

The Enemy Realm

'Put on the whole armour 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.'
Ephesians 6: 11-12

This is the only passage in Paul's writings in which he explicitly speaks of Christians' struggling against evil spirit powers. He identifies the primary enemy as the Devil. Whatever the powers are they are of the Devil and thus have a personal centre and commander-in-chief.

The evil powers here listed as opposing believers are subject to the devil, the prince of the power of the air. They include the principalities and authorities mentioned in Ephesians 1: 21 - those over whom Christ rules both in this age and in the age to come. But, until this age is completed and Christ's rule and reign fully established, Christians must live in it and these powers are still a threat.

Principalities

Strong's G746: *archē* (ar-khay') From G756; *archomai* (properly abstract) a commencement, or (concrete) chief (in various applications of order, time, place or rank): - beginning, corner, (at the, the) first (estate), magistrate, power, principality, principle, rule.

The concept of principalities is understood by the Greek word *arche* meaning chief or ruler. These principalities are ruling devil spirits possessing executive authority or governmental rule in the world. This ruling power usually involves a particular nation, people or race. There are evil angels ruling the kingdoms of the world that oppose the truth of God, and of which Satan is the chief prince or ruler, of both the world system and its organization of demons, as noted in the gospel of Matthew.

In Matthew 12: 24, the devil is called "Beelzebub" meaning 'lord of the dwelling', in which these wicked spirits are subject to and operate under Satan's dominion. They, like their chief prince, direct, control, rule and carry out the present darkness of this world.

The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines principalities as:

1. A territory ruled by a prince or from which a prince derives his title.
2. The position, authority, or jurisdiction of a prince; sovereignty.

The idea of prince devil spirits ruling or controlling a region is supported in the Old Testament book of Daniel, chapter 10. Daniel is visited by an angel in response to his prayer to God. This angel, who was sent by God to answer Daniel's prayer, was delayed for 21 days because of a battle that took place between God's angel and "a prince of the kingdom of Persia."

Daniel reveals the angel's message in the following verses:

In Daniel 10: 12-13 the spiritual battle, for this angel, was of such magnitude that Michael, the archangel of God and designated prince of Israel, assisted the angel in battle. Another enemy of God, the prince of Greece, is also mentioned in later verses.

In Daniel 10: 20-21 the book of Daniel gives us an excellent example of how these unseen spiritual entities fight to increase and maintain their realms of influence and control in order to hinder God's purposes. In addition, as previously stated, these princes are named after the nations or rather their principalities in which they rule.

It is Satan's purpose to deceive these nations and to keep them from obtaining a knowledge of God's truth and salvation through His Son Jesus Christ. In the book of Revelation, chapter 20, Satan is depicted as a deceiver of nations. The Greek word for deceive is *planaho*, and according to Strong's Greek Dictionary, this word means to "cause to roam from safety, truth or virtue, go astray, seduce, wander, and to be out of the way."

Satan's major success, in deceiving a nation, is due to a lack of discernment on the part of the people. The people are blind to the invisible forces of supernatural evil that are operating and influencing their visible human agents of political, social, religious and philosophical programs. Satan's greatest victory would be to convince the world that he just doesn't exist. However, God signifies the devil as the author of sin, sickness and death, and warns us to be alert and vigilant because the devil, as a roaring lion roams about seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8).

The devil controls the kingdoms of the world and we are not to underestimate his influence and power, nor believe that this is the will of God. God is telling us to "stand" against these evil forces by equipping ourselves with the power of God, and looking unto Christ as our example – Christ resists the devil's temptations by knowing and speaking forth scripture.

There will also come a day in which we are told in Revelation 11: 15 that "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." However, until this Scripture is fulfilled we can only conclude, as the Apostle Paul instructs, that our wrestling involves principalities or peoples or regions under the influence and deception of Satan. Satan is the prince or ruler of the kingdoms of this world, also described in the Bible as the "kingdom of darkness," in which we have our spiritual warfare. In addition, let us not be fooled, because Satan can and does prosper evil people in the world.

All principalities were created by God:

'For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.' Colossians 1: 16-17

This Scripture suggests that there is both a visible and established government on earth consisting of thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, and that there is an invisible but just as established government in Heaven, consisting of the same types of administration.

With this interpretation, the ranks of Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers for some of the angels in Heaven can be established with general attributes assigned. If we examine and compare the seen governments established by God on Earth, then we can easily imagine the

unseen government of angels to have the same characteristics as the known. We cannot be certain of this, however, because the Word of God does not reveal knowledge of these things to us in great and confirming detail.

Powers

Strongs G1849 *exousia* (ex-oo-see'-ah) From G1832 *exesti* (in the sense of ability); privilege, that is, (subjectively) force, capacity, competency, freedom, or (objectively) mastery (concretely magistrate, superhuman, potentate, token of control), delegated influence: - authority, jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength.

The Greek word for "powers" is *exousia* which means derived or conferred authority, the warrant or right to do something, or delegated influences of control. Although the word "powers" is left unclear as to Paul's precise meaning in the verse, this expression is used elsewhere in scripture to infer the powers that be in authority. In keeping with the context of this verse, this would include all high-ranking, evil supernatural powers and the power of sin and evil in operation in the world. The fruits of this type of evil can probably be seen in drug cartels, gross poverty, plagues, terrorism, and other heinous crimes against humanity, even toward the animal kingdom.

There are 'powers of the heavens':

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."
Matthew 24: 29 and parallel passages in Luke 21: 26 and Mark 13: 25.

Rulers of the Darkness of this Age

Rulers: Strongs G2888 *kosmokratōr* (kos-mok-rat'-ore) From G2889 *kosmos* and G2902 *krateō*; a world ruler, an epithet of Satan: - ruler.

Darkness: Strongs G4655 *skotos* (skot'-os) from the base of G4639 *skia*; shadiness, that is, obscurity (literally or figuratively): - darkness.

Age: Strongs *aiōn* (ahee-ohn') from the same as G104 *aei*; properly an age; by extension perpetuity (also past); by implication the world; specifically (Jewish) a Messianic period (present or future): - age, course, eternal, (for) ever (-more), [n-]ever, (beginning of the, while the) world (began, without end). Compare G5550 *chronos*.

Some Christian authors also associate "world rulers" with magic and demonic pagan gods such as the Ephesians' Artemis and seems to be in line with the pagan culture of ancient times, in which temples were dedicated to these demonic pagan deities. And let us not forget "Molech," the national god of the Ammonites' in Old Testament history. The priests would place the sacrificial children into the brass hands of the image, in which these helpless victims would slip into the fire below. This is described in Scripture as the "abominations of the nations" (2 Kings 16: 3 ASV).

Spiritual Hosts of Wickedness

Spiritual Hosts: Strongs G4152 *pneumatikos* (phyoo-mat-ik-os') From G4151 *pneuma*; non-carnal, that is, (humanly) ethereal (as opposed to gross), or (daemoniacally) a spirit (concretely), or (divinely) supernatural, regenerate, religious: - spiritual. Compare G5591 *psuchikos*.

Wickedness: Strongs G4189 *ponēria* (pon-ay-ree'-ah) From G4190 *ponēros*; depravity, that is, (specifically) malice; plural (concretely) plots, sins: - iniquity, wickedness.

Heavenly Places: Strongs G2032 *epouranios* (ep-oo-ran'-ee-os) From G1909 *epi* and G3772 *ouranos*; above the sky: - celestial, (in) heaven (-ly), high.

The Greek word for wickedness is *ponēria* and means depravity and particularly in the sense of malice and mischief, plots, sins, and iniquity (Strong's Gk. Dict.).

Malice [A. H. Dict.] is defined as:

1. A desire to harm others or to see others suffer; extreme ill will or spite.
2. Law -- The intent, without just cause or reason, to commit a wrongful act that will result in harm to another.

Satan is also depicted as the prince of the power of the air

Since Satan is the prince of the power of the air, these wicked spirits, in high places, are often understood to be the collective organization of all of Satan's devil spirits. These malevolent spirits work evil and mischief and operate in our atmosphere. They operate as close to the very air we breathe, and reach to realms beyond. All kinds of spiritual filth are propagated, in these realms, for the purpose of humanity's deception and subsequent destruction. Prior to becoming a Christian we too walked according to the prince of the power of the air.

Ephesians 2: 2-3

“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

As Christians we are delivered from the power of the prince of the air, and from the sinful nature that once ruled our path in life. When we received God's Holy Spirit, at the moment of our conversion to Christ, we were translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's light, in which we now have God in Christ in us.

We are continually delivered and empowered by God as we walk according to His Word and Spirit that He has given us. As we do this, we take our seat in the heavenlies with Christ; for Paul goes on to say in Ephesians 2: 5-7:

“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: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

Jesus is also called a Prince, He is called the Prince of Peace and of Life (Isaiah 9: 6; Acts 3: 15) whose kingdom plays no part in this present world system of darkness. Prior to His arrest, Jesus makes this clear to His disciples:

“Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” John 14: 30

“Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” John 18: 36

Note; Jesus is not speaking against the Jews, for Jesus and His followers were Jewish. He is speaking against the hypocritical religious authorities who would have Jesus killed rather than lose their sphere of control over the people of God, in which their own belly was their god.

The details of God's plan, His provision of escape from Satan's kingdom of darkness through faith in Christ, was kept a mystery from the beginning of time. It wasn't until the revelation of the Son of God on earth, and His complete victory in His death and resurrection for the salvation of humanity, that the mystery of salvation through Christ is revealed to us.

The Apostle Paul states:

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” 1 Corinthians 2: 7-10

In other words, if God's enemies knew that the Lord's death would bring the Kingdom of God and His power into the hearts of every believer, with His gift of Holy Spirit, and thus bring God's light into the world, they would not have crucified Him.

For the Christian, Jesus Christ is our Prince of Peace and Life, and we will reign with Him forevermore.

The mystery revealed is stated in Scripture as:

“...Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1: 26-27

Jesus Christ, who came as a light in the world, a light that the kingdom of darkness tried to extinguish. But through the sacrifice of Christ, the Son of God, God's gift of Holy Spirit is given to every believer in Christ (Christ in you), in which, through the manifold wisdom of God, one Lord and Light, continues to sow a vast Kingdom of Light.

“Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” 1 Corinthians 2: 8

Nothing Shall Separate Us from Christ

‘For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’ Romans 8: 38-39

Principalities and Powers Have Been Disarmed by Christ

'Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.' *Colossians 2: 15*

Supplementary Notes by John Godfrey, related to the message 'The World, The Flesh and The Devil - The Enemies of our Soul'- SYMF 1st December 2018