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Volume 42
Issue 1049

The Celestial Realm: Seeing the Unseen

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A Study of Our Real Enemy

Part 2 of 3
by – Stephen Hill

In a beginning, Elohim created the Heavens and the Earth (Genesis 1:1, CV).

Key Points:

The Earth's most prominent leaders are the mere puppets of controlling celestial forces.....8814
Any signs that now appear simultaneously as miraculous and good should be instantly recognized by believers as false.....8814

Earth mirrors the heavens.....8815
Celestial beings were created with incredible abilities and powers.....8816

One of the biggest surprises I've encountered in my studies came about during a men's retreat when the discussion led to a deeper look into the unseen realm. At the time, we decided to reference the *Etymological New Testament (ENT)*,¹ and I was rather shocked to see the Greek *daimon* rendered as "little teaching" instead of "demon." We quickly opened the *Keyword Concordance* making up the *Concordant Literal New Testament*² (which the *ENT* translator relied on heavily) and confirmed that the Greek literally means "TEACH-diminutive" (or "teach-little.")³ Needless to say, this revelation was quite eye-opening and put the lower ranking powers among the unseen forces into much clearer perspective.



In certain instances, such as with the Gerasene⁴ demoniac,⁵ the demons referenced are clearly spirit beings. In other cases, however, passages mentioning demons may be more accurately understood in light of *teachings* that seek to *belittle* God. Whether the "demon" in question is a being or a false teaching, though, the demonic activity revolves first and foremost around the *belittlement*⁶ of [\(continued on page 8813\)](#)

1. [Editor:] Available at [Study Shelf](#), or on the [order form](#) under "Bibles."
2. [Editor:] Available at [Study Shelf](#), or on the [order form](#) under "Bibles."
3. [Editor:] The word "diminutive" in the *Concordant Keyword's* "TEACH-diminutive" for *daimonion*, is etymologically "from *minuere*, 'make small'" (*Oxford*), and is defined as: "serving to diminish" (*WordSense Dictionary*; *Wiktionary*); "tending to diminish" (*Webster 1913*).

4. [Editor:] The name of this place is so variously given in the MSS. that we have appealed to the topography of the country to settle it, and come to the same conclusion as the editor of *Sinaiticus* (S2), *Alexandrinus* has it *Gadarenes*, *Vaticanus* has *Gerasenes*, as also *Sinaiticus*, before being edited. This is probably a variant of *Gergesenes*.... – A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), *Concordant Commentary*, Mark 5:1
5. [Editor:] Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:27-39.
6. [Editor:] The *Immanence Bible*™ (TIB), translates *daimon* as "belittlement":

"teachings of belittlement" (Matthew 12:24, 27); "belittled by religious teaching" (Matthew 8:16; 33); "devalued by religious belittlement" (Matthew 16:28); "the teaching of belittlement"

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Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a weekly format!

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- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
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- 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);
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- 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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God; and these little-teachings are unbelievably convincing and deceptive.

The ability of countless, *belittling* teachings to infect the minds of most people so easily is a power much stronger than any physical harm some may mistakenly fear, and the armor Paul instructs believers to put on to combat the dark forces (Ephesians 6:11-13) is intended solely to shield our minds and thoughts, not our physical bodies.

It will help in this case to clarify what, exactly, a “*spirit*” is according to Scripture and to provide an appropriate contrast between the “*spirit*” and “*flesh*.”

Many people use the terms “*spirit*” and “*soul*” synonymously and understand both terms to denote disembodied “ghosts,” but the spirit and soul – although related – are actually quite different.

Early on, we read of God forming Adam (man) from the dust of the Earth and breathing into his nostrils the breath (“*spirit*,” or “*wind*”) of life. The combination of the physical and the energized but invisible spirit, then, produces a living soul. The flesh is purely physical, the spirit is non-physical but powerful, and the soul is the animated and productive product of the two.

It is no secret that the human body cannot function apart from voluntary and involuntary impulses that are electrically and continually produced – primarily via the nervous system – but, interestingly, humans can survive for quite some time with extreme

was removed” (Matthew 9:34); and “get rid of religious teaching that belittles others” (Matthew 10:8).

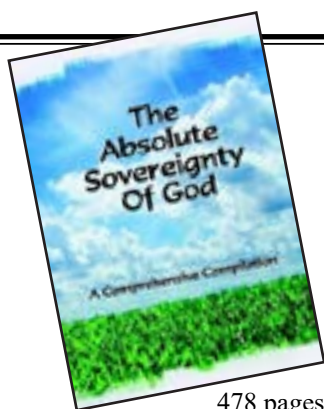
physical limitations if their brain function is generally sound. This fact, alone, is proof that the spirit is mightier than the physical body, and this is why the celestial forces seek to infect our minds more than our flesh and bones.

The study of the spirit and soul could easily fill a much larger work of its own, but it is perhaps easiest to think of the spirit as the mind – the invisible but powerful and energized force that underpins who we truly are – and *Strong’s Concordance* includes “mind” and “mental disposition” among its definitions of the Hebrew *rûach* and Greek *pneuma* that are rendered as “*spirit*” in English.

We use the terms *spirit* and *soul* appropriately at times when we say things like, “He has a troubled spirit” or, “She’s an old soul.” In the former, we are referring to a man’s mental disposition, and in the latter we are referring to a woman as a full being – the combination of a body and spirit.

To be a living soul is a form of existence that is generally unique to mankind, and our adversaries naturally attack the part of our being they can best understand – our spirit. Of course, we are dealing here with spiritual forces among the celestials,⁷ so our ability to comprehend the nature of the unseen powers and their means of attacking our spirits through our thoughts and feelings is of paramount importance. Demonic activity is only a part of this continual onslaught, and many believers would do well to know their real enemy far better.

7. [Editor:] “... spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials” (Ephesians 6:12, CV).



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When most people think of demons, they instantly picture gargoyle-like creatures with red eyes, horns, pointed tails, scaly skin and other grotesque features, and the irony is that that's exactly what the wicked spiritual forces want us to imagine. In truth, our adversaries – including *the adversary* – disguise themselves as *messengers of light* and *dispensers of righteousness* (II Corinthians 11:14-15), and their teachings are nearly impossible to instantly recognize as false because they blend deception with partial truth, confusion with logic, and evil with apparent goodness.

A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), the lead translator of the *Concordant Version*, properly cautioned,

Let us not be deceived into thinking that the warning against giving heed to seducing spirits and their doctrines is intended for the world. God warns His own. We are to beware of these doctrines. The church holds most of these doctrines already. Not the nominal church merely, but those who are aggressively evangelical and uphold vital truths. Many who are loud in their warning against the doctrines of demons hold them, contend for them, and denounce others who refuse to receive them!⁸

The powerful influence of our enemies is abundantly clear, and there is no question that the Earth's most prominent leaders are the mere puppets of controlling celestial forces.

Regarding this, A.E. Knoch also said,

Each kingdom or government of Earth doubtless

8. "The Doctrines of Demons," *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 12, Number 1, p. 21 (1920).

has a spiritual prince or overlord under Satan's control. We have been delivered from the authority of darkness, but Satan himself is never limited to one land. His peculiar province is the aerial jurisdiction. He is sovereign over all, as he was the first of all to oppose the government of God.⁹

Men do not really make up their minds. They are made up for them. All are powerfully influenced by the spirit forces which can be neither seen nor felt, but which can be detected by their effect. The spirit of the times carries men on its current.¹⁰

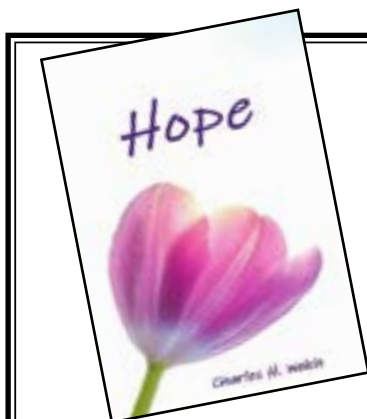
Knowing this, one may naturally assume that the best course of action is to "test the spirits" as John previously instructed in I John 4:1. However, as M. Jaegle, an associate of A.E. Knoch, points out,

In the present administration, it is no longer necessary to test the spirits, as before. Supernatural voices and messages are to be refused, since the Word of God has been completed. In view of the earnest warnings of the Scriptures, because of the possibility of being deceived by messengers of light, all self-confidence is questionable.¹¹

In other words, *any signs that now appear simultaneously as miraculous and good should be instantly recognized by believers as false manipulations from Satan and the minions under his control, rather than wonders or blessings from God.*

This brings us to a very important point, which is

9. "The Problem of Evil: The Fall of Satan," *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 15, Number 4, p. 203 (1924).
10. "The Problem of Evil: Man's Will or God's Will," *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 23, Number 6, p. 448 (1932).
11. "Our Place in God's Plan: Spirit Manifestations," *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 47, Number 3, p. 148 (1956).



Hope

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This short work helps to clear up the theme of "hope" found in Scripture by both defining what it means, as well as looking into its dispensational aspect, related to Israel and the One Body.

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that men throughout history have been fooled by deceptive spirits at times to such a degree that the world today has been irreversibly impacted until the time when our Father and Lord initiate more active rule over the Earth and the Heavens.

Before I learned what I now know about these matters, I assumed that the founders of other religions, for example, had all lied about being visited by celestial messengers for their own personal aggrandizement. I now view it highly likely that Muhammad did, in fact, have an experience with a spirit being that led to the writing of the Qur'an and the beginning of Islam, and that Joseph Smith (although well documented as a charlatan) may have also gone through a similar experience.

In any case, we know that these seemingly remarkable occurrences (if true) could have been instigated only by dark powers disguising themselves as *messengers of light*, as the Word of God had already been completed by Paul (Colossians 1:25), but we also know that God caused these men to have unique experiences and act as they did in order to bring about His own purposes. This is, of course, always the case, but opposing powers have been attempting to sabotage the Creator's plans from the beginning – often by trying to come between God and men.

In Daniel 10, we read of a celestial messenger being delayed by the prince of the kingdom of Persia for twenty-one days on his way to visit Daniel until one of the chief princes, Michael, came to his aid.

Is this a reference to the earthly prince of Persia? Hardly! No human could deter a celestial being for a single second – let alone three weeks – and Michael certainly wouldn't have been dispatched to overpower a mortal man. Yet, a prince of Persia existed in the celestial realm at the same time that a human prince of Persia existed on Earth, proving that the kingdom of Persia was in existence and being ruled simultaneously in both realms. This is but one example of many from Scripture that reveals how our current world mirrors the Heavens. When Moses was instructed to build the tabernacle in Exodus 25, it was a copy of the heavenly tabernacle (Hebrew 8:5).

Just as the Earth contains animals, Revelation de-

scribes four living creatures that surround God's throne and possess the physical characteristics of animals, and we learn in Revelation 19:11 that Christ will return to the Earth on a white horse.

Several other examples of the things we're familiar with that also exist in the heavens include music and musical instruments (Revelation 15:2-3; 18:22), farming and food (Psalm 78:24), jewels and precious metals (Revelation 21:11, 15, 18-2), clothing (Revelation 15:6), fire and water (II Chronicles 7:1; Psalm 148:4), weather phenomena (Revelation 4:3-5; Ezekiel 1:13-14, 28), and even armies (Revelation 19:14).

Importantly, when we read of the heavenly "*host*" in most translations, the Hebrew *tsâbâ'* and Greek *stratia* literally mean "masses organized for war," or armies. Again, the hierarchy in the Heavens is political, governmental and even militaristic in nature.

Of course, it is the Earth that mirrors the heavens, *not vice versa*. The heavenly things were created as the true archetypes, while the earthly things we currently experience are but a shadow of those among the celestials that are far exceeding in their grandeur. When we realize, though, just how similar the two realms actually are, our minds are opened to a far more profound (and realistic) understanding of the cosmos and of Father's plan.

The celestial realm with its multitude of beings suddenly becomes relatable and no longer seems like an abstract and incomprehensible fairytale. Perhaps the most helpful point to remember here (at least for me) is that the resurrected Christ is *physically* seated in a *real geographical location* in the universe *right now* and is not a spirit being floating about in some imaginary dreamworld.

Like Christ, some celestial beings have physical bodies, while others either do not or are capable of taking on different forms and appearances. Every occurrence of a demon, for example, indicates that these terrestrial entities are not physical themselves but seek physical bodies to control; and this includes animals as well as people.

Genesis 6 briefly tells of the sons of God having sexual intercourse with the daughters of men and pro-



ducing mighty children, which clearly indicates that these specific beings were physical. As such, these sons of God are not part of the messenger (angel) class, as angels do not marry (Matthew 22:30).

The messengers who visited Abraham and Lot appeared as men and were presumed to be by others who saw them, and they were capable of eating and engaging in physical acts of hospitality.

In II Kings 6:17, we read of Elisha praying for God to open his fearful servant's eyes when they were surrounded by enemies, and God granted Elisha's request by enabling the servant to suddenly see a mountain full of horses and chariots of fire all around them that had previously been invisible.

Most often, when celestial messengers appeared to men with important messages, or to complete important tasks, their appearance was dazzling and even frightening, such as a messenger who appeared to Daniel wearing gold and linen with arms and feet like polished brass, a face like lightning, eyes like lamps of fire, and the voice of a multitude (Daniel 10:5-6), or the being that rolled back the stone from Jesus' tomb and appeared as lightning and white as snow (Matthew 28:3).

Given what is revealed in Scripture, it seems that the lowest ranking celestial beings – whether righteous or wicked – are spirits only with no physical bodies. When Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection and they assumed in fear that He was a spirit, He invited them to touch Him and explained, "A spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have" (Luke 24:39).

As previously explained, though, some celestial beings are physical or are capable of changing appearance, and these beings are endowed with greater power. As we move up the celestial hierarchy, the physical features of beings become increasingly more wondrous and spectacular, such as with the seraphim, cherubim and four living creatures, until we reach God Himself Who cannot be contained by the laws of physics, is invisible, and exists as all of the energy in the Universe, which can be neither created nor destroyed, and is all-knowing, all-powerful, and everywhere at once.

When we begin to contemplate how unfathomable Almighty God really is, the existence of other, lesser gods should come as no surprise. These beings were created with incredible abilities and powers, but their greatest features pale in comparison to the Creator God. Understanding the role of these lesser gods, though, is of paramount importance because the *elo-him* have been key players on God's stage throughout history and even ruled over the vast majority of men prior to Christ's death, resurrection and ascension. The achievement of Christ was far greater than the saving of men from sin that most believers recognize; it was the conquering of the lesser, unjust gods and the reclaiming of the non-Israelite nations and celestial beings they had previously ruled over with authority.

In Psalm 82, we read,

God has taken His place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods He holds judgment.

He then goes on judging the lesser gods for unjustly dealing with the nations they were charged with leading and tells them,

I said you are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince.

The psalmist finishes the passage by proclaiming,

Arise, O God, judge the Earth; for you shall inherit all the nations!

But didn't God already have possession of all the nations? Deuteronomy 32:7-9 is another rather shocking passage that harkens back to Babel – an extremely significant event that most Christians ignore entirely:

Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when He divided mankind, He fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the Lord's portion is His people, Jacob His allotted heritage.

Here, we read that when God dispersed the peoples at the time of Babel, He segregated them and placed each nation under the control of a son of God while keeping only Israel for Himself.

Most translations incorrectly suggest that God divided the nations according to the number of the sons of "Israel," but this is a misleading and inaccurate translation that does much harm to the true meaning and hides God's real purpose. For one, Israel did not even yet exist as a nation at the time of Babel, so this translation makes no sense. This inaccurate interpretation, condensed, would suggest that God divided the peoples according to the sons of Israel but kept for Himself Israel. If you're scratching your head after reading that, it's for good reason. The Dead Sea Scrolls further cemented the correct translation once discovered, as they are among the oldest known manuscripts and contain the proper phrase "sons of God" in Deuteronomy 32.

In total, it seems that there were seventy nations being ruled by the lesser gods after Babel, and this number is significant as it represents totality. It may seem strange that God granted rulership over the world's many nations to the lesser gods whom He called His sons, yet this is precisely what we are told happened at the time of Babel. This pivotal event set the stage for the rest of Father's plan to unfold and for His only *begotten* Son, Christ, to eventually conquer the lesser gods and reclaim *all* nations for the Most High God.

The divine council mentioned in Psalm 82 was made up of the subordinate gods that the Most High called His sons, and these beings represented a portion of God's celestial family. As sons, these gods were invited to join the Father in rulership, and our Father has graciously granted the same privilege to men. The fourth chapter of Daniel provides further insight into this fact, as does I Kings 22.

In the Daniel passage we read that a sentence imposed on King Nebuchadnezzar was "*by the decree of the watchers* [a powerful class of celestial beings] ... *the decision by the word of the holy ones.*" A few short verses later, Daniel further clarifies that the sentence imposed by the holy watchers was "*a decree of the Most High.*"

We can most easily equate this process with our modern form of government in which Congress passes a bill and the President signs it into law. Powerful celestial beings, with authority delegated to them by God, decided upon an appropriate course of action to achieve a necessary purpose, and God approved of their plan prior to it going into effect.

In I Kings 22, a similar event takes place when God invites His celestial servants to assist in devising a scheme to ensure the fall of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead. Beginning in verse 19, the prophet Micaiah says,

Therefore hear the Word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of Heaven standing beside Him on His right hand and on His left; and the LORD said, "Who will entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?" And one said one thing, and another said another. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, "I will entice him." And the LORD said to him, "By what means?" And he said, "I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." And He said, "You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so."

In each of these cases celestial beings were permitted to devise a strategy without assistance, but it was the Most High Who gave the final approval and guaranteed the perfect fulfillment of each decree.

(continued next issue)

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TOPICS:

Major: Babel; Belittlement; Celestials; *Daimon*; Demon(s); False Teachings; Host of Heaven; Little Teachings; Most High God; Persia; Prince of; Satan; Sons of God; Spirit
Minor: I Kings 22:19; II Corinthians 11:14-15; II Kings 6:17; Angels; Deception; Demon Possession; Deuteronomy 32:7-9; Elisha; Seeing the Invisible; Psalm 82; Soul; Spirit; Translation

THERE IS
 NOTHING THAT
 THE UPHOLDERS
 OF SHAKY CREEDS
 DREAD SO MUCH AS
 TO HAVE THE PEOPLE
 THINK FOR THEMSELVES.

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