

The Book of Ephesians
Ephesians 1:15-23
Session Eleven B-2: Positions of Governmental Authority

We left off last time detailing Philippians 2.

Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and **things under the earth;**

The third part of the submissive whole is for “things under the earth.” This has reference to those supernatural creatures whose sphere of operation is on the earth. There is a structure of authority for them and there will be a “time” in which they will also submit themselves to the authority of the Lord Jesus. “Under the earth” has to do with their association with the underworld, but does not mean they are necessarily confined there.

I do think that part of the job description for some in eternity will be to oversee and supervise the realms of the unsaved dead and the rebellious angels of every kind. I do not think that God is leaving those things on autopilot.

An example of this would be in the encounter that the Lord Jesus has with an unclean spirit, as recorded in the gospels.

Jesus has been teaching the people and when He is finished, He says to his disciples to go by boat to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. It is during that journey that a storm comes up and almost sinks the boat. They awaken Jesus and He rebuked the winds and the sea.

Matthew 8 takes up the account.

Matthew 8:27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him! ²⁸ And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. ²⁹ And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? ³⁰ And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. ³¹ So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.



There is a road that passes up beside the Sea of Galilee on the eastern side, which you can see by the dotted line on the map. This is the road which people were afraid to take because of these two men who were possessed of devils.

When Mark records the account, he focuses on only one of the men.

Mark 5:1 And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.² And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

As it turns out, there are many devils residing in this man, so why does Mark say the man had “an unclean spirit.” Because this unclean spirit is the one with authority; he is over all the others.

Mark 5:3 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:⁴ Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.⁵ And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.⁶ But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,⁷ And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

Apparently, when the man runs up to Jesus, the things he is saying are the words of the unclean spirit within him. Look at vv. 6-7.

Mark 5:8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.⁹ And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many.

Jesus does not address the man himself, at all. He immediately confronts the unclean spirit. And what does Jesus say, once He commands the unclean spirit to come out of the man? He

asks the spirit his “name.” This is not his name as in, what do people call you, but what is his name in the sense of what is your position of power; what is your rank.

Jesus is not having a conversation with this spirit, as in tell me something about yourself, where are you from, what’s your name, etc. He is identifying the position of authority this spirit holds in Satan’s kingdom.

And we know this to be true because in Luke 8, we learn the reason this unclean spirit is called Legion, because of the many devils within him.

Luke 8:30 And Jesus asked him, saying, **What is thy name?** And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

The unclean spirit answers that his “name” is Legion. That is not a name, but a descriptive title of his rank. So, how large is a Legion? It varies. Sometimes (in the time of Romulus) a legion was 3,000 foot soldiers and 300 horse soldiers. Later, as the city of Rome grew, it increased to 6,000 foot soldiers and 600 horse soldiers. Even later, some put the number at 12,000. Among the Jews, the word was used to describe a large number of persons or things.

At the time of Jesus, a legion was between 4,000 and 6,000. Each legion had between 4,000 and 6,000 soldiers. A legion was further divided into groups of 80 men called 'centuries'. The man in charge of a century was known as a 'centurion'. In other words, the “name” of this kind of man would be “Centurion.” The “name” of the unclean spirit in the Mark account was “Legion.”

The point we are making is that a “name” can be a governmental position of authority, no matter who occupies it. The “name” stays the same, even though men who hold that position come and go. There is only one position which is held by the same person with none others ever holding the position, and we shall look at it shortly.

Last week we looked at the truth that Jesus actually has two names; one in connection with His rulership on the earth, and the other in connection with His rulership in the heavenly places. We know from Revelation 6 that “King of kings and Lord of lords” is name for the earthly sphere. His name for the heavenly sphere is “blessed and only Potentate.”

1 Timothy 6:15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the **King of kings, and Lord of lords;**

Okay, there is Jesus’ name. But look at the opening phrase of the verse.

1 Timothy 6:15 Which **in his times** he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

Why “times” plural? Because He will occupy those positions at different times. The Lord Jesus will forever and always occupy the form which He presently takes. What I mean by that is that His resurrection body can only be in one place at a time. The Son is not omnipresent in the sense that the Father is. Why? Because the Father is Spirit.

John 4:24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

What does it mean when it says that God is a spirit? It means that God is not confined to a material body. It means that God can be in the 3rd heaven meeting with the Divine Council and at the same time, He can be on the earth meeting with Moses. God the Father has an attribute of omnipresence. It can be in as many places as He wants to be at the same time. Now, people think of omnipresence as God being everywhere all of the time, but even though He can be, God is not manifesting His presence everywhere at the same time.

It is true that nothing happens without His knowledge. When Paul writes in Romans 12:

Romans 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

When Paul writes that we are not to avenge ourselves (this is talking about personal retribution, not the utilizing of governmental authorities to correct injustices), we have trouble obeying this for several reasons. One of those reasons is that we are not keenly aware of the fact that God the Father has actually witnessed what is going on.

Our part is to not allow our anger to be the motivation for our response, because if it is, we will never do what this verse tells us to do. There is a lot we could say about this verse, much more than what we talked about back in Romans 12, but we will reserve those things for another time. For now, just know that our part is to deal with our wrath properly.

God’s part is to “repay” for the offense committed to us. Because of His qualities as God, He knows everything; nothing escapes His attention, and He will deal with it. That is the truth of it. But, if this truth has not effectually worked in us, we will continue to allow our anger to lead us to commit sin and disobey this doctrine.