

SESSION 35 – THE BELIEVER’S KINGDOM AUTHORITY - PART ONE

¹⁷*That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him...*¹⁹*and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might*²⁰*that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,*²¹*far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*²²*And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,*²³*which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. (Eph. 1:17-23 ESV)*

¹*And you were dead in the trespasses and sins*²*in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—*³*among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.*⁴*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,*⁵*even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—*⁶*and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...(Eph. 2:1-6 ESV)*

I. POWER AND AUTHORITY

- A. Paul writes to the Ephesian believers concerning Psalm 110 and Daniel 7; of the domain of darkness, that he specifically writes to the Colossian believers in 1:13, and of the Kingdom of God; of death, resurrection, and ascension of both Jesus and the Believer. The prayer begins with Paul’s desire for the Ephesian assembly, both individually and corporately to have both the *Spirit of Wisdom* and *Spirit of Revelation* in the *knowledge of God, in Christ Jesus*.
- B. The path to the Knowledge of God can be found in Proverbs 2:1-5. It points to receiving Yahweh’s words and valuing them like treasure within the inner man. Solomon points then to making your ear attentive to *wisdom* and inclining your heart to *understanding*. He follows this with a call for insight and understanding, and their pursuit compared to seeking for hidden treasures. At the end of *this path* is the *understanding, discerning, perception* of the Fear of Yahweh and the discovery of the Knowledge of God.
- C. Paul points us to the *end*, the *goal* of wisdom, understanding, revelation, and the knowledge of God as what is found in Jesus. The addition of the phrase *in the knowledge of him* in Ephesians 1:17 points explicitly to Jesus. When we find Him, we will discover the Fear of Yahweh and discover the knowledge of God (the same use of *knowledge* in Prov. 2:5).
- D. Having found Him resurrected and ascended to the Right Hand of the Majesty on High, we have seen Him and the continuation of His earthly mission from His Throne. His role and revelation as Prophet, Priest, and King provides a framework for *wisdom, understanding, and revelation* of God in Him. As Prophet, He brings the Father’s Word to man, for He is the Living Word Himself (John 1:1-3; Heb. 4:12). As Priest, He brings man back into fellowship and relationship with God. As King, He is the ruler over the realms of

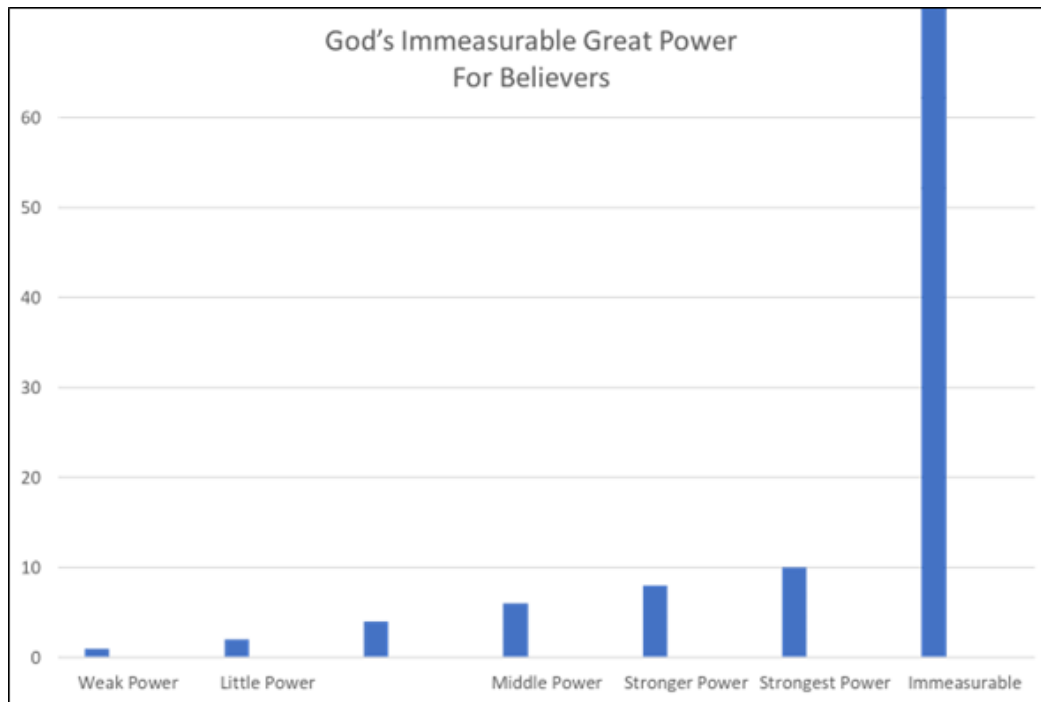
Heaven and Earth. And as King uses *power and authority* to accomplish His Father's will and plans. Paul sets the stage for Believers to *follow Him* to the Throne. First it is of the resurrected and ascended Jesus in Ephesians 1 that Paul prays believers would have wisdom, revelation, and understanding. Using truths from both Psalm 110 and Daniel 7:13-14 he makes the bold declaration in prayer that the experience of the hope of God's calling for the Ephesian believers and the riches of Jesus' inheritance *in them*, the saints (*hagios* – pronounced as *og-EE-oy*), along with something called *immeasurable greatness of His power*. These are all a result of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King.

- E. God's calling for us, our identity, and power come from revelation knowledge of Jesus ascended and *who He is, and what He does; that is the knowledge of God in Him*. Jesus has secured for us the power of the age to come in that His Kingdom rule, reign, power, and authority have been made available to believers in this present evil age where the domain of darkness exists as the world power. That *power of the age to come* is referred to Paul as the *immeasurable greatness of His power*. What is this *power*?
- F. Paul defines the ***immeasurable greatness of His power*** as the result of the working of the Father's great *might* and seating Jesus at His right hand - over all *rule and authority and dominion*. The word *immeasurable* is the Greek *hyperballo* meaning, "a degree which exceeds extraordinarily a point on an implied or overt scale of extent—'extraordinary, extreme, supreme, far more, much greater, to a far greater degree.'"¹ In addition to *hyperballo*, Paul also says this power is *great*, Gr. *megethos* – "the upper range of a scale of extent, with the possible implication of importance in relevant contexts—'great, greatly, greatness, to a great degree, intense, terrible.'"²

Power then is here defined as a result of the Father raising Jesus from the dead *and* installing Him as Prophet, Priest, and King. This power available to believers is not *ordinary* power. There is an upper range of power on a scale that is defined as *great* or *megethos*. This power available for believers is *extraordinarily extraordinary, extreme, and far more, much greater* than the upper range of that scale. In other words, it's literally off of the chart! It is uncontained. If on a scale from 1 – 10 we define power as weakest (1) to strongest (10), then the Father's power made available to the *believer* extends the limits of the chart.

¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 688.

² *Ibid.*, p. 684



G. Tozer refers to this *power* in direct association with the attribute of God's *omnipotence*.

In the time of his vision John the Revelator heard as it were the voice of a great multitude and as the voice of many waters and as the voice of mighty thunderings sounding throughout the universe, and what the voice proclaimed was the sovereignty and omnipotence of God: Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Sovereignty and omnipotence must go together. One cannot exist without the other. To reign, God must have power, and to reign sovereignly, He must have all power. And that is what omnipotent means, having all power... God possesses what no creature can: an incomprehensible plenitude of power, a potency that is absolute. This we know by divine revelation, but once known, it is recognized as being in full accord with reason. Grant that God is infinite and self-existent and we see at once that He must be all-powerful as well, and reason kneels to worship before the divine omnipotence.

Power belongeth unto God, says the psalmist, and Paul the apostle declares that nature itself gives evidence of the eternal power of the Godhead (Rom 1:20). From this knowledge we reason to the omnipotence of God this way: God has power. Since God is also infinite, whatever He has must be without limit; therefore God has limitless power, He is omnipotent. We see further that God the self-existent Creator is the source of all the power there is, and since a source must be at least equal to anything that

emanates from it, God is of necessity equal to all the power there is, and this is to say again that He is omnipotent.

God has delegated power to His creatures, but being self-sufficient, He cannot relinquish anything of His perfections and, power being one of them, He has never surrendered the least iota of His power. He gives but He does not give away. All that He gives remains His own and returns to Him again. Forever He must remain what He has forever been, the Lord God omnipotent.

Omnipotence is not a name given to the sum of all power, but an attribute of a personal God we Christians believe to be the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of all who believe on Him to life eternal. The worshipping man finds this knowledge a source of wonderful strength for his inner life. His faith rises to take the great leap upward into the fellowship of Him who can do whatever He wills to do, for whom nothing is hard or difficult because He possesses power absolute.

Since He has at His command all the power in the universe, the Lord God omnipotent can do anything as easily as anything else. All His acts are done without effort. He expends no energy that must be replenished. His self-sufficiency makes it unnecessary for Him to look outside of Himself for a renewal of strength. All the power required to do all that He wills to do lies in undiminished fullness in His own infinite being.³

- H. Power is best defined as ‘*capability*’, with emphasis on function. (1) *potential for functioning in some way, power, might, strength, force, capability*.⁴ The sun for example has power to provide heat, light, and gravity and perhaps time, and as such influence on and over the planets in the solar system and with respect to earth, all life. The sun’s potential power is its power/energy that is stored in itself relative to its position to release that power in the solar system. In terms of potential power available to believers, **it is based on the Father’s power exercised in Christ Jesus in the resurrection and ascension**. What we know and experience by way of the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation then is the road-map to experiencing **this power; the power to raise us up and seat us with Jesus**.

¹And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked...⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ...⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:1-7)

- I. This power comes to the believer by the Person of the Holy Spirit.

³ Tozer, A W. KNOWLEDGE of the HOLY : The Attributes of God. Their Meaning in the Christian Life. 1961. Gift Edition ed., HarperCollins Publishers, 1992, pp. 101–106.

⁴ Bauer, Walter. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (BDAG). University of Chicago Press, 2021., p. 232

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. (Rom. 8:11)

- J. Yahweh's power then is revealed in the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus and made available to believers through His Holy Spirit. The availability and use of power, or the permission to use that power, is called *authority* (*exousia*). BDAG defines it as, "from ἐξουσιᾱ. [1] a state of control over someth., freedom of choice, right (e.g., the 'right' to act, decide, or dispose of one's property as one wishes...[2] potential or resource to command, control, or govern, capability, might, power...[3] the right to control or command, authority, absolute power, warrant...[4] power exercised by rulers or others in high position by virtue of their office, ruling power, official power...[6] the sphere in which power is exercised, domain."⁵ Authority then, simply put, ***is the permission God has given believers to use the power He used to raise Jesus from the dead that has now come by way of His Holy Spirit indwelling the believer over and in the new sphere of life.***

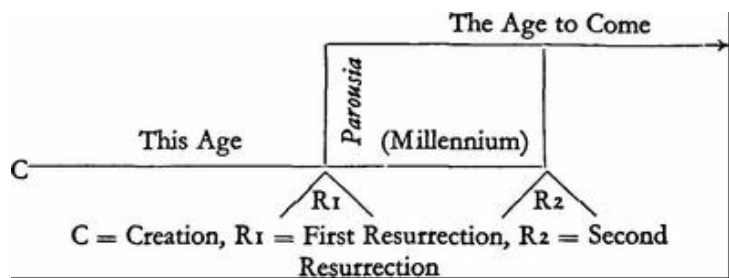
³ Surely you know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus ***have been baptized into his death!*** ⁴ Our baptism in his death made us ***share his burial***, so that, ***as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father***, we too might ***live and move in the new sphere of Life***. (Rom. 6:3-4 Moffatt)

- K. The Greek used in Romans 6:4 for *newness of life* that Moffat translates *new sphere* is *kainoteti* from *kainotes* meaning, "newness w[ith] connotation of someth. extraordinary" from the root *kainos* a word used to describe time in terms of newness as contrasted with something older but more specific "pert. to being not previously present, unknown, strange, remarkable, also w. the connotation of the marvelous or unheard-of."⁶ Recall the Ephesians 1:19 and the *hyperballon megethos* of His power (*dynamis* – *doo-nam-is*). The immeasurable greatness of God's power through the resurrection raised Jesus and *us* up into the extraordinary and marvelous *new life*, or *zoe* – the life of God. Or put another way, it is the entrance into *zoe aionion*, the eternal, unending life of God in the Age to Come, and the Ages of Eternity with Him.
- L. The *new sphere of life* or the *newness of life* is then the experience of *the New Creation* or the *New Heavens and New Earth*, now. Yet again, as the writer of Hebrews tells us, it is only a *taste* (Heb. 6:5) and not the fullness. It is the *already* part of the Kingdom Age we press into and experience now. It is the power of that age and the permission to use that power in this one.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 311-312

⁶ Ibid., pp. 440-441

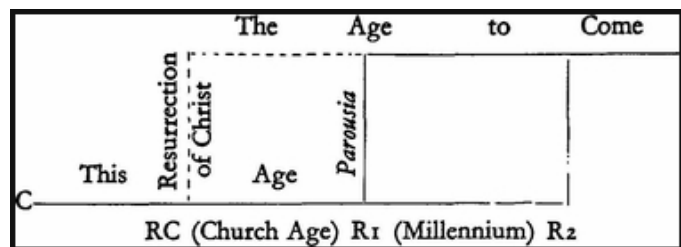
M. The following mini-graph is taken from Dr. George Eldon Ladd's classic work *The Gospel of the Kingdom*



We've seen this small graph before. We have the separation of This Age and The Age to Come at the Second Coming of the Messiah (noted here as the *Parousia*) and the beginning of the Millennia Reign (1,000 years). At the *Parousia* or Second Coming is the First Resurrection of all of the believers who have *fallen asleep* (1 Thess. 4:13-18) and then the *catching away* (harpazo; a.k.a., *rapture*) of the remaining believers. The point here is this: The Resurrection is the hinge upon which this age ends and the next one begins. Resurrection means *immortality* of believers in resurrected bodies that move into the Kingdom Age as *Sons of the Resurrection*.

³⁵ but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, ³⁶ for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. ³⁷ But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. ³⁸ Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him." (Luke 20:35-38)

N. Let's see then the updated mini-graph concerning Jesus' own death and resurrection.



The resurrection (and ascension) of Jesus *moved* the end of this age and the beginning of The Age to Come into this present evil age by beginning the resurrection from the dead and starting the New Creation.

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep...²³But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴Then

⁷ George Eldon Ladd. *The Gospel of the Kingdom : Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God*. Grand Rapids, Mi, Eerdmans, 2011, p. 38.

⁸ Ibid. p. 42

comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. (1 Cor. 15:20-25)

- O. We also know at the end of the Millennial Reign there will be a New Garden of Eden, the New Heavens and New Earth (Rev. 21-22)

⁵ And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” (Rev. 21:5)

But wait. We saw Paul make an emphatic statement that if we have been baptized into Jesus’ *death* then we also share in *His Resurrection* and walk in the *kainotes zoe*, or the life of the New Creation, the New Heavens and New Earth. Can this be? And the emphatic answer here is a resounding, death destroying, life giving “Yes!” Again, it is only in *part* or a *taste*. But that *taste* is the beginning of the fullness. It has already started.

¹⁴ For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵ and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. ¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Cor. 5:14-17)

The dawning of the New Age and the New Heavens and New Earth have now come in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.

- P. What does this mean for the believer and *the believer’s authority*? It means this: the rescue plan of Colossians 1:13 rests in an inevitable truth: the *only way out of exile* and the domain of the god of this age, is by way of death, resurrection, and ascension. In order to walk in the *newness of life* or that *life of that age* one must share in a death like Jesus’.

¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life (zoe) is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life (zoe) appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Col. 3:1-4)

In summary then, Paul lays out the framework in his letter to the Colossians, making the same statement he made to the Romans and Corinthians. If you have raised into the *newness of life* (*kainotes zoe*), then set your mind on the excellencies of the truths concerning the Ascension, Daniel 7:13-14, and Psalms 1, 2, and 110 and contrast that with the domain of darkness, or *things that are on the earth*. How? Through *death and resurrection* into which your *kainotes zoe* is found in and only with Jesus our Messiah. This is the *first and necessary step* into the experience of *power and authority* of the Kingdom of God and His Son, that is to say, into the Believer’s Authority.