



Ephesians 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12

## *The Heavenly Realms*

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### The Church in Ephesus

1. The Christians in Ephesus viewed their world through a very specific *Lens*. They believed the *Spiritual* world was not only just as real as the *Physical* world, but that the *Physical* world displayed the activity of the *Spiritual* world.
2. These early Christians did not live according to theory, but demonstrated what they had witnessed through the

life and ministry of the Apostle Paul. (Acts 19:1-41; 20:17-38)

3. The early Ephesian church demonstrated the Holy Spirit in Holy living (Ephesians 4:1-6:9), preaching (Acts 19:10), healing (Acts 19:11-12), authority over demons (19:13-18), prophecy (19:6), gifts of discernment (Revelation 2:2), power (Acts 19:20), perseverance (Revelation 2:3), church planting (Acts 19:26; Revelation 2-3) and spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-20).
4. The foundation of Paul's ministry and eventual letter to the Ephesian church establishes that the Church has been created to participate, influence, and overcome in the Spiritual world. Paul calls the Spiritual world *The Heavenly Realms*.
  - **ἐπουράνιος** - From ἐπί "upon" and οὐρανός "heaven" - "Heavenly Realms" (Plural) referring to more than one heavenly realm or place.

## The Heavenly Realms

1. This Spiritual Lens of the early Ephesian church was not only shaped by the Apostles and Jesus, but the Scriptural record of God's people.
2. Old Covenant Scripture revealed to the early Ephesian church the intense *Spiritual* activity in *the Heavenly Realms* as it demonstrated itself into their *Physical* world.

3. The Old Covenant Scriptural record of Creation and the Heavenly Realms
  - Genesis 1:1-3:24 - This record is a *Physical Creation Record* and does not include the creation of other *Spiritual* beings or *Spiritual* places, though these beings and places are referenced.
  - Genesis 1:1 - "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
  - שָׁמַיִם - Hebrew term translated "Heaven" or "Air" (plural) referring to more than one heaven.
  - οὐρανός - "Heaven" - Septuagint translation of Hebrew שָׁמַיִם (above) linking Paul's reference to *Heavenly Places* back to Genesis account of creation.
  
4. There are apparently three distinct Heavenly Realms or Places recorded in Scripture.
  - (1) Matthew 6:26 - "Look at the birds of the *air*..." - οὐρανός - "Heaven" - That space immediately above the earth and extending into the universe is called a *Heavenly Place*.
  - (2) 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 - "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the *third heaven*. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows— was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to

tell." - τρίτον - "Third" and - οὐρανός - "Heaven"  
referring to the place that John visited in Revelation 4-5  
where God dwells and which no evil rules. That also is a  
Heavenly Place, also called the Highest Heaven.

- (3) Ephesians 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12 - These verses containing the plural form of Heaven - ἑπουράνιος - "Heavenly Realms", referring to the unseen spiritual places in which mankind lives among and has access.

## The Spiritual War - Before the Beginning

1. Seen within the Creation Account of Genesis, there are *Spiritual* beings who existed before the beginning.

- Cherub - Angelic being - Genesis 3:24
- Lucifer - Angelic being - Genesis 3:1. See also Revelation 12:9; 20:2

2. Lucifer has already rebelled against God and is in a sinful state. He lies and tempts Adam and Eve to rebel against God's command.

- Ezekiel 28:12-15 - Ezekiel records God's revelation of Lucifer's creation, calling, and discovery of wickedness. Lucifer's jurisdiction and calling are in the Garden of Eden (earthly location) and his ordination as a created being was to serve God under Adam & Eve's stewardship of the earth. Also revealed here is Lucifer's created linkage with the earth in which he was to serve.

- Isaiah 14:12-15 - Isaiah records Lucifer's coveting and prideful nature leading him into jealousy of Adam's "likeness" with God.
  - Genesis 1:26 - Adam was created in God's Image and Likeness. "Likeness"- דְמוּת - This term corresponds to the term in Isaiah 14:14 - "Likeness"- דְמָה - These two terms reveal Lucifer's desire to deceive Adam and Eve.
3. Lucifer deceived Adam and Eve out of jealousy over what Adam & Eve carried as children of God.

## From Sonship to Slavery

1. Adam and Eve were created to steward the earth in intimate relationship with God as His children.
  2. Because of their sin, they lost their authority to Lucifer and became slaves of sin and slaves under the authority of Lucifer.
  3. Luke 4:5-6 - "The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to."
- Lucifer reveals here in Jesus' temptation how he received authority over the earth. He was given the authority in Adam's sin.

## Spiritual Warfare - Powerless

1. From the time of Adam's sin until before Jesus' ministry of reconciliation, mankind lived spiritually powerless.
2. The Old Covenant people of God lived in the midst of Spiritual warfare, yet not equipped to participate.
  - Joshua 5:13-16 - The Commander of the Lord's Army *Physical* meets the The Commander of the Lord's Army *Spiritual*. Joshua 6:2 - The Battle was already won *Spiritually* by the *Spiritual* Army of the Lord.
  - Daniel 10:13, 20-21 - The *Spiritual* Angels Gabriel and Michael war on *Physical* Israel's behalf.
3. The consistent picture of warfare, provision, and guidance throughout Israel's Old Covenant history is marked by being excluded from Spiritual warfare.

## Spiritual Warfare - Empowered in the Heavenly Realms

1. Because Jesus the Messiah obeyed God the Father, defeated Lucifer, and received back the authority of the Kingdom of God for mankind, those who believe in Jesus are set free from the power of sin and death and reign with Him.
2. Paul's letter to the Ephesian church gives insight to who believers are in Christ and the authority they have because of Christ's victory.

- Ephesians 1:3 - Our identity in Christ positions us with access to *every blessing* demonstrated in Christ in the Heavenly Realms.
- Ephesians 1:18-23 - Our inheritance is the power demonstrated in Jesus' resurrection and position in the *Heavenly Realms* far above...EVERYTHING.
- Ephesians 2:6 - We are seated with Christ in the *Heavenly Realms* in His position over EVERYTHING.
- Ephesians 3:10-11 - God's intent was to show through the Church that His authority and throne belong to Jesus, not the demonic, and not to Lucifer.
- Ephesians 6:12 - Our "Fight" is not against the *Physical*, but the *Spiritual* in which, by the person of Jesus the Messiah, we are able to *Stand* and *Overcome* in the *Heavenly Realms*.