

The Lord's Prayer 03: Biblical Principles 12-19

Petition 6: For the avoidance of Temptation

“And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one...”
(Matthew 6:13 NKJV)

“Don't allow us to be tempted. Instead, rescue us from the evil one.”
(God's Word Translation)

“Do not cause us to be tested; but save us from the Evil One.”
(International Children's Bible)

This petition in the prayer has two parts.

- (1) *“And do not lead us into temptation.” (NKJV)*
“Don't allow us to be tempted.” (GWT)
“Do not cause us to be tested.” (ICB)
- (2) *“But deliver us from the evil one...” NKJV*
“...rescue us from the evil one.” (GWT)
“but save us from the Evil One.” (ICB)

See the next section for a discussion of the second part of this

Temptation

God does not lead us into temptation. There is nothing in His nature that connects with evil. Such a thought is completely false. He does, however, in our times of temptation, allow us to be tested, so we can confront the evils and gain our victories. In each of our victories, we grow in our faith and confidence, both in the Lord and in our ability to overcome. We win the challenge. We glorify God and horrify the devil!

Verse 13 asks the Lord for help in avoiding the paths of evil. It implies a desire for an increase in those things that help us become more Christ-like and therefore, less vulnerable to temptations. We ask the Lord to help us to take a righteous, God-pleasing path. We speak a rejection of evil (the age-old problem of the human condition). We pray, knowing that our fallen natures leave us susceptible to temptations. We know the battleground is essentially the mind. We petition the Lord to sanctify us for the day, asking Him to keep us from falling into our temptations.

MATTHEW 6:13a:
The New Living
Translation

*“And don't let us
yield to temptation”*

Testing, in the midst of our temptations, can have various purposes. For example, the process helps us to grow. It builds our faith. It increase the strength of our character.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE
12.

**The battleground is
essentially in the mind.**

We can look at Verse 13 in two very different ways.

First, we can look at it as a plea not to ever be exposed to temptation, a petition not to have to enter the battle. In this case, we would be praying, “*Lord, keep us from ever being tempted.*” (Have you ever known anyone who has been spared from temptation? We all go through temptations.) James said to count it all joy when we endure such things.

Second, we can look at it as a petition to strengthen us when we do enter the battle with temptation. In this case, we are praying, “*Lord, don’t let us yield to temptation. Give us the grace and endurance to gain the victory, to receive the increase and get the promotion.*”

Our second meaning is the more realistic interpretation. Why would James say, “*Count in all joy when you fall into various trials.*” (James 1:2) the answer is found in the next verse.

(James 1:2-3 NKJV) “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials {3} knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.”

Testing always produces something (whether it is good or not). God’s design for the testing experience is that it will specifically produce patience. God is not the tempter. Here is how it works when we fail the test.

(James 1:13-15 NKJV) “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. {14} But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. {15} Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”

VERSE 13

“...God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”

Verse 13 gives us further assurance that our interpretation of the Lord’s Prayer speaks of the testing process and not God tempting us to sin.

VERSE 14

“...drawn away by his own desires and enticed.”

What draws us away? According to James, it is our own desires that draw us into the enticements of sin.

VERSE 15

“...desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.”

What do our desires give birth to? Here is how the process works.

1. We become pregnant with ungodly desires.
2. We nurture these desires until we bring them to life.
3. Then they bring us to death.

We cannot blame God for sin in our lives. God does not tempt us. However, He allows the temptations so we can pass our tests and gain the victories. If we are tempted and respond sinfully, we are responsible for embracing the temptations.

DEFINITIONS

Temptation is deception that presents a false promise for the purpose of denying what God has promised. (Faith in God is always the principle thing tested.)

Trials may be defined as opportunities for the proving and strengthening of our faith.

Results & Rewards of our trials:

- **Increased faith**
- **Increased blessings**
- **Promotion**

The Lord's prayer is a not a prayer that allows passivity. God expects us to do our parts as He does His part. Our parts are to resist our own sinful tendencies and the evil influence of the devil. As we do so, we draw near to the sanctifying influence of God.

(Hebrews 10:22 NKJV) "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

(James 4:8 NKJV) "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

13.

The Lord's Prayer does not allow for passivity. God expects us to do our part as He does His part.

The Three Temptations of Christ - All Common to Mankind

Our best example of being led into temptation is the greatest and most significant one that has ever been experienced - the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. The Scriptures reveal three temptations. As we look at how Jesus rejected them, we can learn four powerful principles for our own lives.

(Matthew 4:1-10 New Living Translation) "Then Jesus was led out into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted there by the Devil. {2} For forty days and forty nights he ate nothing and became very hungry. {3} Then the Devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, change these stones into loaves of bread." {4} But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People need more than bread for their life; they must feed on every word of God.'" {5} Then the Devil took him to Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, {6} and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, 'He orders his angels to protect you. And they will hold you with their hands to keep you from striking your foot on a stone.'" {7} Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say,

*‘Do not test the Lord your God.’” {8} Next the Devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him the nations of the world and all their glory. {9} **“I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will only kneel down and worship me.”** {10} **“Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God; serve only him.’”**”*

Temptation 1: The Temptation to turn Stones into Bread

This temptation: To rely upon our own abilities instead of trusting in God to be our provider for both natural and spiritual things - as revealed daily in His Word.

“If you are the Son of God, change these stones into loaves of bread.” (Verse 3 NLT)

Jesus’ reply:

“No! The Scriptures say, ‘People need more than bread for their life; they must feed on every word of God.’” (Verse 4 NLT)

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

14.

We need more than bread for our lives. We must feed on every word from God.

Temptation 2: The Temptation to put Pressure on God to Test Him for Our Advantage

This temptation: Not to honor the will of the Father - but to give our will priority over His and expect Him to submit to ours

“If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He orders his angels to protect you. And they will hold you with their hands to keep you from striking your foot on a stone.’” (Verse 6 NLT)

Jesus’ reply:

“Do not test the Lord your God.” (Verse 7 NLT)

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

15.

Never challenge or tempt the Lord so you can gain some advantage.

Temptation 3: The Temptation to worship Satan

This temptation: To worship anyone or anything of the god of this world - To replace the Father with whatever seems right to us. In doing so, we will actually worship the devil!

“I will give it all to you... if you will only kneel down and worship me.” (Verse 9 NLT)

Jesus’ reply:

“Get out of here, Satan... For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the Lord your God; serve only him.’” (Verse 10 NLT)

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

16.

Every trial or test is a test of our faithfulness. His faithfulness is never in question!

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

17.

Worship and serve God and Him only!

From the three temptations, we learn the following.

- Trust in God for everything and feed on His Word daily.
- Avoid being tempted to test the Lord for our advantage.
- Worship and serve God only.

“And do not lead us into temptation,”
(Matthew 6:13 NKJV)

Paraphrase

***And bring us through the trials and temptations that
would test our faithfulness to you,***

Petition 7: For Deliverance from the Evil One

“But deliver us from the evil one...”
(Matthew 6:13 - NKJV)¹

“...rescue us from the evil one.” (GWT)

In the original Greek language, the word for “evil one” or “evil” is “*poneros*.” It has one of two meanings. It can mean the one who has the essential and ultimate character of evil - “*the evil one*,” (whose name is Satan). It can also mean “*the essential character of evil*,” which refers to evil itself (all that is in opposition to God’s character and at enmity with His person.) This dual meaning accounts for the differences in the translations, above. So we can translate the petition to be either “*deliver us from the evil one*”... or “*deliver us from the essential character of evil*.”²

If we accept the interpretation of “*poneros*” as a reference to Satan, then this verse asks the Father to keep us from the intentions and activities of the devil. Without God’s intervention, we are no match for him. We know that Christ destroyed the authority of Satan through the victory of the cross. However, Satan retains the power to do great damage to those who do not trust in and submit to the Lord. So this first interpretation acknowledges the spiritual battle we fight daily against a fallen angel of absolute evil.

The second interpretation of “*poneros*” as “*the essential character of evil*” leaves us with a petition which asks for protection and/or escape from the consequences of our

¹ The balance of this verse - “*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen*” - will be discussed in the final section.

own human sinfulness and evil tendencies. Even in this interpretation, Satan is not taken out of the equation. He is still at work. The Apostle Paul recognized these sinful tendencies that arose within himself. He wrote,

(Romans 7:17-25 NKJV) "But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. {18} For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. {19} For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. {20} Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. {21} I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. {22} For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. {23} But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. {24} O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? {25} I thank God; through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

Jesus recognized this vulnerability in God's people. He prayed to the Father in the following manner.

(John 17:15 NKJV) "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one."

The Lord did not pray to totally shelter us from the evil one (or from the essential character of evil within us), but that we should be delivered from him (or it).

We are to expect the assault to come, but we are also to expect the Deliverer to come, as we petition Him daily! Referring to deliverance from the evil, A.W. Pink, says,

*"This is a prayer, first, for Divine illumination, so that we may be able to detect Satan's devices (II Corinthians 2:11)."*³

Then Pink gives these additional reasons for praying Matthew 6:13.

- *"For the strength to resist Satan's attacks"*
- *"To crucify our flesh - to control our evil desires"*
- *"For repentance when we do succumb."*
- *"That our souls are restored again to communion with God"*⁴

Note that the language of this section of the Lord's Prayer has been corporate, not singular. When we pray, we pray for ourselves and our brothers and sisters in the Lord. We pray that all who follow Christ be granted these same petitions.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

18.

We are to expect the assault to come, but we are also to expect the Deliverer to come, as we petition Him daily!

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE

19.

The Lord's Prayer is to be an unselfish one in which we pray for our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

³ Pink, P.126.

⁴ *ibid.*

“But deliver us from the evil one.”
(Matthew 6:13a NKJV (Second Thought))

Paraphrase

Set us free from the enslavement, devastation and destruction that come from our sinful natures and the evil works Satan brings to our lives.

Recap: Section II - The Good of His Children

“Give us this day our daily bread. {12} And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. {13a} And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.”

Paraphrase

- {11} Provide us with those things that will sustain our natural and physical needs through the day... And give us Your presence in our lives - today!***
- {12} And cancel the enormous debt we owe You, just as we willingly cancel and forgive every wrong and every debt owed to us by anyone.***
- {13a} And bring us through the trials and temptations that would test our faithfulness to You, as You set us free from the enslavement, devastation and destruction that come from our sinful natures and the evil works Satan brings to our lives.***