

Levels in the Spirit (Part 2)

God is building His Church (Ecclesia) and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it

Mt 16:17 – 19 . Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Gates speak of authority. We are doing this as the Church and not as lone rangers.

May God give you wisdom to know when to avoid certain people and bypass others in your dealings, because you know that there are powers at work. May God show you who to deal with in all your dealings. May He give you wisdom to build altars to God that attract the working of angels. Sometimes that spirit cannot work when you are present, because greater is He who is in you. That's why personal confrontation helps. You will be the exception because that spirit fails to operate in your presence.

Gen 28:12-14 *He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 There above it stood the Lord, and he said: "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. 14 Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.*

It is possible to have an interaction between heaven and earth. When this happens, we see promises granted and established. We see miracles. This is where heaven meets earth. Powers that had held back the purposes of God are disarmed at this point. Jacob then names the place in Canaan, Bethel although the city had been called Luz. We are shifting things. Afterwards he committed to give the Lord a tenth of all his increase.

A. The Kingdom of God

1. God (Ruler over all things)

Genesis 1:1 *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*

Psalm 103:19 *"The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all."*

2. Archangels (High-ranking Angels) e.g., Michael, Gabriel

1 Thessalonians 4:16 (NIV): *"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first."*

Jude 1:9 (NIV): *"But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!'"*

Daniel 10:13 (NIV): *"But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia."*

These verses highlight the role of the archangel Michael, emphasizing his involvement in spiritual warfare and divine intervention.

Daniel 8:16 (NIV): "And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, 'Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision."

Daniel 9:21 (NIV): "While I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice."

Luke 1:19 -20 (NIV): "The angel said to him, 'I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."

This passage highlights Gabriel's authority as a messenger of God and the consequence of Zechariah's initial doubt.

Luke 1:26-27 (NIV): "In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary."

These verses show Gabriel as a messenger from God, delivering important messages and revelations, particularly in the books of Daniel and Luke.

Dan 10:20 So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; 21 but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince).

3. Angels of Dominion (Ruling Angels over regions)

Colossians 1:16 (NIV): "For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him."

Daniel 10:20-21 (NIV): "So he said, 'Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince)."

These verses emphasize the spiritual realities and hierarchies, with Colossians focusing on Christ's supreme authority over all creation, including spiritual beings, and Daniel highlighting the spiritual warfare and the role of angels like Michael in God's plan.

4. Thrones (Angels who carry out God's will in worldly affairs)

Colossians 1:16 (NIV): "For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him."

1 Pet 3:22 who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand – with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Revelation 4:4-5 (NIV): "Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings, and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God."

Unpacking Colossians 1:16

Powers = potestas – overseeing the power of kings and rulers

Thrones = thronoi – seat, potentate, dominion. One who holds dominion or exercises authority. Similar to judges or tribunals.

Dominion = kurios – celestial hierarchy, angelic lordship, power exerting itself in a jurisdiction, rulers/government

Rulers = archo – magistrates, beginning or origin, ahead of the rest, domain or principality. This could explain why “ancient things” affect current climate of things.

Authorities = Exousia – Spiritual power, weight, authorisation in a jurisdiction

5. Seraphim and Cherubim (High-ranking beings involved in worship and God's holiness)

Is 6:1-3 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.

I have called these beings and not angels because the Bible does not actually describe them as such. They have wings and angels are not described as such. Many believe that Cherubim have a ruling function whilst Seraphim seem to protect God’s throne. Seraphim have six wings whilst angels have humanoid features. In Ezekiel 10 Cherubim are described as having four faces; the face of a man, lion, eagle and cherub. They are described as living creatures.

6. Messengers (Regular Angels and servants of God)

Hebrews 1:14 (NIV): "Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"

The word angel is the Greek transliteration *angelos* meaning messenger.

7. Ministering Angels (Angels sent to minister to believers)

Psalm 91:11-12 (NIV): "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

Luke 22:43 “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” 43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.

Matthew 4:11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Dan 10:16-19 16 Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, “I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I feel very weak. 17 How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe.” 18 Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. 19 “Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed,” he said. “Peace! Be strong now; be strong.” When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, “Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength.”

8. Guardian Angels (Angels assigned to protect individuals or groups)

Matthew 18:10 (NIV): "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."

Whether or not we each have guardian angels is not the issue here. The fact these angels are described as somewhat belonging to the children says something. It either means they had assignments specifically directed toward the children or perhaps each were assigned to a child.

B. The Kingdom of Darkness

Romans 11:29 for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. Although Lucifer was fired from heaven he still remains powerful and gifted. This is similar to worldly rock groups that started out in the church. When Satan fell from the 3rd heaven into the second heaven, he was with strong followers who he appointed into key positions not dissimilar to the angelic hierarchy.

1 Thess 2:18 For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan blocked our way.

Satan is actively trying to hinder the advancement of God's Kingdom on earth.

It's important to discern when it is the Holy Spirit leading you away from something and when it is the enemy hindering you.

Acts 16:7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

After this was when Paul had a vision of a man from Macedonia calling them.

1. Satan (Ruler of the Kingdom of Darkness)

Isaiah 14:12-15 How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! 13 You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon. 14 I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." 15 But you are brought down to the realm of the dead, to the depths of the pit.

He is the adversary who does the work of accusing the brethren

Zech 3:1-2 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. 2 The Lord said to Satan, 'The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?'

He is proud and we must not be the same as we attempt to overcome darkness

Ezekiel 28:12-17; "Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: "You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: carnelian, chrysolite and emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper, lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings[b] were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared.14 You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked

among the fiery stones. 15 You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. 16 Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. 17 Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.

Revelation 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

2. Principalities (Ruling Spirits over Nations/Regions)

Ephesians 6:12 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.

Rulers = Arch

3. Powers (Authorities over specific areas, such as cities)

Ephesians 6:12 Ephesians 6:12 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.

Authorities = Exousia

4. Rulers of the Darkness of this World (Influencers in world systems)

Ephesians 6:12 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.

Powers or rulers of darkness. Darkness = skotos – principle of sin with its certain results

5. Spiritual Wickedness in High Places (Demonic forces influencing thoughts, culture, and ideologies)

Ephesians 6:12 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.

Wickedness = ponerias – iniquity, pain ridden evil, depravity, evil purposes and desires.

6. Fallen Angels (Demonic beings with specific tasks)

Revelation 12:7-9; Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. 8 But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. 9 The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

7. Territorial Spirits (Demons assigned to specific geographic locations)

Daniel 10:13, 20 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia..... So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come;

Think of the time when the demons begged that Jesus would not send them away from that region.

8. Demons/Unclean Spirits (Lower-level spirits involved in possession and torment)

*Luke 11:24-26 When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' 25 When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. 26 Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the **final condition** of that person is worse than the first."*

Rules of Engagement with the Spiritual Realm

Jude 1:8-10 8 In the very same way, on the strength of their dreams these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings. 9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" 10 Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct—as irrational animals do—will destroy them.

This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the flesh and despise authority.

2 Peter 2:10-12 Bold and arrogant, they are not afraid to heap abuse on celestial beings; 11 yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not heap abuse on such beings when bringing judgment on them from[b] the Lord. 12 But these people blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like unreasoning animals, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like animals they too will perish.

Someone once said, "If we want the territorial spirits to leave a certain geographical area, then we should be winning souls on the ground in that area. When many people in that region turn to the Lord, then the territorial spirit must leave."

To slander is to verbally degrade the dignity of another.

- 1. One can be destroyed by celestial beings**
- 2. It seems to be the job of archangels to deal with these celestial beings in the 2nd heaven as opposed to us**
- 3. We must practise the presence of God not the presence of demons**
- 4. We are not to command angels.**

They are under God, and we pray to God and He instructs them.

Heb 2:6-7 6 But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is mankind that you are mindful of them, a son of man that you care for him? 7 You made them a little[a] lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honour

This will change in another dispensation, as Paul states that we will judge the angels. *1 Cor 6:2-3 Or do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3 Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!*

5. Demons and angels are able to teach for good or for evil

Acts 7:53 53 you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it."

Gal 3:19 Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator.

1 Cor 10:20 No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons.

NCV 1 Tim 4:1-2 Now the Holy Spirit clearly says that in the later times some people will stop believing the faith. They will follow spirits that lie and teachings of demons. 2 Such teachings come from the false words of liars whose consciences are destroyed as if by a hot iron.

6. Satan has been demoted multiple times

Luke 10:1; 17-20 After this, the Lord chose seventy-two others and sent them out in pairs ahead of him into every town and place where he planned to go..... When the seventy-two[a] came back, they were very happy and said, "Lord, even the demons obeyed us when we used your name!" 18 Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Listen, I have given you power to walk on snakes and scorpions, power that is greater than the enemy has. So nothing will hurt you. 20 But you should not be happy because the spirits obey you but because your names are written in heaven."

This statement could be Jesus speaking of what had already happened when Lucifer was fired from heaven. It could also be speaking of a dispensation they were coming to where Satan would no longer have access to the courts of heaven as he did in the Old Testament.

7. Jesus regained authority on earth through the cross. He had never lost it in heaven.

When the enemy had conned Adam and Eve he gained authority on earth. This is why he could offer Kingdoms to Jesus when he tried to tempt him.

Mt 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

We are called to take dominion and rule on earth for now, then in eternity also rule in the heavens with Christ.

8. Don't be a lone ranger

It took many people consistently living a certain way to build a stronghold that empowers a principality over a region. It will also take an army to overcome it and reverse what has occurred.

Let's examine how to deal with principalities using the case of mammon. If we are to dislodge a principality of mammon in our region we need to come in the opposite spirit. We recognise that mammon is the pursuit of money and trust in money, possessions, and worldly wealth for security, identity, and fulfilment. So, we come in with strong teaching of God as the provider, placing value on spiritual growth over accumulation of wealth. We view money as a tool, entrusted by God, to be used wisely for His purposes. We collectively repent and renounce mammon. When this is dislodged from the people, it loosens the hold and the authority of the principality. We can pray strong prayers of repentance and disciple people. We can also ask God to deal with the minds of people concerning the matter. We can go to the root issues of fear of lack and greed in our hearts. This is the way we deal with high-ranking spirits and thrones as opposed to slandering them.

Reflection Questions

1. How does understanding the authority behind the "gates of hell" influence your perspective on spiritual warfare in your own life?
2. In what ways can the church collectively stand against the powers of darkness, as opposed to operating as individuals or "lone rangers"?
3. Reflect on a time when God gave you wisdom to avoid certain individuals or situations. How did this impact your spiritual journey?
4. How can you actively build altars to God in your daily life that attract the presence of angels and divine assistance?
5. What does Jacob's vision of the stairway in Genesis 28 teach you about the interaction between heaven and earth? How can you recognize these moments in your life?
6. How does understanding the hierarchy of angels (archangels, ruling angels, etc.) change the way you approach spiritual battles?
7. Reflect on the importance of personal confrontation in spiritual matters, and how "greater is He who is in you" manifests in such situations.
8. How do you discern when resistance in your life is from the enemy versus when it is the Holy Spirit leading you in a different direction?
9. In what ways can you engage with the spiritual realm responsibly, following the example of the archangel Michael in Jude 1:9?
10. How can you remain focused on practising the presence of God rather than becoming overly preoccupied with the presence of demons or spiritual opposition?