



ST. LUKE'S
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The frequency illusion, or the Baader-Meinhof phenomenon, is a cognitive bias event in which a person notices a specific concept, word, or phrase more frequently after becoming recently aware of it. For instance, if you have just discovered that a baguette is a long, narrow loaf of French bread, you might suddenly begin seeing these in bakeries where you've never noticed them before.

This recently happened to me when I was scrolling through some science videos and came across the idea of the Infinite Hotel Paradox, also known as Hilbert's Hotel. It's a mathematical thought experiment demonstrating infinite sets. In short, you have a hotel with an infinite number of rooms where every room is occupied, and yet it can still accommodate an infinite number of additional guests, which can then be infinitely repeated.

Shortly after watching that video I started reading a book called The Life Impossible, in which the main character references the mathematician David Hilbert who originally presented this paradox in 1925.

Then this week I was casually perusing Basic Writings of Saint Augustine, as one does, and Chapter III of *The Confessions* was along these same lines. Augustine writes, "Everywhere God wholly fills all things, but neither heaven nor earth can contain him." This chapter is mostly questions about the nature of God, such as: If God fills all things, is there any part of God left over? If God contains all things, are there any things that contain God? If God is entirely everywhere and in everything, is there anything that can contain God entirely?

It can make your head hurt. But that's sort of the point – that the vastness of God cannot be explained or comprehended by mere mortals. This is one reason I like being an Episcopalian, because there is room for mystery that doesn't have to be explained and controlled.

So now that you know about Hilbert's Infinite Hotel accepting an infinite number of guests, and Saint Augustine's musings about God containing all things while also

being contained in all things, I hope you experience your own Baader-Meinhof event in which you begin to notice and struggle with all things being filled entirely with God even though all things cannot contain God altogether.

Blessings,

Todd+
