

Christians and Politics

A HEAVENLY CALLING, INHERITANCE

Israel's Calling is EARTHLY, but the Christians' is HEAVENLY

(Christians are being urged on practically every hand *to involve themselves in the political structure of this present world system*. Politicians single out and make appeals to particular groups of Christians, they speak in Christian colleges, in Churches, and numerous ministers throughout the land urge their people to become involved.

What is this all about? Are Christians to involve themselves in the political structure of this present world system?

If so, Why? If not, Why not?

Answers to those questions are what the two parts of this article are about.)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children [sons] by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (Eph. 1:3-5, 9-11).

Christians have a *heavenly calling, a heavenly hope, a heavenly inheritance, a heavenly citizenship, heavenly blessings, and they are confronted with an ever-present heavenly battle* against the present rulers who occupy the heavenly land to which they have been called (Eph. 1:3; 6:11-18; Phil. 3:20; Col. 1:5; Heb. 3:1; I Peter 1:4).

The one book in the New Testament which, in its overall structure, possibly sets forth that facet of truth dealing with the Christians' relationship to *the heavenly land* better than any other is Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. Paul used the expression "in heavenly places [*lit.*, 'in the heavenlies']" five different times in the six chapters of this epistle. Two of these times, *the Christians' position in the heavenlies* is in view (1:3; 2:6); two other times, *the position of Satan and his angels in the heavenlies* comes into view (3:10; 6:12); and the other time, *the position of Christ at the right hand of God, also in a heavenly place*, is in view (1:20).

The Christians' Position — In the Heavens

Revelation in Paul's letter to the Ephesians begins by revealing *blessings awaiting Christians* "in heavenly places ['in the heavenlies'] in Christ," and terminates by revealing *a present warfare confronting Christians* against "spiritual wickedness in *high places* ['the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenlies']" (1:3; 6:12).

The heavenlies, wherein blessings are to be realized in chapter one, and *the heavenlies* in which the enemy presently resides in chapters three and six, must be looked upon as *one and the same*.

The Christians' positional standing is "in Christ" *in the heavens where God Himself dwells*; but, contextually, the spiritual blessings in view are to be realized by Christians as *they move in, conquer, and dwell in the heavenly land held by the enemy in chapter six*. In this respect, there are heavenly blessings for present victorious engagements of the enemy, and there are heavenly blessings awaiting victorious Christians in that coming day when the enemy will finally be dislodged from the land.

Contextually, *the blessings* in chapter one are associated with the "adoption" (v. 5), the "dispensation of the fulness of times" (v. 10), the "inheritance" (vv. 11, 14, 18), and the "wisdom and

revelation in the knowledge [Gk., *epignosis*, 'mature knowledge'] of him" (v. 17). Such blessings to be realized by Christians are, thus, intimately associated with *the heavenly land to which they have been called*; and the entire matter is projected out into the coming age, *but* not to the exclusion of the present dispensation.

The present spiritual warfare in the heavenlies is with a view to *the coming age*, but spiritual blessings await the victors during both *present* and *future* time. *There can be no future occupation of the land apart from a present warfare against the enemy*; and the blessings extend throughout both eras.

Ephesians moves progressively from chapter one into things relative to eternal salvation and the revelation of the mystery in chapters two and three. Believing Gentiles have been placed together in the same body with believing Jews. God has broken down the "middle wall of partition" by creating *one new man*, where there is neither "Jew nor Greek" (2:8-16; *cf.* Gal. 3:28).

Believing Jews and believing Gentiles, together in one body, forming *the one new man*, then become "fellowheirs" of *the heavenly* promises and blessings in view (Eph. 3:6; *cf.* Gal. 3:29). *The very purpose for an individual's salvation is to be realized through the reception of the inheritance introduced in chapter one and continued in chapters two and three.*

The Christians' association with *the heavenlies* is presently being made known to the "principalities and powers in heavenly places ['in the heavenlies']" "by ['through'] the church" (3:9, 10).

God is making known to the incumbent rulers in the heavenlies that *they are about to be replaced*; and He is making this known through *the ones who are destined to occupy these positions, the ones presently engaging the enemy in the heavenlies.*

Ephesians then continues by exhorting Christians to walk worthy of their high calling (4:1ff) and revealing the need for pastor-teachers in the Church (4:11-16). Pastor-teachers have been placed in the Church to lead Christians into a mature knowledge of, contextually, *their calling in relation to the heavenlies.*

Christians are to know about the blessings awaiting them in the heavenlies, the coming dispensation, the inheritance, the mystery, etc. And to make this known, in the strict Biblical sense,

is *the primary task of pastor-teachers*.

The latter part of chapter four and the first part of chapter five continue with thoughts and exhortations concerning walking worthy of one's high calling; and this is followed by related material in the latter part of chapter five and the first part of chapter six concerning the relationship of husbands and wives, children and parents, and servants and masters.

Then, at the conclusion of the epistle, in the latter part of chapter six, *the crux* of the entire matter comes into view.

Beginning in 6:10, the Apostle Paul says, "*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*" The engagement with the enemy now comes to *the forefront* in the epistle. *The enemy is revealed, and the proper armor with which the Christian is to clothe himself is given* (vv. 12-17).

The Christians' Warfare — In the Heavens

There is *a battle* to be fought, and there is *a victory* to be won. This battle not only requires *extensive preparation* but also *the correct armor*; and pastor-teachers in the Church are to see that Christians placed under their care become properly equipped to engage the enemy in the battle at hand (cf. 3:10, 11; 4:11-16; 6:11-18).

Going forth to battle, one's loins are to be *girded with truth* (showing truthfulness, earnestness, and sincerity in the conflict).

A person is to have on *the breastplate of righteousness* (showing a righteous manner of living).

His feet are to be shod with *the preparation of the gospel of peace* (showing that the messenger properly understands and is able to proclaim both present and future aspects of salvation).

He is to take *the shield of faith* (showing faithfulness to act in the realm God has commanded).

He is to put on *the helmet of salvation* (showing a hope relative to a future salvation [the salvation of the soul]).

And he is to take *the sword of the Spirit* (showing an acquisition of the Word of God).

Only in this fashion can a Christian stand in a victorious manner against “the wiles of the devil.”

(*Ref.* Ch. IV in the author’s book, JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST, for a fuller discussion of Eph. 6:14-17.)

One’s *faithfulness* in the entire realm of proper preparation is the primary prerequisite. As in Jude 3, one is to “earnestly contend for the faith [*i.e.*, ‘earnestly strive for (with reference to, in the good contest of) the faith’].” He, according to the parallel passage in I Tim. 6:12, is to “Fight the good fight of faith [*lit.*, ‘Strive in the good contest of the faith’]”; and, in this manner he is to “lay hold on eternal life [*lit.*, ‘lay hold on life for the age’ (a future salvation, to be realized during the Messianic Era, associated in the text with *his calling*)].”

The words translated “contend” in Jude 3 and “fight” in I Tim. 6:12 are from *epagonizomai* and *agonizomai* respectively in the Greek text. Note that the only difference in these two words is the prefix “*ep*” in Jude (this is the preposition *epi* [‘upon’] prefixed to the word [the “*i*” is dropped when *epi* is prefixed to a word beginning with a vowel]). *Epi*, used in this manner, intensifies the meaning of the word, providing the translation, “earnestly contend [‘earnestly strive’].”

Agonizomai is the Greek word from which our English word “agonize” is derived. The word could more properly be translated “strive,” as in Luke 13:24 and I Cor. 9:25. Every muscle is to be strained, every effort is to be expended, in the “good contest of the faith.”

In Jude 3-5 this contest is associated with entrance into the land to which Christians have been called, drawing from the type of the Israelites under Moses; and the false teachers in these verses are seeking, through that which they are teaching, to mislead and thus prevent Christians from entering this land (*ref.* the ten unfaithful spies during Moses’ day and the results of their message).

However, Christians following the admonition in Jude 3 need not fear the false teachers in Jude 4, nor fear being numbered among the unfaithful in Jude 5. Such Christians will experience victory after victory in the battle and partake of rich spiritual

blessings which the Lord has reserved for His conquerors, both now and in the coming age.

Seated on the Throne — In the Heavens

Dare to be a Caleb! Dare to be a Joshua!

Rewards for those who so govern their lives will be the same as Caleb and Joshua's — *present victory, and the ultimate possession of one's inheritance* (Joshua 13:7-14; 19:48-50).

As Christ is today seated with His Father on His Father's throne, He is inviting Christians to one day sit with Him on His Own throne (Ps. 110:1; Rev. 3:21), which will be located *in the heavens* — located in the place from which Satan and his angels rule today, with Christ and His co-heirs replacing Satan and his angels in that day.

Christ, having a reign both *from the heavens and upon earth* in that day, will rule from *His Own throne with His co-heirs in the heavens and from David's throne in Israel's midst on earth* (Joel 2:27-32; Luke 1:31-33; Rev. 3:21). *And these two thrones should NEVER be confused with one another.*

Israel's calling is *earthly, connected with David's throne*; the Church's calling is *heavenly, connected with Christ's Own throne*. *And over-coming Christians will sit with Christ on His throne in the heavens, not with Him on David's throne on earth.*

DEFILING ONE'S HIGH CALLING

Christian Involvement in the Affairs of this World

“And he brought us out from thence [the Israelites under Moses, brought out of Egypt, in the type; Christians under Christ, brought out from this world, in the antitype], that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers [brought into an earthly land in the type; brought into a heavenly land in the antitype]” (Deut. 6:23).

In the central Old Testament type, alluded to in the preceding reference, having to do with the Israelites under Moses, *earthly Gentile nations dwelling in an earthly land were in view.*

The antitype though, as it pertains to Christians under Christ, has to do with a heavenly land and the rulers therein. Rather than Gentile nations in an earthly land, it has to do with *Satan and his angels in a heavenly land — the incumbent rulers over the Gentile nations on the earth, ruling from a heavenly realm.*

Christians have been called to a heavenly land presently occupied by Satan and his angels. And their warfare is *there*, against Satan and his angels, *not here* against the earthly rulers. As Israel's warfare was against those dwelling in the land to which the nation had been called (*an earthly land*), so is the Christians' warfare against those dwelling in the land to which they have been called (*a heavenly land*).

That's why Eph. 6:12 states:

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places [‘against spirit forces of the evil one in heavenly places’].”

This is a *spiritual battle which is specifically stated to not be against “flesh and blood” opponents, but against the spirit forces of Satan in heavenly places.* And Christians concentrating their efforts in the spiritual warfare against the correct enemy in the correct realm, apart from distraction, is exactly what Paul had in mind in II Tim. 2:4, 5:

“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully [*i.e.*, according to the manner which God has revealed in His Word].”

Lawful, Unlawful Warfare

A Christian expending his time and energy in the wrong realm — which often involves a warfare against the wrong enemy in this realm (*i.e.*, a warfare against “flesh and blood” opponents *on the earth* rather than against “spirit forces” *in the heavens*) — is not striving lawfully. It is *impossible* to overcome in the warfare in which Christians are to be engaged if one becomes wrapped up in “the affairs of this life.”

That’s why Christians will not be crowned apart from striving lawfully. They will have separated themselves from *the only place* where one can overcome and gain the victory — *the spiritual warfare*; and if any warfare was carried on at all in their lives, it could only have been against the wrong enemy in the wrong realm (again, separate from the only enemy and realm where one can overcome and gain the victory).

And warring against the wrong enemy in the wrong realm is something being carried out among Christians today on a scale which encompasses, after some fashion, almost the whole of Christendom (*e.g.*, Christians opposing governmental leaders among the Gentile nations, who all hold positions under Satan and his angels in the present kingdom of the heavens [*cf.* Dan. 10:12-20]).

(Note Appendix I at the end of this article for an overview of Satan’s present rule among the Gentile nations and what involvement in the political structure of the present kingdom under Satan would actually involve.)

Christians, not understanding the true nature of the spiritual warfare have turned things completely around, have found themselves warring against “flesh and blood” opponents, and have placed their crowns in jeopardy.

Why is this the case? Why is something of this nature — completely contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture — so prevalent within Christian activity today?

The answer can be seen through viewing what has happened, *in the antitype*, relative to the commission which Moses gave the twelve elders from the twelve tribes before they were sent into the land of Canaan.

That is, the answer can be derived through:

1) Understanding how the elders under Moses were supposed to heed his commission during a past dispensation, *in the type*.

2) Then, seeing what has happened when this same commission is supposed to be heeded *after exactly the same fashion* by elders under Christ during the present dispensation, *in the antitype*.

In the type, the twelve elders which Moses sent into the land were told to go *up a certain way*, and that way would lead them *up into the mountain* (Num. 13:17). Then, while in the mountain, they were *to learn everything they could about the land and the inhabitants therein*. And, after learning all they could, they were *to bring back word concerning their findings to the people in the twelve tribes*.

The message of the twelve was to involve the strength of the people dwelling in the land, how the Israelites could move in and overcome them, all the various things about the land itself, etc. In other words, they were to find out everything they could about the kingdom — both the present kingdom under Satan and the anticipated future kingdom under God — and they were to proclaim these things to the people of Israel upon their return.

This message would provide knowledge about the hope set before them — that of going into the land, conquering the inhabitants, and realizing an inheritance therein. And this knowledge

would not only provide them with an incentive to move out and be victorious over the inhabitants in the land, but it would also provide them with information concerning how this was to be accomplished.

Then, bringing this over into the antitype, the elders, the pastor-teachers, those whom God has called to lead and feed His flock, all have *a central commission*. They have been commissioned by the Lord to *look to the land* and *go up a certain way*, which will lead *up into the mountain*. And, once on the mountain, they are to find out *everything they can about the things of the mountain* and *then proclaim these things to those under their ministry*.

This is *central!* *Everything* in the pastor-teachers' ministry should revolve around this, for it involves the hope set before every Christian, which centers around the very reason for their salvation.

And *the only place* which God has provided for those whom He has called to go up into the mountain and learn these things for this particular purpose is His Word.

Looking to the land and going up a certain way, which will lead up into the mountain, is looking to and delving into those things in the Word having to do with the kingdom. And, so doing, the person is to traverse the Word from one end to the other, learning all he can about the complete scope of the kingdom.

Then he is to take this message to the people, providing them with a knowledge of the hope set before them — that of going into the land, conquering the inhabitants, and realizing an inheritance therein. And this knowledge will not only provide them with an incentive to move out and be victorious over the inhabitants of the land, but it will also provide them with information concerning how this is to be accomplished.

But...

But *a major problem exists*. The elders under Christ — the leaders whom God has placed among His people, the pastor-teachers — have not followed the command in Num. 13:17. *They have not looked toward the land and gone up a certain way, which leads up*

into the mountain.

They, not having followed the Lord's command, don't understand the true nature of the spiritual warfare, how it is to be fought, what is at stake in the fight, and all the various things about the kingdom — both present and future. Not having been there themselves and not understanding these things, they can't bring back a message to those under their ministry concerning that which is there, the hope set before Christians, all the various things about victory over the enemy, etc. *Such would be impossible.*

And the pastor-teachers' failure to heed the Lord's commission after this fashion *has produced far-reaching ramifications seen throughout Christendom.*

Christians, because of the failure of pastor-teachers in this realm, are not knowledgeable concerning the various facets of the Word of the Kingdom. And this is the reason so many Christians find themselves wrapped up in "the affairs of this life" and, within such actions, often also find themselves engaged in *a battle against the wrong enemy in the wrong realm.*

This is the reason that *numerous Christians find themselves involved in the political structure of this present world system, often encouraged by their religious leaders to do so — that is, find themselves involved in Satan's present kingdom rather than looking to the Lord and His coming kingdom.*

Or, referencing the overall typology of I, II Samuel, involvement of this nature would be comparable to David's faithful men during his time of exile (19:1ff; 22:1, 2) *leaving their place with David, going back to Saul's kingdom, and involving themselves in his kingdom.*

(Note Appendix II at the end of this article for a succinct overview of the typology of Saul and David in I, II Samuel.)

And what will be the end result of the present state of Christendom (which is not far removed, though after a different fashion, from that of the Israelites at Christ's first coming *after* the Scribes and Pharisees had finished their work)? It was given by Christ Himself, almost 2,000 years ago, before the Church had even been brought into existence.

Because of the working of the leaven which the woman placed in the “three measures of meal” (apparently very early in the dispensation) — which will work *until* “the whole” has been leavened (Matt. 13:33; cf. Matt. 16:6), resulting in the “lukewarm” condition in Christendom at the end of the dispensation (Rev. 3:14-21) — Christ asked:

“Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith [‘the faith’] on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).

The expression, “the faith,” is peculiarly related to the Word of the Kingdom (cf. I Tim. 6:12-15, 19; II Tim. 4:7, 8; Jude 3); and the way in which the question is worded in the Greek text indicates that a negative response is anticipated. The Son of Man is not going to find “the faith” on the earth at the time of His return. He will not find the true message surrounding things pertaining to the kingdom being taught among Christians in the Churches at this time.

Why? Again, because the pastor-teachers have not heeded the Lord’s commission. They have not *looked toward the land and gone up a certain way, which leads up into the mountain*. They know little to nothing about the land and its inhabitants; and, resultingly, the people under their ministry know little to nothing about these things either.

And that’s where we are. That’s the way matters surrounding the Word of the Kingdom exist during the closing days of the present dispensation.

Will conditions improve? Not according to Scripture! In fact, according to Scripture, *deterioration* will continue. Matters will only become *worse*, for “the whole” *is to be leavened*.

APPENDIX I

THE RULE OF SATAN AND HIS ANGELS

From what realm do Satan and his angels presently rule?

It is clear from both Old and New Testament Scriptures that they rule *from a heavenly realm over the earth*. Satan and his angels have access *to the earth and rule through the Gentile nations on the earth* (Gen. 6:2-4; Job 1:7; 2:2; Dan. 10:12-21; I Peter 5:8; Jude 6), but they themselves do not rule *on the earth*.

Daniel chapter ten presents certain insights into how the present kingdom of Satan is structured, along with the location of those administering power and authority in this kingdom.

In Daniel chapter ten, a heavenly messenger who had been dispatched to Daniel on the earth from that part of the heavens where God resides and rules (“the uttermost parts of the north [a superlative in the Hebrew text]” — the northernmost point in the universe in relation to the earth [Isa. 14:13, ASV]) was detained at a point enroute. This messenger was detained in the heavens above the earth by “the prince of the kingdom of Persia.”

Then Michael was dispatched from heaven, and the messenger remained there with “the kings of Persia” while Michael fought with the prince of Persia for his release (v. 13).

The picture presented is that of *powerful angels in the kingdom of Satan ruling the earth from a heavenly realm (a heavenly realm in relation to the earth) through counterparts in the human race on earth*.

There was a prince (ruler) of Persia in the heavens, and there was a prince (ruler) of Persia on the earth. Then, in the heavens, there were lesser rulers associated with Persia (the kings of Persia); and the same would have been true in the earthly kingdom (*cf.* Dan. 2:39; 5:28-31; 7:5; 8:3-6, 20).

Then beyond that “the prince of Greece” is mentioned — another heavenly ruler, the angelic heavenly ruler over the Grecian kingdom on earth (v. 20).

And the reason why attention is called to this heavenly ruler is easy to see and understand. Daniel, throughout his book, deals with the kingdom of Babylon, from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the days of Antichrist; and Dan. 10:20, “...the prince of Greece shall come,” anticipated that day when Alexander the Great in the Grecian kingdom on earth would conquer the kingdom of Babylon under the Medes and the Persians (cf. Dan. 2:39; 7:6; 8:7, 8, 21, 22).

Thus, there is not only a breakdown of powers in the heavenly kingdom under Satan corresponding to a breakdown of powers in various earthly kingdoms under fallen man but there is also a shifting of powers in the heavenly kingdom corresponding to a shifting of powers in the earthly kingdoms. In this respect, any person occupying a position of power in any Gentile earthly kingdom during the present age is merely occupying a position of power under Satan and his angels, as they rule from the heavens through counterparts on the earth.

(Note that *the nation of Israel* is the lone exception among nations on earth whose rulers presently hold positions of power and authority under fallen angels in the kingdom of Satan.

The prince over Israel is *Michael* [Dan. 10:21], an angelic prince in the heavens who is not numbered among those ruling in Satan’s kingdom, as Israel is not numbered among the nations [Num. 23:9].

And Michael, undoubtedly, has a great host of angels ruling with and under him, as Satan has a great host of angels ruling with and under him.

The whole of the matter is *a rule by angels from two places in the heavens through individuals from the human race on earth — one through the nation of Israel, the other through all of the Gentile nations.*)

APPENDIX II

SAUL AND DAVID SATAN AND CHRIST

The complete story of Scripture, as it would pertain to Satan, Christ, Christians, Israel, and the nations was foreshadowed typically by the account of Saul and David in the Books of I, II Samuel.

Saul was anointed king over Israel (I Sam. 10:1); but Saul disqualified himself by refusing, as God had commanded, to destroy the Amalekites and all of their possessions (I Sam. 15:1ff), though Saul continued to reign. And Saul would continue to reign until the one whom God had chosen to replace him was not only on the scene but ready to ascend the throne.

Then, note that which the type, thus far, foreshadows:

Satan was anointed king over the earth (Ezek. 28:14); but Satan disqualified himself through seeking to extend his rule beyond his God-appointed position (Isa. 14:13-15), though Satan continued to reign. And Satan would continue to reign until the One Whom God had chosen to replace him was not only on the scene but ready to ascend the throne.

In the type, shortly after God rejected Saul as Israel's ruler, God had Samuel anoint David *king over Israel* (I Sam. 16:10-13). There were then *two anointed kings in Israel*.

But David didn't immediately ascend the throne. Rather, he eventually found himself in a place out in the hills, separated from Saul and his kingdom. And, during this time, certain faithful men joined themselves to David and remained out in the hills with him (I Sam 22:1, 2).

The day though eventually came when David was ready to ascend the throne, possessing a contingent of faithful men ready to rule with him. Then, Saul was put down, his crown was taken and given to David, and David and his faithful men moved in and took over the government.

In the antitype, after God had rejected Satan as the earth's ruler, God anointed His Son *King over the earth* (Ps. 45:6, 7, 16; Heb. 1:8, 9; cf. Matt. 2:1, 2). There were then, and there are today, *two anointed Kings over the earth*.

But God's Son, as David in the type, didn't immediately ascend the throne. Rather, as David, Christ finds Himself in a place of exile, separated from the kingdom. And, as in David's case, certain faithful individuals join themselves to Christ during this time, remaining in the place of exile with Him (Matt. 16:24-27; John 14:1-3; I John 2:28).

The day is near at hand though when *matters will continue exactly as seen in the type*. Christ, in that day, as David in his day, will be ready to ascend the throne, possessing a contingent of faithful followers to rule with Him. Then, Satan, as Saul, will be put down, his crown will be taken and given to Christ, and Christ, with His faithful followers, will move in and take over the government (II Sam. 1:1-16; 5:3, 4; Dan. 7:13, 14; Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21; 19:11ff).