

Authority 'Exousia'

From the moment we are born we experience two kinds of power, Human Power and Divine Power and they can be used either for good or for evil.

It can be legitimate which is given and empowers or illegitimate which is taken and disempowers, and down through history we have seen this in people's lives, over countries and in the church.

The bible gives us many examples of how authority has been used in relationships, kingdoms/governments and in the religious structure of the day.

David Riddell defines authority/power in two ways 'power over' and 'power for'.

Where it is 'power over' it will result in alienation, the person, govt. or church, cannot be reasoned with and makes demands, its purpose is to isolate you from those who love you. It subjugates, crushes as we see in dictatorships, it violates the sovereignty of people for religious or political domination in the cause of a selfish belief of the one in control. It invokes resentment or rebellion in those under it. At the centre the controller is very insecure and will manipulate and do anything to keep the person, nation or group in line. In the Christian context God talk is used to try and validate and enforce their actions, rules and demands.

Where it is 'power for' the focus is to serve others, it feels uplifting and safe, and it inspires respect and there is mutual submission to one another, and respects the sovereignty of others. There is a level of self-sacrifice and releases others to be who they were created to be and will willingly let others go their own way if the person will not take the opportunity to hear Godly wisdom and counsel when needed.

It is very easy to be using both at the same time, we see King David a man after God's heart using his power to meet the selfish desires of the flesh, and then commands others to take actions that will cover his sin. 2 Sam 11

The Grk work 'exousia' is used 104 times in the NT – a power based on delegated power/authority by the virtue of the position the person holds. John 1:12 'But those who embrace him and took hold of his name were given authority (exousia) to become the children of God' TPT

As we develop and grow in our Christian faith we hear about the authority of the Name of Jesus, the authority of the Word, the power of the blood. We learn that we have authority because we are a spirit being, seated in Christ Jesus at the right hand of the Father in heaven. We have been given authority in the spirit realm on the earth and the Kingdom of God will be advanced like Jesus did over the works of the devil who is now our enemy.

So where did it come from? There was a discussion in heaven that sets this in motion. We find it in Genesis 1: 26-28. God said 'Let us (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) make man in our likeness, and let them have complete authority over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the (tame) beasts, and over all the earth, and over everything that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image and likeness of God he created him, male and female, He created them. And God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,

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subdue it (using all the resources in the service of God and man) and have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature that moves upon the land.'

In Chpt 2:20 of Genesis God gives Adam authority to name every living thing. Being in the likeness of God he had the mind of God with the wisdom, understanding and knowledge of how to be a steward of all that was created. There was a unity, a unison of spirit, to spirit with the Creator of all things. Then we see Eve being brought to Adam and together with God there is no division, conflict, domination, they walked in perfect harmony in the garden the three of them, no jealousy, mistrust, doubt, manipulation, a perfect soul tie.

I see three things that Adam was given that was in the likeness of his creator. He **was too multiply**, he had **permission to use** freely all the resources at his disposal, and had total **dominion/rule/authority** over creation on the land, in the sea and in the air.

They had the authority to rule and reign over all that was given to them in Eden. Their position and purpose was to tend, keep and guard Eden with the purpose to enlarge it and a place for the Creator and creation to enjoy together (Gen 2:15)

Their state of mind, their position, and relationship with God and the one command, not to eat of the Tree of good and evil, had never been challenged, it was a glory filled, holy environment, all was perfect and they being in the likeness of God were innocent of evil.

Then came the first words of doubt that were ever spoken in Paradise, they bring thoughts that question and challenge Gods authority on earth, the goodness of God, his integrity and the integrity of Gods relationship with them, is he trust worthy? Did He really say? If Satan could not usurp God as is recorded in Is 14, then his plan was to get at God through the one thing God loved, his creation, human kind made in his likeness, his offspring. As we read in Genesis Chpt 3 the challenge was successful, mankind was seduced by a twist of words that led to a new belief, an action and the consequence was being separated from the relationship with God, reaping eternal consequence including the loss of the authority over the earth realm and the relationship they had always known. Sin and death entered the human experience for the first time, bringing separation from God and one another.

Throughout the scriptures God began to reveal His heart and the plan to redeem what was lost. The prophets prepared the way, for those who would hear, 'One would come called the last Adam' who knew no sin, to redeem by his incorruptible blood all that was lost and sin and death would be defeated, deposed and destroyed and the restoration of the intimacy between the Creator, God and his offspring would be restored. The authority over creation would once again be in the rightful hands of the Creator. Is 53. And he could once again give it to who he chose.

Then in the fullness of time came the revealing of the last Adam, Satan using the same tactics that had given him victory in the garden, asks Jesus questions that challenged who he is, his identity 'If you are the Son of God' Satan was wanting to be worshipped like God as god, this time he failed because Jesus the Son was confident in who he was and to whom he represented. His love for the Father and humanity was greater, than any power, title or possessions, he came to be the servant King. At Calvary he won the victors crown and

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triumphant over sin and death, they had been defeated for ever. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy (loosen, untie, and dissolve) the devils works (sin and death) 1 John 3:8.

Through Jesus death and resurrection from the dead, his ascension and the out pouring of the Holy Spirit meant that all authority and power is now given back to those who believe in him and called the children of God, (1 John 3:) born of the spirit, (John 1:3) adopted (Rom 8:15) into the family by faith by the Holy Spirit. We have been made righteous by the blood of Jesus (Rom 5:9) and we are given joint seating in Him in heavenly places (Eph 2:6) therefore we are in this world but not of this world, we are made alive in him by faith, because the Spirit of Truth has revealed it to us, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 5:4-5) In Rev 1:17 Jesus said 'Don't yield to fear. I am the Beginning and the End, the Living One I was dead, but now look-I am alive forever and ever. And I hold the keys that unlock death and the unseen world.'

Through his Son the purpose for which God created humankind in the first place is now restored, intimacy and co labouring to advance the Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven, and restoring the power and authority that the first Adam lost has now be given to all that believe and put their trust and faith in Him. The authority and power that was given to Adam is given to those who by faith are born of the Spirit not of the flesh. We live and move in Him because they are his offspring by the Spirit. Acts 17:28

Ps 115:16 'The heavens belong to God; they are his alone, but he has given us the earth and put us in charge.'

We have been given as believers in Jesus the full measure of faith to operate as Jesus did on the earth, with the authority of the Father to demonstrate the Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. We are legitimate children born of the Spirit, our position in Him never changes and His Spirit dwells in us and empowers us to live by faith.

We can speak to the elements as he did, change the weather, walk on water, change water into wine, multiply food, levitate, walk through walls, be translated from one place to another (Is 60:8) have authority over the diseases and torments of the body and mind, heal broken hearts from the devastation of life that have twisted the emotions and destroyed relationships and raise the dead. How do we know this, because it has been done before and recorded so we can know that in him all things are possible to those that believe? Matt 19:26

Satan the father of lies doesn't want us to know we have authority and power and if we do know it he doesn't want us to know how to use it.

To speak with authority we have to have faith in the truth that we are in a position of authority, it will give us confidence and boldness. Authority is a truth, it is not a feeling, any thoughts of doubt and unbelief will weaken us, they intimidate and cause us to waver, and remain passive, and Satan wants us to stand aloof lacking confidence in the promises of who we really are, these are lies from the father of lies. It is his tactic to prevent our authority being activated. This is the truth he is a liar and therefore we are called in James 4: Stand up

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to the devil and resist him and he will run away from you.' 2 Tim 1:7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but (He has given us spirit) of power and of love and a calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control.'

The most common area where we will use our authority is in our mind, and we have a choice to hold every thought captive, (2 Co 5:10) by doing this scripture tell us that he will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is on him. (Is 26:3) The mind is a great training ground. In my experience the battle over self-pity, depression, doubt, any fears or anxieties, demands that I have to use my authority to get free.

Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and we have authority to resist any sickness and disease that wants to attach itself to us.

We have authority in the Spirit over all that belongs to us, our families, over our workspaces and places and wherever we put our feet the Kingdom is there.

Our gifting will give us an authority in that particular area, and the anointing infuses us with authority for a particular purpose, calling or ministry.

I found examples in which authority can be used or abused in the scripture and the outcome

People who disobeyed the authority of the law of their govt. leaders and obeyed a higher authority, the ways of God. They were the midwives who attended the Hebrew women giving birth in Exodus 1:21 they revered and feared God, their faith was rewarded and they were given households. The three friends of Daniel in Dan 2 & 3 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who refused to worship the gods of Babylon as King Nebuchadnezzar commanded, they were put into the fiery furnace believing that God is greater and trusting their lives into His providence not the King. They were supernaturally protected, walking freely not bound up as they were when thrown in.

Their faith in the higher authority of God led the King to make a decree that nothing could be spoken against their God and they were given authority over a province in Babylon

Daniel prayed openly to God defying the law that the only King Darius must be worshipped and no other god, a law that could not be reversed. He was spared it says because he believed in (relied on adhered to and trusted in) his God. Those that brought the charges were themselves thrown into the lion's den with their families and were killed. Dan 6:1-28 Daniel was highly favoured, the King made a decree that a nation will follow the God that Daniel follows.

World history is full of people of faith that have put their lives at risk for the sake of truth and God's people. In our time, in many nations, many hid the Jews from the Nazis attempt to remove the race from the face of the earth.

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2 People who used power in a way that was out of their sphere of authority and the consequences:

Lucifer had a position in heaven but was not satisfied, he wanted more In Is 14:12 jealousy and pride leads to a rebellion in heaven, Lucifer is described as O Morning Star, son of the dawn, in Ezekiel 28:12 it reads you were full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Lucifer walked among the fiery stones, it says your heart became proud on account of your beauty and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour, vs 17. He worshipped himself and he had the desire for greater power, glory, to be worshipped. The ambition to replace God led to him being cast out of heaven. Power can corrupt if the heart is not right. Adam & Eve believed a lie and disobeyed the command of what they could not eat because they came to believe they could know more, God was holding out on them. They lost their glory state and were cast out of the garden. 2 Sam 14 15 Absalom the son of David had position yet he used his position and power to set up the killing of his brother Amnon and promising immunity to those who did it. He was vain, jealous of his father and he wanted the power, prestige, honour and love of the people like his father, David had. He led a rebellion and usurp himself as a King and forced his father to flee. Eventually he was caught in a tree and killed.

Queen Vashti defiles the order of her husband the king and is divorced. Esther 1

Saul is king and being impatient and fearing the people he took the authority that only the priest Samuel had 1 Sam 13:8 Saul thought he was above Gods law and could do what he liked, he was King after all. But he is rebuked and told his Kingdom will not endure and God has given it to another because he has not kept the Lord's command. vs 14

3 People who knew their God ordained authority and used it in the right way

The prophets did what they were called to do and did not shrink back, they were obedient and not looking for popularity. It was for the people to hear the heart of God.

David was anointed 3x before he took the title of the King of Israel, he would not get out of timing even though he was encouraged to by others or as opportunity arose.

Jonathan had the birth right but he recognised the anointing and authority of God on David's life. He was a faithful friend of the David.

For the husband is head (kapto) of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church, himself the saviour of his body. Eph 5:22-29 the TPT uses the word leadership not head. In 1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, you in turn must treat your wives with tenderness, viewing them as feminine partners who deserve to be honoured, for they are co-heirs with you of the divine grace of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Jesus is our perfect example of how authority looks and is used. As a child he was aware of his calling which was evident at the age of 12, he honoured and supported his parents until the age of 30. The Son of God came to serve, a basin and a towel, doing everything by obedience and selfless love for humanity, and the love of his Father. In John 10:17-18 Jesus knew his authority which had been given by his Father over his own life, he had the authority to lay it down and to take it up again, I am the Good Shepherd. He laid down his authority in

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the Garden of Gethsemane, not to rescue himself but to redeem the fallen nature of creation to its rightful estate.

Father will use all things to give us opportunities to exercise the authority we have as his representatives, it is our responsibility to do it.

Job 22:28 'you shall also decide and decree a thing, and it shall be established for you: and the light of (Gods favour) shall shine on your ways.'

Gen 17:1-14 gives us the example. God makes a covenant with Abraham face to face and decrees his destiny and continues in the chapter giving him instructions.

In Rom 4:17 I have made you the father of many nations (He was appointed our father) in the sight of God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and speaks of the non-existent things that (he foretold and promised) as if they (already) existed,'

In the decade of Pey we are in a season where speaking is significant so with a heart and mind that is resolute that heaven is behind us lets use our authority with confidence in the spirit realm to bring heaven to earth.

One of the keys to knowing how we are doing is to check our attitude to the authority that is over us. Do we pray for our leaders? How well do I observe the road rules? Or do I have some of my own, especially the speed. What is my attitude to work and the boss and management? Am I standing with my church leaders? Am I paying my taxes and bill as I should? As parents do we have power over or for our children?

With authority comes responsibility, and with responsibility comes authority, it is and and and, Father has given us the free will choice whether we exercise our authority to enforce the victory of the cross until he returns.

Hope Ministries is doing just that, we have learnt about our authority from Is 61 and Luke 4, and the healing of our broken hearts, we have learnt to pray in His Name, the Tower were we have greater authority. We have the prayers from Ed Citronnelli that have given us effective prayer weapons to have authority over our lives. All this is good but the most important thing is our character, in the days ahead can he trust us with more. Faith, trust and obedience are essential as we develop humility, intimacy and authority and the outcome will be freedom at a personal and corporate level so we can touch and transform the community.

What thoughts or emotions stop us using our authority?

What ungodly belief am I believing? Amen.

To discover our subconscious beliefs we can do an exercise.

1. What happened when I first used my sovereignty as a person and it was negative?
2. What feelings did I have?
3. How did I respond and behave?
4. What did I believe about authority over me?

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5. From that belief created will be the foundation about you using your sovereignty the next time. Is it safe, will I be listened to, will I be validated, is it worth speaking out again.

1. When did I experience authority over me that was negative?

2. What feelings did I have?

3. What happened, how did I respond?

4. What did I come to believe about authority over me?

From that belief created, will be the response to authority in the future

We are a spirit having an earthy experience