

Doctrinal Summary of
Satan & Company: The Temporary Authority Over the World System and Its Kingdoms

In Luke 4:6 Satan proclaims that he has been given authority over the kingdoms of the world.

“And the devil said to Him, ‘I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.’”

The word “domain” is translated from the Koine Greek word ἐξουσίαν (“ex-ou-si-ahn”) which literally means, “freedom to exercise authority over a delegated area without hindrance or interference from another, based on response.” It identifies delegated authority that is given to another and grants them the freedom to make unilateral decisions over the area which has been assigned or given to them as governor. Satan’s proclamation is that he will give to Jesus the freedom to govern over all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would bow down and worship him (cf. Luke 4:7). According to Satan, and with no contest from Jesus, Satan had the right to delegate such authority to Jesus because it had already been handed over to him.

The words “handed over” are translated from the Koine Greek word παραδέδοται (“pa-ra-de-do-tai”) which literally means, “it really has been acted upon in a completed action in the past with results that continue on to be given over to the power of another.” Satan had been handed the kingdoms of the world by God in a completed action that had already occurred prior to Satan’s temptation of Jesus. This resulted in Satan having the authority over the kingdoms of the world, an authority that continues today. Jesus identified him as such in John 14:30.

“I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me;”

The word “ruler” is translated from the Koine Greek word ἄρχων (“ar-chohn”) which literally means, “the first in a series or sequence of others, based on initiation.” Satan is the one who holds the pre-eminent position of authority over the world and the systems which characterize it. The world system is directed by him and its inhabitants are directly and indirectly deceived into agreement with his destruction of God’s standard for a replacement of his own derivation. These are called “sons of disobedience” in Ephesians 2:2 where Satan is also identified as the “prince of the power of the air” working in carnal individuals to accomplish his ultimate objective of overthrowing God.

The word “world” is translated from the Koine Greek word κόσμου (“kos-mou”) which literally means, “world system, based on initiation.” It refers to the world and the system of laws, policies, and principles that govern its operation. Thus, Satan has been given the authority over the way the world works including the collective thought process of the world’s inhabitants. He has both the wisdom (shrewdness) and authority to operate in this capacity over the world while God continues to allow him to have authority over the world system and its kingdoms. It is this same authority which gives him the right to delegate authority over the kingdoms of the world to those who satisfy his demand for worship. While Jesus rejected this demand, many humans in power today, deceived through the lust of their sinful natures, have been empowered in government as a result of their direct or indirect worship of Satan.

Satan’s authority over the world system and its kingdoms is temporary though, being eternally revoked from him starting with the millennial reign (cf. Rev. 20:1-3) and then continuing into eternity once he is cast into the lake of fire just prior to the Great White Throne Judgment (cf. Rev. 20:10).