

## CHAPTER THREE The Prince of This World

John 14:30 I no longer will speak many things with you: for the Prince of this world is coming. And he has nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father has commanded me, so do I.

Any question we might have on the integrity of John's text, as it has come down to us, should not deter us from clear recognition that Jesus made very important remarks to his apostles and disciples, and that he kept those remarks to the end of his association with them. He reserved those warnings for the end of his life. Revelation of a severe religious persecution, and notice that a rebel spirit personality was now coming on this world, should help us understand.

Unfortunately, we modern people lost the reality of spirit transactions. When we did, we opened the door to this rebel spirit. Ancient people accepted such possibilities; otherwise Jesus would not have addressed them as he did. He would not make remarks that were totally obscure to his apostles. They carried significant weight for John. Emphatically, John placed them at a crucial point in his account. Thus, for two thousand years, a very important warning from Jesus was preserved.

Can we neglect the testimony of the New Testament? The idea that a rebel Spirit Personality was an immediate threat to everyone is a major theme of Christianity. The author of 1 Peter said that he prowls about, seeking to devour, 5:8. The author of the letter of James stated that if we resist him he will flee, 4:7. John told us in Rev 12:12 that he now comes with exceeding anger because he knows his time is short. Such strong tradition had solid foundation in the teachings of Jesus. But modern generations lost contact with the reality. We resorted to mythological images of this Great Being. In our doubt and disbelief we created skepticism about his true power, to give the Prince freedom to exercise his diabolical schemes.

We viewed this Prince as a Devil or Satan, who, somehow or other, was around our planet deceiving mankind. We did not grasp him as a real personality bent on literally destroying mankind.

Jesus accorded him honor. "Prince" is from Greek *archon*. It means *Ruler*, and is applied to Jesus as Prince of the kings of the earth, Rev 1:5 (KJV), to rulers of the nations, Matt 20:25, judges and magistrates, Acts 16:19, and rulers of the synagogues, Matt 9:18. It is also translated Prince by both KJV and RSV in Matt 9:34 and 12:24. It denotes ruling authority. This Prince was assigned administrative responsibility for our world.

The Greek word *kosmos* is translated world. But it meant much more. It meant *order*, as intelligently planned, *arrangement*, as purposeful design, or *embellishment or decoration*, as that by which God blessed creation. This word is the origin of the English word *cosmos*. In Rom 1:20 it is used for the universe, recognized by the Greeks for the order observable within it. In most applications in the New Testament it meant the earth as a body within the order of creation, the planet. This word must be distinguished from *aion*, the Greek word for “age.”

Thus, the *Prince of this World* meant a distinct personality, ruler of this planet. If we used modern terminology we might more readily understand him as *Prince of this Planet*. In more formal terms we might say *Planetary Prince*, as a title of lordly administrative authority.

Did Jesus have power to remove him? Certainly. He is the Creator; he is God. This Prince was a divinely created being. Divine beings do not exist and do not function without the consent, approval and blessing of their Creator.

Why, then, did Jesus permit him to remain? Why did Jesus not remove this diabolical personality?

Jesus was following his Father’s will. Jesus did not permit the Prince to remain strictly because it was his own will. Jesus spoke plainly about it; he had nothing *in him*. He wanted nothing to do with this fallen Prince. The rebel had long since taken his own devious path, not aligned with his Creator. He was a rebel, pure and simple. The Father wanted this rebel to remain here. This the Father had commanded, and this Jesus would do. “As the Father has commanded me, so do I.” The will of Jesus was in perfect alignment with the will of the Father.

We should infer that the Father had reasons which must be for the greater benefit of creation, and for all his created children, reasons which we do not now appreciate, and reasons which Jesus did not discuss.

### **The Coming of the Rebel Prince**

In order to more clearly determine the spiritual influence of this rebel I shall now examine the phrases in this passage from John 14:30, and the other two references in John 12:31 and 16:11.

“Coming” is from Greek *erchomai*. It is a frequent verb, denoting *to come*, *to go*, or *to pass*. In Matt 11:3 two apostles of John the Baptist inquired if Jesus was *the coming one*, the Messiah. The remark in John 14:30 was intended to indicate that the Prince of this World is now coming, i.e. will be permitted to perform his diabolical work. Jesus did not specifically say when this “coming” would take place. But he gave us warning.

“Nothing” is from Greek *ouden*. It meant *nobody*, *nothing*, *none*. It was an emphatic word which removed all possibility that he had any connection with Jesus’ goals, was in the same spirit of intent with Jesus, or was aligned with the will of Jesus. This Prince had *nothing* in Jesus.

“In” is from Greek *en*. It is used in a wide variety of applications, such as *upon, among, before, in the presence of, with,* and so on. In Mark 5:2 it is translated as *with an unclean spirit*. In John 14:30 Jesus meant that the Prince of this World, this Planetary Prince, has absolutely nothing to do with him. He is a rebel.

“Judgment” is from Greek *krisis*. The word meant *to separate, or to make a distinction between, to judge, and to sentence*.

“Cast out” is from Greek *ekballo*. It meant *to cast out, eject by force, or expel*. A modifying word, *eko*, meant *outside*. The Prince of this World would be *ekblithisetai eko*, cast out, completely removed from existence. But not before his coming. He would be permitted to do his diabolical work. He would be given ample opportunity to demonstrate the justice of the judgment placed upon him. Our God is a God of mercy; he is merciful to all his created children. He will extend full mercy opportunity to this rebel Son. And he will extend mercy opportunity to all human beings to demonstrate their spiritual loyalties. But he cannot offer such mercy without spiritual trial. Jesus is using this rebel to determine our true loyalties.

### The God of This Age

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God.

In 2 Cor 4:4 “god” is from Greek *theos*. In the polytheism of the Greeks the word denoted a god or deity. See Acts 14:11, 19:26, 28:6, and Gal 4:8. The Greek word was appropriated by Jews in their Greek-speaking communities, and retained by Christians to denote the one true God. In the Septuagint *theos* translates the Hebrew word Elohim.

This word should be distinguished from Yahweh, the Hebrew name for God, which was given to the tribes of Israel at Mt. Sinai. Yahweh is translated in several English versions as LORD. In the Septuagint it was translated as Kurios, the Greek word for Lord. However, the Septuagint was inconsistent; sometimes it would translate Yahweh as Theos, depending on context. I emphasize that Yahweh is a name, and not an adjective of royal designation. The translations are incorrect when they translate Yahweh as Lord.

As I indicated the word translated world by most of the versions is from Greek *aionos*. *Aion* denotes an age or an era, a significant period of time; it does not mean the world. Translation as world is incorrect and has introduced gross confusion in our understanding. In fact, the modern translations probably reflect a desire to steer clear of the true significance of the term. *Aionos* is indeterminate as to duration, of unknown length, although it does not necessarily mean unending. The inflected form *aionion* is translated everlasting or eternal, in Matt 25:41, Rom 16:26, 2 Cor 4:18, and so on.

By shifting emphasis of the word *aeon* from *age* to *world* modern translators placed a veil over the significance of the presence of this “god” on this planet. Jesus was leaving and now permitted him to come. Since that coming the Prince has held the world in his grip. In the Dead Sea Scrolls this influence on the present age is designated as the Era of Wrath. Although he was denied rulership when he was cast down, his power did not end. As a spirit personality he is about to perform a dramatic act in defiance against his Creator.

Whether Jesus used Greek *archon*, meaning Prince or Ruler, or if Paul used Greek *theos*, the designation is one of royal celestial status. This personality was a spirit administrator appointed to rulership of this planet.

Paul wrote to a world embedded in pagan ideas of heavenly realms populated by the gods. The Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Phrygians, Babylonians and other surrounding people all believed the skies were ruled by the gods. No matter how debased, mythologized, paganized, humanized, or corrupted, the central concept was one of rulership by spirit entities. They are immortal; they are spirit personalities; hence they were regarded as gods. When Paul used the word *god* his audience readily understood his intent. Only modern people, far removed from the social milieu of those days, and under the blindness wrought by this rebel personality, would fail to recognize Paul’s meaning.

Paul emphasized the difference between this god who was given administrative power, and Jesus, who was in the likeness of God the Father, far superior to all lesser gods, including the god of this age. Jesus, as our Creator, is a God who demonstrates true righteousness and glory.

Paul confirms the fact of world spiritual power, granted by God to the *god of this age*, for a period of unspecified duration.

### Many Gods and Many Lords

1 Corinthians 8:5 For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things are and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

In this passage *gods* is from *thei*, the Greek plural of *theos*.

Here Paul supports a theme of celestial rulership. Did he use the term “so-called” because celestial personalities, the gods —

- a. do not exist and are so-called out of imaginary pagan mythology, or
- b. actually exist but are not gods in the sense that they should be worshipped?

Philo, for example, argued that, while there is but one sovereign God, he has commissioned many lesser authorities and ministering angels to serve his purpose. Paul was expressing the same understanding. The “god” of this age would

be one who was commissioned, but a rebel who is now in spiritual power, blinding the minds of those who do not believe. Their understanding was conditioned by a desire for smooth things.

The confirming parenthetical remark, “*as indeed there are many gods and many lords,*” has been variously interpreted to reject the possibility that God has commissioned many lesser gods and lords as administrators in the celestial realms. One commentator described it as *ironic*, meaning that Paul did not intend a literal statement, but was speaking in irony, reflecting on prevailing social attitudes. Another described it as *felicitous*, patronizing his spiritist-minded Corinthian audience, but again not literally true. Still another commentator remarked that “*Paul’s wording . . . is not to be taken to affirm that the gods and lords of the pagan religions have some sort of existence.*” Paul “*is not affirming that these gods have actual reality, for this would be directly contrary to Jewish-Christian faith that there is no God but one.*” The commentators thus reflect prevailing attitudes that there are no commissioned spirit rulers in the heavenly realms who may be called gods and lords.

However, Paul was emphatic of their actual existence. Indeed, there are many gods and many lords in the heavenly realms, immortal spirit beings who deserve human respect. But for us there is only one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus. Only they are to be worshiped. Attempts to reduce the significance of Paul’s remark denies the value of his statement, and elucidation of our understanding.

The modern world, whether secular, Jewish, or Christian, did not want to understand. The reason for this reduction in reality is simple: if the Devil no longer existed, if he was no more than mythological, he could not be of danger. He then was only a harmless image in those Christian, Jewish, and secular minds. He could proceed with his diabolical work unopposed. And that is exactly where we are today. We human mortals permitted an environment which gave him free reign. And all because we did not remain righteous and true to God

The greatest deception the Devil ever taught was to lead us to believe he did not exist.

### **The Prince of the Power of the Air**

Ephesians 2:2 In which you then walked, according to the age of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit now operating in the children of disobedience.

“Power” is from Greek *exousia*. It meant freedom of action, the right or authority to act. This personality has authority from God to act, according to his celestial status.

“Air” is from Greek *aer*. It occurs seven times in the New Testament.

In five applications *aer* means the atmosphere; in the other two, of which Eph 2:2 is one, it could carry a meaning of a *spiritual atmosphere*, or an atmosphere not physically visible. This latter sense may also be implied in 1 Thes 4:17.

Again, as with all other revelations of the fallen Prince, this passage received considerable attention from biblical commentators, with confusion about its meaning. As one commentator said:

“Power is used in the sense of ‘area of dominion.’ The idea that the air is the realm of Satan’s authority is obviously connected with the current astrology; it presupposes that the several areas of the universe have each its spirit ruler, and assigns the air to Satan.”

Note that this commentator admits the air as a common designation for the domain of this spirit ruler, and states that “*it presupposes several areas of the universe have each its spirit ruler.*” He abstracts his idea of administrative dominions by the phrase “several areas.” Although he admits these “several areas” as within the universe, he does not see them as planets, or systems of worlds. A large Kingdom of Heaven of many worlds is beyond his thought. He would see Paul’s remarks as a reflection of the then current astrology — meaning that others worlds in space do not actually exist, and that such notion is strictly astrological. He would not credit Paul with understanding of such matters beyond appeasement to this popular myth. If administrative realms are real, and if they have a multitude of ruling personalities, the commentator is the one who refuses to admit such existence, not Paul. He regards such existence as mythological. He would unjustly apply his myth suppositions to the ancients. Once again, he is reflecting the general unbelief which pervades Christian thought.

Another commentator said this:

“It is possible, therefore, to understand the words as meaning ‘the ruler to whom belongs the power over the region of the air’; but this would create difficulty in connection with (pneumatōs, the Greek word for spirit). It is therefore perhaps best to take the phrase as the power whose seat is in the air. . . . Eadie ingeniously suggests that ‘. . . as there is an atmosphere round the physical globe, so air (Greek aer) envelopes this spiritual kosmos.’ . . . That the notion of the air being the dwelling place of the spirits, and especially of evil spirits, was current, appears to be beyond doubt. . . . There is no difficulty in supposing that St. Paul is here alluding to such current notions. Nor are we to suppose that he is conveying any special revelation about the matter.”

Here the commentator is willing to quote from Eadie that the *air* in Paul’s remarks refers to a spiritual cosmos, although he discounts the validity of such suggestion. The silent inference is that Paul was conceding to current intellectual fashion but did not himself actually believe such myth. Paul used such imagery because it derived from common views; he was not making any special revelation.

How truly unfortunate that so many modern Christian minds deny Paul’s intent.

The power of this Prince was in world spiritual influence granted him by God. How he used that power was within his hands, a freedom of personality expression also granted by God. As a spirit being he is resident upon this planet, but it would be primitive for us to view his abode as in the physical air.

### **The Divine Councils On High**

Psalms 82: God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment. "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked." They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. I say, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, you shall die like men, and fall like any prince." Arise, O God, judge the earth; for to thee belong all the nations!

In 1888 Thomas K. Cheyne wrote:

"No psalm makes a stronger demand than this on the historic imagination of the interpreter. The ideas may be perennial, but their outward forms are no longer understood."

How true. We human mortals, isolated for thousands of years from contact with the celestial realms, no longer understand revelation. Celestial beings appeared to Abraham, Gen 18:1f; Melchizedek was one of those, Gen 14:18. Moses had direct contact with heavenly representatives, Exod 19, 24:9-11. Other examples could be cited from the Old Testament. The apostle John states explicitly that he had conversation and revelation direct from celestial beings, Rev 1:1, 17, 22:8.

In commenting on this Psalm the writer in *The Interpreter's Bible* stated:

"The crux of the interpretation of the psalm is the meaning to be attached to gods in vs 1b,6, and on this point commentators differ widely. The principle meanings proposed are: (1) the lesser gods and angels; (2) the national gods of the heathen; (3) the wicked governors of the nations holding Israel in subjection; (4) kings and those invested with authority; (5) the judges of Israel. . . . This variety of interpretation testifies to the paucity and ambiguity of the available data."

While it is true that we have no explicit revelation on celestial administrations in the Bible, sufficient evidence exists for us to come to more certain understanding. How truly the Prince of this World blinded us. It was his purpose to keep us

from understanding; the generations reflect the results of his diabolical influence. These possible explanations given in *The Interpreters Bible*, and other scholarly studies, show the darkness which has afflicted us.

Consider the manner in which the word *gods* is used in the Psalms. All are from KJV.

Ps 82:6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

Ps 86:8 Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.

Ps 138:1 I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

Ps 136:2 O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Ps 135:5 For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.

Ps 97:9 For thou, LORD, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.

Ps 97:7 Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.

Ps 96:4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

Ps 95:3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Do we really believe our God would be King over pagan gods? Would he be a Lord to all those? Would the Psalmist ask those pagan gods to worship our God? Would we sing praises to our God in an assembly of pagan gods?

Can we not understand that the heavenly realms are populated with many gods and many lords, divine administrators who serve our common God? Is this not sufficient evidence to demonstrate how the god of this world blinded us to clear vision of the might of our heavenly Father?

As further evidence of this blindness consider the KJV translation. *Congregation of the mighty* is properly rendered as *divine council*. Literally, in Hebrew, *b'edath-el* is *assembly of God*. Such denial by translation can be followed through the entire passage.

As a consequence of our mythologized fears few recognize the existence of a divine administration in the heavens. God is a great and powerful God, he has many lesser gods to assist him in the transactions of a universe. He assigns Planetary Princes to rule the worlds of space. And if they rebel he gathers divine councils to deliberate on justice, and the actions necessary to correct disruptions. As *The Interpreters Bible* goes on to say:

“The view that the psalmist has in mind a heavenly concourse of gods, demigods, and angels, has much to be said for it. The ancient Near East was well acquainted with assemblies of gods, and, a priori, we should expect the Hebrews to be familiar with such an idea. . . . Ultimately, of course, the Hebrews abandoned the concept that there were lesser gods in heaven, and the heavenly host was thought to consist solely of angels.”

How true. Blind Judaism and Christianity admit of a heavenly host, but solely of angels. Jews bear a heavy burden; they were entrusted with the oracles of God, as stated so eloquently by a Jew in Romans 3:2. How unfortunate that they also became blind to divine revelations. We cannot escape the view that those of Hebrew heritage are more accountable; they received revelations directly; they did not need the environment of the Near East to so inform them. When the Devil brought blindness to this planet he did not favor Christians over Jews; they were of equal mark.

If God consults with other divine beings does this mean he is a lesser God? Certainly not. It means that he gives respect to the existence, function and service of his heavenly created Sons.

We might devise a scenario of the deliberations which took place. Those other gods might ask him:

“How long are you going to permit this to go on? How long will you show partiality to these rebels? Will you not bring justice to the earth? Consider the disruptions caused by this fallen Son, a Son which you created. Look at all the fatherless of the earth. Can you not see all the weak and needy, all the afflicted and the destitute?

“Do you not see what has happened upon earth? They have neither knowledge nor understanding. They know nothing of the heavenly realms, and of the administration which rebelled. They walk about in darkness; they are like children without light.”

And then God might respond:

“I shall bring restitution. I know that all the foundations of the earth are shaken. I shall rescue my creation from that turmoil and woe. I shall demonstrate to those fallen Sons true justice and righteousness. I say to them:

‘You are gods, Sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, you shall die like men, and fall like any prince.’

“If they could not bring justice as heavenly princes, perhaps they will exhibit justice as human mortals. Out of the mercy of my heart I shall permit them one final opportunity. They brought havoc to the human

racers. Now I will make them human also, that they may taste of the wine they created. I shall give them the same opportunity they gave to each of those mortals. Then we shall know their true worth.

“But I know their hearts. They shall not repent. They shall not forgive. They shall die as any mortal would die, and shall fall as any earthly prince would fall. And they shall be no more forever.”

And now God rises to judge the earth. To him belong all the stars and worlds of space.

Now creation will know who is God.

This Psalm shows that unusual transactions are to take place. The passage suggests that divine beings are to live as men; in one final mercy extension they will be given opportunity as human mortals. This concept is so profound, and so utterly beyond the theological range of existing Jewish or Christian religions, it demands careful attention. It is revealed to us in more than one passage.

### **His Celestial Origins**

Ezekiel 28:12-19 “Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: “You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, carnelian, topaz, and jasper, chrysolite, beryl, and onyx, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald; and wrought in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. With an anointed guardian cherub I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and the guardian cherub drove you out from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought forth fire from the midst of you; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All who knew you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more for ever.”

Previous passages demonstrated the difficulty we have in understanding and accepting divine revelations. This passage is further encumbered by the symbolism and figures employed.

The phrase “King of Tyre” has thrown most expositors into the assumption that it refers to the historic Tyre, and the kings who ruled it. Their commentary centers on the idea that the prophet intended a description and pronouncement against an ancient earthly prince. *“The ruler of Tyre has been led to imagine himself as more than human, and his city as impregnable, like the seat of the gods.”* They believe this view is confirmed by the fate which is decreed against him. He will be turned to ashes upon the earth, in the sight of all who see him. How could that be other than an earthly king?

But the statement is clear; he was cast to the ground; he became a physical being. And in that physical condition he was burned to ashes in the sight of the kings of earth. Now he will be no more forever.

Thus, we now have two passages which show that a divine being will be given one final mercy opportunity as a human mortal. But he will fail; his mind became so distorted with pride, and betrayal of the trust placed in him, he long since lost his mental equilibrium. No being, human or divine, can betray such immense trust without paying the personal price. He is truly insane.

From *The Urantia Papers*:

P.754 - In all the administrative work of a local universe no high trust is deemed more sacred than that reposed in a Planetary Prince who assumes responsibility for the welfare and guidance of the evolving mortals on a newly inhabited world. And of all forms of evil, none are more destructive of personality status than betrayal of trust and disloyalty to one's confiding friends. In committing this deliberate sin, Caligastia so completely distorted his personality that his mind has never since been able fully to regain its equilibrium.

Other commentators suggest this chapter in Ezekiel is a continuation of Chapters 26 and 27, which contain an extended description of a land of Tyre. *“In both passages the prophet is speaking, not so much of an particular individual, as of the nation whose character is embodied in the person of the chief.”* Unfortunately, for this view, the prophet promised that Tyre would be totally destroyed and covered by the waters of the sea, 26:19, 27:27. This never actually happened to the historic Tyre; therefore, the commentators seek recourse in the suggestion that the terms are merely poetic, or that some later editor corrupted the original text.

Little did the commentators and theologians recognize that Chapter 26 and 27 deal with a different, but related, subject. As King of Tyre this celestial personality will focus his insane activities in a land of “Tyre.” The symbolism of Tyre is fitting to a land upon earth at the last days of a planetary age.

The commentators also believed this oracle was part of a myth cycle then current in the Near East. *"The story belonged, no doubt, to the common stock of Semitic myths, some of them preserved in the Babylonian epics, some in the Phoenician traditions."* For parallel, the commentators cited the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, Genesis 3, and the placement of a cherubim to guard against their return. This Archon, this Ruler, this Prince, was created perfect, as was Adam, until iniquity was found in him. His fate is similar to that of Lucifer in Isaiah 14:12, who fell from heaven and was cast down to earth, again to die like any man.

Contrary to the scholarly godless view the passage informs us in some detail of the origin of this heavenly personality. The use of the phrase King of Tyre was convenient for the prophet to provide a context for his message. He was writing among people who no longer respected the heavenly realms. Ezekiel composed his prophecies following 600 BC and the Babylonian captivity. Disbelief and failure to remain true to God led to that captivity. Under conditions of revelation imposed upon him, Ezekiel could conceal his purpose; the revelation would then await a future generation which might examine it with greater care.

Indeed, this personality was in the heavenly Eden, in the literal garden of God. This home was prepared for him on the day that he was created. He was created a divine being, a personality of celestial brilliance. His habitat was suited to his divine splendor. He was on the holy mountain of God, a distinct physical abode within the universe. Angelic beings were in service to him.

Compare his walking among stones of fire, glistening crystals ablaze with spirit light, to the witness of the writer of the ancient *Book of Enoch* 18:6-9: *"And I saw a place which burns day and night, where there are seven mountains of magnificent stones. . . And I saw flaming fire."* Consider also the description that this writer of the *Book of Enoch* provides of his visit to a great Majesty in the heavenly realms.

*"And I went in till I drew nigh to a wall which is built of crystals and surrounded by tongues of fire. . . . And I drew nigh to a large house which was built of crystals, and the walls of the house were like a tessellated floor made of crystals, and its ground work was of crystal. Its ceiling was like the path of the stars and the lightnings, and between them were fiery cherubim, and their heaven as clear as water. A flaming fire surrounded the walls, and its portals blazed with fire."*

These brilliant crystals, composing walls and floors, are not in some mystical heaven beyond space and time. They are within space and time.

Furthermore, the apostle John provides description of a great crystalline structure, sometime to come down upon earth, composed of numerous gems, and *"the city was pure gold, clear as glass,"* Rev 21:18. This great edifice also is lit with a glorious celestial light; it has no need of the sun or the moon to obtain its light.

Do any of us really believe that a great crystalline structure, obviously composed of materials that one can see and touch, would come down out of some mystical heaven? Are we to continue to believe that the Kingdom of Heaven is not within the physical realms of time and space?

Consider the statements. That personality of Ezekiel 28 was in Eden, the Garden of God. The Garden was not an earthly Eden, it was a heavenly Eden. He was cast as a profane thing from the mountain of God. The guardian cherubim drove him out.

For those of us unacquainted with textual study the word “Eden” may be a major stumbling block. We traditionally identify it with the Garden of Eden, the earthly home of Adam and Eve. Study of the Hebrew word, and other uses in the Bible, shows that it is a generic term for any place of great beauty, luxuriousness, and natural bounty. Refer to the Commentators, such as Davidson and Brown, et al. In Isaiah 51:3 the word is used to describe the dramatic changes in world environment which will take place in the coming new age:

For Yahweh shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the Garden of Yahweh. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

Here the Garden of Yahweh, located in the heavenly realms, is used as an archetype for great beauty. The material beauty surrounding the residence (throne) of God is also indicated by John.

Rev 22:1: And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In another oracle Ezekiel compares great beauty to “*the cedars in the garden of God,*” and to the “*trees of Eden,*” Ezek 31:8-9.

I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him.

The commentators see this as mere poetic emphasis. Blinded by the Prince of this World, they do not recognize the literal significance of such revelations.

This personality, this heavenly being, was created perfect. Then, as he considered his perfection and his beauty, he became proud. He began to question his Creator and his Creator’s purpose. As temptation grew in his heart he entertained the notion of independence. He could function without his Lord and Creator. When he succumbed to this sophistry iniquity was found in him