

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

The garden of Eden was a peaceful paradise that God gave to man. He was to enjoy God's presence and reign over the creation.

*You have made him (man) to have dominion over the works of your hands;
You have put all things under his feet. - Psalm 8:6 NKJV*

*The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth he has given to man.
- Psalm 115:16 NIV*

That was the Creator's original plan - man under God and over creation. However, someone else had other plans. They had already brought rebellion against God's authority in heaven, and now they would do the same on earth. The sad news came back to heaven that the usurper had seized authority from Adam and Eve through deception. Man was now under creation and the devil that had fooled them. Paradise was lost.....at least for now. However, Satan would be the ultimate one who was deceived. He thought that he had defeated Jesus at the crucifixion, but he was in for a mighty surprise. Jesus had the authority to lay down his life and take it up again.

All things have been committed to me by my Father. - Matthew 13:27

*No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have
authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command
I received from my Father. - John 10:18*

Jesus walked in authority while on earth and died, rose again and ascended to the right hand of God because he walked in humility under the Father's mighty hand. One can only imagine the rejoicing in heaven when news came that Jesus had defeated the devil!

A HEROES WELCOME

There is often great joy and celebration when a soldier returns home, victorious from war. Family and friends are there to greet them on their arrival home. The same could be said for Olympic athletes who win in their particular sport. Their sacrifice of time and great effort is rewarded when they take the platform and a medal is placed around their neck. In other sports, the athletes are rewarded with money and trophies. Jesus also received a heroes welcome when he returned to heaven, because he had liberated mankind from the dominion of darkness by conquering the devil. He assumed his position of authority at the right hand of the Father. Jesus is described in the following.....

*Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality
with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form, he humbled himself and*

*became obedient to the point of death - even death
on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and gave him
a name that is above every name, so at the name of Jesus every knee
should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. - Philippians 2:6-11 NRSV*

Before Jesus returned to heaven, he gave final instructions to his disciples.

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore
go and make disciples of all nations (ethnos = ethnic groups).....
surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.
- Matthew 28:18,20 NIV*

This was an important revelation for the first Christian missionaries that Jesus was about to release into the world. It would also be true for those in all future generations. They would face danger, disease and despots, but Jesus assures them that he is with them to the ends of the earth and to the very end of the age. He tells his believers that they will face persecution, tribulation and trouble before he returns once more. They must persevere and endure to the end. - Matthew 24:9,13, 29-31; Revelation 13:9-10, 14:12. Just before the battle of Armageddon, he returns to rescue his bride.

***Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his
clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.
Then they gathered the kings together to that place that in Hebrew is called
Armageddon. - Revelation 16:15-16 NIV***

What is the most significant celebration to ever take place? It began the day that Jesus ascended to heaven after he left his disciples looking up into the clouds. They only saw Jesus leave from their earthly point of view. God gave Daniel a vision of the heavenly side of those clouds, hundreds of years before that.

***In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son
of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient
of days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory, and
sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language
worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not
pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.**
- Daniel 7:13-14*

The first sermon in the early church was a passionate, pointed, powerful one preached by Peter.

***.....God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.
Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the
promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.
For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,***

*The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I
make your enemies a footstool for your feet. - Acts 2:32-35*

Psalm 2 was read at the coronation of Israel's kings, but it is a prophecy about Jesus, the most anointed one to be king over all nations. Down through history, rulers and kings in the world have plotted in vain against God and his ways. Here is God's response.

The one enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath saying, I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill. I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: He said to me, you are my Son, today I have become your Father.

*Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession, you will rule them with an iron scepter.....
- Psalm 2:4-9 NIV*

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. - Hebrews 1:1-3 NIV

Throughout history, many kings have taken their thrones after much blood has been shed in the process of their enemies being defeated in battle. It was the same with Jesus, except for one thing, he shed his own blood to defeat Satan and the evil forces that were enemies of God and all of mankind. / Hebrews 7:26-29. When Jesus returned to heaven from earth there was a great celebration, a heroes welcome home. The Lamb has overcome! The Lamb has overcome! (Revelation 5).

Jesus is rewarded for his sacrifice and great victory over the world system, the flesh and the devil. He has been exalted to God's right hand where one day every knee will bow to him and declare that he is King, to the glory of God the Father. He has inherited all things, including rulership over the whole world. Also, he has received the greatest measure of joy to be given based on the Father's opinion of Him....

But about the Son he says, Your Throne O God will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. - Hebrews 1:8-9 NIV

It is not uncommon for people to scorn politicians and government. They are notorious for corruption and waste. Washington D.C. might as well mean District of Corruption. The lust for

power, privilege and personal prosperity is seductive. Any outsider who seeks to drain the swamp is vilified and vehemently opposed. Jesus came to earth to drain the religious swamp despite extreme opposition. He hated injustice and wickedness but loved righteousness, therefore He has been entrusted with all authority in heaven and on earth.

Some day the whole world will have to acknowledge that

JESUS CHRIST IS LORD AND KING