

## Visible and Invisible

### Commentary for February 16, 2014 — As Below, so Above

There is an invisible realm. God is invisible to us at present (John 6:46; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 John 4:12). In fact, the vast majority of God's creation (physical and spiritual) is invisible:

**"Giving thanks unto the Father, ... Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:**

- **In whom [the Son] we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:**
- **Who [the Son] is the image of the INVISIBLE God, the firstborn of every creature:**
- **For by him [the Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:**
- **And he [the Son] is before all things, and**
- **by him [the Son] all things consist."**

• **Colossians 1:12-17**

Things "visible" refer to the earthly creation. Things "invisible" generally refers to things in the heavens. We can also know that the things we see around us came from unseen causes, in particular the Word of God:

**"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen [things invisible or things which have not yet happened]. **For by it the elders obtained a good report.****

**Through faith we understand that the worlds [eons, ages] were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear [i.e., things invisible]."**

• **Hebrews 11:1-3**<sup>1</sup>

Apparently, the invisible things are familiar enough for us to recognize because they have aspects similar to visible things in God's earthly creation today:

**"... that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has showed it unto them.**

**For the INVISIBLE THINGS of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen [how?], being understood by the things that are made,**

**even his [God's] eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: ..."**

• **Romans 1:19-20**

Why are things "invisible" to us? It is because they are out of range of our senses. They are either too small, too large, or outside the range of our senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste,

<sup>1</sup> Although we can count time, nevertheless it is invisible to us. The *eons* were made by the Son (Hebrews 1:2).

or smell. We have a range of perception of our five senses, each of which informs us only of a tiny fraction of what exists. For example, our vision range is an infinitesimally tiny portion of the entire electromagnetic spectrum. We can only “see” limited wavelengths.

Our ability to see into the heavens is limited, although now we are able to “extend” our sight through the use of instruments such as optical and radio telescopes.<sup>2</sup> Even so, astronomers are finding that YHWH’s statement to Jeremiah is still true:

**“As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.”**

• *Jeremiah 33:22*

This is true only so far as man’s inability to count the stars in heaven. God knows their number and has a name for each one: **“He tells the number of the stars; he calls them all by their names”** (Psalm 147:4). As I wrote above, most all of God’s creation is invisible to us.

Sometimes we cannot see things even though they are actually present. Hagar did not see a well of water, although it was apparent when **“God opened her eyes”** (Genesis 21:19). Angelic beings can, of course, be invisible. Read the entire story of Numbers 22:23–31 about the Angel of YHWH. Note the last verse:

**“Then YHWH opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of YHWH standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.”**

• *Numbers 22:31*

Another incident where angels became visible was in 2 Kings 6:15–23, particularly verse 17:

**“And Elisha prayed, and said, YHWH, I pray you, open his eyes, that he may see. And YHWH opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”**

• *2 Kings 6:17*

We should not be concerned about unseen things because such matters are in the hands of God. Note what the apostle Paul admonishes Timothy:

**“... that you keep this precept unspotted, irreprehensible, unto the advent of our Lord, Christ Jesus, which, to its own eras, the happy and only Potentate will be showing:**

**He is King of kings and Lord of lords, Who alone has immortality, making His home in light inaccessible, Whom not one of mankind perceived nor can be perceiving, to Whom be honor and might eonian! Amen!”**

• *1 Timothy 6:14–16, Concordant Literal Version*

We know that after our resurrection we shall perceive Him as He is (1 John 3:2). At that time we will be able to learn to perceive all things currently imperceptible to us.

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<sup>2</sup> In all of the natural sciences, our senses have been remarkably extended through instrumentation.