

THE SPIRITUAL REALITY Ephesians 6:10-24

The Heavenly Places

The spiritual domain

- Where we have already been blessed (1:3)
- Where Jesus has been enthroned forever over all evil powers (1:20-21)
- Where we have already been raised and seated with Christ (2:6)
- Where the wisdom of God is made known to the rulers and authorities through the church (3:10)
- Where spiritual forces of evil also reside (6:12)

Two present realities in the heavenly places: The world and the Kingdom

The World

- “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” Ephesians 2:1-4
 - Society apart from God
 - Dead in sin
 - Controlled by passions and desires of the flesh
 - In opposition to God
 - Rebelling against the law and order of His Kingdom
 - Inheriting disobedience and wrath

Satan

- The prince of the power of the air = the ruler of the world
 - “...and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.” 1 John 5:19
 - “Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.” John 12:31-32
 - “I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me.” John 14:30
- Hebrew name: Satan = adversary (enemy of God)
- Greek name: devil = slanderer, accuser
 - MURDERER AND LIAR:
 - “You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” John 8:44
 - ACCUSER
 - “...for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.” Revelation 12:10

- DECIEVER
 - “And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.” 2 Corinthians 11:14
 - “And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world.” Revelation 12:9
- TEMPTER
 - “And the tempter came and said to him...” Matthew 4:3
- ENEMY OF BELIEVERS
 - “Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8
 - Roar like a lion: open persecution, open temptation to sin (force)
- CUNNING
 - “Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.” Genesis 3:1
 - Subtlety of a serpent: seduce into compromise and deceive into error (fraud)

Jesus' Victory Over Satan

- “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.” Hebrews 2:14
- “And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. ¹¹ And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.’ Revelation 12:10-11

The Kingdom

- Jesus ushered in the Kingdom
 - “From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 4:17
 - Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.” John 18:36
- Jesus exhibits the power of the Kingdom
 - “But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.” Matthew 12:28
 - “When Jesus does battle with Satan by the Spirit of God, and begins to plunder the strong man's house (Matt. 12:29), freeing people from his bondage, the powers of the kingdom are at work and the kingdom is already present.” John Piper
- The mystery of the growth of the Kingdom
 - “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” Matthew 13:31-32

- Praying for the fullness of the Kingdom
 - Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven. Matthew 6:10

Transferred from the world to the Kingdom

- “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son...” Colossians 1:13
- “I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.” John 17:15-16
 - “...that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9

Overcoming while Remaining in the world

- Jesus has overcome
 - “In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33
- We overcome by our faith in Jesus
 - “For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” 1 John 5:4-5

THE WAR

*“Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.”
Revelation 12:17*

The Kingdom

- Described throughout Ephesians as the new society in Christ characterized by unity, diversity, purity, harmony, love, light, truth, and wisdom.
 - “Is God’s plan to create a new society? Then they will do their utmost to destroy it. Has God through Jesus Christ broken down the walls dividing human beings of different races and cultures from each other? Then the devil through his emissaries will strive to rebuild them. Does God intend his reconciled and redeemed people to live together in harmony and purity? Then the powers of hell will scatter among them the seeds of discord and sin...There will be no cessation of hostilities, not even a temporary truce or cease-fire until the end of life or of history when the peace of heaven is attained.” John Stott (pg. 261-262)

Where he attacks

- The daily routines of mundane life
- Marriage, family, work (Ephesians 5:22-6:9)
- His first attack was on marriage (Genesis 3)

Satan seeks to destroy (Sinclair Ferguson pg. 176)

1. The Word of God and its reliability
2. The character of God and his generosity
3. The righteousness of God and his absolute dependability
4. The enjoyment of God and its abundant pleasures
5. The fellowship of the people of God and its harmony and unity

“Satan has wounded such children of God as Adam, Noah, Moses, David, Peter and the vast multitude of others. How foolish I would be to think I am exempt from his attacks or immune to his powers. He plans to sift us like wheat and devour us.” -Sinclair Ferguson

Satan’s influence on the world

Desires and pride

- “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” 1 John 2:15-17

False Teaching

- “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.” 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
- “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.” Matthew 7:15

Sinful Compromise

- “Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.” 1 John 3:8

Our instruction

Be strong in the Lord
Put on the whole armor of God
Stand firm

Our Armor

Belt of Truth
Breastplate of Righteousness
Shoes of the Gospel of Peace
Shield of Faith
Helmet of Salvation
Sword of the Spirit

The Messianic Divine Warrior

***“Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.” Isaiah 11:5***

Defeat of the wicked and New Creation

- Isaiah 11:1-4
 - The righteous Branch will emerge from the destruction of Israel
 - The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon him
 - He will bring righteous judgement upon the wicked
- Isaiah 11:6-9
 - He will usher in a new Kingdom of an ideal new creation

***“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news,
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns.’ Isaiah 52:7***

Freedom from the wicked and New Creation

- Isaiah 52:1-6
 - God Himself frees His people from slavery and buys them back from bondage
- Isaiah 52:8-10
 - The Lord restores His people to Zion
 - His salvation produces joy and worship across all nations

***“He put on righteousness as a breastplate,
and a helmet of salvation on his head;” Isaiah 59:17***

Freedom from our sinful nature and New Life

- Isaiah 59:1-16a
 - All mankind is incline to evil, sin, wickedness, dishonesty, injustice
 - All mankind is dead, blind to truth, living in darkness
 - All mankind is separated from God because of sin
- Isaiah 59:16b
 - The Lord Himself provides a means of salvation and righteousness
- Isaiah 59:17-19
 - The Lord brings righteous judgement upon the wicked
- Isaiah 59:20-21
 - The Lord bring salvation to the people of Zion through His covenant faithfulness

Our Armor

1. When we trusted Christ we received His armor once and for all.

The armor of God is a picture of Jesus Christ

The belt of truth	“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6
The breastplate of righteousness	“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” 2 Corinthians 5:21
The shoes of the Gospel of peace	“For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility...” Ephesians 2:14
The shield of faith	“And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20b
The helmet of salvation	“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12
The sword of the Spirit	“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14

2. We are responsible to put the armor into use, living in its power each day

The belt of truth	“For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.” John 14:6
The breastplate of righteousness	“Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness...” 2 Peter 3:11
The shoes of the Gospel of peace	“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ.” Philippians 1:27 “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” 2 Corinthians 5:20
The shield of faith	“For we live by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7
The helmet of salvation	“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called...” Ephesians 4:1
The sword of the Spirit	“...preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.” 2 Timothy 4:2

- The Belt of Truth
 - Truth of doctrine and truthfulness of heart
 - Unless we practice truth, we cannot use the Word of Truth in its power
- Breastplate of Righteousness
 - Positional righteousness without practical righteousness gives satan an opportunity
- The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace
 - “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ Romans 10:14-15
- Shield of Faith
 - “Faith lays hold of the promises of God in times of doubt and depression, and faith lays hold of the power of God in times of temptation.” John Stott (pg. 281)
- Helmet of Salvation
 - Living in the power of salvation already received and confident expectation of full salvation on the last day
- Sword of the Spirit
 - “Still today it is his sword, for he still uses it to cut through people’s defenses, to prick their consciences and to stab them spiritually awake.” John Stott (pg. 282)

PRAYER

- Our two chief weapons: Scripture and prayer
- Prayer is to evade all of our spiritual warfare
 - Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication with all perseverance for all the saints
- Taking up the armor of God in prayer is an expression of our dependence on God
- Stay awake, alert, watchful, sober-minded
- Speaking with clarity and courage

“Clarity without courage is like sunshine in the desert; plenty of light but nothing worth looking at. Courage without clarity is like a beautiful landscape at night time; plenty to see, but no light by which to enjoy it.” John Stott (pg. 286)

"In heaven we shall appear not in armor but in robes of glory; but here they are to be worn night and day; we must walk, work, and sleep in them, or else we are not true soldiers of Christ."

William Gurnall pg. 67

PRAYING FOR COVENANT SCHOOL and PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN NASHVILLE

"When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. ¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice, ***"O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"*** ¹¹ Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been." Revelation 6:9-11

The Belt of Truth

- "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

The Breastplate of Righteousness

- Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. 1 Peter 2:12
- He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 1 Peter 2:22-24

The shoes of the Gospel of Peace

- Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world." John 11:25-27

The Shield of Faith

- "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. ¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 5:8-11

The Helmet of Salvation

- “And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved.” Romans 8:23-24

The Sword of the Spirit

- ¹¹“Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. ¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. ¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.” Revelation 19:11-16