

# BIBLE STUDIES ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6 vs 9 to 13

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Part 9.

## TEMPTATION

Matt 6 v 13 K.J.V.: *“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”*.

N.I.V.: *“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”*.

A.S.V.: *“And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”*.

In further pursuing the subject of ‘The Lord’s Prayer’ we will, in this study, be looking at the words in verse 13, and seeking to get a clear understanding of what Jesus actually meant when He said the disciples were to pray these words. It will be vital that we get a good understanding of this verse otherwise we will be led into some error relating to temptation.

In a book called ‘After This Manner, Pray’ by Mark Copeland, he states the following. I quote: *“We must begin our discussion of this petition of the Lord’s Prayer by endeavouring to understand just what temptation is all about. The need for such understanding is readily apparent when we consider that the word temptation has a narrower meaning in modern English than it did in 1611 when the King James translators provided us with the Authorised Version of the Bible. Today we use the word temptation to mean ‘Enticement’.”* (end of quote.)

If we take the words of James 1 v 13 KJV it says: *“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man”*.

And then James 1 v 14 KJV *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed”*. We see from these verses that the word is connected and related to evil. I do not believe that when Jesus said we were to pray the words: *“And lead us not into temptation”*. He was actually referring to God enticing us to commit something evil.

Thomas Watson in his book on the ‘Lord’s Prayer’ says this of God. *“He permits sin, but does not promote it. He who is an encourager of holiness cannot be a pattern of sin. God does not tempt to that which he has an antipathy. What King will tempt his subjects to break laws which he himself has established”*.

It is clear therefore that there has to be an explanation to what Jesus said, which does not leave us with the impression that God will entice us with things that would cause us to commit sin. We have to take a look at the words: *“And lead us not into temptation, but*

*deliver us from evil*” and understand them in the way Jesus meant us to. The word temptation has meanings in scripture other than being enticed to commit evil. For instance we read in Matt 4 v 1: *“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil”*.

Ryrie in his commentary says: “Satan’s intention in the temptation was to make Christ sin so as to thwart God’s plan for man’s redemption by disqualifying the Saviour. God’s purpose (note that the Spirit led Jesus to the test) was to **prove** His Son to be sinless and thus a worthy Saviour. It is clear that He was actually tempted; it is equally clear that He was sinless”. Notice the word **‘prove’** in these comments.

If God does lead or bring us to a point where we are tempted, it is not a temptation that motivates a desire to commit sin, but a test to prove our love and loyalty to Him. In that test the devil will try to take advantage of the situation, but it is always the purpose of God to lead us to good and not to evil. When Job was tested, it was God who permitted it, He didn’t prevent it, He never planned it, and even though He perceived that it would happen, yet he still allowed it. In this test which God permitted, He proved to Satan the loyalty of Job. During this test Satan tried by various means to entice Job to sin. His wife came during his crisis and said (Job 2 vs 9 & 10) *“Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die! He replied, you are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble? In all this, Job did not sin in what he said”*.

In Gen 22 vs 1 & 2 we read: *“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of”*.

The root meaning to the word **‘tempt’** in verse 1 is **‘to test; to prove, try’**. This was a very big test for Abraham, because God had made a covenant with Him, that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. God was testing him to see if he would be willing to give up the most precious thing in his life. Once God had seen the total trust of Abraham, He set him free from the test.

The apostle Peter in his first epistle chapter 1 v 7 says: *“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ”*. The word **‘trial’** here means **‘testing, trustworthiness, trial, trying’**. We can see that from these instances referred to in scripture, that there are periods of time, during our Christian life,

when we shall be allowed by God, to pass through some form of trial, or test of faith. This is not to entice us to evil, but to prove our loyalty and commitment. *“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”*, is a request to God not to let us be overpowered by the testing that we encounter.

I read this about Gods testing.

All Gods testings have a purpose  
Someday you will see the light.  
All He asks is that you trust Him.  
Walk by faith and not by sight.  
Do no fear when doubts beset you.  
Just remember God is near.  
He will never, never leave you.  
He will always, always hear.

I have referred to the temptations, which can come from God, which are in actual fact tests to prove our loyalty and trustworthiness. It will be of benefit now, if we look at the usual meaning of the word ‘temptation’ because the word is normally linked to something that comes from the devil. Temptation is usually linked to the attempt of Satan to get us to sin. There are two types of temptation:

### **1. TEMPTATIONS THAT COME FROM WITHIN**

James 1 vs 14 & 15 KJV: *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed, then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”*

The N.I.V. vs 14 & 15 says: *“But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed, then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death”*.

The Greek word for lust is **‘epithumia’, (ep-ee-thoo-mee'-ah)**, and means **‘a longing especially for what is forbidden, a desire, to lust after’**. This is something that comes from within a person; it is a desire, which gives energy and motivation to a passion. You can lust for things, which are not forbidden, because lust is a passion, which can occupy your time, and your talents. You can lust for fame, fashion, and finance. Your mind can be obsessed with many things, and as a result God is left out of your life.

The greatest temptations we have come from within ourselves. You can lead yourself into temptation because you can put yourself in place of danger by going to certain places and allowing your life to be shaped by the company you keep. In the book of Judges chapter 4 we read of Samson who put himself in danger by visiting Delilah. He could have saved himself a lot of trouble and pain, had he not allowed himself to be drawn away by what he saw and felt. It is very true that we place the blame on the devil, when in actual fact we are drawn away, or tempted, by our own desires. This was the case with Samson.

The problem we have is that the temptations we often have are a combination of that which is from within and:

## **2. THE TEMPTATIONS THAT COME FROM WITHOUT**

Let us read from Joshua 7 vs 19 to 21: *“And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it”*. How often it is that something outside of ourselves triggers something within us? Something is pleasing to the eye and we desire it. In Achans case it was a garment that captured his imagination, then his mind, then his heart, and once that happened he yielded to the temptation to take what was forbidden, and sinned as a result of it.

We read also of the occasion when David, as King, fell into sin because of this combination of temptation working both in him and outside him. In 2 Samuel 11 vs 2 to 4 it says: *“And it came to pass at eventide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her for she was purified from her uncleanness; and she returned unto her house”*.

We all have to acknowledge that what we see often affects how we feel. The problem lies in feeding what you see and what you feel.

Listen to what Thomas Watson says in ‘The Lord’s Prayer’ written in 1692. “Satan’s diligence in tempting is seen in this. If he gets the least advantage by temptation, he pursues

it to the uttermost. If his motion to sin begins to take, he follows it close and presses to the act of sin". If you are inclined towards sinning when tempted by the internal desires, or if something is stirred by what you have seen externally, then don't allow it to incubate, otherwise you will have great difficulty overcoming the temptation by your own strength.

The next request is: "*Deliver us from evil*".

The word '**deliver**' here implies '**someone who is caught up in a current and is being swept away by it**'. It means '**to be rescued, snatched out of**'. The picture we have is of a fast flowing river and someone being swept away, and in great danger. Evil is like a fast flowing river, picking up people and sweeping them towards inevitable destruction. Our prayer is, don't let us slip into the river of evil, and if we do deliver us from it. The word '**evil**' has to be looked, at because the words are: "*deliver us from evil*". There is something about evil we need to be delivered from. The word in the Greek is. '**poneros**', (**pon-ay-ros**) and means '**hurtful, evil in effect or influence, diseased, derelict, vicious, bad, evil, grievous, harm, lewd, malicious, wicked**'. What a catalogue of things attached to evil! There are three things about it I will highlight here, to give us an indication as to why we must pray this prayer. We have.

### **1. THE DANGER LYING IN THE VEHICLE OF SIN**

Sin is a dangerous vehicle. It is like a stick of dynamite; an explosive package; a missile or bomb. It has within it all hurtful and harmful things.

### **2. THE DESTRUCTION CAUSED BY THE IMPACT OF SIN**

It is not until sin has become effective that we begin to see the consequences of it. When it is activated within someone's life and allowed to explode, the end result is destruction. Whatever the size of the sin, the end result is always the same. The stick, the package, the missile, or the bomb, each has power in it to destroy.

### **3. THE DEVASTATION IN THE LIVES OF THOSE AFFECTED BY SIN**

The impact of evil goes beyond the actual devastation in the personal life of anyone caught up in evil, it touches the lives of many more. It is like an infectious disease, its virus affecting the innocent.

It is important for us to pray the words that Jesus told us to. “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*”.