OUR POSITION IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES

There are five mentions of the phrase “heavenly places” which are all in Ephesians in the NKJV (the KJV translates the same Greek word, “epouranious” as “high places” the fifth time)

- Elsewhere in the New Testament, the KJV translates this word as “heavenly” (e.g. Father, kingdom, etc.) or as “celestial”
- The literal meaning of “epouranious” is “above the sky” – figuratively referring to the spiritual realm

These five verses in Ephesians that address the “heavenly places” clearly show us our position and authority in the “spiritual realm”
- And, each one addresses a different aspect of these “heavenly places”

1. **Spiritual Blessings for Us from God through Christ** *(Ephesians 1:3, NKJV)*

   - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.
     - The Greek word for “spiritual” here is the same word “pneumatikos” that Paul used in 1Corinthians 12:1 in reference to spiritual gifts
     - God the Father has literally sown the “heavenly places” with spiritual gifts and blessings for each and every believer through the redeeming work of Christ Jesus
     - This makes us “complete” in Jesus (Colossians 2:9-10) and “thoroughly equipped for every good work” *(2Timothy 3:17)* “to do His will” *(Hebrews 13:21)*

2. **Access to God’s Wisdom and Power through Christ Jesus** *(Ephesians 1:17-21)*

   - ... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 
   - the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.
     - The “spirit of wisdom” and the “revelation in the knowledge of Him” and the “eyes of your understanding being enlightened” are all free gifts from God the Father sown in the heavenly places for all believers -- but you must “earnestly desire the best gifts” *(1Corinthians 12:31)*
     - In addition, the ‘exceeding greatness of His power” flows down from God the Father through Christ Jesus “toward us who believe” in the “heavenly places”
     - This great power has “seated” Jesus “far above” all the power of the enemy in this age as well as in the age to come, putting “all things under His feet” through the church which is His body

3. **We are Seated with Jesus in the Heavenly Places** *(Ephesians 2:4-7)*

   - But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
     - These three “togethers” refer to us sharing in 1) Jesus Christ’s resurrection from the dead; 2) His ascension into Heaven; 3) His present rulership of the world from His throne alongside the Father
• In this verse, “ages to come” literally means: “age; by extension perpetuity; by implication the world” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary)
• The “ages to come” refers to the Church Age that followed Christ’s resurrection and the subsequent millennium of Christ’s reign in the new heaven, new earth and new Jerusalem
• In the Spirit, we are already seated with Christ in the heavenly places, and like Him we simultaneously have dominion over the earth and the “prince of power of the air” (Eph. 2:2)
  ⇒ Thus says the Lord: “Heaven is my throne and earth is My footstool”

4. Boldness, Access and Confidence versus the Principalities and Powers (Ephesians 3:10-12)
  ⇒ … to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.
• The “manifold wisdom of God” specifically references all aspects of His eternal Truth
• These are to be “made known by the church” – i.e., by and through His body, not individually as “Lone Rangers” despite whatever shortcomings the church might have
• We (i.e. all believers) can “access” the Spirit and Truth of God with “boldness” and “confidence” through “faith” in Christ Jesus our Lord

5. We then Wage War against the Devil in the Heavenly Places (Ephesians 6:10-12)
  ⇒ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.
• Note that our strength comes from “the power of His might” – “not by might nor by power but by My Spirit says the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6)
• We put on the whole armor of God so that we can “stand” against the “wiles” of the devil – not the power of the devil but his wiles because he has little power but great cunning (Genesis 3:1)
• The word “wrestle” implies an ongoing fight that will not be over until the “end of the age” (Matthew 13:49)
• Our fight is not against people (“flesh and blood”) but rather the devil and all his cohorts (i.e. the principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, spiritual hosts of wickedness)
• And the fight is not in the natural world but rather in the “heavenly places” – i.e. the spiritual realm
• We must always remember that we must war with “the power of His might” not our own – “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God” (2Corinthians 10:4)
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us with every spiritual blessing** in the **heavenly places** in Christ.

... that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may **give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation** in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your **understanding** being enlightened; that you may know what is the **hope of His calling**, what are the **riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints**, and what is the **exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe**, according to the working of His mighty power which **He worked in Christ** when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the **heavenly places**, far above all **principality and power and might and dominion**, and every name that is named, not only **in this age** but also in that which is to come. And He put all things **under His feet**, and gave Him to be **head** over all things to the church, **23** which is **His body**, the fullness of Him who **fills all in all**.

But God, who is **rich in mercy**, because of **His great love** with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us **alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), and **raised us up together**, and made us **sit together in the heavenly places** in Christ Jesus, that in the **ages to come** He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

... to the intent that now the **manifold wisdom of God** might be **made known by the church** to the **principalities and powers in the heavenly places**, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have **boldness and access** with **confidence** through faith in Him.

Finally, my brethren, be **strong** in the Lord and in the **power of His might**. Put on the whole **armor of God**, that you may be able to **stand against the wiles of the devil**. For we do not **wrestle** against flesh and blood, but against **principalities**, against **powers**, against the **rulers of the darkness of this age**, against **spiritual hosts of wickedness** in the **heavenly places**.