



## UNDERSTANDING AUTHORITY AND POWER

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**Luke 10:18-19 NKJV - 18 And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.**

- **Power and authority - definition and function**

Power (*Greek - dunamis*) is the strength or force needed to rule.

Authority (*Greek - exousia*) is the right to rule.

***1. Being granted power and authority allows us to have dominion, the right and the ability to rule.***

In the divine government of God, power and authority are twins that must operate in tandem.

Authority without the power to enforce it is meaningless and useless.

***2. Power exercised without authority, without the right to use it, is using power illegally and is morally wrong - this is usurping authority.*** Usurping authority is exercising power or control over someone by force without the right to do so.

***3. God is all-powerful, and all power originates from God.*** Psalm 62:11, I Chronicles 29:11, II Chronicles 20:6

***4. All authority is delegated by God because He is the source of all authority.*** Romans 13:1-5

***5. Governing authorities have a God-ordained purpose and we, as Christians, are required to submit to their authority with one exception, when those authorities contradict the will of God.*** (I Peter 2:13–17, I Timothy 2:1-4, Titus 3:1, Ezra 7:26 *Contradicting the will of God* - Acts 4:13-20, Acts 5:26-29, Daniel 1:8-15)

***6. As believers, we need not fear submitting to governing authorities since it is God who appoints them and directs them.*** (Proverbs 21:1, Psalm 75:6-7, Daniel 2:21, Cyrus - Isaiah 45:13)

***7. Exercising dominion in God’s image is not about domination or abuse. Instead, it is about faithfully representing God’s character as the ultimate example in our work and actions.***

- In our last session, we discussed satan's plan to cause the fall of mankind and the effect it had on mankind's authority in the Earth.

- God established mankind as the authority in the Earth to represent Him.

**Genesis 1:26-28 NIV - 26 Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” 27 So God created mankind in his**



**own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”**

God created mankind as a being like Himself and then blessed or empowered him /her to have dominion over the Earth. Since mankind was created in the image and likeness of God, he/she was given the opportunity to function like God with authority and power. **Psalm 115:16 / Psalm 8:3-8**

- We stated that due to his fall, satan no longer had authority over the Earth, but he still had power in the Earth.
- We saw that satan schemed to prevent God's plan of mankind ruling the Earth by devising a way to sever mankind's relationship with God. *God's plan being fulfilled in our lives requires us to have a relationship with Him.*
- Through the use of deception, satan caused mankind to rebel against God and unknowingly serve him instead of God. This would enable satan to regain authority in the Earth by usurping the authority that God had given to mankind.
- We saw satan's deception executed in the use of a serpent, one of God's creatures, to speak to Eve. I believe satan deceived the serpent into using him and was allowed to enter into the body of the serpent in order to disguise himself to tempt Adam and Eve. **(II Corinthians 11:14 - an angel of light. That's why the serpent was cursed to walk on his belly in Genesis 3:14.)**
- **Genesis 3:1 AMPCE - Now the serpent was more subtle and crafty than any living creature of the field which the Lord God had made. And he [Satan] said to the woman, Can it really be that God has said, You shall not eat from every tree of the garden? The serpent was said to be crafty or cunning, more subtle than all other creatures. (Subtle - clever at achieving their aim by indirect or deceitful methods.)**
- When satan fell, the wisdom and great intellect that he once had was changed into an evil craftiness. **Ezekiel 28:17 AMPCE - 17 Your heart was proud and lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.**  
This is why I believe satan choose the serpent, because of its subtle and crafty characteristics.
- The plan satan instigated was initiated through subverting the order that God had established. *subvert - to "undermine the power and authority of an established system or institution."*
- Ray Ortlund, author of Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, wrote, “Eve usurped Adam’s headship and led the way into sin. And Adam, who (it seems) had stood by passively, allowing the deception to process without decisive intervention — Adam, for his part, abandoned his post as head. Eve was deceived; Adam forsook his responsibility”.
- Headship denotes authority and means shouldering more responsibility, not less. God’s forming Adam first meant greater responsibility, not greater privilege.



**8. To operate properly in authority, one is required to recognize they have responsibility.**

**I Timothy 2:14 - And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.**

The woman was deceived, but Adam made his decision with his eyes wide open - he rebelled and therefore, committed treason by willfully disobeying the one command God had established, which was not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So, we see that satan's subversion of God's order led to the fall of mankind.

- God had established divine order by creating Adam first, as head, then Eve as his wife and helper to carry out His will in the Earth. *Being called to assist doesn't make you less than the person you're appointed to assist. The fact that you're called to assist means that God recognizes help is needed.*
- Rather than following the divine order God had established and requiring the serpent to speak to her husband, Eve allowed the serpent to speak to her and then Eve spoke to Adam on behalf of the serpent. Then, rather than Adam going to God to validate what Eve was saying via the serpent, he just agreed with what the serpent had told her.

*(Check off with God.)* **I Chronicles 16:11 - Search for the Lord and for his strength; continually seek him.**

**9. God sets order through His Word and when order is set through His Word, authority is established.**

*When order is not followed, sin and its effects will ultimately occur. Subversion of God's order will always cause loss.*

- Because authority had been granted to mankind in **Genesis 1:26-28**, Eve, along with Adam, had dominion over all the creatures in the Earth, including the serpent. Because they did not exercise the dominion they had, they allowed themselves to be tempted by satan working through an inferior being (in rank), the serpent. Adam or Eve had the authority to shut the serpent up and shut the serpent down.

**10. Authority must be exercised so that order can be maintained.** *Don't allow what's inferior (what you have authority over) to become superior (have authority over you).*

- God permitted satan entrance into the Garden for the purpose of the temptation of Adam and Eve. However, this did not mean that God wished Adam and Eve to sin, or that He forced them to sin, or that He kept them unprotected from sin. Ultimately, as with every temptation, it is the person's own decision that determines whether they will sin.

**I Corinthians 10:13 AMPCE - 13 For no temptation (no trial regarded as enticing to sin), [no matter how it comes or where it leads] has overtaken you and laid hold on you that is not common to man [that is, no temptation or trial has come to you that is beyond human resistance and that is not adjusted and adapted and belonging to human experience, and such as man can bear]. But God is faithful [to His Word and to His compassionate nature], and He [can be trusted] not to let you be tempted and tried and assayed beyond your ability and strength of resistance and power to endure, but with the temptation He will [always] also provide the way out (the means of escape to a landing place), that you may be capable and strong and powerful to bear up under it patiently.**