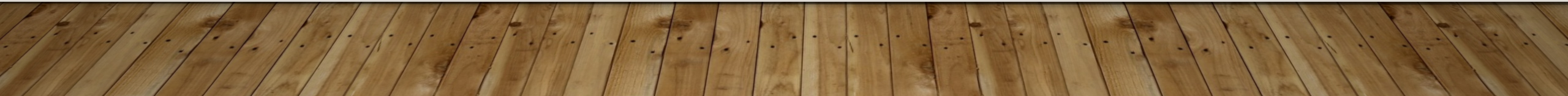
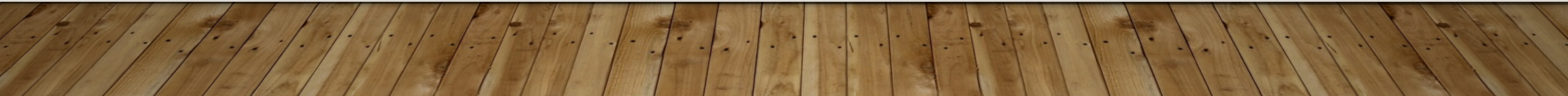


GENESIS A DEEP DIVE

HEAVEN AND EARTH

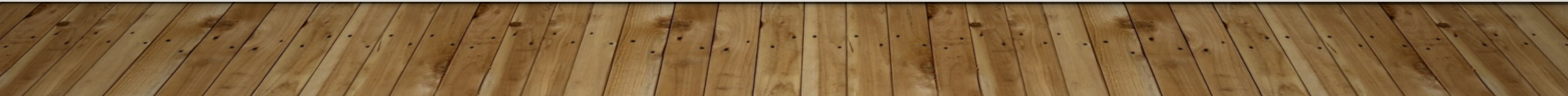


THE MEANING OF HEAVEN AND EARTH



SOME KEY QUESTIONS TO BEGIN

- What experiences have shaped your view of the cosmos growing up? How has that affected your faith or understanding of the Bible?
- How do you think about the question of whether the Bible's view of the universe seems unsophisticated or primitive? What tensions or questions exist for you or others you know related to the Bible's view of the universe?

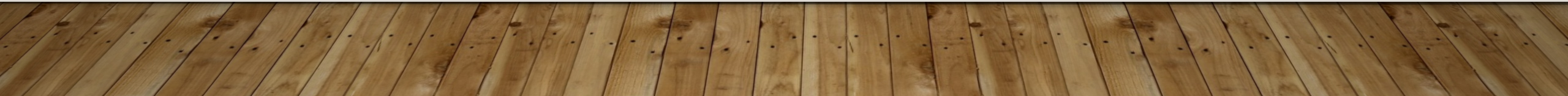


QUOTE

- Is it possible that our search for the truth of Genesis 1 is misdirected if all we're thinking about is the time and material processes of the universe's origins, when what the Biblical authors are trying to communicate through their sense of the universe is the meaning – the nature and purpose of the world. (Tim Mackie)

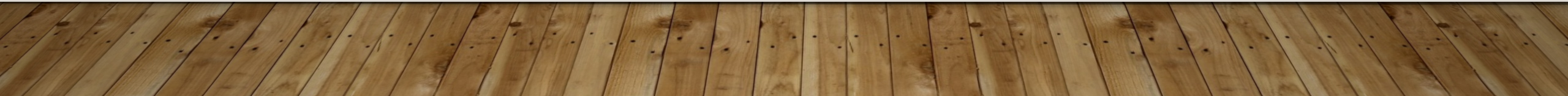
WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN BY HEAVEN AND EARTH? VERSES TO CONSIDER

- Genesis 1:1
- In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- “Heavens” are plural and clearly refers to “sky” in contrast to “earth”. Heaven here is not an afterlife dimension, but the actual sky above.



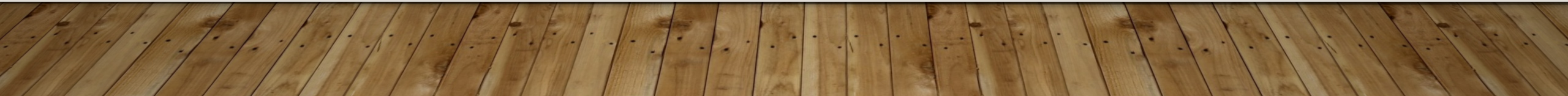
WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN BY HEAVEN AND EARTH? VERSES TO CONSIDER

- Psalm 24:1-2
- The earth is the Lord's and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it. For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers
- The earth is founded "upon the seas...and rivers."
- But isn't the earth a sphere floating in space?



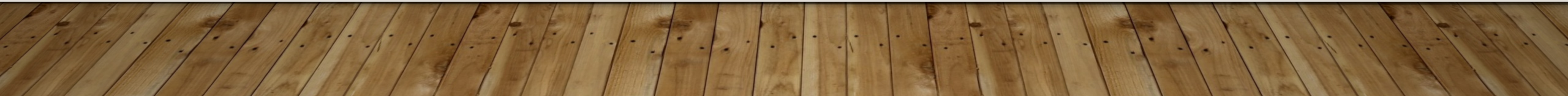
WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN BY HEAVEN AND EARTH? VERSES TO CONSIDER

- Psalm 104:1-5
- Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, You are very great; You are clothed with splendor and majesty. Covering Yourself with light as with a cloak, stretching out heaven like a tent curtain. He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters; He makes the clouds His chariot; He makes the winds His messengers, flaming fire His ministers. He established the earth upon its foundations, so that it will not totter forever and ever.
- So, heaven is like a tent, where God lives in a beamed structure in the waters up above? And the earth sits on pillars, so that it won't tip over?



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN BY HEAVEN AND EARTH? VERSES TO CONSIDER

- Exodus 20: 3-4
- “You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.”
- This is one of the ten commandments.
- Heaven must refer to skies, not a dimension where God lives.
- What is meant by “water under the earth?”

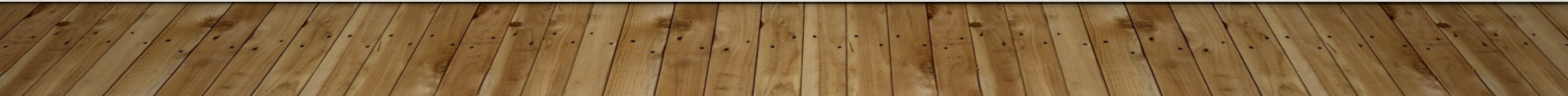


WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN BY HEAVEN AND EARTH? VERSES TO CONSIDER

- Jonah 2: 1-7
- Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from **the stomach of the fish**, and he said, “I called out of my distress to the Lord, and He answered me. I cried for help from **the depth of Sheol**; You heard my voice. For You had cast me into **the deep**, into the heart of **the seas**, and the current engulfed me. So, I said “I have been expelled from Your sight. Nevertheless, I will look again toward Your holy temple.” Water encompassed me to **the point of death**. The **great deep** engulfed me. Weeds were wrapped around my head. I descended to the **roots of the mountains**. The **earth with it's bars** was around me forever, but You have brought up my life from **the pit**, O Lord my God. While I was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer rose up to You into Your holy temple.

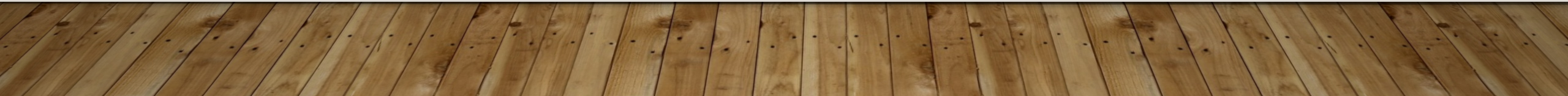
WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN BY HEAVEN AND EARTH? VERSES TO CONSIDER

- Jonah 2:1-7 Comments:
- There are a variety of terms used for the stomach of the fish: Sheol (untranslated Hebrew word for the grave), the deep, death, the earth, the mountain-roots, and the pit.
- Jonah's prayer "rose up to" God's temple. If this is the temple in Jerusalem, then why the "rise up" language when the temple is on dry land in Jerusalem?



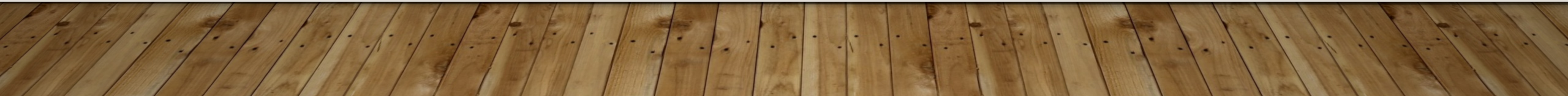
“HEAVENS” AND “EARTH” COME TOGETHER IN JESUS

- The New Testament's view of the universe is really similar to that of the Hebrew Bible.
- Why does this matter when it comes to understanding Jesus and His message?



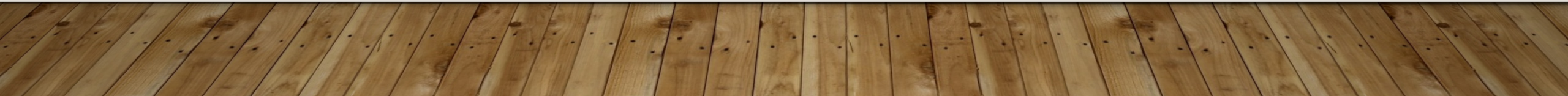
“HEAVENS” AND “EARTH” COME TOGETHER IN JESUS – SOME NT VERSES

- Matthew 4:8 - “a high mountain” from which Jesus can see all the kingdoms of the earth
- Matthew 4:17 – “Kingdom of the heavens has come near”
- Matthew 6:9-10 – Lord’s prayer, “God’s kingdom/ will be here on earth as in heaven”



“HEAVENS” AND “EARTH” COME TOGETHER IN JESUS – SOME NT VERSES

- Matthew 11:23 – Capernaum, a city, not exalted up to heaven, but going down to Sheol/ Hades
- Matthew 12:41 – Sign of Jonah: belly of whale // “heart of the earth”
- Matthew 12:42 – Queen of the South comes “from the ends of the earth”

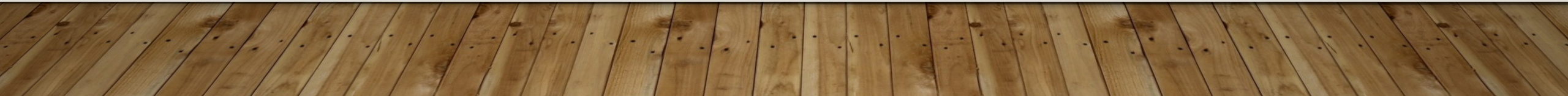


“HEAVENS” AND “EARTH” COME TOGETHER IN JESUS – SOME NT VERSES

- Matthew 28: 16-20 – On a mountain, the risen Jesus says, “All authority on heaven and earth belongs to me.”
- Philippians 2: 9-10 – The exalted Jesus was raised high, so every knee will bow and tongue confess “in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.”
- Ephesians 1:19-22 - Jesus’ resurrection exalted him to “sit at the right hand in the heavenly places

“HEAVENS” AND “EARTH” COME TOGETHER IN JESUS – SOME NT VERSES

- Ephesians 2:1-7 – We have been raised from the dead and “raised up and seated with him in the heavenly places”
- 2 Corinthians 12:1-4 - Paul talks about “a guy I know” (himself) who had a vision and “apocalypse” where he ascended up to the “third heaven.”
- Revelation 21: 1-3 – new heaven and earth, a city descending from heaven, presumably a new one coming to a new earth, but it’s called a tebernacle.

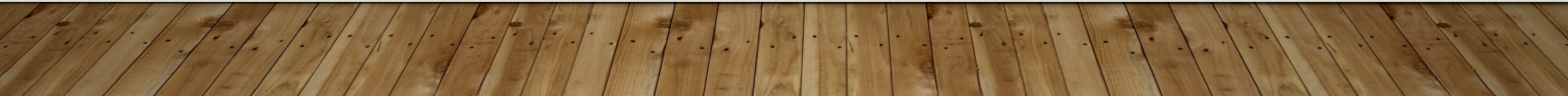


“HEAVENS” AND “EARTH” COME TOGETHER IN JESUS – SOME NT VERSES

- Revelation 21:9-22:5 – the city coming down again, described as a temple-Jerusalem-Garden-Throne of God.
 - 21:9-10 The bride, the wife of the Lamb (The church, the bride of Christ) = the holy city Jerusalem coming out of heaven from God
 - 21:22 There is no need for a temple in the city. God’s presence in the city (the church, the bride of Christ) is the temple.
 - 22:1-5 The tree of life and healing is there,

SOME THOUGHTS

- The authors of the Old Testament, Jesus, and the apostles imagined a universe very different from the one our modern western culture teaches and we have grown up with.
- If we are going to understand the Bible on its terms, we will have relearn some of our concepts of heaven and earth.



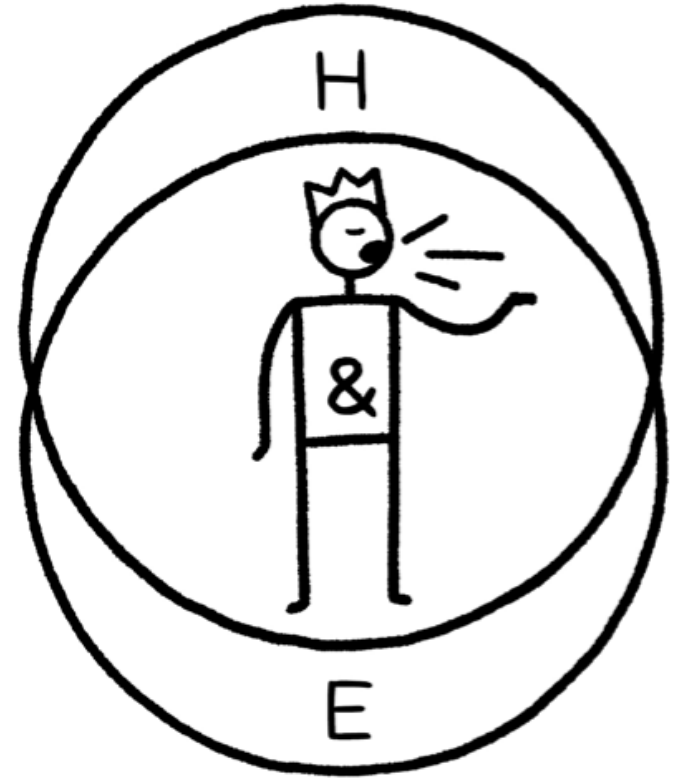
QUOTE

- This is the purpose of history: that heaven and earth come together in a royal human.

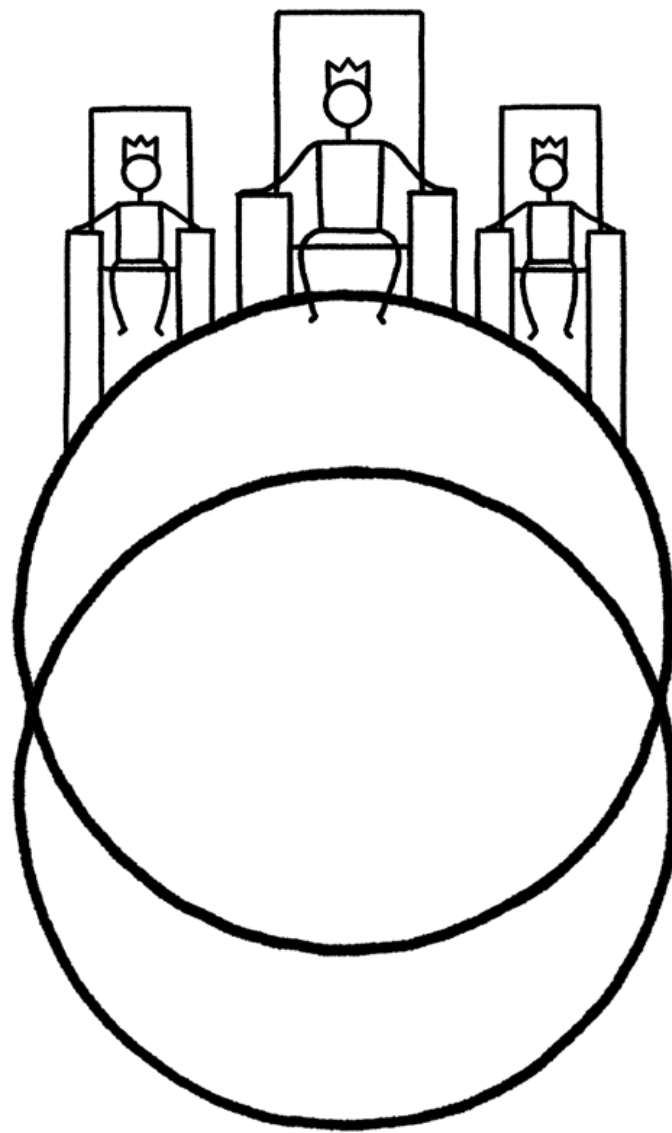
HEAVENS = GOD'S SPACE

EARTH = HUMAN'S SPACE

WATERS = "NOBODY'S" SPACE



**Heaven and earth come together
in the person of Jesus.**

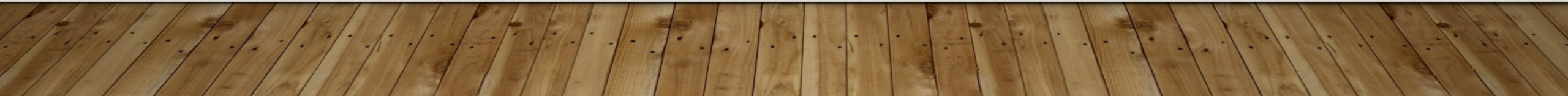


REFLECTIONS, QUESTIONS, AND THOUGHTS

- What thoughts do you have so far?
- All our language about God, even the biblical authors' language about God, has certain limitations. But those limitations can be the vehicle for communicating what God wants His people to hear.

REFLECTIONS, QUESTIONS, AND THOUGHTS

- If you were traveling to a foreign country that you had never been to, you would expect differences and prepare in certain ways.
- Apply this idea to reading the Bible. How can you engage this ancient text on its own terms as an ancient and foreign text?
- The Bible is another country and I should treat it like one. That doesn't diminish its capacity to speak to me. It actually enhances its ability to say things that I never thought to think before.



HEAVENS

