

AUTHORITY/RULERSHIP IN GOD'S CREATED ORDER

Three Wills in the Cosmos

The focus of this session is the authority and rulership roles of God, Satan, and Man in the created, ordered, and structured universe.

God is the one and only absolute sovereign. His will is absolute.

Yet **Satan** is called "*the prince of the power of the air*" (Eph. 2:2) and "*the god of this age*" (2Cor. 4:4). In fact, "*The whole world (cosmos) lies in the sway of the wicked One,*" we are told in 1John 5:19! Are there no parameters on his authority as exercised in the affairs of men?

And **Man** is said to be "*made a little lower than the angels,*" yet "*made to have dominion over the works of Your (God's) hands,*" (Psalm 8:5-6). To what extent does man have dominion over God's creation? And in regard to our primary emphasis, how do these varied volitions and levels of authority interact and react?

In a generalized fashion, we will examine the relationship of major and minor wills in God's creative order. The diagram below is an effort to illustrate God's will, Satan's will, and man's will and the major thrust of each.

Three Wills in the Universe: God's, Satan's, & Man's

- **God's will** – Absolute, Sovereign:

- ▶ God wills a cosmos where the eternal Son, who, as the one and only Messiah, is worshipped and glorified.

A major concern of the biblical-historical-predictive narrative is the sovereignty of God over His created universe. He proves His sovereignty in time-space-history.

- **Satan's will** – Locked in negative volition towards God and God's will

- ▶ Satan wills a cosmos in which he himself is revered as God. See the five "I wills" of Satan (as Lucifer) in Isa. 14:12.

- **Man's will** – chaotic, vacillating, confused (after the Fall, billions of wills that vacillate regarding good and evil).

- ▶ Unregenerated Man wills a cosmos of his own making, one that glorifies man.
- ▶ Regenerated Man is to learn God's will from God's Word; then to will God's will in and through the Holy Spirit's ministries.

God's Will & Rule in His Created Cosmos: How Effective?

Is God in control of the historical process? Is His rule being fulfilled in accord with His written word?

1. Fulfilled prophetic truth says, “Absolutely”!
 - Messiah, as prophesied, has come, Isa. 9:6-7.
 - Messiah’s place of birth as prophesied is now history, Micah 5:2.
 - Messiah’s substitutionary death for sin as foretold (Isa. 53, 10 times in 12 verses) is a completed fact.
 - Messiah’s resurrection predicted by David 1,000 years before it happened is now historical fact, Acts 2:25-31.
2. The very existence of Israel as a distinct people group says, “ABSOLUTELY”!
3. Yet-to-be-fulfilled prophetic truth says, “ABSOLUTELY”!
 - Messiah will return.
 - He will put down His enemies.
 - He will rule the nations with a rod of iron, Psa. 2; Rev. 11:15-18; 19:11-16.

Satan’s Will & Rule: How Effective?

1. Jesus calls Satan the prince/ruler (archonta/ αρχοντα) of this world (cosmos*)... and assures us that he will be cast out or defeated, John 12:31.

*cosmos/world here = an ordered system, a systematic mindset, a mentality that excludes the self revealed God (as in 1John 2:15-17). It is the world of human beings who are lost.
2. Paul refers to Satan as “*the prince (or ruler; archonta/αρχοντα) of the power of the air (atmosphere), the spirit who now energizes the sons of disobedience...*,” Eph. 2:2.
3. Paul also refers to Satan as “the god of this age,” 2Cor. 4:3-4.
4. Paul sums up the Satanic hierarchy in Eph. 6:12.
5. Satanic rule/authority/power
 - Involves a hierarchy of fallen angels (1/3 of original host, Rev. 12:4).
 - Is limited to the sphere and powers of darkness that focus upon planet earth.
 - Is superior to any powers of man.
 - But cannot possess or control men (as though men were puppets).

Man’s Will & Rule: How Effective?

1. Gen. 1:26, Psa. 8:5-8: The Dominion mandate given by God to mankind.
2. Dominion (rule) requires, 1) intellect (reason), 2) volition (action), and 3) responsibility (moral imperatives).

3. One result of the Fall was a loss of this dominion: man becomes dominated by his environment, so that we do not see all things under Him, Heb. 2:8.
4. It is only through total redemption-completed that dominion will be restored, Rom 8:19-25; 1Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 11:15-18. The battle for dominion is won for mankind in and by Christ.

Summary

- Sovereignty (God) chose to use volitional creatures to bring His plan to pass.
- Who rules the universe? God, but God sovereignly permits His authority to be challenged.
- Despite the volitional resistance of Satan, fallen angels, and unregenerate men, all events and actions in our universe will transpire just as our sovereign God has foretold. **THE VOLITIONAL CHOICES OF ALL WILL EVEN CONTRIBUTE TO GOD'S PREDICTIONS OF THE END OF HISTORY.**

“KINGDOM OF GOD” IN SCRIPTURE

by Ron Merryman

UNIVERSAL KINGDOM OF GOD

“The Rule of God over His Creation”

(Minority use in Scripture)

MEDIATORIAL KINGDOM OF GOD

“God Reigns over Nations Thru A Mediator”

(Majority use in Scripture)

