

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Looking Into The Heavenly Places

Jerry Fite

What do you see when you look into the heavenly places? Paul helps us in our tour as we read his letter to the Ephesians. Five times he points out something of interest as we travel throughout the heavenly places.

First, we see EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING. “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ*” (Ephesians 1:3). If we think of heavenly places as being in Heaven itself, then we will not have any spiritual blessing till we reach Heaven. Does not our tour guide say that “*every spiritual blessing*” is found here? But look again. The spiritual blessings are in the heavenly places “*in Christ*”. Paul says these blessings are ours now—“*He hath blessed us*” - not only that which we shall receive in Heaven. What we learn is that the heavenly places refer to the spiritual relationship we enjoy now in Christ or in His body, the church (Ephesians 1:22-23).

Every person saved from past sins “**IS SITTING**” there. God “*raised us up with Him, and*

made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ” (Ephesians 2:6). People dead in sin today come alive only by being buried with Christ in baptism and therein raised with Christ to a new life (Colossians 2:12, Romans 6:3-4). After obedience of faith the raised person is made to sit with Christ as a member in His body, the church. So far on our tour We see the spiritual blessings offered now and we cannot help but see saved souls sitting now in the heavenly places.

Jesus is **AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD** there. God “*raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places*” (Ephesians 1:20). We could not be sitting with Christ if He had not first been raised from the dead and made to sit on God’s right hand. This implies that Jesus is reigning now in His Kingdom. God swore that He would set one of the fruit of David’s loins on his throne (Acts 2:30). Peter says this has been fulfilled in Jesus being raised from the dead and “*therefore exalted, by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit...*” (Acts 2:33). We are seeing on this tour some-

thing that many in the religious world do not see—Jesus reigning now in His Kingdom.

As we continue, we see **HIEARCHY OF ANGELS** as they are looking upon something very important. “*to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God...*” (Ephesians 3:10). Angels are intently interested in our salvation and have been looking for a long time to see how God would work out his eternal plan in saving man (1 Peter 1:12). God made it clear when the Lord’s church was established.

The last stop on our tour in the heavenly places may surprise you. Paul wants you to see that **WORLD RULERS OF DARKNESS** and **SPIRITUAL HOSTS OF WICKEDNESS** are there.

“*For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places*” (Ephesians 6:12). Arm yourself with God’s armor as you leave our tour for in the heavenly places lie also formidable foes.