

Our Authority in Christ

Part 1

Introduction

To understand what the Bible means when it speaks of our authority in Christ, it is necessary for us to fully understand who Christ is, who He was before He was born on earth, what His sacrificial death accomplished, and what He is doing today.

Christ's existence did not begin on earth. Let's see what Scripture has to tell us.

The Scripture: Hebrews 1:10-12

"In the beginning, O God, you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but You remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe, like a garment they will be changed. But You remain the same, and Your years will never end."

1. What do these verses say Christ did? _____

2. What else do they tell us about Christ? _____

The Scripture: John 1:1-4

"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. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men."

"The Word" is another name for Jesus.

3. What do these verses tell us? _____

The Scripture: Colossians 1:15, 16

"He (Christ) 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."

4. What do we learn from these verses? _____

Most Bible authorities agree that the following verses refer to Satan and tell the story of what happened in heaven before the existence of man.

The Scripture: Isaiah 14:12-15

“How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, “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.” But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.”

Ezekiel 28:11-19

“The word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: “You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. By your many sins and dishonest trade you have desecrated your sanctuaries. So I made a fire come out from you, and it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching. All the nations who knew you are appalled at you; you have come to a horrible end and will be no more.’ ”

5. Summarize in your own words what we learn about Satan and the war in heaven. _____

6. What happened to Satan and those who followed him? _____

The Bible is silent as to what happened next, but after many centuries God moved on earth.

The Scripture: Genesis 1:29

"God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

7. What did God do? _____

The Scripture: Genesis 1:28

"God blessed them (Adam and Eve) 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 earth.'"

8. What is the latter part of God's command to Adam and Eve? _____

Yes, God gave Adam and Eve authority to rule over all living things on earth. Life on earth could have been idyllic had not Satan, in the form of a serpent, tempted Adam and Eve to doubt God's word. The pair disobeyed God and in doing so forfeited their authority to Satan.

Centuries went by and because of the sin that separated them from God, mankind became more and more wicked. But sin exacts a terribly high price and must be paid for. There was no way the descendants could pay that price.

From the beginning, it was God's desire to create a people who would not only worship and have fellowship with Him, but would have dominion over the earth. However, He knew that this part of His creation would fail on its own, and because God's purposes are eternal, He had an alternate plan.

That alternate plan was His Son, Jesus Christ.

Centuries before Jesus' birth, Old Testament prophets foretold of a Messiah whom God would send to earth.

The Scripture: Isaiah 11:1,2

"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse (an ancestor of Jesus); from His roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord - and He will delight in the fear of the Lord."

9. What did Isaiah prophesy? _____

The Scripture: Isaiah 42:6,7

"I will...make You a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness."

10. What miracles would the Messiah accomplish? _____

The Scripture: Isaiah 49:25

"Captives will be taken from warriors, and plunder retrieved from the fierce; I will contend with those who contend with you and your children I will save."

11. What do these verses say the Messiah would do? _____

Thousands of years passed before these Scriptures were fulfilled.

The Scripture: Galatians 4:4

"But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son...to redeem those under the law, that they might receive the full rights of sons."

12. Why did God send His Son? _____

The Scripture: 1 John 3:8

"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."

13. Why did the apostle John say Jesus had come? _____

Yes, God put His alternate plan into action. Jesus came to pay the price required by man's sin.

The Scripture: John 1:14

"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the Glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

14. What do we learn from this verse? _____

One of Isaiah's most familiar prophesies foretold:

The Scripture: Isaiah 61:1

"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners."

15. What would the Messiah do? _____

Yes, Jesus was the same Messiah prophesied by Isaiah. Jesus lived in relative obscurity for the first thirty years of His life. Finally the time came for Him to move. His first move was to challenge Satan.

The Scripture: Luke 4:1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days He was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them He was hungry. The devil said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone.'" The devil led Him up to a high place and showed Him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to Him, "I will give You all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if You worship me, it will all be Yours." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'" The devil led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If You are the Son of God," he said, "throw Yourself down from here. For it is written:

“He will command His angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” Jesus answered, “It says: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left Him until an opportune time.

16. What were the three temptations Satan leveled at Jesus?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

17. How did Jesus respond in each case? _____

Shortly after Jesus' victory over Satan in the wilderness, He returned to Nazareth, His home town where He preached at the local synagogue.

The Scripture: Luke 4:18, 21

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed..." He began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'"

18. What scripture did Jesus read in the synagogue? _____

19. What did Jesus say? _____

By His reading of the scripture from Isaiah and His statement, Jesus announced that He was the long-awaited Messiah with all His authority. Many religious leaders refused to believe who He was.

On one occasion when Jesus healed a demon-possessed man, the Pharisees attributed the healing to Beelzebub, the prince of demons.

The Scripture: Matthew 12:28

"If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you."

20. What was Jesus' response? _____

Jesus asserted that He had authority over Satan. Throughout His earthly existence, Jesus constantly showed His authority over the enemy.

Although the religious leaders of Jesus' time were very familiar with the prophecies of Isaiah, they were looking for a great political figure who would come as a military commander and free Israel from the yoke of Rome.

Consequently, when Jesus came, announcing the establishment of a spiritual kingdom and the breaking of spiritual bonds, for the most part, the religious leaders did not recognize Him as the Messiah even though He performed the miracles prophesied by the prophets.

The Scripture: Listen carefully as your instructor reads chapters 8 and 9 of Matthew to you.

21. List some of the miracles Jesus performed. _____

22. What did these miracles prove? (Your opinion) _____

Jesus clearly illustrated by His miracles that He indeed had authority over the works of Satan. In the second part of this study, we will look at another aspect of Jesus' authority.

The Answers

1. He laid the foundations of the earth and of heaven.
2. He is eternal.
3. Jesus existed from the beginning and He is God. In Him was life and that life is the light of men.
4. That Christ is the image of God, the firstborn. All things were created by Him and hold together in Him.
5. Your summary
6. They were cast down to earth.
7. He created man, male and female.
8. To rule over every living creature that moves on the earth
9. That the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge and fear of the Lord would rest on the Messiah
10. He would be a light for the Gentiles, open blind eyes, and free captives
11. Take captives from warriors and plunder from the fierce; He would contend with those who contended with His followers and save their children.
12. To redeem those under the law and receive full rights of sons
13. To destroy the devil's works
14. Jesus became flesh and lived among men. He has the glory of God and is full of grace and truth.
15. Preach good news to the poor, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.
16.
 1. To turn stones into bread
 2. To worship Satan and receive all the kingdoms of the world
 3. To throw Himself down from the highest point of the temple
17. He said, "It is written," and He quoted Scripture. He refused to comply with each temptation.
18. Isaiah 61
19. "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."
20. If He drove out demons by the Spirit of God then the Kingdom of God had come
21. He healed a leper; restored a demon-possessed man to his right mind; healed a paralytic; healed a woman who was hemorrhaging; brought the synagogue leaders' daughter back to life; healed a blind man; healed every disease.
22. Your opinion.

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