

Where is the battle waged between these two governments? | 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

The battle between God's government and Satan's government is waged in our minds. While the fight between good and evil has, and will continue to, involve physical dimensions, the true controversy rages in the minds of people. It is in our mind that we determine whom we will believe, serve, and obey. It is our mind that Satan's wants to control by force, and that God asks us to give to Him.

How can we live faithfully to God while surrounded by sin? | Ephesians 6:10-18

We must have on the right armor. For a Christian, this armor includes acceptance of Bible truth and trust in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. It means believing and sharing the gospel, and exercising faith especially when it seems hard to believe. It means that we recognize our need of God's power, wisdom, and protection, and that we pray for these things for ourselves and for others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Read Romans 3:23; Jeremiah 17:9; and Psalm 53:2-3. What has been sin's effect upon humanity? Can we change these effects on our own?**
2. **Read Joshua 24:15. Why doesn't God force us to serve Him? What does this reveal about God's character?**
3. **Read 1 John 5:19. Do you think God is restraining the power of sin and evil in this world? If so, why and for how long?**

MY RESPONSE

_____ **I recognize that sin has marred God's creation and threatens His plan for my life.**

_____ **I choose to accept God's perfect government in my life, and to live as a citizen of heaven.**

REFLECTION

1. What evidence do I have in my life that God is a good God, worthy of my trust and my worship?
2. How do I feel about the principles underlying God's government? Is this a place I would feel comfortable living?
3. What part of the armor of God do I feel a special need for today?

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MINISTRIES

REVELATION UNFOLDING

**RESCUE IS
AROUND THE CORNER**

STUDY GUIDE 2

**REVOLUTION
PROTESTS AND THE CAUSE OF SUFFERING**

The Bible says that God created our world as a perfect place, a beautiful planet without sin, suffering, or death. If this is true, then where did all of these curses come from? Is God somehow to blame for all the misery and pain we experience? What kind of God is the God of the Bible? These are important questions, and the Bible provides answers that reveal the origin of sin, and God's solution to it.

THE FIRST REVOLUTION

Where did the first revolution take place? | Revelation 12:7-9

The first revolution took place in heaven, when “the dragon,” or Satan, rebelled against God's government.

What was the objective of Satan's revolt? | Isaiah 14:12-14

Satan wanted to make changes in heaven's government, to remove God from His throne, and to seize divine power, authority, and worship.

Is God responsible for sin and evil? | Ezekiel 28:12-15

God created Lucifer perfect and placed him in a perfect environment beside heaven's throne. How sin could arise in God's perfect universe is appropriately called the “mystery of iniquity” (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

A PERFECT GOVERNMENT

What is heaven's government like? | Revelation 4

Revolutions on earth often happen in response to oppressive governments and abuses of power. Is this why Lucifer rebelled in heaven? What is God's government really like? Revelation 4 provides a fascinating glimpse into heaven's throne room, and reveals important characteristics about heaven's government :

- **Transparency.** A door is opened in heaven, and an angel invites him to witness what happens around God's throne (vs. 1).
- **Authority and power.** John sees a throne and One sitting on it in power and authority (vs. 2).
- **Mercy and grace.** A rainbow surrounds the throne (vs. 3), representing God's “everlasting covenant” (Genesis 9:12-17) of divine mercy and grace.
- **Upward mobility.** The 24 elders surrounding God's throne are clothed in the white raiment given to those who overcome sin (Revelation 3:5).
- **Divine law.** Thunder, lightning, voices, and lamps of fire proceed from the throne (vs. 5), the same things that issued from Mt. Sinai when God gave the 10 Commandments to Israel (Exodus 19:16, 18).

- **No corruption.** The creatures around God's throne continually praise Him with the words, “Holy, holy, holy” (vs. 8). God's government is pure, just, fair, and honest.
- **Welfare.** All of heaven worships God as the Creator and Sustainer of life (vss. 9-11). God provides for His creatures all that is necessary for life and happiness.

How many Powers rule in heaven? | Matthew 3:16-17

God is one (Deuteronomy 6:4-5), yet the Godhead includes three equal, eternal, and perfectly united Beings—God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They all appear in John's vision of the throne in Revelation 4:

1. **God the Father** (Revelation 4:2). God the Father is the source of all life and power (Gen. 1:1; Luke 22:69; Acts 3:15). He sits on the throne of the universe and, therefore, has all authority (Matt. 23:22).
2. **God the Son** (Revelation 5:5-6). God the Son reveals God the Father to humanity. He became a human being (Jesus Christ) to save sinful man. He ministered to us, died for us, and was raised to life again (Matt. 1:21-23; John 1:18; 14:8,9; Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Tim. 3:16).
3. **The Holy Spirit** (Revelation 4:5). God the Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus and directs worship toward Him (John 15:26; 16:13,14).

SHADOW EMPIRE

How did Lucifer's rebellion spread to Earth? | Genesis 3:1-5

Lucifer's rebellion spread to earth when he led Adam to disobey and distrust God. As a result, “death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12).

Where is Satan setting up his kingdom? | Ephesians 2:1-2

The Bible calls Satan the “prince” of this world, and ever since Adam's fall into sin, the devil has attempted to set up his government on earth. This “shadow empire” counterfeits heaven's government, and the Godhead, in many ways:

- **The dragon, or Satan, counterfeits God the Father.** Lucifer wanted to be like God in heaven. Like God the Father, the dragon has power, a seat, and authority (Revelation 13:1-2).
- **The “beast from the sea” in Revelation 13 counterfeits God the Son.** It sits on the dragon's throne, as Jesus sits on the Father's throne. It comes out of the water, as Jesus did at His baptism, it works signs and wonders, and is resurrected from a mortal wound, as Jesus did (Revelation 13:1-3).
- **The “beast from the earth” counterfeits the Holy Spirit.** It directs worship to the beast, as the Holy Spirit directs worship to Jesus Christ, and it makes fire “come down from heaven” as the Holy Spirit did on the day of Pentecost (Revelation 13:11-15).