

UNDERSTANDING THE HEAVENLY REALMS

INTRODUCTION

The Battle for Truth

How you define reality will define how you live your life, what you believe 'works' and 'doesn't work'. There is a fight on to determine how we see 'reality'.

To live the Overcoming Life we must understand the nature of the world we live in.

1. The Heavenly Realms

God existed before creation, He is the Creator – all other things are created by Him.

*In the beginning God created the **heavens** and the **earth**.*

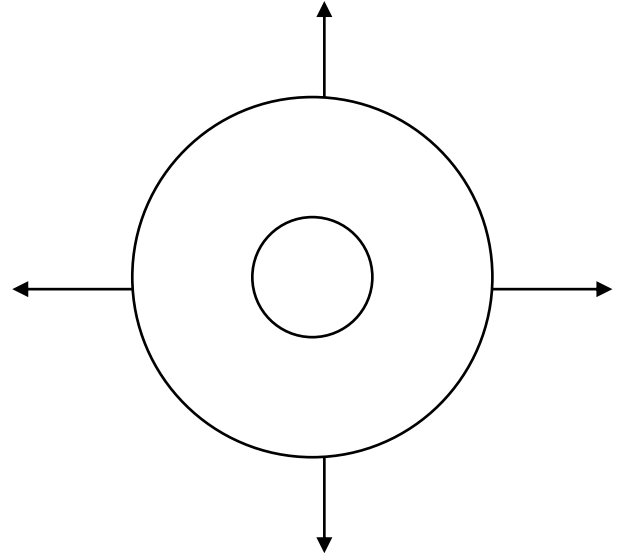
Genesis 1:1

The word of God teaches that there are two realms that operate simultaneously in our lives.

- The **Heavenly** Realms¹
Greek *epiourainios* means "of the heavens" Ephesians 1:3; 1:26; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12
- The **Natural** Realm
The physical world we see, hear, taste, touch and smell – the world we're familiar with.

3 Realms of "The Heavens" in the New Testament

- 1) The natural skies/stars
2 Peter 3:12
- 2) The spiritual atmosphere around the earth
Ephesians 2:1-2
Ephesians 6: 12-13
- 3) The 3rd heaven of God's uninhibited rule
"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."



The 'cast list' of the Heavenly realms
 God – The Creator
 Angels – Spirit beings, servants of God
 Satan – fallen Archangel
 Demons – servants/foot soldiers of satan

²¹ They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²² The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. ²³ Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, ²⁴ "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

²⁵ "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" ²⁶ The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

²⁷ The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him." ²⁸ News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Mark 1: 21-28

Angels

- Real – Luke 1:26
- Powerful – Daniel 10:2-13
- Having authority (given by God)
- Intelligence – Daniel 10:14
- Desire – Genesis 22:12
- Voice – 1 Corinthians 13:1

Demons

- Real – Luke 4:41
- Powerful – Revelation 16:14
- Having authority (given by man)
- Intelligence – Mark 1:24
- Desire – Mark 5:10
- Voice – Mark 5:7

Purpose

- Protect – Luke 4:10
- Guide – Acts 12:8
- Prepare the way – Exodus 23:20, Daniel 10
- Fight the demonic realm
- Minister to believers – Hebrews 1:14
- Powerful – Daniel 10:2-13
- Having authority (given by God)

Always good; Always to bring God's rule

Purpose

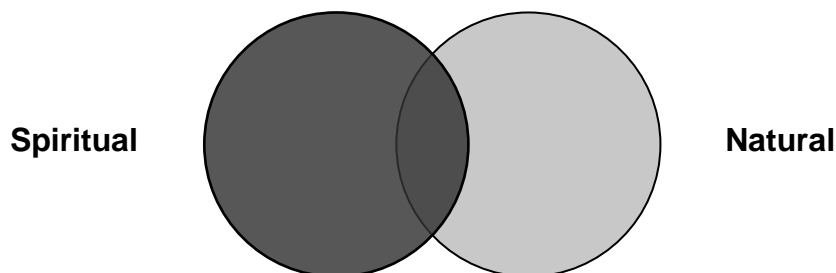
- To steal
- To kill
- To destroy
- Deceive – John 8:44

Always evil and destructive

John 10:10

2. We Live in Two Realms at the same time

The Natural realm includes all that can be perceived by our natural senses in the physical world. The Heavenly realm includes all that is spiritual, invisible and not seen in the natural realm.



A. Example 1 - Elisha & his servant (2 Kings 6)

The king of Aram was angry because all his plans were being discerned prophetically by Elisha. So he sent an army to capture Elisha, who was living in Dothan.

Then he [the King of Aram] sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked.

"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

2 Kings 6:14-17

The servant had only been able to see the natural realm.

God enabled him to see the heavenly realm and his perspective changed completely.

B. We need to learn to ask the Lord to reveal what is going on in any given situation:

Judas betrays Jesus

And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. They were delighted and agreed to give him money.

Luke 22:4-5

The source of the betrayal

Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.

Luke 22:3

Events in the heavenly realms bear a direct impact on events in the natural realm

We must ask these questions:

"Is this just happening?" "What's really going on here?"

- Is my bad mood "just happening?"
- Is my strained marriage "just happening?"
- Is the disintegrating relationship between parent and child "just happening?"
- Is the tension and division in a church "just happening?"
- Is oppressed corporate worship due merely to weather and the seasons?
- Why does a selfish and stingy spirit (or one of division, or rebellion, or fill in the blank) persist in the church from generation to generation?
- Is a persistent lack of joy and zeal due merely to personality?
- Is the disintegration of a society "just happening?"
- Are communities in disrepair and oppressed by crime, drugs, murder, suicide, and hopelessness merely because of socio-economic issues?
- Are civil tensions (Ireland) and wars (Middle East) "just happening?"
- Are bigotry, prejudice, and ethnic cleansings "just happening?"

This requires a significant change in world-view. To recognise that events in the spirit realm impact earth, that there isn't merely a natural realm cause for every circumstance.

3. The Church on Assignment

Hazlemere Church 2016

1. Christ gives his people authority and power over the enemy

God

Redeemed Man - Angels

Satan

Demons

Fallen Man

Created Order

I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. Luke 10:19-20

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the Head over every power and authority. Colossians 2:9-10

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills every thing in every way. Ephesians 1:18-22

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus Ephesians 2:6

2. The purpose is for the Church to do Jesus' ministry today!

- a. To discern - to be alert: 1 Peter 5:8-9
God's will and truth: ("Thy will be done")
Satan's schemes and lies ("Take your stand against the enemy's schemes – Ephesians 6:12)

- b. To gain victory over the forces of evil

- OFFENSIVELY:

And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Matthew 16:18-19

But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. "Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house."

Matthew 12:28-29

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

- DEFENSIVELY:

Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Ephesians 6:13