

God's Cosmic and Human Families

>>>>>> *Introduction – Establishment of the Supernatural* <<<<<<<

- 1) This discussion might be called a walk on the Dark Side – looking at the idea of the supernatural and the rebellions and bad actors.
- 2) The idea being to perhaps define the forces we are battling against that Paul mentions in Eph 6.

Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)

¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

- 3) Before I jump into this, I want to give a bit of a disclaimer.
 - a) Some of what I am going to present is based on the opinion of scholars.
 - b) Personally, there are things in here that I have struggled with and honestly still do.
 - c) In context, I only ask that you keep an open mind and if nothing else, consider this material “thought provoking.”
- 4) In the book “The Unseen Battle” Joel Muddamalle (Mu da mal a) brings an expanded perspective of God’s household – God’s cosmic family and His earthly family.
 - a) PhD in theology and serves as the director of theology and research at Proverbs 31 Ministries.
 - b) Proverbs 31 Ministries is a nondenominational, nonprofit Christian ministry that seeks to lead women into a personal relationship with Christ.

- 5) He begins the introduction with a quote from C. S. Lewis:

“There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.”¹

- 6) Muddamalle goes on to say, in what might be considered a purpose statement for the book:

“We need a return to a biblically balanced approach regarding the cosmic reality of our world that protects us from obsession yet does not reject what is explicit in the Scriptures.”²

- 7) To make the point about the supernatural or cosmic nature of our faith he poses the following challenge.
 - a) Think about this as I read it. What you are listening for is what **IS** and **IS NOT** supernatural.

As Christians, we believe Jesus is the Son of God, who in the incarnation and through the virgin birth entered humanity, taking upon human flesh without losing an ounce of his divinity. He lived a perfect life on earth, literally died by being hung on a Roman cross, after three days defeated death through death, and then rose to sit at the right hand of the Father in his ascension.³

What was not supernatural in that statement?

¹ I. C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2001), ix.

^{2,3} Muddamalle, Joel. *The Unseen Battle* (p. xiv). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

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- b) Bottomline is that it is all supernatural or cosmic!
- c) He further makes the point that if, we were to remove any one thing from this statement, “we would lose the fabric of the gospel, the good news of Jesus.”

Agree / Disagree?

- 8) We could spend the rest of this hour just listing all the supernatural/cosmic events that are laid out in scripture.
 - a) From the serpent in the garden of Eden to John's revelation on the isle of Patmos.
 - b) The point is that we must take the supernatural realm seriously and consider the implication it has for our human earthly existence.
- 9) A couple of final comments on the general topic of “supernatural or cosmic.”
- 10) We as readers and studiers of God's word must **never** look at the supernatural events we are given as mere stories or nice tales told to make a point.
 - a) We may not have all the scientific facts, or the time spans involved with these supernatural events.
 - b) We may also not have archeological or historical proofs but they are real happenings of a supernatural origin.

>>>> God's Family – Who are the Members of God's Household <<<<

- 1) To reach our goal of defining what or who our enemy is we must begin with God's family.
- 2) When we begin to speak of God's family, we must consider that there are two parts to His family – the Earthly and the Heavenly.
- 3) The earthly part we probably have no problem grasping.

>>>> Earthly Family

- 1) Let's begin with that.

Who are the members of God's earthly family?

- a) We are.
- b) All those who come to Him in repentance.
- 2) So, with this we have basically two parts of God's earthly family.
 - a) Those who trust and obey Him and believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son Christ Jesus.
 - b) Those who do NOT trust and obey Him and do NOT believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son Christ Jesus.
 - i) And even these He desires to become members of His family again.

1 Timothy 2:3–4 (ESV)

³This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

- 3) One other note of vast importance in this, is what we mean to God.
 - a) We are His treasured and special possession; we are created to become greater than the angels.
 - b) As Genesis says:

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Genesis 1:27 (NASB 2020)

²⁷ So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- c) Paul further states in Ephesians 1:14 in our redeemed state, we are "... God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."

>>>> *Supernatural Family*

- 1) Here is where things get a little harder to nail down.
- 2) When it comes to the heavenly portion of God's family we may not have as clear a picture as we possibly should have.

What are the obvious parts of God's heavenly family?

- a) Jesus, Holy Spirit, and Angels.
- 3) However, to really answer the question we must look a little deeper.
- 4) There are several Old Testament scriptures that speak to this. The first is Genesis 1:26.

Genesis 1:26–27 (NASB 2020)

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make mankind in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the livestock and over all the earth, and over every crawling thing that crawls on the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- a) Now, the consensus has been for many years that the "us" here referred to the Trinity.
- b) However, in recent years, the majority of scholars have rejected this because the Hebrew grammar does not support that unique position.
- c) Instead, a more contextually appropriate view is that the "us" refers to part of God's cosmic household mentioned in Job 1, 2, and 38 as the "sons of God" which in the Hebrew is bene ha'elohim.
 - i) In Psalm 82 this group is referred to as His assembly or council.
 - d) Regardless of the interpretation – Trinitarian or council – when we look at verse 27, we see that God and God alone is the creator and it is His image in which we are made.
- 5) So, what else can we say about this council?
 - i) The exact nature of these beings is really not specified in scripture.
 - ii) They are considered part of the heavenly hosts.
 - iii) They existed before the creation as seen in the Gen 1:26 passage.
 - (1) This is also made clear in Job 38.
 - (2) Likely high-ranking angels.

Job 38:4–7 (ESV)

- ⁴ "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
Tell me, if you have understanding.
- ⁵ Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it?
- ⁶ On what were its bases sunk,

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or who laid its cornerstone,
7 when the morning stars sang together
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

iv) They are subservient to God as is obvious from the wording in the wording of Job 1:6 and Job 2:1 passages.

(1) In both chapter 1 and 2, we see the statement ... there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord ...

b) One possible well-known member of this council might have been Satan himself.

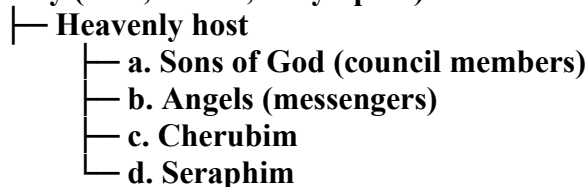
i) This is based on the wording of Job 1 and Job 2 as well.

Job 1:6–7 (NASB 2020)

⁶Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ⁷The LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?” Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.”

6) So, we now have the basics of God's cosmic household:

The Trinity (God, Christ, Holy Spirit)



7) To be emphatically clear, under no condition in scripture is God ever seen as anything other than the supreme being and creator of all things!

8) Just as a perspective note here...

Where do we fit in this chart?

a) Ps 8 tells us ...

Psalms 8:4–5 (ESV)

⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?

⁵ Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.

b) However, we are destined for a higher position.

1 Corinthians 6:3 (ESV)

³Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!

>>>> Family, Bad Actors, Rebellions, and the Path to Where We are Now

1) The first and most relevant rebellion and bad actor under consideration here is likely Satan and his Fall.

a) Just to emphasize the point, Satan was a member of God's Spiritual family.

2) There is no specific moment in scripture when we are told that the devil initially rebelled against God.

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- 3) However, by virtue of Genesis 3, we can know with certainty that it occurred before the creation.
 - a) In the Garden in the form of the serpent, we see him as:
 - i) Deceptive.
 - ii) Opposed to God's word and twisting what God says.
 - iii) Both of which have one goal – to lead humanity into rebellion as well.
 - b) We should, however, be clear that it is assumed that the serpent is Satan though that is really never stated directly in the Genesis account.
- 4) Let's talk for a moment about the Garden of Eden.
- 5) There are several things we know and are important to consider about it and a few reasonable assumptions we may make.
 - a) We know that it was a perfect place created by God.
 - b) We know that it was a place where God came often to visit Adam and Eve.
 - c) The possibility exists that other members of God's Spiritual family were present at times in the Garden.
 - i) We know the serpent (later identified as the devil) was there and also, as Adam and Eve were removed from the Garden, Cherubim guarded the entrance afterward.
 - ii) However, consider if you will, the ease of the conversation Eve had with the serpent.
 - (1) It is as if this was nothing out of the ordinary to converse with beings of that nature. (Simply food for thought)