

The Spiritual Realm

Intro

- Jn 16:13, “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.”
 - truth relates to reality — how things really are, how they operate, what’s happening
- Flat-landers analogy
- Jn 20:19 [after Jesus’ death & resurrection], “On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’”
 - What was the disciples’ state of mind before Jesus appeared? Why?
 - What did Jesus do in this verse?
- Jn 20:26, “A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’”

Physical and Spiritual Realms

- Gen 1:1, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”
 - What is the theme of Genesis Chapter 1?
 - Does Gen 1:1 suggest that God created all the heavens at the same time?
 - In “eternity past” did God exist in nothingness?
- 2 Co 12:2, “I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven.”
- How many heavens are there?
 - Atmospheric heaven
 - Isa 55:10, “. . . the rain and the snow come down from heaven.”
 - Job 38:29, “. . . the frost from the heavens.”
 - Deut 33:13, “. . . the precious dew from heaven above.”
 - Where do rain, snow, frost, and dew come from?
 - Celestial heaven
 - Gen 15:5, “Look at the heavens and count the stars.”
 - Deut 4:19, “And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars — all the heavenly array”
 - What do we call the area where the sun, moon, and stars are located?

- From an earth-dweller’s perspective, which direction are the stars?
- Rev 12:7-9, “And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. 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.”
 - Where did the war originate and where did Satan wind up?
 - “place” [Gk, *topos*]: (1) place, space; (2) task or responsibility; (3) position, rank
 - “earth” [Gk, *ge*]: all definitions relate to planet earth (land, ground, planet, country)
 - not *kosmos* (earth, world, world system, universe)
 - Before Calvary, Jesus called Satan “ruler [*arche*] of this world [*kosmos*]” (Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
 - Are Satan and his fallen spirits confined to our physical planet or universe? Or are they confined to another region of spiritual heaven surrounding our physical universe?
- Heaven, God’s abode
 - 1 Ki 8:27, “The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!”
 - Is “the highest heaven” (1 Ki 8:27) the “third heaven” (2 Co 12:2)?
 - Is the “highest heaven” in the physical realm or the spiritual realm?
- Which direction is heaven?
 - Scripture uses physical directions to describe highest heaven (God’s abode) as “above” the earth (see Ex 20:4; Deut 4:39; Josh 2:11; Isa 55:9; Acts 2:19)
 - Isa 57:15, “I live in a high and holy place.”
 - Isa 63:15, “Look down from heaven”

What is in the spiritual realm?

- Heaven
 - How many heavens are there in the spiritual realm?
- Sheol/Hades
 - *Sheol* is Heb word for region of the dead; *Hades*, Gk equivalent

- *Sheol* consistently is said to be “down” (see Deut 32:22; Job 11:8; 17:16; Ps 30:3; 55:15; Isa 7:11; 14:9)
- Php 2:10 “. . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.”
- Rev 5:3 “But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it.”
- Ro 10:6-7: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down) or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).”
- Lk 16:23 (parable): man in torment in Hades looks “up” and sees the realm of the righteous dead

Spiritual laws

- Spiritual laws govern the spiritual realm and directly affect — probably govern — what happens in the physical realm.

Relevance to us

- You are primarily a spiritual being with a psyche, temporarily living in a physical body.
- God created man to live in both the spiritual & physical realms.
- As spiritual beings, our effectiveness in life is determined by our effectiveness in the spiritual realm.

Closing

- Spiritual and physical realms are entirely separate realms that coexist.
- Blessing
 - May the Holy Spirit this week guide your thoughts into the reality of the spiritual realm.