



**The Field Guide
Recommended by the
God Observers' Club**

Observers' Guide to God



Derek Thompson

Observers' Guide to God

by

Derek Thompson

“Observers’ Guide to God”

Copyright 2015 Derek Philip Thompson

Published by Derek Philip Thompson at Smashwords

ISBN: 9781311175403 (ePub edition)

APA Reference:

Thompson, D. P. (2015) *Observers’ guide to God*.

Publisher: Author

Smashwords Edition License Notes

The author gives permission to freely reproduce or distribute all or part of this document provided it is not changed and there is acknowledgement of the source. If you would like to share this book with another person, please download an additional copy for each recipient from Smashwords.com or one of its distribution agents so that the author knows that people are making use of his work. Thank you for respecting the hard work of the author.



Table of Contents

[Preface](#)

[Introduction](#)

[How to Use This Field Guide](#)

[Observing God](#)

[Field Information](#)

[No God Here](#)

[No God Anywhere](#)

[Are There Whales?](#)

[Counterfeit Gods](#)

[The Quest to Find God](#)

[The Final Hurdle](#)

[The First Sighting](#)

[Back at the Clubhouse](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Other Works by this Author](#)

[Connect with Derek Thompson](#)



Preface

Recent world events have caused renewed efforts to update outdated God observation methods. Some God spotters, like the train spotter narrowly missed by a train while photographing another train, have placed themselves in danger trying to see God. Nevertheless, since God sees everything we do here on Earth, it is only right we try to return the compliment.

The serious God observer strives to be on the cutting edge of the game. Even amateur God observers will want to avail themselves of the latest techniques. The primary aim of the present volume is to enhance the observer's capabilities at identifying and encountering God, whether it be in God's native habitat, or elsewhere. Observing God is a pastime for everyone, of all ages.

I thank the publisher for making this edition available in fireproof paper and providing a waterproof covering, although I am at a loss to know why. We acknowledge our generous

sponsors, “Furnace Fashions” and “Pompadour Welding Helmets” whose names I will mention in the text several times as agreed.

Albert Steinberger,
Sydney University.



Introduction

Zebra spotting in an African safari park is easy. You pay a guide to take you to the zebras and you photograph them to prove you saw them. Bird watching is more difficult. They are small, keep fluttering around, and there are numerous species to identify. In such cases, observers' guides are an essential tool for the enthusiast. The search for God has similarities to bird watching, train and aeroplane spotting, and even butterfly collecting. This invaluable book is a guide for God spotters. The task before us is to help the enthusiast spot God. That first glimpse, followed by the exciting first meeting, makes all the hard work of the quest worthwhile.

Allow me to tell you something about myself. I am Albert Steinberger, a lecturer in field guides at the University of Sydney. I have ascended to late middle age having written several well-received field guides and I am eager to apply my expertise on behalf of God spotters. Our Publisher too, specialises in field and travel guides, although I think he wants to be a movie producer. Readers should not be dismayed at my candour. In this digital age, publishers need not read the books

they publish, and I am sure mine does not. Never mind, Dorothy, my wife is an excellent typist. [Note from Dorothy: Hello readers!]

Before tackling our task, you might wonder what attracts people to God spotting. There are trains to spot, bird sightings to record, bugs to catch, whales and celebrities to watch. Where does one find the time and money for God spotting? The value of God observation is much greater to the God observer than the yellow-billed leg-shaker (a much sought after rare bird) is to a twitcher (a birder who seeks rare birds). Furthermore, twitchers themselves are rare in the population but 93.6% of people I surveyed are interested in God observation.

As someone who has devoted much time to observational pastimes, I assure my readers that God spotting has a special fascination of its own. A religious turn of mind is unnecessary and may even be a hindrance. I was astonished to find that adherence to a religious organisation bears little relationship to one's success at God spotting. However, I acknowledge the valuable help of experienced members of the God Observers' Club, which attracts God observers like robbers to a bank. I have sought experts in both God observation and God avoidance, to give a well-rounded appraisal of the field.

Another thing I need to warn the reader of before going into the field is the negative remarks unkind people make, such as, "it's a load of bollocks", "you may as well try spotting live dodos", "a venture for the foolhardy", and remarks that are even more colourful. I do not want the novice to lose heart and refrain from venturing into the field. Your guide has encountered the objections, false trails and phantom appearances. Be assured, there is a way through the jungle. The delights of God observation lay before us.



How to Use This Field Guide

Even a Safari Park has its hazards, and something as seemingly friendly as God spotting has its dangers. The observer need not be alarmed. Your guide found the way to the goal and I will relate the tortuous path I took to success. Prospective observers will come across many advisers providing conflicting ideas. This comprehensive guide is all you need. I will not confuse you by quoting the statements of pseudo-experts and religious organisations. The best way to learn God spotting is in the field with experienced God observers. The God Observers' Club recommends this guide.

Before we go into the field, I need to discuss things such as, what equipment to take, exactly what we are proposing to find, identifying God, and proper etiquette to use in God's presence. As to equipment, the keen novice God spotter will want to run out and buy all kinds of things such as binoculars, maps, notebooks, "Furnace Fashions" fire-proof clothing, "Pompadour Welding Helmets" auto-darkening to 15+ shade

welding helmet, paranormal cameras, and overseas plane tickets. I suggest that self-restraint in these purchases will save you money and avoid embarrassment.

As I always tell my students as they leave the lecture theatre to do field work, be prepared to have fun. This may appear odd advice in this case because God spotting is often associated with a religious temperament that is tediously serious. This is the first hurdle to leap. You will find God is a joyous being and difficult to find in dull, boring or solemn places. God may well be there, as we will learn in the next chapter, but these are not ideal conditions for observation. Another reason I have not pursued a religious solution is that I am not religious by nature and cannot help you in that regard. I recommend to such readers more religious field guides, but unfortunately, I do not know of any.

I assure those students struggling to follow directions they think irreverent that my instructions are not profane, just not religious. This confuses them to a satisfactory extent to allow them to get on with their work. Besides, student protests at irreverence are an excuse to avoid work. They quite happily throw paper aeroplanes around the lecture theatre while I am trying to teach them the intricacies of how the observer can stay unobserved by the one observed. Incidentally, that module of field study does not form part of this guide due to its inapplicability to God observation.

This field guide is designed to be useful for all observers whether experienced or beginners. I remember one of my confused students, named Max Bradfield, who for all his lack of experience, lack of aptitude, and general uselessness, blundered in on God and made a glorious sighting. Max was thoroughly overcome for over an hour. One of my colleagues who lectures in comparative God observation was beside herself with hilarity at meeting the God she had taught about for years. Our task is made even more fascinating because of

the extraordinary nature of the God we seek, which leads us into the next chapter.



Observing God

Let us clarify our aim. We aim to spot nothing less than God himself. I will give a few words of advice to help prepare the casual observer. There is an important distinction between observing God and observing birds. The awesome nature of God can overwhelm the observer. We must take precautions. As to God's appearance, one cannot gaze upon God and survive without the correct use of suitable equipment. A good field guide always keeps in mind observer safety. In addition, we must consider God's invisibility, which means God's appearance is not as well-documented as that of birds. Do not be perturbed, our quest is not stymied, as we shall soon discover.

We will start by listing the distinguishing features of God to aid the observer in field identification. I sought the help of an expert at the university's School of Theology where I found the office of Dr Freeman Lee. Freeman came from Hong Kong, which was where he first saw God. Although his experience gave me a high regard for him, I was surprised that his office was as tiny as mine was. He invited me in saying he was not

doing anything special. I could see he was marking student essays, which confirmed it for me. I squeezed in to a chair opposite him at his desk, explained my assignment and asked Freeman for God's distinguishing features. In my pocket was my bird watcher's notebook, which I carry with me everywhere. Out came my notebook, and I wrote the heading "Species Attributes".

"It shouldn't be too hard," said Dr Lee, "There is only one God. Only one species, one individual. God is who he is." Dr Lee spoke English well and had a practiced oriental accent. Freeman is short of stature, with straight black hair, glasses, and I would find him difficult to pick out in a crowd of Chinese people. Freeman tells me he has the same problem with westerners.

"Yes, I am sure there is only one God but when out in the wild, how do I single out God. What does he look like?" I said trying to direct Freeman to my point of interest.

"Heck, everything you see displays his nature, except for the nasty things that display his nature in negative. God is easily distinguished from other things, because God made all the other things," explained Dr Lee.

"Okay, so God is distinguished by not having been made, and having made everything else," I said writing in my notebook. "What features will help us identify God?"

"Well," said Dr Lee thinking how to simplify it for a field guide. He smiled as he had an idea. "There are '**The Three Omnies**'."

"Ah, like 'The Three Amigos'," I said taking his bait.

"No, not like 'The Three Amigos' at all," said Dr Lee amused that I had fallen for it. "God is One Amigo. As Creator of everything, God is omnipresent, omnipotent, and

omniscient, which means God is everywhere, is all-powerful, and knows everything. ‘The Three Omnies’.”

“I can imagine my students getting excited and thinking, ‘If God is everywhere we will have no problem finding our Amigo’.” My ploy to put this remark into the mouths of my students was to ensure I did not appear stupid.

“I’m sure, Albert, you will think up a reply such as, ‘yes and no’, or ‘birds are everywhere too’. There must be some reason for the market in field guides.” Dr Lee could be inscrutable.

He continued, “Unlike the Three Amigos, God is not a second rate actor. When God acts, things happen and continue that way until God determines otherwise. One of God’s pastimes is upholding the universe. People observation is another.”

“What?” I said surprised. “I’m writing about observing God, not God observing us.”

Dr Lee replied, “It’s very different from train spotting, Albert, but if God was not interested in observing us, we could not observe him.”

“Oh well, that’s all right then.”

Dr Lee smiled and nodded. He continued, “When considering God’s habitat, omnipresence needs to be qualified. Why live in a slum if you own a mansion? God’s presence on earth is somewhat at arm’s length compared to his presence in heaven. Although heaven is part of creation, it isn’t despoiled by wars, pollution and... well, people. God keeps heaven separate from what we call the universe to prevent it from getting polluted.”

“Pollution, yes,” I said taking notes.

Dr Lee smiled and went on, “Besides, this isn’t the end of the matter. If it were, you could not find God anywhere. God obviously did not give up on the universe. If God gave up on the world, it wouldn’t be here. God forecasted pollution but made the world anyhow. He even maintains its polluted existence. So, it must be possible to see God.”

“Good,” I said with great relief, struggling to follow Dr Lee’s reasoning.

“Speaking of goodness,” said Dr Lee.

“I was?”

“Goodness is an attribute of God’s integrity. God’s goodness is sometimes called omni-benevolence, which would be the fourth of ‘The Three Omnies’, but we can’t have that. Human beings fall short of perfection in goodness and integrity, and things that are unlike just don’t mix. Perfection and imperfection, good and bad.”

“Publishers and authors?” I added to the list.

Dr Lee ignored my contribution, “... they cannot have a cordial meeting. It is because of God’s goodness he prevents the inadvertent observer stumbling upon him and being dazzled to death by his glorious majesty. One might think that this precludes us from God observation, but as the song says, ‘it ain’t necessarily so’.”

Like all good mystery writers, I will leave the disclosure of this mystery until near the end. [Note from Dorothy: No peaking!]. Besides, Dr Lee was in full lecturing mode. I was glad I was taking notes.

“Now, ‘**The Three Twins**’ display God’s goodness.”

“Twins!” I exclaimed. Dr Lee’s lectures must have been a riot of metaphors. I am sure he confused his students a treat.

“Yes, twin attributes: holy and righteous, faithful and true, gracious and merciful. They display God’s goodness.” This was getting too technical for a field guide lecturer, but I continued writing.

“There is something else about God, not in the class of species attributes,” Dr Lee said reading the heading in my notebook. “Because of God’s role as Creator of everything, his relations with creation are unique, giving rise to **‘The Three Relations’**.”

“God has relatives?” I asked.

“Eternity, sovereignty, and providence.” Lee counted off with his fingers. He paused while I, resembling one of his flustered students, listed his points in my notebook.

“When God created things out of nothing, new relationships were made that are utterly perplexing for us created beings. For instance, our creation in time makes it difficult for us to understand God who upholds creation from the outside, so to speak. Although God does not change in his nature, he can respond to changes inside his creation. This is why it’s possible for us to meet him.”

“It does?” I asked.

“Yes, but there is a downside. We can cope with God being everywhere always. We even expect God to rule over creation, but when things go wrong, we use ‘The Three Relations’ to blame God. Don’t forget God is good everywhere, always, and in every circumstance. We defend human shortcomings by blaming God for making us.”

“There are two sides to every story?” I suggested.

“It’s true that God has a case against us. This raises the interesting philosophical controversy over free will. If we assume God has free will, and if God created humans with

even a small measure of free will, we might suspect that our freedom limits God's sovereignty.”

“Because we have a say in the future?” I asked.

Dr Lee continued, “Yes. But the future does not yet exist. So it cannot be any great harm to God's sovereignty if he gives us a say in future outcomes. God can accurately predict what will happen, so his omniscience remains intact. God still has the final overriding power over everything, so his omnipotence still applies. As for how God’s predictive knowledge of the future and human free will can coexist, perhaps you should go over to the Philosophy Department.”

“Yes,” I said with no intention whatsoever of investigating the esoteric details of this line of reasoning which are best confined to the Philosophy Department. I thanked Freeman for his time and extracted myself from his tiny office.

I came away from the meeting pleased with what I had learnt. Dr Lee’s species description will be invaluable, and his assertion that it must be possible to observe God was a great reassurance.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

