

The Celestial Conflict

A. E. Knoch / Bob Evely (2026)

As we consider current world events and political trends, it's important to recognize that spiritual forces are at work. But, God is in control, and the final outcome is certain.

God is also in control of milestones along the way. From the Scriptures we know that one of these milestones will be the emergence of a world government, with a world leader (see Revelation) – and the people of the earth will be controlled and deceived by this leader into opposing God.

I sometimes comment on politics because I see in current events the precursor of the world as described in Revelation. The end game of Globalism and extreme Liberalism seeks to remove free speech, to remove the ability to push back (removal of firearms), to bring all under the authority of various world councils (economics, environment, health), to mandate use of a world digital currency that would allow for tracking and shutting down an individual's ability to buy if they violate government decrees, and to fully control all inhabitants of the earth. Individual property ownership and other rights will be taken. Freedom of speech will be curtailed significantly, and this will include even the ability to quote from the Scriptures (The Bible), as it will be deemed offensive to certain people groups.

The world government will promise peace and happiness, but all must be totally subject to this government.

Knowing that one day these things will happen (again, see Revelation), I do not want to be in the position of opposing God's plan. But I likewise do not want to be in alliance with the Deceiver, and his spiritual forces that work to make this all happen.

It is important to recognize a few things and to keep them in mind as we live in this temporal world. First, God is ultimately in control of the outcome. Second, we must recognize that it is not evil politicians who are working to bring about this thing called Globalism – they are deceived by "The Deceiver" (aka "Satan") and the spiritual forces that he commands. The Deceiver is permitted by God to do his bidding in the short term, unwittingly accomplishing God's purposes in the long term.

Around us we see but a snapshot of a work in progress – not the outcome. It should bring us peace knowing that the outcome is secure – and it is an amazing, wonderful outcome. My hope in sharing thoughts on current events as they relate to God's revelation to us (The Bible) is that individuals will explore Revelation and indeed the entire Bible to see for themselves.

Following are excerpts from an article entitled "The Celestial Conflict" by A.E. Knoch, a premier Bible translator and commentator. The article does a great job of describing the spiritual forces that are at work all around us. As difficult as it is, at times – let us seek to remember that we are not at enmity with our fellow human beings – but with the spiritual forces that deceive and lead them.

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A. E. Knoch, UR Vol 116, No 4, p.157, 2025

"God has granted us an allotment among the celestials. It is only as we tenant the tract entrusted to us that we have a place to stand. It is only when we hold this ground that the enemy will seek to dislodge us. Those who find the faith of Ephesians will have to fight to hold the ground they have gained. There are unseen strategists who will seek to dispossess them.

There is need abundant to stand firm on the ground we have gained and withstand every effort to dislodge us from our allotment.

To those who confuse contexts, God's Word is full of contradictions. One of the great truths of a previous portion of Ephesians is that we are *seated* together among the celestials (Ephesians 2:6). There is relaxation and rest. Now this seems to be denied for we are exhorted to *stand*, clad with all the accouterments of conflict. There is vigilance and warfare.

Both are true, in their contexts.

As related to Christ Jesus, as members of His body, we have no work to do, for He has completed it all Himself. But, as related to God, as *enjoying an allotment* among the celestials, we need to be invigorated with God's mighty strength, and to stand in His protective panoply. The allotment is ours. We shall enter upon its tenancy *in fact* when we are called above. But now we need to hold it by *faith*.

Israel's warfare is with blood and flesh. Their allotment is the land. Our holdings are in heaven. Our strife is with wicked spirits.

Neither is the fight with our own flesh. It is a fatal mistake to seek to subdue the flesh. It is futile to strive against our physical propensities. The flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh.

The only successful solution is to starve the flesh, to put it in the place of death, to nail it to the cross.

Let there be no conflict with the old humanity. With men we are at peace, even as God is conciliated toward them now. (see 2 Corinthians 5:18-21)

As soon as we seek to enjoy our allotment among the celestials by faith we enter a scene of unceasing strife, carried on with skillful strategy and spiritual force.

Do not let the stratagems of the Adversary shift your stand to earth.

It is wise that we should be well acquainted with our foes. It is essential that we should recognize our chief adversary. In the future, on the earth, he will resemble a roaring lion. He will openly attack the saints. No one will mistake him then. Not so now. To all appearances he is "an angel of light." His ministers are transfigured as dispensers of righteousness.

Let us suppose that some radiant, angelic messenger graced the earth with his presence, teaching men to forsake the wrong and cleave to the right, disclosing marvelous secrets of science for the betterment of mankind, adding to our store of knowledge, harnessing the forces of nature for our use, the patron of education, philanthropy and religion. Suppose he consummated a movement for the federation of mankind, a congress of the nations, the brotherhood of man.

This is a true picture of Satan, the Adversary. Today he is the great deceiver.

It is only by stealth and deception that he holds fast the homage of humanity. Our adversary is the god of this eon. He it is who blinds the minds of unbelievers, so that the illumination of the evangel of the glory of Christ, Who is the Image of the invisible God, does not irradiate them. (2 Corinthians 4:4).

The heart fails as we see multitudes of Christ's members become Satan's eager instruments for the reformation and moral uplift of mankind. Christ's gospel bears no promise of temporal advantage in the world today.

But still more subtle are Satan's schemes to deceive the saints. With ingenious art he misplaces truth and presses the most precious portions of Scripture beyond their proper sphere.

Spiritual Warfare

For our protection in this warfare God has given us a spiritual armor. It consists of truth, righteousness, peace, and faith. To win in this defense we must know the truth, we must act justly, we must practice peace with our fellow men, we must exercise faith, and then we will enjoy a present salvation from the assaults of the powers of darkness.

Truth: We need a thorough realization of God's revelation to be saved from Satan during our present life. Truth is first in this warfare. It is the lack of truth which has left the heavenly allotment almost deserted. The saints are thieving Israel's physical and spiritual belongings instead of defending their own.

Righteousness, in word and deed, is our chief protection from the assaults of the spiritual forces of wickedness. Wrong doing not only incurs the condemnation of men, but the accusations of the spirit world, not to speak of the loss at the dais of Christ (see Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10). The heavenly allotment cannot be enjoyed by those who act unjustly.

Peace: If we engage in strife with mankind we will be unfitted for the fight with our real enemies. To be saved in this warfare it is of the utmost value to know the truth of the conciliation, and to imitate God in His attitude toward the race. There is too much friction with our fellow men. They are so blatant in their enmity to God that it is difficult to maintain His attitude toward them and refuse to antagonize the unbeliever.

Faith: Our spirit foes use such fiery arrows to wound and torture us. Only faith can fend us from them. Faith insists that men are merely the instruments of unseen spirit forces which impel them, of which they are not aware. Faith refuses to fight with men because it believes and receives the conciliation.

Helmet of Salvation: The helmet is not salvation from our sins or ourselves, but from the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials. It is limited to the defense of our celestial allotment. It is deliverance from the mighty powers of darkness which seek to rob us of the enjoyment of our allotment among the celestials.

Summary

To sum up, our warfare is not with blood and flesh, but with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world-mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials (Ephesians 6:12). The celestial allotment (Ephesians 1:3,11) which characterizes the present secret administration is still in the hands of opposing spiritual forces, who will not be finally dislodged until the day of deliverance.

Men may be used by these spirit forces to antagonize us but let us always look beyond the human agents.

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NOTE: What follows comes from a related article, also by A.E. Knoch, entitled "The Spirit World, The Celestial Conflict – found in a book entitled "The Third Heaven, Our Celestial Destiny, A Comprehensive Compilation" (pp 161-169).

Too often we wrestle with blood and flesh, not realizing that these are not our real adversaries but only the necessary human tools of spirit powers. God gives us these conflicts in order to acquaint us with their stratagems.

Satan is primarily concerned with spiritual affairs, particularly those which affect the purpose of God and His Christ.

We have no earthly allotment to hold, but we have a heavenly inheritance. No forward move is necessary now, for the fields are ours by faith; but there is need abundant to stand firm on the ground we have gained and withstand every effort to dislodge us from our allotment.

Israel's warfare is with blood and flesh. Their allotment is the land. Our holdings are in heaven. Our strife is with wicked spirits. One of the hardest lessons for us to learn is the fact that we do *not* fight

with our fellows. On earth we have no interests which conflict with any man. We have no allotment here to form the basis of a quarrel.

Why does the Adversary single out Israel for his prey? Because he is well aware that earth's sovereignty, which he has held for more than seven millenniums, has been given to God's Anointed, and that His people Israel will administer His government when He ascends the throne. The same motive now impels the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials in their opposition to the ecclesia which, someday, will displace them in their celestial sovereignty.

They will to their utmost to keep us from the enjoyment of our allotment.

Do not let the stratagems of the Slanderer shift your stand to earth. Do not allow his fiery darts to slip past the shield of faith.

In the future, the Adversary will openly attack the saints. No one will mistake him then. Not so now. To all appearances he is "an angel of light." His ministers are transfigured as "dispensers of righteousness."

The heart fails as we see multitudes of Christ's members become Satan's eager instruments for the reformation and moral uplift of mankind. Not only are they involved in sanitary politics and fleshly philanthropies, but the very "gospel" which is preached glides over the blood of Christ to a promise of bread and butter, better clothes, a cleaner and more prosperous career, and a respectable standing in the community, all of which Satan will gladly give to those who will worship him. Christ's gospel bears no promise of temporal advantage in the world today.

The celestial allotment (Ephesians 1:3, 11) which characterizes the present secret administration is still in the hands of opposing spiritual forces, who will not be finally dislodged until the day of deliverance."

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Note: My summary of Revelation is available on my web site at:

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