel. Many of these are hinted at in the Exodus story.

Bread of Life 6:35, Light of the World 8:12, Door 10:9, Good Shepherd 10:11,14, Resurrection and the Life 11:25, the Way, the Truth and the Life 14:6, Vine 15:1,5. (all John's Gospel), Alpha and Omega Rev 22:13.

Look at God's promise in verse Exodus 3:17.

How might this give a picture of what God promises to Christians today? Talk with other people about 'what this means to me'.

From misery to a land flowing with milk and honey is an accurate portrayal of our Christian hope. We should be careful not to confuse destination with the journey!

There is certainty in what God says in the latter part of verse 12, and a consequence resulting. **How should we apply this to whatever we do?**

Pray about the journey and the destination God has for you, your local church, the local community and the wider world.

Omnipresent: The God Who is Always There

Welcome

Think of the things you have come to rely on being there over the years. In your home, for the community, or even people...

What happens when they are even temporarily absent?

Pray and Worship (see page 11)

The people of Israel, having done what God had told Moses and Aaron to do concerning Passover, were then told by Pharaoh to leave Egypt.

Read Exodus 12:31-32, 50-51 in your own Bible

Even though Pharaoh wanted rid of the Israelites from Egypt, he was worried that their God was powerful. Pharaoh asked for a blessing as a 'belt and braces' principle. This suggests that we should never be discouraged if people oppose us, as it can often be bluster to cover up uncertainty. God works in ways that we don't see and his timing is different.

Look at 12:32. Pharaoh asks Moses for a blessing.

Consider the importance of the blessing and what it might show us about Pharaoh.

In what ways might this provide you or your local church with encouragement to maintain witness even when facing apparent opposition?

Ponder on who it was that brought the Israelites out of Egypt in 12:51. Do you think the ordinary Israelites believed it was Moses, Pharaoh or God? Talk about your reasoning.

What else are we told in 12:42a? How might this encourage us to do what God calls us to, even if it seems to be impossible?

Moses led the people out of Egypt, but it was God who made it happen. Note that God kept watch over them throughout! Here is another reason for encouragement: God uses us to do His work through us.

Read Exodus 13:17-22

Look at verses 17 & 18. Having been sent off, how did the people of Israel leave Egypt? Which way does this suggest the Israelites were looking?

The people of Israel are armed for battle. Rather than looking to God they were probably looking behind and around, expecting trouble.

Consider how we equip ourselves for protection or attack rather than first seeking the face and direction of God.

Think about when God has taken you 'the long way round' so that you didn't become so afraid that you gave up.

Make a list of occasions when by waiting you have seen God's timing to be perfect.

As the Israelites set out on their journey to the 'Promised Land,' they had a lot to learn. So it can be for our journey of faith.

In verse 19, we see what Moses took with them. Look up *Genesis 50:24-25*. The link to the past reminds the people of God's previous faithfulness and their link with the Patriarchs as well as God's faithfulness to them in current difficult circumstances.

What are the things you keep to remind you of God's faithfulness when times are difficult and faith is hard - or God seems distant?

Do you think that God's promise to Abraham, even though made over 600 years before, is seen as historical fact rather than a present reality?

Do you think that the people of Israel were aware at this point of God's presence with them? What makes you think this?

God gave the Israelites pillars of cloud and fire so that they would know day and night that God was with them on their journey to the promised land. God has given us His Word, the Bible, our guide to help us on our journey. We read in 13:21: '*the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar,*' and in v22 '*the pillar never left its place in front of the people*'.

Think of and note down times when you have been strengthened by God's presence and guidance.

How is this passage speaking into your situation today?

Look at how God's omniscience and omnipotence work together for the good of his people.

Pray for a greater trust in God's power and presence in your everyday life.

Omnipotent: The God of Power

Welcome

How many power sources can you list?

Which ones do you rely on most?

Pray and Worship (see page 11)

God's power had been shown in the miracles of the Old Testament - He had moved mightily and powerfully to bring about the Exodus in Exodus 14:5-31. This would be THE time of salvation that the people of God remembered.

What are the significant times that God worked in your life or times you remember from your church's own history or biographies?

Jesus promised that God would clothe his church with; "power from on high" Luke 24:49. Jesus himself responds in Mark 5:30 to "power having gone out from Him", as the woman seeking healing touches the hem of His cloak in faithful hope.

**Where else do we talk about the power of God in our faith?
List some reasons why it matters that God is all-powerful?**

Please read Acts 2:1-16 in your own Bible.

God's salvation plan is that He is continually present in the churches with His life and power. The Holy Spirit is given by God in His own timing and for His own purposes.

Look up Joel 2:28 and mull over the significance of God's timing for the fulfilment of the prophecy. What are the key phrases?

What might we expect the presence of the Holy Spirit to look like in the churches?

The power of God is the energy that fuels the church for its mission.

What is the mission of your group/ fellowship/ church? How do/ might you recognise the power of God fuelling you as you serve God's purposes in this way?

The power of God is shown as the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:1-2.

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Think about the significance of the people all being together when the 'day of Pentecost came'.

The power at Pentecost is God, is from God and feels powerful.

Consider how the power of God's presence had a dramatic impact.

Look at Acts 1:8. The power of God is purposeful for the church. What evidence of the power of God is shown in the early church of the New Testament?

Now think about the power of God and the evidence of that power in your local church, in other churches that you can think of in your locality and in the wider world.

What are the characteristics of a Church operating its ministry in the power of God?

God is omnipotent and that power can be seen in the pages of the Bible. The power of God may be seen in everything from creation to the cross. We see it in the parting of the Red Sea and later in the crossing of the Jordan into the Promised Land. In Jesus, we see the power of God at work in the life of Jesus; in him resisting temptation in the wilderness, in the miracles - especially in feeding the 5000 and in Him raising the dead. Ultimately, we see the power of God in the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Pentecost is the pouring out of power to give life to the Church.

Pray for the power of God to give energy and life to your faith, to the faith of your group and fellowship / church.

Commit to being open to the power of God to move you in unexpected ways for his good purposes.

O! My God



Welcome

How do you feel about the phrase 'Oh my God!'
Or its little sister 'OMG!'?

Why do suppose you feel as you do?

Pray and Worship (see page 11)

Charles Wesley wrote his great hymn "And Can it Be!" in which there is this exclamation;

*He left His Father's throne above—
So free, so infinite His grace—
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race:
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For, O my God, it found out me!*

Find a version of the hymn to sing along to, or sing it in your group...

Is it a favourite of yours?

What memories do you have of singing it in church or at Christian Festivals?

Read John 20:17-28 in your own Bible

Here, Jesus is clear about the relationship between Father, Son and the disciples. God is 'our God' - omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent: the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses; the God of Jesus; and as He declares it the God of the Church. However, if we leave it there, we can detach ourselves from it, leaving the 'our' as being one of a mass. While this is true and we are one of many in the church, Charles Wesley made it explicit in the hymn that God is 'My God'. Just as Jesus says it, so too may we.

How do you relate to the phrase 'my God'?

Which of the following does the phrase 'O my God' express for you?
Underline all the ones you relate to...

Anger Admiration Awe Belief Prayer Frustration Hurt
Hope Hopelessness Wonder Power Faith Concern Sadness
Worship Pain Longing Regret Fear Thought Revelation

Our faith in Jesus has a corporate element. We need the fellowship of the believers for many reasons; encouragement and companionship that guard against loneliness and temptation being fairly high on the list. Yet, there is the constant call on our individual, personal heart to draw close to Jesus: as Mary

did, and Peter, and John and Charles Wesley; the great preachers and ministers who have inspired your faith - and you. You are called to an encounter with God in Jesus where he becomes not simply the God of the Church etc, but also that you might be made new as you declare him, "My God!". Just as we see, later in the passage, where an encounter of faith is made in verse 28:

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Maybe now is the time to reflect on your faith in Jesus. Is it time to renew your commitment?

Is it time to ask him to make the difference in your life as you allow Him to be both Lord and Saviour?

Pray for the words of faith to be real in your heart and worked out in your life.

"Tis Mercy all, immense and free... For O My God, it found out me."

Pray and Worship

Loving God, I thank you for your unfailing goodness towards Your people.

You never leave or abandon us. You know our every thought and need.

You have given us hope and new life in Jesus Christ. You have gifted Your people with Your power to worship, serve and bless You and to shine the light of Your love wherever we are. Enable me to be a true witness to You, our God.

Equip me with a faith that cries out in relief and adoration to You,

O! My God.

Forever and Ever, Amen.

Songs to help you to worship...

And Can it be

Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine!

Tell Out, My Soul

I cast my mind to Calvary (Anastasis) Hillsong

Be still and know that I am God

He is the Lord and He Reigns on High Kevin Prosch

Guide me O Thou Great Jehovah

The God of Abraham Praise

Goodness of God

Bethel

Here Again

Elevation Worship

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