

# Session 1: The War In Heaven

**Focus:** What took place in the heavens before Man was created?

## 1.1 Sharing Time

Invite the participants to introduce themselves one by one to the larger group. Invite them to share 3 things about themselves that give us a little insight into who they are. Leaders are encouraged to go first. As each person shares, there is no need to respond nor add to the dialogue other than acknowledging what was said with a nod of the head. We are just practicing hearing each other's heart in a safe environment.

Next, we are going to ask Jesus for a picture of our heart. This picture may change from day to day, depending on what is going on in our life at the time. A 'picture' comes in many forms. It may include a visual picture, a word picture (you hear the word), just the sense of an image, a Scripture, a song and so on. God is not limited in how He comes to us. He is a creative God and He will choose how best to reveal Himself to you at the time. If you see nothing at all, do not panic! It may be that you are unpractised, or carry unbelief about Jesus (see Mark 9:14-27), or your heart does not feel safe yet so is unwilling 'to look to see'. There will be opportunity to follow this up in the Demonstration Ministry or in your Small Group later on in this session.

So invite everyone to close their eyes in prayer as we are going to seek Jesus. Allow a few moments for everyone to settle. Then the Leader prays:

*Jesus, could You please show me a picture of my heart?*

Take a moment and ask if anyone wants to share what Jesus showed them.

## 1.2 Introduction

As Christians we sometimes wonder why it is so difficult to stand, now that we know Jesus. Why is it so hard? Isn't God for us? Shouldn't life be much easier for us now that we are Christians?

This Ministry Manual looks at some of the reasons why we struggle to stand in the spiritual realm. We will discover that we have an enemy who is purposely coming against us. But God has a plan and a provision for this place. The plan was and always is Jesus and the provisions are numerous. This Ministry Manual will explore some of these provisions but what is presented is by no means complete.

Learning to stand is all about intimacy with Jesus and confidence in who He is. As our intimacy increases, our confidence increases and our ability to get up again and stand increases. As we experience Jesus and all that His death on the cross has achieved for us, the truth will begin to move from just 'head knowledge' to deeper and deeper 'heart knowledge'.

So, let's go back to the beginning, to the book of Genesis and see what light this throws upon our ability to stand in the spiritual realm. The Scriptures do not give a specific account of what took place in the heavens at the beginning but there are numerous references that give broad brushstrokes of what may have occurred.

## 1.3 The Trinity

Genesis 1:1 tells us that, *"In the beginning God ..."* Before anything was created God existed. Yet not only did God exist, but He existed as the Trinity – God the Father, God the Word and God the Spirit. The Scriptures tell us that it was the spoken Word of God who created all things. Jesus, in human form, was not involved in the creation process as He was not yet born at the time.

God is in total unity within the Trinity. Deuteronomy 6:4 says, *"...The Lord our God, the Lord is one."*

Let's have a look at some of the Biblical references regarding this:

### God the Father:

1. Genesis 1:1 *"In the beginning God ..."*
2. 1 Corinthians 8:6 *"... yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live ..."*

### God the Word:

1. John 1:1-3 *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."*
2. John 1:14 *"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."*
3. John 17:5 *"And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began."*
4. John 17:24 *"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."*
5. Colossians 1:15-17 *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."*
6. Hebrews 13:8 *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."*
7. Revelation 22:13 *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."*

**God the Spirit:** Genesis 1:2 *"... and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."*

## 1.4 The Heavens

Genesis 1:1 says that, “*In the beginning God created the heavens ...*” We assume that He made the heavens first before the earth because Genesis lists it first. Epp suggests that there are three heavens mentioned in the Scriptures<sup>1</sup>:

1. The first heaven is the **firmament**, or sometimes called the clouds. (Genesis 1:8, 7:11, 8:2)
2. The second heaven refers to the heaven that is home to the **planets and stars**. (Genesis 1:17, 15:5)
3. The third heaven is known as the **abode of God Himself**. (1 Kings 8:27, Psalm 2:4, 2 Corinthians 12:2-4)



Once God created the heavens He then set about creating spiritual beings to live there including:

1. The three archangels: Lucifer (the guardian cherub), Michael (the great prince) and Gabriel (the great messenger).
2. Cherub/cherubim – Ezekiel 10:3-5
3. Seraphs – Isaiah 6:1-4
4. Ministering spirits – Hebrews 1:14
5. Other inhabitants as found in the books of Ezekiel and Revelation.

## 1.5 The War in Heaven

Although it is difficult to understand what went on in heaven, it seems that Lucifer, one of the archangels, was not satisfied with being the worshiper but wanted to be worshiped himself. He became proud and his boasts are recorded in Isaiah 14:13-14:

*“I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.”*

A war broke out in heaven as the angels of God fought against the angels of Lucifer. It is recorded in Revelation 12:7-9, “*And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in*



<sup>1</sup> T. H. Epp, The God Of Creation (Nebraska: Back To The Bible Broadcast, 1972) 42.



heaven. *The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.*"

When Lucifer was thrown out of heaven he was hurled down to the earth. This event is recorded three times in the Scriptures:

1. Ezekiel 28:17 *"So I threw you to the earth ..."*
2. Isaiah 14:12 *"You have been cast down to the earth ..."*
3. Revelation 12:9 *"He was hurled to the earth ..."*

As Lucifer was being thrown down to the earth, he took one third of the angels with him. Revelation 12:3-4 says *"Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth."* Again in Revelation 12:9, *"He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him."* Jesus

was present as the Word at this event and witnessed Lucifer (now known as Satan) being thrown from heaven. Luke 10:18 says, *"He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."* So the earth became the domain of Satan and his evil angels.

On the sixth day of Creation, God created Man and gave him dominion over the earth:

1. Genesis 1:28 *"God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*
2. Genesis 2:15 *"The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."*

Satan was very angry that all authority over the earth had been given to Man, so he sought ways in which to take it back. He finally found a way through Eve, which we will look at in the next session. The Fall resulted, and so now *"... our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."* (Ephesians 6:12)

This whole scenario impacts our ability to stand. We have an enemy who purposely pursues us. We have a God who knew that all this was going to happen. We have a God who has made provision for us through His Son Jesus Christ. This course will explore some of those provisions and how God enables us to stand in the spiritual and natural realms today.

## 1.6 Demonstration Ministry

These public Demonstration Ministry times offer opportunities to practice what has been taught in the session. This is a time to give a practical demonstration, to watch how others receive, to practice hearing from Jesus yourself and to just have a go. It is one thing to read

about Jesus in the Scriptures, but an altogether different experience to meet with Him personally. This personal intimacy may take time to grow and develop but Jesus is always keen to meet with us. For James 4:8 says, *“Come near to God and he will come near to you.”*

**Note for Leaders:**

Remember that it is your responsibility to keep the participant safe at all times by:

- Always allowing Jesus to lead.
- Always offering the participant a choice in whether to proceed or not.
- Always praying protection over the participant’s heart before you start.
- Praying prayers of comfort over the heart if fear rises up.
- Looking for where Jesus is again and again in each circumstance.
- Binding back the darkness.

The Leader invites a participant to come forward to share the picture received at the beginning of the session. This participant needs to be willing to participate in a public ministry session. The Leader doesn’t choose anyone, they just issue the invitation – God will do the prompting! When a volunteer comes forward, the Leader invites the participant to come and sit at the front so that everyone may observe what takes place. The Leader invites the participant to close his/her eyes and wait with expectation. Then the Leader invites Jesus to meet with him/her by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Leader encourages the participant to ‘look’ at the picture of their heart, the one they received at the beginning of the session. Describe it to the Leader. There is no right or wrong picture, whatever they see is where their heart is at. Encourage the participant to be accepting of their heart where it is. Once that is settled, invite Jesus to come and be present in that place. Invite Him to come and speak with the heart and then just follow His prompts. Keep reminding the participant to keep a running commentary out loud so that the Leader and everyone else know what is going on. If necessary, the Leader may need to facilitate this step by step.

If the participant was unable to receive a picture of their heart at the beginning of the session, try again now. If it still will not come, “Go Ask Jesus” (see Notes for Leaders on page 5). Ask Jesus for a word of knowledge that will help unlock this situation. It is He who knows the truth about what is going on. It is He who is the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). Seek Him.

As with all prayer ministry, just continue to follow any prompts that Jesus gives. As the ministry goes along, the participant describes out aloud to the Leader what is happening. The Leader follows these prompts and just keeps on inviting Jesus in. Allow 10 minutes for this exercise but do not allow it to go too deep. It is just a demonstration. The aim of this ministry is to foster a positive encounter with Jesus that will lead the participant to hunger for more.

## 1.7 Small Groups

It is now time to break up into your small groups for personal prayer ministry. Once the groups are organised and settled, the small group Leader will offer prayer to those who are willing to receive ministry in the first session. Start with the picture of the heart. Others may

want to observe for a little while longer until their heart feels a little safer in the group. There is no condemnation for not being willing to open up on the first (or any other) session. Jesus always accepts us where we are today. He also knows why we find it difficult to open up and share ourselves before others. He does not condemn us but comes in a way that we are able to receive Him and at a pace that we can manage. He is always a gentleman!

## **1.8 Prayers**

### **A picture of your heart (Leader)**

Dear Lord, could You please show ..... (participant's name) a picture of his/her heart? What does his/her heart look like today? In Jesus' name. Amen.

### **If you cannot see a picture of your heart (Leader)**

Dear Lord Jesus, ..... (participant's name) cannot see a picture of his/her heart at the moment. Lord, could you please show him/her why? *Jesus knows what is going on – look to Him. Wait for Jesus to give a revelation and then follow His promptings. If no progress is being made, perhaps the Leader may have a word of knowledge to open things up. If after a while the ministry is still not progressing, bring it to a close and pray Jesus' comfort and blessing over the heart. It is not yet time and the heart is not yet ready. Never push ministry so hard that the person receiving ministry leaves in a worse place than when they came. Jesus is gentle and comes at a pace that the participant is ready to receive.*

### **A confession of unbelief (Participant)**

Dear Lord, I confess that I struggle with unbelief. Unbelief that You will come to me. Unbelief that You speak to me today. Unbelief that I can hear You. Unbelief that ..... (fill in what you struggle with). I confess it as sin before you Lord and ask that You forgive me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

### **In response to any confession the Leader always prays 1 John 1:9**

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.* In Jesus' name, you are forgiven. Amen.

### **A blessing (Leader)**

Dear Lord, please bless ..... (participant's name). Please pour Your rich blessings on his/her precious heart. We invite You in more and more. We invite You to come with more grace and mercy. We invite You to come with greater revelation about who You are. Thank You for Your rich blessings. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## **1.9 Journal**

Spend some quiet time with Jesus and ask Him about your heart.

- Jesus, what does my heart look like today?

- Where are You Lord in relation to my heart? Above it? Below it? To the left? To the right? Inside? Outside? Somewhere else?
- Ask Jesus for an encouragement for your heart today. Draw a picture of what He says or shows you. Write a few sentences about it in your journal.
- Draw a picture of what standing in the spiritual realm looks like for you right now.

If you have any questions, please bring them along to your next small group meeting.

**A prayer to pray over myself:**

*May the God of hope fill me with all joy and peace as I trust in Him, so that I may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)*

**Testimony:**

*The very first time I was asked to look for a picture of my heart, I saw a picture of a spinning top. It was red and spinning very fast. The red reminded me of a red heart, and the spinning suggested that my heart was spinning very fast. How odd, I thought, that my heart was spinning fast like a top.*



*But as we unpacked the meaning of this picture, Jesus showed me that I was on the go so much that I was unable to stop. I was pushing myself too hard to keep on going. I was out of control in some sense, spinning all over the place. I had no understanding of what it meant 'to be'. I only knew what it meant 'to do'. I was 'doing' lots and unable to stop.*

*This was an incredible revelation to me. What was even more amazing was that Jesus knew the reasons as to why I was in this situation, as I didn't have a clue! - Lizzie*