

## **Does Satan get permission from God? 1of3**

Hi all,

I have received many emails asking if Satan goes to God to get permission to bring trials and tribulations into our lives. People ask about Job 1 where Satan and God had a discussion about the man Job. They also question Jesus's statement of Luke 22:31-32 that Satan desired to sift Peter like wheat.

### **Does Satan get permission from God to trouble us? (having direct access to do so?)**

This series is about that conversation between the devil and God, if it exists in our day, so we may understand the strategies of the devil.

### **Rule of Bible interpretation: We interpret the Old Testament through the eyes of the New**

Two main verses interest us in this discussion: James 1:13 and I Corinthians 10:13 in order.

"Let no man say when he is tempted, tested or tried that God is doing it to him. For God is not tempted by evil and neither does he tempt, test or try any man (with evil)." (The same Greek word is translated tempt, try, test.)

"There is no temptation, test, or trial that happens to you but what is common to everyone. But God (Father) is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted, tested, or tried beyond what you are able to handle. But will when the temptation, test, or trial comes, make a way of escape so you will be able to bear it."

### **These two passages are anchors to our understanding.**

First about James 1:13. It is a character trait of God for all eternity. God is not tested/tempted/tried by evil.

God tests, but not with evil, for He is not tempted with evil. Why is this? Because He doesn't have a physical body. Temptation requires a physical earth-body to be tempted. Jesus became human and was tempted, but the Father has never experienced what it is to be tired, hungry, to have to use the bathroom, sexual temptations, food temptations, situations requiring Him to choose between right and wrong - He is love, joy peace, and such - He has never been tempted.

So we look at the OT like Job 1 telling us of a conversation between Satan and God, understanding that whatever Satan says to try to stir God up against Job, has absolutely zero effect. He wasn't tempted in the least to bring evil to Job.

Now I Corinthians 10:13. It states God's role is that of protector and limiter to Satan's plans. This states the God who is never tempted with evil, will when a test, trial or temptation enters our lives, He limits what Satan can do AND will make a way of escape for us! (It is the same word 'temptation' here that is used in James 1:13, so we know the authors are talking about the same things)

### **Summary: God does not test us with evil, and He will step in to limit any test, trial, or temptation to that which we can handle, AND make a way of escape for us.**

When Barb and her best friend, Margaret, were 5 years old (summer 1963), their mothers would give them money and they would walk through their neighborhood to a store. It was a bit more than half a mile (1km). (Margaret is still a good friend)

Just on the other side of an intersection with stoplight was the store. In 1963 it had a soda fountain, booths for eating ice cream and sandwiches, and was run by 1 man, the owner. They would buy a sandwich, bag of chips, soft drink and money left over for a piece of candy. Today many would think that was foolish of their mother's to allow such regular walks for their daughters.

When Barb and I were married with young boys of our own, she was horrified to remember her mother had given her such freedom at 5 years old! She asked her how she could do that!

Her mom replied that first, it was training because they were going to have to walk to school for the first time in their lives starting that fall. Second, she told her she was never alone, for her mom had friends all along their route, each calling her as the girls passed by.

Suddenly Barb remembered the man running the store would most often be on the phone when they got to the stop light on the opposite side of the intersection. He would hang up and step outside the store to greet the girls and help them cross the busy street. The whole time she realized, her mother was watching, and had people assigned to guide them along their path, but unknown to the children.

This is similar to our training. The Father doesn't leave us, but has angels in His realm and people in our realm He uses to bring us along the way. He doesn't test us with evil. He does test us with decisions before us. Jesus asked The Rich Young Ruler to follow Him - decision. A man wanted to follow Jesus but first wanted to say goodbye to his family - decision. Martha got in strife with her sister Mary because she served while Mary sat - decision. That's how we grow.

But He never tests us with evil, but only guides us along the way, ready to step in to put limits or stop whatever the evil one has in mind, AND makes a way of escape.

Now about that conversation between Satan and God in Job 1 - for next week!  
Until then, blessings,  
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Does Satan get permission from God? 2of4

Hi all,  
I've changed this to a 4 part series rather than 3 parts. As a result we'll cover an area of the NT this week and get into Job next week. This lays a foundation for that.

**We've established that Satan is on the earth tempting, testing, trying people.**

He comes to steal, kill and destroy Jesus said. The Father is not tempted/tested/tried with evil, nor does He tempt/test/try with evil. He does however, put limits on what Satan can do, and make a way of escape for us. (John 10: 10, James 1: 13, I Corinthians 10: 13)

With this understanding that God is not tempted by evil it means He therefore doesn't grant him permission. He instead limits what Satan can do, it means Satan could do much more than he is allowed. Jesus said he comes "only to steal, kill, and destroy."

How often have we realized Satan could have killed us, but didn't? How many times have we thought if not for God we would be dead, in prison, or living some lost and sin filled life? Yes, Satan COULD have done and could even today do much more to us, but our Father has placed limits on Satan throughout our lives. He has always limited tests/trials/temptations at the level but not over the point we were able to handle them. AND always makes a way of escape.

Even in Matthew 24: 22 Jesus speaks of Him returning to cut those days short, for if allowed to continue, no one would survive. So even at the end He is limiting what Satan can do to mankind.

**Satan doesn't ask permission**

To suggest Satan comes to our Father to gain permission to tempt or try us, turns the Father into a perverted hypocrite. He can't say He loves us and nothing can separate us from Him and give us Christ in us on the one hand, and then coordinate with our mortal enemy to bring death and destruction into our lives on the other. No! He does not bless with the right and curse with the left!

The Father pours grace into our spirits, into our lives, protecting us from threats unknown to us. We never know this side of heaven about the drunk driver headed our way that was pulled over by a policeman just before he would have swerved into us. We never learn about the wet floor in the work bathroom that was dried by the janitor just before we wanted to use it and would have slipped and injured ourselves. How many thousands of times have we been spared, known only by our Father?

### **Jesus, Satan, and Peter's sifting**

Jesus said in Luke 22: 31-34: 'Simon, Simon, Satan has desired to sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for you that your faith not fail. And when you are converted, that you would strengthen your brethren.' Then Peter said, 'Lord, I'm ready to go with you to prison and to death.' And He said: "I tell you Peter, before the rooster crows you will have denied me three times.'

The word 'desire' means 'to fully hand over' (Peter). God isn't tempted to hand over Peter, nor by any desire for evil that Satan has. God limited Satan's involvement in Peter's life.

(There is a way however for people to turn themselves over to Satan at his will: Paul wrote in II Timothy 2: 25-26 people caught up in strife and opinions held to the point of strife. He said 'they are taken captive by Satan as his will...' What a horrible thing to do to oneself! Being in strife opens a person up to being taken captive by Satan at his will. Wow....run from strife!)

Look back on any challenge in life that brought you to the point of a major decision: A confrontation at work, a moral crisis where you found yourself doing something you swore you would never do. Something involving fear of man and the choice to admit a wrong doing, or to lie under pressure. Peter folded. But he recovered, never losing his faith in the Lord, but he denied knowing Him.

### **Peter was flawed from the start**

We see an unpredictable and unstable character, with any number of areas Satan might steal, kill, and/or destroy him. Jesus' response to knowing Satan's plans was to pray for Peter that his faith not fail, and prayer for his future, that he would afterwards, strengthen the brethren. Jesus did not see Peter's denials as a failure of his faith, but rather a character issue within Peter.

Jesus can't override his free will to make him not deny Him. What Jesus could do is pray for Peter, that through the sifting he might learn and grow from the experience.

### **In Acts 27:10 Paul is a prisoner of Rome on a ship,**

He tells them he perceived if they sailed they would lose the ship, the cargo, and their lives. That was a revelation of Satan's plan from the Father - very often the Father reveals Satan's plan and we out of ignorance, rebuke the Holy Spirit thinking because it is a negative it can't be from God.

But Paul perceived God was showing him they would lose the ship, cargo, and their lives if they continued. After much fasting and prayer on the storm-tossed seas, an angel stood by Paul and said that God had spared all the people, (276 of them) though they would still lose the cargo and ship. Paul also was instructed they would run aground on an island and they must stay with the ship until it starts to break up for all 276 to be spared. (There are always conditions to grace). (v21-31)

In this case, Satan tried to kill Paul, but God put limits: He gave all 276 their lives, AND gave instructions how to survive. Even better, once rescued, God healed a leader on the island and many got saved. How's that for limiting Satan's original plan to kill Paul!

**Look at those times:** Where did the enemy gain access into your life? Through friends? Through unwise decisions you had made? By other unwise decisions? How did he try to kill, steal, or destroy you - now look for the limitations God put on Satan. What do you see, what could have been?

What was the way of escape? Was it to repent? Was it to take counter measures? Was it to change habits or break off relationships?

Look at your life and you will see the same pattern outlined in I Corinthians 10: 13: An attack, a limitation placed on the attack, a way of escape. Look for the grace.

Next week, how Job opened the door to death, but God intervened several times to limit Satan. Until then, blessings,

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**Does Satan get permission from God? Job 3/4**

Hi all,

We've established the truths of I Corinthians 10:13 and James 1:13: God will not let us be tempted/tested/tryed above what we are able to handle. He also limits Satan AND makes a way of escape. God is not tempted with evil, so He does not tempt/test/try anyone with evil. This brings us to the man named Job.

Remember, we interpret the Old Testament through the eyes of the New Testament. Why? Because the NT is a higher revelation of the Father God. Paul wrote of this in I Corinthians 10:6 & 11, twice saying the things that happened to Israel in the OT were for examples for us. So we look at the Old through the eyes of the New.

When you were a child you saw specific events in your life through a child's eyes. But when you became an adult you saw those same events as an adult. That perspective causes a reinterpretation from when you were a child. Same with OT/NT. We see the OT through Jesus to those events.

### **God, Satan, and Job**

Job lived after Noah but before Abraham. We understand this due to his long life - after his trial he lived another 140 years. There was no priesthood, he made his own sacrifices to God. And the Lord appeared to him supernaturally, out of a whirlwind.

The book of Job is Hebrew poetry and is the oldest book in the Bible, therefore placed 1st with Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon. Moses wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy about 1400BC. Job is older than that, most believe it was written around 1800BC - 400 years older than Genesis was written. It's style of writing is that of similar Babylonian writings of that same time.

### **We are told in Job 1:1-3 he was the wealthiest man in the east.**

He had thousands of sheep, cattle, camels, donkeys and many employees. Camels were for desert caravans/import/export. Donkeys were city and short haul trucks (lorries.) He also had sheep (food/wool), cattle (meat/leather), crops and several other business interests.

In 29:1-17 we learn Job was a nobleman and their chief (v25), sitting at the gate of the city to govern. He was so esteemed young men ran from him, other nobles stood to their feet and became silent as he approached. He was in his own words, 'eyes to the blind and feet for the lame'. In 31:1 he said he had made a covenant with his eyes that he would not look on another woman. In that chapter he also says he invited the poor and hungry to eat with him, and clothed those in need with clothing of his own wool. He was a very good, wise, and generous man.

### **Fearful for his children's salvation**

Job 1:4-5 reveals he was so worried about his children's spiritual life, that he regularly made sacrifices to God on their behalf. This would be like a mom or dad so worried about their children's salvation they attended services regularly on their behalf, or gave money in the hope God would see and bring them to Him. He worried continually about their walk with God.

### **Job's emotional, mental, and physical conditions**

In 3:24-26 Job reveals: "My distress and crying has become my daily food. My groans pour out of me like water. The thing that I greatly feared has happened to me, and what I was afraid of happened. I have had no peace, no safety, I could not sleep, and turmoil has happened to me."

We know Job developed a skin condition, and we can see though he was very wealthy, he was a man of fear, worry, and stress. What if you are a modern doctor and Mr. Job comes to see you. He tells you his duties as Mayor, his wayward children and fears for them and his many businesses. He can't sleep, he is always in fear and worry, and he has what may be eczema, shingles, psoriasis, rosacea, boils, and/or other skin and stress related conditions.

As his doctor we would prescribe medicine for stress and sleep, and tell him to take time off, see a counselor to deal with the stresses and fears of life. That's what was going on in the natural.

**Spiritually speaking: Satan sees his fears and stress, which are open doors to attack him.**

With all that in the natural, behind the scenes Job 1:6 tells us Satan came before the Father, and that he had been wandering the earth. (v7). The terminology, 'presented themselves before the Lord', could suggest physically coming before Him.

In our day we often say, 'Let's go to the Lord in prayer' or 'Let's bring our burdens to the Lord', but no one believes we physically come before Him. So in this poetry, it is unclear whether this was literally a situation after Noah's flood where Satan was given access to the Father, or if it is like we say 'we are going before the Father'. We do know that since the cross Satan has no access to heaven - as per Ephesians 1:20-23, Colossians 2:14-16, Hebrews 9:11-15, 23-25 and so on.

**Satan was walking on the earth seeking whom he may devour.**

In Job 1:7 he admits this, which is consistent with I Peter 5:8 which states Satan wanders like a roaring lion looking for whom he may devour. Then the discussion turns to Job, and with each opportunity to kill Job, the Lord steps in to place limitations.

This is consistent with I Corinthians 10:13 that says when the test comes, he will limit that test AND make a way of escape. God is not tempted with evil, so this was purely an act of our good Father limiting what Satan did to Job. Job's way of escape was presented to him many times, even in his sleep the Lord tried to reach him. Finally, repentance became his way of escape.

**Proverbs 26:2 says; "...A curse does not come without a cause."**

Satan had open doors into Job's life - his children weren't walking with God so they were wide open to attack. Job could have suffered a heart attack due to stress and fear. There was a reason Satan attacked Job and his family, God's part was to limit what could be done to him.

Without going into further detail, 3 of Job's friends accused him of secret sin, but a 4th, Elihu, spoke rightly of God and Job. He said God had been trying to reach Job for some time, even in his sleep, but Job wouldn't listen. Job 33:14-30 and 36:1-12.

Elihu also told Job that God did not do this to him, in 37:23: "Concerning the Almighty, He is beyond our reach and mighty in power and judgement. He will not afflict."

**Elihu spoke rightly of God and Job**

He was the only one in the whole story God did not require to repent. Starting in chapter 38 of Job God demands Job repent: "Who is this who darkens counsel with foolish words? Stand like a man and I will demand of you!" The Lord asks Job if he was there at creation, did he create the eyes of an eagle to see so far off, and many other questions about nature and Job's presence or knowledge.

In Job 40:2 God asks: "...does Job instruct Me? Let him who accuses Me answer Me!" Job wisely repents, saying in v4: "I am vile. Who will answer you? I will lay my hand on my mouth." But God continues to demand of Job in v7: "Get dressed and face me like a man! Do you discredit my justice? Do you blame me to justify yourself?"

**Finally, when the Lord is done, Job answers in 42:1-6:**

"Who was it who spoke in ignorance? It was me. I abhor myself... I spoke of things I do not understand, foolishly, things beyond my knowledge, yet I spoke as though I knew... I've heard of you, but now I've seen you. I despise myself in sack cloth and ashes. (repentance)"

The final thought concerns 42:11, where his friends comforted Job for 'all the things the Lord brought upon Job.' The Hebrew word 'hebi' from the root 'bo', is in the permissive rather than causative. It says things the Lord allowed to happen to Job, not that He was the source of it, but allowed it. This is consistent again with the NT which says God doesn't test man with evil, and when the enemy comes in He places limits and makes a way of escape.

As Elihu told Job in so many words; 'God didn't do this to you, and He has tried to reach you even in your sleep, but you ignored him.' Job did repent, and his life was restored and blessed.

Next week how we open the door for the devil and how he uses our authority against us. Until then, blessings,  
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## **Does Satan get permission from God?**

Hi all,

If God acts only to restrain and limit Satan's efforts to steal, kill, and destroy us, how do we open the door for the attacks? We won't answer all questions by any means, but I can offer some chapter and verse on how we open ourselves to the enemy's attacks.

### **Sins against the body**

In I Corinthians 6:18 Paul states that fornication is a sin against the body. He says there are sins outside the body, and sins like fornication that are against the body. The basics of what he said is that sins against the body are manifest in the body.

In his day fornication (s\*x outside of marriage, including with pagan temple prostitutes) would have seen emotional turmoil, s\*xually transmitted disease, and so on. The sins against the body stay in the body.

The larger principle is seen in such things as smoking, over or under eating, working too much or too little, and other sins against the body. There are no miraculous healings in most cases as the person did it to him or herself. God will walk with them in treatment for the condition or disease they brought on themselves by sinning against their body, but rarely have I seen a miracle healing.

I believe it won't be until the age to come that we will learn the sins against the body we have inflicted upon ourselves by all our chemically enhanced foods.

Many today would blame the devil for what are really sins against the body. My mom died of emphysema from smoking 50 years. She loved the Lord, and it wasn't the devil that was doing it to her, she did it to herself.

The same could be said of the person 100 pounds overweight (45k) and their sore joints or feet - there is no healing for that which they did to themselves, making their joints and feet ache. God is just, rendering to each person what they deserve - what you sow is what you reap - that is only fair and just. He will walk with us through efforts to stop the sinning against the body, or walk with us through treatments, but He won't step in to heal instantly that which we've purposely done to our own body.

### **Prejudice - I Corinthians 11:17-34**

The church at Corinth started in Acts 18 with Jews, Greeks, and Romans all under one roof, meeting in the home of the Roman, Justus. Many had racial and social prejudices they held on to, to the point some would not have the communal meal with the others.

Paul asked if they despised the body of Christ? He told them how Jesus bled and was broken for us all, and "many are weak and sickly among you, and some have died early, not discerning the Lord's body. If we judge ourselves we won't be judged. But if we are judged it is of the Lord, so that we won't be condemned with the world." 11:28-32

These people developed what we might call 'weakened immune systems' to cause them to be 'weak and sickly' as Paul stated. He linked it to their prejudicial attitudes towards others. Again, this was to the point they would fellowship with each other, but not eat together. So their prejudice was front and center for all to see. This made them weak and sickly, and many had died as a result.

### **Strife - II Tim 2:23-26**

He told Timothy not to engage in foolish questions, speculations and such knowing they stir up strife. He said those in strife 'oppose themselves' and that 'God may give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth'. Note that in repentance it is also required that one acknowledges the truth - they were wrong in their attitude, opinion, and actions. For Paul wrote: "they are taken captive by Satan at his will." That's huge. A person in strife is captive of Satan and played with at his will.

**Forgiveness - II Corinthians 2:10-11:** "...for your sakes I forgave it lest Satan take advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices." (Devices: 'thoughts, purposes, mind')

**Married relations - I Corinthians 7:5:** Husbands and wives are not to refrain from s\*xual union except for certain agreed to designated times, "lest Satan take advantage of your lack of self-control." (Greek: 'akrasia'. From 'a', not, and 'kratos', prevail. (ie; lack of ability to prevail against your desires.)

**Complicated faith - II Corinthians 11:3-4:** "I'm afraid that Satan would deceive you away from the simplicity that is faith in Christ, that you would receive another gospel, another Jesus, another spirit."

If your faith has become complicated by formulas and information that if you do x God will do y, just stop. Return to the simplicity of your faith, give up the complicated gospel, the complicated Jesus, the complicated Spirit.

The reason for listing some of these passages is to show that more often than not we, not God, but we, open the doors for the devil to enter our lives. People get off on a path worried about God granting permission to Satan to test us, when New Testament reality shows more often than not, we are the ones who give Satan permission to enter into our lives.

### **Satan left Him for a season - Luke 4:13**

A final thought is this. Jesus was perfect in character, but was tempted body (turn stones into bread), soul (prove you are God's son by jumping off this tower), and spirit (worship me and I'll give you the world). We are just given the summary of the categories of His temptation, but He was 'tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin.'

Satan left the Perfect Man for a season - it means Satan doesn't need a reason to attack you, he just hates you for you are God's child. A demon can stir someone at work to be against you. The same for church or family. He does random attacks just because he hates us.

Even when the unprovoked attack comes, it is our good and loving Father who limits what Satan can do. When we perceive a demon is stirring someone against us, it is up to us to take authority over that spirit and its attack: "I command the spirit working through \_\_\_\_ to stop attacking me in the name of Jesus. I cast you out of this situation! Now heavenly Father, I ask you to put a buffer between us, send angels according to your will to protect me, and if possible with them, heal the relationship, thank you, in Jesus' name...." and things like that - use your authority to use the name!

"If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." John 14:9. He never brought evil to try to 'teach' someone...

New subject next week! Until then, blessings,  
John Fenn

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