

**F.B. Meyer:**

**IN HIS** conversation with Nicodemus, while the night-breeze played over the sleeping city, coming and going as it would, our Lord spoke of Himself as being already in heaven. His bodily presence was evidently in the chamber of that house in Jerusalem, robed in the simple peasant garb which his mother had spun for Him; but in spirit, He was much more really in heaven than there. So, according to the teaching of the apostle Paul, the Church, consisting of such as believe in Christ, is really less a denizen of earth than of those heavenly places which have been entered by her Lord. They are not heaven, but heaven-like.

**ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS ARE STORED THERE. (Ephesians 1:3)**

Human speech could never tell the infinite variety of blessings which are required for the life of the saints. Grace to endure what God sends or permits, as well as to do what He commands. So destitute are we of natural qualities and powers that we need to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. Everything that Christ asks of us must be received from Him before it can be yielded to Him. It is therefore a source of deep heart's-ease to learn that God has stored in Jesus every spiritual blessing. As all colour lies hidden in sunlight, waiting to be drawn off by the flowers, so does help for every time of need reside in Christ.

The tense denotes a definite past act. The apostle does not say that God does or will bless; but that He has blessed. He carries us back into the eternal ages, in which we were created in Christ, so far as the eternal purpose is concerned, and assures us that then every conceivable blessing which we should need in our earthly pilgrimage was stored up in Christ Jesus our Lord. We have not therefore to plead for these things, as though God were unwilling to give; but humbly and reverently to lay claim to them by faith. All things are thine, O Christian soul; by which thou mayest become partaker of the Divine nature, and escape the corruption that is in the world by lust.

But since these spiritual blessings are in the heavenly places, we must live upon that plane. This is where so many mistake. They know that all the land is theirs; but they do not put their foot down upon it. We cannot inherit the treasures of the everlasting hills, whilst we are satisfied with the heavy air of the valleys. Our daily life must be spent in fellowship with the living Jesus; our thought and heart must not only ascend to Him, but continually dwell with Him; we must experimentally sit in the heavenly places ere we can claim or possess the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

**CHRIST SITS THERE. (Ephesians 1:20)**

It is not wonderful to find the second Person in the Holy Trinity seated far above all rule, and authority, and power, and every name that is named. But it is wonderful to find him there as Man, wearing our nature, identified for ever with our race. The Mediator between God and man is Himself man (1Ti\_2:5). The vision of Ezekiel is a literal fact, upon the likeness of the throne, which is like a sapphire stone, there is the appearance of a Man, robed in fire.

We need not, therefore, anxiously inquire what "the heavenly places" are, or where. It is enough to know that they are where Jesus is, and that they are open to us, just in proportion as we live in communion with the Lord. Abide in Him, and you are by necessity an inhabitant of these heavenly places, wherever your earthly lot may be cast. They are the hallowed meeting ground, where the saints of earth come to the spirits of the just made perfect. It was of them that Bunyan spake, when, describing the land of Beulah, he said, "Here they were within sight of the city they were going to; also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof, for in this land the Shining Ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven." Only we need not locate them as always just preceding the river.

**WE SIT THERE IN THE PURPOSE OF GOD. (Ephesians 2:6)**

What Canaan was to the Jewish people, that the heavenly places are to us. When the twelve stones were taken from the bed of the Jordan and placed on the hither side, the whole people were deemed to have entered upon the possession of their inheritance; though as a matter of fact, two-and-a-half tribes had elected to settle on the farther side, and their wives and children would probably never cross the Jordan at all. So when Jesus passed to the throne we passed with Him.

Was He raised? So were we. Was He made to sit at the Father's right hand? That is our place. Was every foe made his footstool? Then not one of them can overcome us so long as we are in abiding fellowship with our risen Lord. If the "together" of the inner life is maintained, the "together" of victory is secure. Oh to tread in the power of the Holy Ghost on these high places!

## The Heavenly Places

### **MULTITUDES OF HOLY BEINGS ARE THERE. (Ephesians 3:10)**

We know little of them. The vague term "principalities and powers in the heavenly places" veils as much as it reveals. But we shall know them one day, and be known by them. And we shall make them know the manifold wisdom and the eternal purpose of God. Here is the ministry that shall engage our redeemed energies in the land of the unsetting sun, where the flight of time is not marked, because time shall be no more. Heaven is not set out with couches and beds of ease, for our luxurious enjoyment. His servants see his face and serve. And their aim is ever to pass on to others some deeper knowledge of the being and attributes of God.

### **HOSTS OF WICKED SPIRITS ARE THERE. (Ephesians 6:12)**

Never in this life can we escape from temptation. The holier we get, the more subtle and vehement will be the assaults of the dark legions, though they may wear white over their dusky armour. The nearer we get to our Prince in thought and fellowship, the more shall we be put to it. It is from under the opened heaven that we are driven to the wilderness to be tempted. There is no such fighting as in the heavenly places themselves. Here we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against world-rulers of this darkness.

But the issue cannot be doubtful. In the thought of God, and in the Ascension of our blessed Lord, they are beneath our feet and conquered; and He waits to realize his purpose in the weakest of the saints. "Having done all, stand"; God will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.