

## Chapter 3 | Blockage Removal: Authority

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We were looking into the heavenly realms to understand the configuration of the heavens as they relate to the authority of God. All authority is centered in the throne of God. Scripture gives us a picture of the Lamb seated on the throne,<sup>1</sup> and around the throne are four living creatures.<sup>2</sup>

- So first, there is a throne; the Lamb sits on the throne. This is the book of Revelation, chapters four and five. And seated upon the throne is the Lamb.
- Before the Lamb seated on the throne, there are seven lamps that are blazing. These are the seven Spirits of God, which is to say they are the seven characteristics of God on full display before the throne and before the Lamb.<sup>3</sup> These seven characteristics of God we know as the Spirit of Lordship—first, foremost, and preeminent, because He is the Ruler over all; then, there is the Spirit of knowledge, understanding, wisdom, counsel, power, and the fear of the Lord, the seven Spirits of God.<sup>4</sup>
- Surrounding the Lamb, there are four living creatures with the face of a lion, an eagle, an ox, and a man.
- And surrounding these four living creatures are twenty-four elders with crowns, symbolizing the authority of God to rule, because crowns are the symbols of rule; they are the authority of kings. But we also know that the number twelve is a reference to government, and it symbolizes the reach and the rule of heaven, the Kingdom of Heaven, and the One who sits upon the throne. He governs heaven and earth, as He Himself would claim in Matthew 28:18, where He said, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”
- Now, surrounding the twenty-four elders are angels—multitudes of angels, innumerable multitudes of angels—and they have ranks to them. It would appear that the highest rank of the angelic is called the rank of the archangel, and we know some of these archangels. The archangel who conducts warfare is Michael. The archangel who is in charge of bringing messages from the throne of God into the earth is called Gabriel. And there was a curious, absent one who was previously present; his name is “light-bearer,” Lucifer. He was in charge of the worship and praise to God, because heaven cannot be kept from adoring the majesty of God. It is the clearest understanding in creation of the awesomeness of God who would create such things.

If only humans could see God from the viewpoint of the heavens, they would not be nearly as arrogant as they are. They would be like the twenty-four elders who are always casting their crowns before the Lord. They would have a clearer understanding of God’s design of the existent creation, and they would have some knowledge as to His purpose for the creation of what He has created. The understanding that God assembles His sons before His throne would preclude the assemblage of angels, inasmuch as He has never said to an angel, “You are My Son, today I have begotten you” (cf. Hebrews 1:5). I know that out of Jewish mysticism has come the notion that the sons of God must have been angelic creatures, or the Nephilim. No. The Bible only says the Nephilim were present in the days of the sons of God, and that the Nephilim were *men* of renown. The Bible never calls them *not* men—they are *men* of renown.<sup>5</sup> But the sons of God, they are here because their representation before the throne of God is that they participate in and they are the symbols of divine authority, all of which, every scrap of divine authority is concentrated in the Person who sits upon the throne.

The throne by itself is nothing. The throne is a symbol. In fact, God references it as a throne or a seat only because that is what men are used to. The occupant of the throne is the one to keep your eye on, because wherever He migrates to, the throne migrates to Him. While He was on the earth and in the moment when He was being hounded, having been betrayed by one of the twelve and pursued by the temple guard, He turned to Peter—who in an act of desperation to save himself, pulled a sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, a man who was the high priest’s servant, apparently the one leading the charge, doing the bidding of the high priest in the night that Jesus was arrested in the dark of night—He said to him, “Put up your sword. I do not need your sword. Where I am, the authority of heaven is. I can command legions of angels to defend Me. I do not have to be on the throne to speak the authority of God. I can command them here.”<sup>6</sup>

The book of Hebrews, chapters one and two, delineate the authority of Christ in creation. He comes from the pre-creation existence as the Word, typified by the water, into creation as the Son of God. He migrates and He sits upon the throne established by His Father to govern creation by the authority of His Father. So He is the prime executive of the Father in creation to rule all of it. By the way, although Jesus is referenced as sitting at the right hand of God, there is no reference to God Himself sitting upon the throne. The reason is that the right hand does not imply that God is

sitting there and Jesus is sitting next to Him on the right hand; it is the term used in Scripture and the term used generally to indicate the position of the chief executive, the One who has the authority to execute on behalf of the One who is not visible.

See, heaven cannot contain God. Creation cannot contain God. And no man has ever seen God.<sup>7</sup> That is because He is too big to be seen. Heaven cannot contain Him, but it does not diminish the power of the throne, because the One who sits on the throne is the principal heir of all authority that has been put in creation. There is more authority than has been put in creation, but all that has been put in creation is absolutely sufficient to fully and completely execute everything God intended to do in creation. Nothing is lacking. But I want you to understand that all of creation, the heavens and the earth and all that are in them—the angels, the demonic that is in the second of the three heavens, and mankind—all of it is subject to God who is outside of all of it. So if God wishes to dismiss all of creation, He simply can at any time He wants to, or He can move it or shape it, whether in a storm or in a whirlwind, to accommodate what He wants to. So let's not mistakenly think that all of God's power is in creation. But, all of the power of God that is in creation, heaven and earth, is conserved and presented to and projected by the occupant upon the throne. This is so important, because later on we will talk about the working of His mighty power—according to Ephesians, chapter one (verse 19)—on behalf of those who believe, and the working of *that* power to dislodge the enemy and to put him in his place in creation.

Certain of the angels warred against God, questioning His authority to establish the throne and to establish man as the lawful heirs of all that God intended to put in creation. And God did not spare the angels that sinned. Here it is in 2 Peter 2:4, *“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell...”* The word “hell” has multiple renditions in the Scriptures. One rendition is the term Hades. Another is the term Gehenna, referencing the Valley of Hinnom outside of Jerusalem, in which place the refuse from the city was burned. So, there was a fire and a smoke that went up from it perpetually, and it served the imagery of describing Gehenna, a place of torments for humans. But this place called “hell,” in which the angels were cast down is the term Tartarus. So “hell,” as used in 2 Peter 2:4, is not Hades and it is not Gehenna; it is Tartarus. And here is what He does with them: He *“cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment...”* Certain of the angels, God put there.

Interestingly, this is the word that is synonymous with the term “abyss.” Like when the man in the country of Gadara, who was possessed by the demonic—the man was living amongst the tombs in Gadara—he cried out to Jesus, and Jesus had mercy on him and was about to destroy the demons that were in him. They begged Him not to send them to the abyss, not to send them to Tartarus. They said, “Son of God, leave us alone. Have You come to torment us before the time?” (cf. Luke 8:26-31). So, there is a set time. Now all the angels who sinned are not in Tartarus. They are not bound in chains of darkness reserved for judgment because some were in people. Jesus cast them out. In fact, He told us in Mark 16:17, “These works will follow those who believe. In My name they will cast out demons, they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover, they will speak with other tongues, they will take up serpents and it will not harm them”—all of which have actual and metaphorical references. The angels who sinned is the point I am after: There are angels who have sinned. In fact, in the book of Revelation there is a reference to the angel of the abyss, an angel who was thrown down out of the second heaven, in which there are the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms, according to the book of Ephesians, the sixth chapter.<sup>8</sup> So some of the angels are bound in Tartarus; others are located in the second heavens, and they are described as the spiritual forces of evil. It is from there that they attempt to operate in the earth, and it is from there that they are controlled in their activities among human beings.

We have an example of how the demonic kingdom interacts with human kingdoms in the book of Daniel. In the tenth chapter of the book of Daniel, the demonic spirit known as the prince of Persia was cast down when he attempted to impede the progress of Gabriel, who was sent to bring a message to Daniel and was interrupted in his flight to bring that message by the prince of Persia. Michael, the great prince, was dispatched, and he alone was necessary, and he struck down the prince of Persia, who fell and with him the empire of the Persians. Daniel was told by Gabriel that when he returned to his place in the ranks of those who serve God, that the prince of Greece would take the place of the prince of Persia. In human history, when the Persian empire was overthrown, the Greek empire arose. So we have some indications of how these configurations, all of which were put in the heavens on the fourth day, interact with human kingdoms.

You see, again, the whole structure of the heavens being called out of God and placed into existence in the created realm to accommodate the purposes of God, who knows the end of every matter from the beginning and is the sovereign controller over all of creation, inasmuch as all of creation lies within God. God controls every aspect of it, for His sovereign power is not limited to that which He has put on display in creation—housing components of it in the heavens, centralizing it in the throne of God and the occupant of the throne, the Lord Jesus Christ, or upon the earth where He has established orders for the operations and behaviors of humankind, especially as they engage the demonic.

Now there are ranks of angels, like we said, and the highest order of these ranks are the archangels. It would appear that there are second and third rankings of angels, and cherubim seem to occupy the next ranking below the archangels. Cherubim are part of the messenger coterie, but they are also part of the entire messaging that happens in heaven. And then there are seraphim, or seraphs. The word for “serpent” is derived from the word “seraph.” We see seraphim often functioning as honor guard and part of the armed forces, as it were, of heaven. It would appear that Satan was of the rank of the archangels, but was perhaps the head of one of the orders that is associated with serpents. That is why the root word for the serpent is the word seraph. I do not want to go too far afield, because I want to keep the focus on removing blockages, but it is important to understand how the pieces of Scripture collate together to present a picture structured on what it is that God created man for. What was the purpose for the creation of man? And, why are there angels involved in the picture?

Angels were initially created to serve man. The design of angels and the design of man are quite distinct. Whereas man has a *pneuma*, a spirit, that is empowered by the *zoë* life of God, angels are spirits, but they are *not* empowered by the *zoë* life of God. The *zoë* life of God is meant to replicate in creation that which is of the same kind and nature as God. So God said, “Let Us make man in Our own image, after Our own likeness” (cf. Gen.1:26). When a man is reconciled to God, he is reconciled to God by being placed *in Christ*. His spirit becomes an assembled component of the Spirit Man known as Christ—not Jesus. Jesus is a reference to the body, Mary’s son; but Christ is the reference to the Spirit being who is the Son of God. So when we are born again, the Holy Spirit animates our spirits and assembles us. It is said that we are baptized by one Spirit into one body;

this is 1 Corinthians, chapter 12.<sup>9</sup> The baptism *by* the Spirit is an assembly of a spirit component into the Spirit Man known as the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, we have the authority of the throne of God in creation; and beyond creation we have the standing as the sons of God.

The angels who sinned, like all angels, were created not as sons, not by an endowment of spirit out of the person of God, they were created as ministering *servants*—servants, not sons. A servant has a position, and the usefulness of a servant is as that servant functions in his place. God sustains all creation according to that design. But certain of the angels sinned, as we just saw in the reading in 2 Peter 2:4—“*For if God did not spare angels when they sinned...*” How did they sin? It is on the subject of, God never said to an angel, “You are My Son” (cf. Hebrews 1:5). The angels desired the position of son—certain of the angels led by the one who is now called Satan. Jesus said, “I saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven” (cf. Luke 10:18). He was thrown out of his place. It is referenced again a second time in the book of Revelation, the eleventh chapter, where it says, “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, for the devil has gone down to you, and he is full of fury, for his time is short.”<sup>10</sup> As a servant, you see, he could never be entrusted with that which God meant to put on display in creation.

Why did God create the creation? So that He would be known: “Let there be light”—I will be revealed. Creation is for the purpose of revealing the nature of the invisible God. All of creation reminds us of what God can do—“the heavens declare the glory of God,”<sup>11</sup> and so on. But *man* reminds us of who God is—not just what He can do, but *who He is*. Man is in the likeness of God.

I want to pick up there when we come back, as we continue. Because this, you see, was what the war was about and it is why the war continues. Satan intends to defeat man, and by that to frustrate the purpose of God. Now, that is why we are in the crosshairs. He has certain avenues that he is exploiting in this war against us, and we will explore that fully.

#### Endnotes:

1. See Revelation 5:13 BSB: “And I heard every creature in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying: ‘To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be praise and honor and glory and power forever and ever!’”

2. See Revelation 4:6 NKJV: “Before the throne *there was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.”
3. See Revelation 4:5 NKJV: “And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.”
4. See Isaiah 11:2 NKJV: “The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.”
5. See Genesis 6:4 NIV: “The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.”
6. See John 18:10 NKJV: “Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.”; see also Matthew 26:52-53 NKJV: “But Jesus said to him, ‘Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?’”
7. See John 1:18 NKJV: “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.”
8. See Ephesians 6:12 NIV: “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”
9. See 1 Corinthians 12:13 NKJV: “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”
10. See Revelation 12:12 NKJV: “Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”
11. See Psalm 19:1-2 NKJV: “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.”