

profound insight when he deduced that if the sky and the heaven of heavens could not hold God in and contain Him, how much less could the temple?

If, as we believe, the Israelites held to a three-level concept of heaven (the first heaven being the air above the ground, in which the birds flew and clouds drifted by; the second heaven being the sky (what we would call space), where the sun, moon, and stars moved; and the third heaven or heaven of heavens being the realm where God resided and the angelic hosts made their home), then Solomon appears to be saying that God transcends even the heaven of heavens. This is an advanced and profound concept!

Isaiah 66:1 -- "Thus says the Lord,
Heaven, is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.
Where then is a house you could build for Me?
And where is a place that I may rest?"

Here is the divine counterpart of Solomon's human expression! God says that heaven is His throne, and the earth is His footstool. Does God intend to convey the idea that He is so tall that when He sits down on His throne in heaven, His feet extend all the way down to earth, which He uses as a hassock or footstool? Of course, we understand this as an anthropomorphism!

What then is God saying? Well, for one thing He is saying what Solomon said -- that no temple is large enough to hold Him. This suggests the concept of immensity. God is present in heaven and on earth at the same time. He is a great God, and His greatness should inspire awe and reverence in us. He cannot be confined to any one location at a given time, for He is in all locations!

Jeremiah 23:23-24 -- "Am I a God who is near, declares the Lord,
And not a God far off?
Can a man hide himself in hiding places
So I do not see him? declares the Lord.
Do I not fill the heavens and the earth? declares the
Lord."

Here the Lord declares His omnipresence. He is both near and far at the same time. Here we learn that the reason no one can find a secret place that will hide him from the sight of God is not that God can see from a great distance and look into dark places and pierce through the densest rock with His gaze, but rather that God fills heaven and earth! Thus if a human being finds a really remote secret place, he will not be hidden from God, for God already fills that secret place, and thus sees everything!

Acts 17:27-28 -- "God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. For in him we live and move and have our being."