



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 42
Issue 1032



"Heavenly Places"

En Tois Epouranios

by — Charles H. Welch (1880-1967)

[Click here to listen to this article](#)

[**Editor's note:**] Some teach that our hope and calling are not actually located in the *Super-Heavens*, but that they are only "heavenly" in nature. Yet, they are not merely "heavenly" in character, but they are, like Christ Himself, "far above all Heavens" in actual location. Our expectation and vocation are not "among" celestial beings in position, but literally located "in Super-heavenly realms," or simply "in the Super-heavenlies." In this article Welch provides Scripture evidence that the hope and calling of the One Body is not merely positional, but is actually located "where Christ sits on the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1), "into Heaven itself" (Hebrews 9:24).

Key Points:

The ecclesia of the One Body of this dispensation finds its calling in the superior sphere of the Heaven of the Heavens.....8675
The Greek phrase *en tois epouranios* occurs only in Ephesians.8675
The peculiar sphere of the Church of the Mystery is the Super-

Heavens, i.e., "up far above all heavens."8677
Since Christ is "far above all" at the right hand of God, our place also is there.8678

The "heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:3, KJV)¹ were known at least in part in other ages. The expression "the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens" suggests that such a superior sphere was known, but no prophet, evangelist or apostle ever dreamed that a redeemed company would find their sphere of blessing there, least of all a company made up of alien Gentiles.

First let us examine the word itself.

Epouranios. This word is composed of *epi* ("upon") and *ouranios* ("heavenly"), the adjective form of *ouranos* ("Heaven"). Upon examining the epistle to the Ephesians, we discover that the word *epouranios*² is there used in a form which occurs nowhere else – *en tois epouranios*. This form occurs in five passages in the epistle.

- [**Editor:**] "upper-heavenly places" (FAA); with "realms" used in the GNT; ISV; MNT; NET; WNT); or simply "in the Super-heavens" (in line with MLT and HCSB, which translates *epouranios* as a noun rather than an adjective).
- [**Editor:**] SEC, G2032.

EN TOIS EPOURANIOS IN EPHESIANS

- A 1:3 Spiritual blessings
- B 1:20 Far above principalities and powers.
- C 2:6 Raised and seated together
- B 3:10 A witness to principalities and powers
- A 6:12 Spiritual wickednesses.

The form in which these five references to "heavenly places" occurs is unique. It is found in no other part of the New Testament. The Ephesians phrase *en tois epouraniois* is never merely defined as something "heavenly" in character.

When Paul addressed this epistle to the saints which

(continued on page 8677)

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unpropheesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);

- union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seated position among the celestials (Ephesians 2:6);
- adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneidar

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are *at* Ephesus, the words *en Epheso* do not mean that they were “Ephesian” in character while they were living somewhere else. No, they were actually residing “*in Ephesus*.”

When the Apostle reminded the Ephesian masters that they also had a Master “*in Heaven*” (6:9), there could be no two thoughts about the fact that this Master was not only heavenly in character but also in position. He was there. The word “*where*” is indicative of a place, and is used of the present position of Christ.

Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God
(Colossians 3:1).

This is said to be “*heaven itself*” (Hebrews 9:24) and in “*heavenly places*” (Ephesians 1:20).

While *en* followed by a plural can mean “*among*” (Colossians 1:27), it can also mean “*in*,” for no one supposes that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelt “*among*” tabernacles; they had enough common sense to dwell “*in*” them (Hebrews 11:9).

The Apostle not only has given these five references which indicate the exalted and peculiar position of Christ and His One Body, he has assisted us further by giving an explicit statement in Ephesians 4:10 concerning the Ascension. There Christ is said to have “*ascended far above all Heavens*,” the word translated “*far above*” being *huperano*.³ This position is so far above all Heavens that, by ascending to this sphere, Christ is able to “fill all things.”

Many words used in the English language are derived

3. [Editor:] SEC, G5231.

either from Latin or Greek. Some words are derived from both tongues, and are employed severally as the genius of the language dictates. Thus, the Greek *huper*⁴ becomes the Latin *super*, and while we retain the Greek in such terms as *hyperbolic*, we often favor the Latin equivalent *super*, and say *super-abundance*, not *hyper-abundance*; *super-impose*, not *hyper-impose*.

Consequently, with Ephesians 4:10 plainly written, we are at liberty to speak of the *Super-Heavens* as a definition of the peculiar sphere of the Church of the Mystery, conscious that we are not adding a word to the inspired testimony but are honestly giving, in this compact form, the combined intention of the two sets of expressions: *en tois epouraniois* [“*in the Super-Heavens*”) and *huperano panton ton ouranon* [“*up far above all Heavens*” (:10)].

The only calling or revelation that has pierced the present contemporary Heaven and touched that which can be spoken of as eternal, is that Dispensation of the Grace of God which has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the Super-heavens far above all. This shows the unique character of the Church of the One Body. It is connected both by time and place with that which begins before the present Heavens were made, and goes on when the present Heavens shall be no more. The Church of the Mystery is the only link ... between the time before sin entered and the time when sin shall be no more. ... [These things being so, it should not be surprising that] the doctrine and practice of [the One Body are] different from all others. — *The Berean Expositor*, Vol. 20, p. 111

4. [Editor:] SEC, G5228.



The Third Heaven - Our Celestial Destiny

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Thus, the “heavenly places” is the future sphere of blessing for the Church of the Mystery.

The phrase *en tois epouraniois* occurs again in Ephesians 1:20. There the reference is to the Ascension which, as Ephesians 4:10 affirms, was “*far above all heavens, that He might fill all things*,” even as Ephesians 1:20-23 reveals that Christ our Head is seated at the right hand of God, far above all principality and power, the church thus associated with Him there being “*the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*.”

Colossians 3:1 uses the adverb “*where*” (Greek, *hou*), indicating that the Savior is in a *place*, that place being “*the right hand of God*.”

Wherever Christ is conceived of as sitting now, it is not *among heavenly beings*, but *far above them*. “*Far above all*,” *huperano*, a word which is repeated in Ephesians 4:10, “*far above all Heavens*.”

Hebrews 4:14 teaches us that the ascended Christ “*passed through [dierchomai⁵] the Heavens*,” (cf. I Corinthians 10:1; 16:5); but not only so, in Hebrews 7:26 Christ is said to be “*higher than the Heavens*.” Again, the Apostle goes out of his way to enumerate the orders of “*heavenly beings*” which are beneath the exalted position of the Savior. “*All [not some] principalities and powers and might, and dominion*,” and then, as in Romans 8:39 where he adds “*nor any other creature*,” so, here, to ensure that the entire Universe is conceived of, he continues, “*and every name that is named*” – and yet further, every name that is named

5. [Editor:] SEC, G1330.

“*not only in this age, but also in that which is to come*.”

How is it possible, in view of these explicit statements, to teach that “*where Christ sits*” is “*among*” heavenly beings? Yet this is not all. Paul quotes from Psalm 8, “*And hath put all things under His feet*.” Now if this quotation were to stand alone, we should admit that it does not add anything more to that already seen, but the fact is, Paul had quoted this passage on two other occasions, and has given them such a peculiar exposition as to render further discussion unnecessary. Here are his own words, and his own peculiar deduction:

Thou hast put all things in subjection UNDER His feet. For in that He put ALL in subjection UNDER Him, He left NOTHING that is not put under Him (Hebrews 2:8).

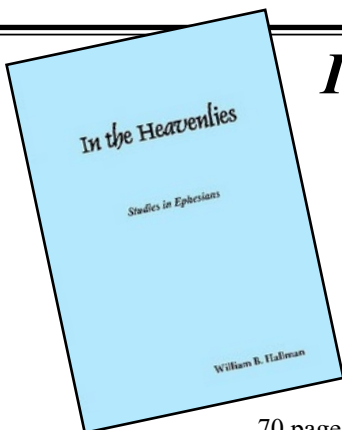
But when He saith, ALL things are put UNDER Him, it is manifest that HE IS EXCEPTED, which did put all things UNDER Him (I Corinthians 15:27).

When, therefore, Paul added the quotation from Psalm 8, he clinched the interpretation “*in heavenly places*,” for it is impossible after seeing this isolated and exalted position to believe that it is after all “*among heavenly beings*.” BSN

Heavenly Places
An Alphabetical Analysis
(Edited Abridgment)

TOPICS:

Major: Christ Jesus; Ephesians; G2032; G5231; Heavenly Places; *En Tois Epouranios*
Minor: Calling; Ecclesia; G5228; G1330



70 pages

In the Heavenlies: Studies in Ephesians

by — William B. Hallman (1903-1973)

The key to this book of Ephesians is the phrase which occurs five times, namely, “*in the Heavenlies*” (*en tois epouraniois*). It is found in 1:3; 1:20; 2:6; 3:10 and 6:12. It is the dative plural, and in this grammatical construction always means a locality. It is correctly rendered in 1:20, “*in the heavenly places*” or “*in the heavenlies*,” and should so have been translated in all five occurrences. This phrase is found nowhere else in the Scriptures.

See [order form](#) under “Hallman.”

God's Omnipotence

Bible Student's Courses

Course 1: GOD / Unit 5: The Attributes of God / Lesson 3: God's Omnipotence

by — Mark D. Vogt
(with Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.)

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... I am the **Almighty** God ... (Genesis 17:1).
... God **Almighty** ... (Genesis 28:3; 35:11; Exodus 6:3, etc.).

Key Points:

God's ALL-Mighty power is used to accomplish His ALL-inclusive work, which is motivated by His endless love..... 8681

Omnipotent means *all powerful*. The Scriptures teach that God is *ALL-mighty*. There is nothing too hard for “*Almighty God*.”

*Is anything **too hard** for the LORD?* (Genesis 18:14).

*Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the Heaven and the Earth by Your **great power** and stretched out arm, and there is nothing **too hard** for You* (Jeremiah 32:17).

The Scriptures clearly declare the omnipotence of God. The fact that there is nothing too hard for God is apparent. God can do anything that His essence and character determine. The real need is for understanding as to *how* God ultimately uses this limitless power of His.

His use of power is not so that humanity will cower before Him, as would be the case with some human

dictator, but that with the use of His power He can bring about the results of His great and loving Master Plan (*Logos*).

God always uses His power for perfectly accomplishing His *will*, but His will is always motivated by His *love*. His power is *unlimited*, yet it is guided by His devotion and affection.

We cannot fully comprehend the power of God, nor can we fully comprehend the love that motivates the use of that power. *Unlimited* power and *unlimited* love are what guides the Universe to God's ultimate conclusion.

Do not think for one minute that God is somehow lacking in strength to accomplish all that He desires. Paul, in I Timothy 2:4 plainly states,

*Who **wills** all mankind to be saved and come unto a realization of the truth* (CV).

(see **OMNIPOTENCE**, page 8681)



Who Is Jesus? A Plea for a Return to Belief in Jesus, the Messiah

by — Sir Anthony Buzzard

A work dispelling the error of the Trinity.

48 pages

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God's Omnipresence

Bible Student's Courses

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Course 1: GOD / Unit 5 - The Attributes of God /

Lesson 4 - God's Omnipresence

by — Mark D. Vogt

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?" saith the LORD. "Do not I fill Heaven and Earth?" saith the LORD (Jeremiah 23:24, KJV).

Key Points:

There's no place that God does not inhabit..... 8680
God is present with and cares for even the humblest of His creatures..... 8680

How could someone allegedly be "eternally separated from God" if He is indeed everywhere, including "hell," or "sheol"? 8681

God is present in all of His creation. This is what is often referred to as the *Omnipresence of God*.

The word omnipresence means "all-present," or "everywhere-present." It's a term that describes God being everywhere at the same time.

What this means is that God's presence encompasses His entire Universe. Simply stated: There's no place He does not inhabit.

What does it mean for God to "fill the Heavens and the Earth"? Our own inability to be in two places at one time, let alone being in all places at all times, makes this concept hard to perceive and appreciate. Yet, it is such a comforting truth – that the presence of God is *everywhere*. He is always present with us wherever we are. This is true not only of us, but of all of His creation.

We can take tremendous reassurance in this astound-

ing truth, for Jesus declared concerning the sparrow that,

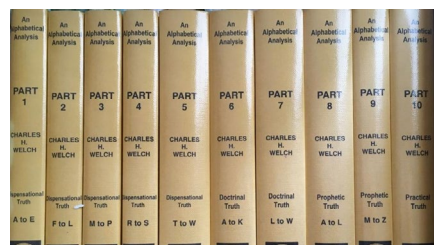
... one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father ... Fear not therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows (Matthew 10:29-31).

Notice in this context that the detailed care of God is the demonstration of Him as "Father."

The sparrow is one of the smallest and most common of the birds. Its value is almost insignificant compared to man, which is illustrated by the price paid; but the illustration is further strengthened when we read Luke 12:6,

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

Two sparrows for 1 penny; five sparrows for 2. So, if you pay for four sparrows, an extra sparrow is thrown



An Alphabetical Analysis

by — Charles H. Welch (1880-1967)

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into the deal free, as almost valueless. However, God’s presence with, and care for, even the humblest of His creatures is emphasized.

Furthermore, take close notice that this passage does not say, “without your Father knowing,” but, “without your Father.” Not even the tiny sparrow falls to the ground outside of the presence and divine will of God. He is there with His care, directing the minutest detail of the experience. For *even* the sparrow is dear to “Father.”

Yet, if God is present with, and cares so for the sparrow – that its every move and circumstance is within His sovereign presence and divine direction – how much more is this true of us?

He has planned our lives and oversees every detail of them. He never takes a break or vacation from us. Consider Psalm 139 and what David realized about God.

You have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I stand up ...

You observe my travels and my rest; You are aware of all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue, You know all about it ... You have encircled me; You have placed Your hand on me. This extraordinary knowledge is beyond me. It is lofty; I am unable to reach it. Where can I go to escape Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence? If I go up to Heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, You are there. If I live at the eastern horizon or settle at the western limits, even there Your hand will lead me; Your right hand will hold on to me. If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me, and the light around me will be night” – Even the darkness is not dark to You. The night shines like the day; darkness and light are alike to You. For it was You who created my inward parts; You knit me together in my mother’s womb. I will praise You because I have been remarkably and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, and I know this very well. My bones were not hidden from You when I was made in secret, when I was formed in the depths of the Earth. Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in Your

book and planned before a single one of them began (Psalm 139:1-16, HCSB).

While Jeremiah described God’s presence as filling “the Heavens and the Earth,” notice that David remarkably described it as reaching “up into Heaven,” and down “in hell,” or “Sheol” (i.e., the unseen.)

If I ascend up into Heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there (Psalm 139:8, KJV)

... if I make my bed in Sheol, You are there (HCSB).

Thus, the presence of God is *everywhere*, and the concept of a “god” who is **NOT** in “hell,” or “Sheol,” is simply a “god” of religious tradition and imagination, and is **NOT** the One True God of Scripture Who is absolutely omnipresent.

Furthermore, since David’s declaration is indeed true, how could someone allegedly be “eternally separated from God” if He is indeed everywhere, including “hell,” or “sheol”?

Rejoice – God is omnipresent! His presence is *everywhere*. **ALL** of His creation is the beneficiary!

For in Him we are living and moving and are (Acts 17:28). BSN

TOPICS:

Major: God; God, Attributes of; Omnipresence

Minor: Hell; Salvation of All; Sheol; Sovereignty; Unseen

OMNIPOTENCE (continued from page 8679)

This does not say that God would simply “like” all men to be saved. No! He sovereignly “wills” it to be so!

God’s **ALL-Mighty** power is used to accomplish His **ALL-inclusive** work, which is motivated by His **end-less** love.

Love never ends (I Corinthians 13:8, HCSB). BSN

TOPICS:

Major: God; God, Attributes of; Omnipotence

Minor: Salvation of All; Sovereignty



Wonderful, wonderful issue of the BSN [1014]. All of the “Tidbits of Truth” articles were encouraging and so clearly explained. I can’t pick a favorite; they are all spot on ... just a great issue.

J. Eustace Mills’ quote: “Paul’s superlative language is necessitated by reason of an excelling revelation” – WOW. Can you say WOW with me? This is why when you talk with a denomination-driven person their words are so weak. They are blind by design, but we never know the nature of the impact we can have on them. – IN

Five years ago, I came across Right Division and this is surely a more excellent way to explain the cessation of miracles and perfection we have today as members of His Body. I was deep in Pentecostalism for over three decades. This is indeed liberating.

Thanks for the bound issues of the BSN. They are like gems of Bible understanding to me. – TN

I have been working my way through the compilation book [Rightly Dividing Israel’s Prophetic Kingdom](#).¹ What a wealth of information. While reading II Timothy today the thought struck me ... that Paul knew very well what the Pre-Millennial Kingdom (PMK) was about, and when he wrote I Thessalonians concerning the Second Coming, and his belief that he was going to be present at that time, hinges upon his realization of his

1. Editors: Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., André Sneidar, Bible Student’s Press, on the [order form](#) under “Compilation.”

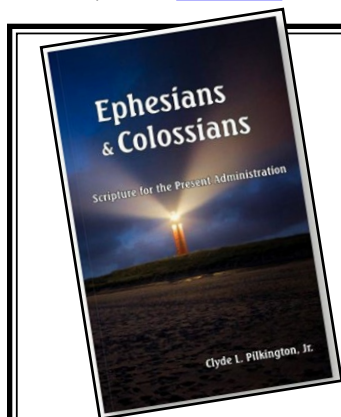
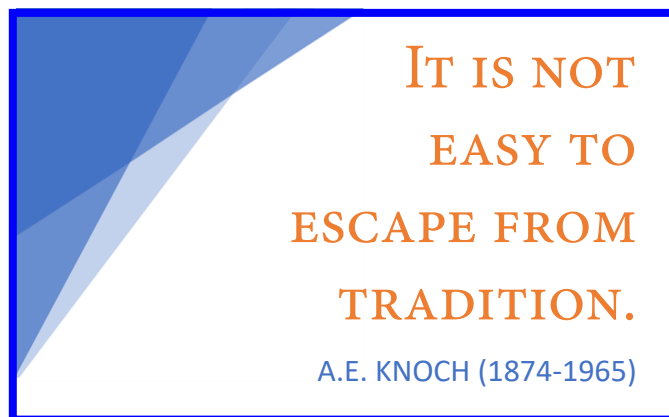
not dying during “the Day of Christ” because of God’s promise of health and longevity during the PMK, just as God’s promise to Israel out of Exodus for the same thing. Not having been given the truth of the *Secret Administration* yet he was anticipating the PMK and his being around to witness the tribulation and the advent of Christ Jesus at “the Day of the Lord.” – PA

I cannot express my thanks to our Father for His gracious gift to me, which is you my brother, your passion, heart and exposition of the word has brought clarity and insight to my understanding of Scripture, I am truly blessed having made your acquaintance. – Canada

I love these BSN bound volumes. They are my Bible truth reference library! ... Please keep up the wonderful work! – TN

“You Are God’s Workmanship,”² chapter 35 of the compilation book, [The Absolute Sovereignty of God](#),³ is the smoothest, best written chapter that I have ever read. It is so well done that I can’t say enough about it. Thank you so much. – NE BSN

2. This chapter, by Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., was originally published in 2005 in BSN 70 as “We Are God’s Workmanship,” and revised and expanded five years later in 2010 in [BSN 222](#) as “You Are God’s Workmanship.”
3. Bible Student’s Press (on the [order form](#) under “Compilations”).



Ephesians & Colossians

Scripture for the Present Administration

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Ephesians and Colossians are the present truth for the current dispensation. Ephesians introduces the Secret Administration in which we live, while Colossians, its companion epistle, completes the Word of God. There are no other Secret Administration letters beyond Ephesians and Colossians.

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