

OUR POSITION IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES

There are five mentions of the phrase “**heavenly places**” which are all in Ephesians in the NKJV (the KJV translates the same Greek word, “epouranious” as “high places” the fifth time)

- ⇒ Elsewhere in the New Testament, the KJV translates this word as “**heavenly**” (e.g. Father, kingdom, etc.) or as “**celestial**”
- ⇒ The literal meaning of “epouranious” is “**above the sky**” – figuratively referring to the **spiritual realm**

These five verses in Ephesians that address the “heavenly places” clearly show us our **position and authority** in the “spiritual realm”

- ⇒ And, each one addresses a **different aspect** of these “heavenly places”

1. Spiritual Blessings for Us from God through Christ (Ephesians 1:3, NKJV)

- ⇒ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.***
 - The Greek word for “spiritual” here is the same word “pneumatikos” that Paul used in 1Corinthians 12:1 in reference to **spiritual gifts**
 - God the Father has literally **sown** the “heavenly places” with **spiritual gifts and blessings** for each and **every believer** through the redeeming work of Christ Jesus
 - This makes us “**complete**” in Jesus (Colossians 2:9-10) and “*thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2Timothy 3:17) “*to do His will*” (Hebrews 13:21)

2. Access to God’s Wisdom and Power through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:17-21)

- ⇒ *... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may **give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,**¹⁸ **the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;** that you may know what is the **hope of His calling**, what are the **riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints**,¹⁹ and what is the **exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe**, according to the working of His mighty power²⁰ **which He worked in Christ** when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the **heavenly places**,²¹ **far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.**²² **And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,**²³ which is **His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.***
 - The “*spirit of wisdom*” and the “*revelation in the knowledge of Him*” and the “*eyes of your understanding being enlightened*” are all **free gifts** from God the Father sown in the heavenly places for all believers -- but you must “*earnestly desire the best gifts*” (1Corinthians 12:31)
 - In addition, the “*exceeding greatness of His power*” flows down from God the Father through Christ Jesus “*toward us who believe*” in the “*heavenly places*”
 - This **great power** has “*seated*” Jesus “*far above*” all the **power of the enemy in this age** as well as in the age to come, putting “*all things under His feet*” through the **church** which is **His body**

3. We are Seated with Jesus in the Heavenly Places (Ephesians 2:4-7)

- ⇒ *⁴But God, who is **rich in mercy**, because of **His great love** with which He loved us,⁵ **even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved),⁶ **and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places** in Christ Jesus,⁷ that in the **ages to come** He might show the **exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.***
 - These three “*togethers*” refer to us **sharing** in 1) Jesus Christ’s **resurrection** from the dead; 2) His **ascension** into Heaven; 3) His **present rulership** of the world from His throne alongside the Father

- In this verse, “*ages to come*” literally means: “*age*; by extension *perpetuity*; by implication the *world*” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary)
- The “*ages to come*” refers to the **Church Age** that followed Christ’s **resurrection** and the subsequent **millennium** of Christ’s reign in the **new heaven, new earth** and **new Jerusalem**
- In the Spirit, we are **already seated with Christ** in the **heavenly places**, and like Him we simultaneously have **dominion over the earth** and the “*prince of power of the air*” (Eph. 2:2)
⇒ *Thus says the Lord: “Heaven is my throne and earth is My footstool”*

4. **Boldness, Access and Confidence versus the Principalities and Powers** (Ephesians 3:10-12)

- ⇒ ... to the intent that now the *manifold wisdom of God* might be **made known by the church** to the **principalities and powers in the heavenly places**,¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,¹² in whom we have **boldness and access with confidence through faith** in Him.
- The “*manifold wisdom of God*” specifically references **all aspects** of His **eternal Truth**
 - These are to be “**made known by the church**” – i.e., by and through **His body**, not **individually** as “Lone Rangers” despite whatever shortcomings the church might have
 - We (i.e. **all believers**) can “**access**” the Spirit and Truth of God with “**boldness**” and “**confidence**” through “**faith**” in Christ Jesus our Lord

5. **We then Wage War against the Devil in the Heavenly Places** (Ephesians 6:10-12)

- ⇒ Finally, my brethren, be **strong** in the Lord and in the **power of His might**.¹¹ Put on the whole **armor of God**, that you may be able to **stand** against the **wiles of the devil**. For we do not **wrestle** against flesh and blood, but against **principalities**, against **powers**, against the **rulers of the darkness of this age**, against **spiritual hosts of wickedness** in the **heavenly places**.
- Note that our **strength** comes from “**the power of His might**” – “not by **might** nor by **power** but by **My Spirit** says the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6)
 - We put on the **whole armor of God** so that we can “**stand**” against the “**wiles**” of the devil – not the **power** of the devil but his **wiles** because he has **little power** but **great cunning** (Genesis 3:1)
 - The word “**wrestle**” implies an **ongoing fight** that will not be over until the “**end of the age**” (Matthew 13:49)
 - Our fight is **not against people** (“*flesh and blood*”) but rather the **devil** and all his **cohorts** (i.e. the **principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness**)
 - And the fight is **not in the natural world** but rather in the “**heavenly places**” – i.e. the **spiritual realm**
 - We must always remember that we must **war** with “**the power of His might**” not our own – “**For the weapons of our warfare** are not carnal but **mighty in God**” (2 Corinthians 10:4)

Read the 5 “Heavenly Places” Verses all Together

Ephesians 1:3, and 1:17-21 and 2:4-7 and 3:10-12 and 6:10-12

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us with every spiritual blessing** in the **heavenly places** in Christ.*

*... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may **give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation** in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your **understanding** being enlightened; that you may know what is the **hope of His calling**, what are the **riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints**, and what is the **exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe**, according to the working of His mighty power **which He worked in Christ** when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His 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 age** but also in that which is to come. And He put **all things under His feet**, and gave Him to be **head** over all things to the church, ²³ which is **His body**, the fullness of Him who **fills all in all**.*

*But God, who is **rich in mercy**, because of **His great love** with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us **alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), and **raised us up together**, and made us **sit together in the heavenly places** in Christ Jesus, that in the **ages to come** He might show the **exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus**.*

*... to the intent that now the **manifold wisdom of God** might be **made known by the church** to the **principalities and powers in the heavenly places**, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have **boldness and access with confidence through faith** in Him.*

*Finally, my brethren, be **strong** in the Lord and in the **power of His might**. Put on the whole **armor of God**, that you may be able to **stand** against the **wiles of the devil**. For we do not **wrestle** against flesh and blood, but against **principalities**, against **powers**, against the **rulers of the darkness of this age**, against **spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places**.*