

Luke 4:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Analysis

Satan's claim 'to whomsoever I will I give it' asserts authority over earthly kingdoms, a claim Jesus does not dispute. Scripture affirms Satan's current but temporary dominion as 'prince of this world' (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11). First John 5:19 states 'the whole world lieth in wickedness'—literally 'in the evil one.' Yet Reformed theology maintains God's ultimate sovereignty; Satan operates only by divine permission (Job 1-2). Satan offers Jesus what is already Christ's by right—Psalm 2:8 promises the Father will give the Son 'the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' The temptation is to grasp immediately what God has promised to give through appointed means. Philippians 2:6-11 contrasts Satan's usurpation with Christ's humble obedience: Jesus did not grasp at equality with God but humbled Himself, therefore God highly exalted Him.

Historical Context

Roman occupation of Judea made messianic expectations intensely political. Most first-century Jews anticipated a military-political Messiah who would liberate Israel from foreign domination and establish God's kingdom with Jerusalem as its capital. The Zealot movement advocated armed rebellion. Satan's offer plays directly into these expectations—immediate political power without the scandal of a crucified Messiah. The Dead Sea Scrolls reveal expectations of a conquering 'Son of God' who would judge the nations. Jesus's rejection of earthly power in favor of the cross would prove a 'stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles' (1

Corinthians 1:23). His kingdom is 'not of this world' (John 18:36), obtained not through Satan's gift but through redemptive suffering.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How should Christians understand Satan's real but limited authority over fallen creation?
2. What does Christ's rejection of political power teach about the nature of His kingdom?
3. In what ways do we try to claim God's promises without submitting to God's appointed means?

Interlinear Text

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτήν· ὁ διάβολος Σοὶ δίδωμι τὴν
And said it G3588 the devil thee I give G3588
G2532 G2036 G846 G1228 G4671 G1325

ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἀπασαν καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτήν· ὅτι
power G3778 All G3588 the glory it for
G1849 G537 G2532 G1391 G846 G3754

ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται καὶ ὅ ἐὰν θέλω δίδωμι
unto me that is delivered And to whomsoever I will I give
G1698 G3860 G2532 G3739 G1437 G2309 G1325

αὐτήν·

it
G846

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 2:2 (Parallel theme): Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

John 14:30 (Parallel theme): Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

1 John 5:19 (Evil): And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

John 12:31 (Parallel theme): Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

Revelation 13:7 (Parallel theme): And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

Revelation 13:2 (Parallel theme): And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Revelation 12:9 (Evil): And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

John 8:44 (Evil): Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

2 Corinthians 11:14 (Parallel theme): And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.