

THURSDAY**Limits and Rules**

Revelation 12:7–9 = War broke out in heaven = war of words = Satan trafficked lies against God; vs 9: ⁹So the great dragon was cast out, **that serpent of old**, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

- Garden of Eden = Satan used serpent as medium = deceived Eve
- **1 Timothy 2:14** Adam [first Adam] not deceived, but deliberately submitted to Satan = forfeiting his God-given rights
 - to rule operations/ jurisprudence of the planet.
 - Adam handed over his rights to Satan =

Romans 6:16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

- When Jesus was tempted / wilderness / 40 days = Satan offered to return authority over Earth to Him,
 - if Jesus would only worship / fallen angel **Luke 4:5–7**
- See thru/out Scripture = cosmic conflict =
 - between demonic rulers of darkness
 - God's kingdom of light/love
- God's govt operates by **power of love**
 - Satan governs by **love of power** /lies /motivated by desire for worship that only belongs to God

ABSG lesson opens – **QUOTE** The cosmic conflict is primarily a dispute over God's character, caused by the devil's slanderous allegations against God's goodness, justice, and government. It is a kind of cosmic covenant lawsuit. **Such a conflict cannot be settled by sheer power but, instead, requires demonstration.** If serious allegations are brought against a person in power, the best (and maybe only) way to defeat the allegations would be to allow for a free, fair, and open

investigation. If the allegations threaten the entire government (of love), they cannot simply be swept under the rug. **UNQUOTE**

- Although God does not need counsel from anyone to approve His decisions = we've seen Scripture indicates He graciously allows some of His created beings to come into His presence / suggest input to accomplish His will (Job 1:6; 1 Kings 22:19, Daniel 4:17).
- God= not authoritarian dictator = many accuse Him of being.
- Quite plausible / this council of beings / had input on allowing Satan short time on Earth **Rev 12:12**= prove /disprove his accusations
- However determined / obvious rules of engagement for this conflict
 - Are temporarily in place = short time
- Omnipotent God has agreed to these = morally bound/limited by

Mark 6:4–6 ⁴But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.” ⁵Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

- Jesus still had power to do mighty works
- People didn't come to Him = because of unbelief
- He honored boundaries He places around “free will”
- Divine action = related to faith/prayer
- **Mark 9:29** = So He said to them, “This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.”

ABSG QUOTE: In both these narratives, some limits or rules of engagement seem to be in place, dynamically related to things like faith and prayer. Elsewhere we see abundant evidence that prayer makes a difference in this world, opening up avenues for divine action that otherwise might

not be (morally) available. However, we should not make the mistake of thinking that faith and prayer are the only factors.

There are likely many other factors of which we might be unaware. This fits with what we've seen previously about rules of engagement. As we said, there are certain rules of engagement in the great controversy that limit what God can morally do, at least for now. As such, some evils may fall within the temporary domain of the kingdom of darkness.**UNQUOTE**

INTERCESSORY PRAYER = REMOVE GOD'S SELF-IMPOSED HANDCUFFS
OF LOVE = GIVE HIM MORAL PERMISSION TO RESPOND TO OUR
PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF OTHERS

- even though there are = many things we do not know
- we can trust = God **knows** what is best = **wants** what is best
- will bring an end to evil = usher in an eternity of bliss

Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

- Christ defeated Satan /Cross= proved / nature of self-sacrificing love
 - Paid penalty of our sins = Satisfy His own justice
- Last Adam [Jesus **1 Cor 15:45**] regained legal authority to rule world
- Defeated devil = will be cast into lake of fire = at end
- God will recreate Earth = restore to Garden of Eden

Revelation 21:3–4 ³And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴**And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.**