

origin or nature like God Himself, the angels, cherubim, seraphim, etc.

In the beginning, after creation, paradise comes into focus with God, Adam, Eve, and the cherub as the initial parties involved. The cherub, according to Ezekiel 28, was anointed as guardian in Eden. However, he was lifted up with pride due to his beauty and turned against God. In Genesis 3, he had already transformed into the serpent which is later identified in the Scriptures as the devil. He acts out against God by deceiving Adam and Eve to disobey God's command. Consequently, both the cherub and man fall from the exalted position provided by God. Hence began the need for reconciliation both in heaven and earth.

A spiritual warfare commences which has continued since. In that the warfare is celestial in nature, mankind for the most part is totally ignorant and unaware of its existence. The Scriptures provide glimpses of its reality but not a complete panoramic view.

According to Revelation 12:4, the devil also drew one third of the angels of God to fall with him. Their impact upon the world is quickly evident. Genesis 6 and I Peter 3:19-21 inform us that their influence was behind God's judgment which had cataclysmic results with the flood. Some of these fallen angels (also called demons, devils, or evil spirits) were responsible in the day of Noah and were placed in prison. Jesus, after his resurrection, made proclamation to these imprisoned spirits. Just this record alone awakens our minds to the spiritual world that coexists with our terrestrial world. There is something much bigger going on beyond what is seen with our eyes! In order to see the constant connection that the

# Kingdom Focus Celestial

I Corinthians 15:40

*There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial [the heavenly or the divine] is one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial [belonging to the earth or its inhabitants] is another.*

**T**he two different aspects of the celestial must be divided carefully in order for one to understand the Scriptures. The first one is the material or physical such as the sun, moon, and stars. The second is the spiritual, that which is of heavenly

spiritual has with the terrestrial, this article will set forth a brief review of some records declared in the Scriptures.

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## Something much bigger is going on beyond what is seen with our eyes

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The book of Job informs us that Satan had access to God and accuses the righteous ones. He is seen to have power to cause great loss and suffering. In David's day, Satan stood up against Israel and provoked the king to number Israel resulting in the death of 70,000 men (I Chronicles 21). In Zechariah 3:1 and 2, Joshua the high priest stands before the angel of the Lord, and Satan is standing at his right hand to resist him.

The angel of the Lord led Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 14:19). God's angel, according to Exodus 23:23, went before Israel to fight their adversaries in the promised land. In the books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy), little is stated about the death and burial of Moses. However, in the book of Jude, we learn that Michael the archangel contended with the devil about the body of Moses (Jude 9).

Daniel reveals more than most books about the spiritual warfare. God's angels are seen at work helping the faithful, and Satan's spirits are seen resisting them. Chapter 10 shows that evil spirits effect nations, and that God's angels contend with them. Micaiah the prophet is given a vision of God's throne room in which the host of

heaven is standing on both the right and left hand of God. The celestial beings discuss God's question about who will persuade King Ahab to go to Ramothgilead for his destruction (I Kings 22). Isaiah is also allowed to see a vision of the Lord sitting on His throne. Seraphim were also involved. Ezekiel was shown four living creatures which are obviously celestial in nature. He also saw the throne and glory of the Lord. Throughout the Old Testament God's angels are constantly intervening in the affairs of men and help to enable God's will to be carried out. David declared in Psalm 68: "The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* thousands of angels: the Lord *is* among them...."

In the New Testament we see that the devil had the power and authority to tempt the Son of God. Jesus Christ resisted and eventually exposed and defeated the devil and his cohorts. Jesus made clear that devil spirits can and do occupy humans and that he had complete authority over them. They cowered in his presence and always obeyed him. The most important parable Jesus spoke (recorded in three Gospels) was that of the seed and the sower. He said that it was the beginning of parables and must be the first understood. In it we clearly see the devil's attack upon those who hear the Gospel of the Kingdom. He endeavors to steal the Word out of their hearts so that they will not be saved.

In the book of Acts, both angels and evil spirits are at work influencing mankind. II Corinthians 4 says that Satan is the god of this age and blinds the minds of them that do not believe. The whole world is deceived by him. According to II Corinthians 11, he is subtly always endeavoring to corrupt the simplicity that is in

Christ. He is transformed into an angel of light at work within false apostles and deceitful workers. In Ephesians 2 he is the prince of the power of the air (surrounding and influencing all). He is at work within the children of disobedience. Our true struggle is not against people, but against the forces of darkness. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*" (Ephesians 6:12). The devil has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14), and he is our adversary walking about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8).

However, the Church is not left defenseless. According to Revelation 2 and 3, the seven churches in Asia each had an angel. God's angels are still at work, and, more importantly, Christ has come. Immediately following the upheaval in paradise, God set in motion a plan to reconcile both heaven (the celestial world) and the earth. The Messiah was central to God's masterful plan. Approximately 4,000 years after the fall, Jesus was born.

His faith effected a complete triumph over Satan and all his forces. His sinless life, death, resurrection, and ascension accomplished God's complete plan for redemption. Jesus told his disciples right before he ascended of the exalted position that God had given him as a result of his faith. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18).

The Apostle Paul gave a brief summary of the life and victory of Christ.

Phillipians 2:6 NASB

Who [Jesus], although he existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

Jesus was in the form of God in that he was "...the express image of his person..." (Hebrews 1:3). Due to the manner in which Jesus was born, with God creating seed in Mary, he was born without the sin of Adam (unlike every other human). Jesus throughout his life always obeyed the will of God. Everything he did and everything he said was what God wanted done and God wanted said. His obedient life showed the world the will of God in the flesh. Jesus was indeed in the image of God, but he was not God.

Adam was also created sinless and in the image of God. The devil was also created sinless and in the image of God. Neither were God, but both grasped for equality with God; consequently both fell. Jesus, unlike Adam and Satan, did not grasp at equality with God, rather he was obedient.

Verses 7 and 8

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Because of the disobedience of Adam and Satan, both lost their exalted positions and authority. Due to Jesus' obedience, he is exalted above all.

Verses 9-11

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Today, Jesus is at God's right hand and is head over all.

Ephesians 1:20-23

Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Satan still has influence over the world as we have acknowledged; however, in the fullness of time, there will be a complete realization of the victory.

Ephesians 1:10 NASB

With a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

At that time, every knee both in heaven and earth will bow to him.

God's Kingdom will come, and order will be completely restored both in heaven and earth. Today those of faith have been rescued from the power of darkness and qualified to share in the Kingdom of

God's dear Son.

Colossians 1:13 and 14

Who hath delivered *us* from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

Jesus Christ is representative of both God and those who will be resurrected to be a part of the new creation.

Verse 15

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

God has fulfilled the requirement for the new creation that will be in heaven and earth by Jesus Christ. The following verse is not reflecting back on the first creation but rather ahead to the new creation.

Verses 16 and 17

For by [Greek *en* = in] him [Jesus Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by [*dia* = by or through] him, and for [*eis* = for] him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

It has pleased God to place Christ in the position of preeminence.

Verses 18 and 19

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in *all* things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in

him should all fulness dwell;

Through Christ, God has reconciled all things unto Himself. Everything that was ruined has been made right in Christ, everything both in heaven and on earth.

Verse 20

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

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## Everything that was ruined has been made right in Christ

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Those who have faith in Christ are identified with him. We are united together with Christ in his crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. Since he is seated at the right hand of God, the seat of authority, everything is in subjection to him. Satan and evil have not, and will not, triumph over him. The opposite is the truth. We are united with him in this position of authority over evil.

Ephesians 2:5 and 6

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:

We no longer are under the power of darkness but rather are transported above it and prepared for entrance into his Kingdom. In

Christ we have been made to be holy, faultless, and blameless. Our responsibility is to have faith in the accomplishments of Christ and to stay grounded in him.

Colossians 1:21-23

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and u n b l a m e a b l e a n d unreprieveable in his sight:

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Jesus Christ carried out everything that was necessary for God to regain that which was lost in the beginning with Adam and Satan. As we maintain our faith and walk in accordance with Christ's accomplishments, we are complete in him.

Colossians 2:10

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: