

CHAPTER FIVE

GOD LED JESUS TO THE DEVIL

Before Jesus was baptized, very few people in Israel knew him. Even the devil was very little bothered as Jesus kept a low profile at his parent's home. But the moment he was anointed with the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, everything changed. All darkness and evil began to shiver. Satan and all demons started trembling. The devil was so much afraid of the mighty power Jesus had just acquired. It is the same anointing of the Holy Spirit operating in the lives of many Christians that Satan seeks to extinguish today. Satan never slept as he launched a campaign of false accusations against Christ before God in heaven. Some of these accusations were:

"That so-called Son of yours will misuse your name and the authority you have given him"

"The so-called savior will be taken up by the pleasures, treasures and the kingdom of the world"

"He will put you to test"

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As it was in Job's case, God patiently listened to these accusations against Christ. He was confident that his Son would not let him down. The Father did not waste time defending his Son. This is the same confidence God has in all faithful Christians today. Finally God granted the devil permission to find for himself where Jesus belongs. God gave Satan permission to tempt Christ! If God did not spare his best friend Job, and if he did not spare his only precious and beloved son Jesus, how about us? God may permit the devil to tempt faithful Christians today. After God permitted Satan to tempt Jesus, we come to the most important part of this message. What happens next is very perplexing yet it is significant to the life of every Christian. Now observe this: As he prepared himself to tempt the Son of God, it was not the devil that went to Jesus. Rather it was God the Father who took Christ to the devil to be tempted!

Hear what the written Word of God says:

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil.

Matthew 4:1 NLT

[This was the sixth, out of the seven Scriptures the Lord presented in this vision].

The Amplified Bible puts this Scripture in a very clear form:

THEN JESUS was led [guided] by the [Holy] Spirit into the wilderness [desert] to be tempted [tested and tried] by the devil. Matthew 4:1 TAB

The original Greek translation of this Scripture shows that it was the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, who led Jesus to the devil to be tempted (Luke 4:1 confirms this). The Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity. Many times when Christians feel the Holy Spirit they say they sense the presence of God. They are right. The Holy Spirit is God. It is God who led Jesus to the devil to be tempted. Our Father does not tempt any one [James 1:13] but rather it is the devil that tempts or entices believers. However, just as God led Jesus to the devil, our Father may lead faithful Christians to Satan to be tempted. Let all those who are known by the Name of Jesus always reflect on Matthew 4:1 and realize that it was not Jesus' wish to go to the place of temptations in the wilderness. Rather it was our loving Father who led Jesus into the wilderness where the devil was already waiting with many temptations for him. Our Father had reasons for leading Jesus to the devil to be tempted. By the same reason he is still leading many faithful followers, without their knowledge, into situations of temptations and trials.

Below are some of the reasons why God may lead believers to the devil to be tempted:

1. As God had confidence in Christ, he has confidence in all faithful Christians.

When Satan presents himself in heaven with accusations against a believer, God has no way of proving to the devil that His children are blameless. If you read the book of Job Chapter 1 and 2, you will realize that when Satan presented himself in heaven with accusations against Job, God did not waste time trying to defend his faithful servant. He simply permitted Satan to go and prove for himself who Job was. The same thing happened to Jesus. God did not waste time trying to defend Christ, because he had all the trust in his Son. Today God has the same confidence in all

Christians. He knows we can prove to the devil that we love our Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit from the bottom of our hearts.

2. God wants to test our obedience to him.

Sometimes when God leads Christians to the devil to be tempted, he wants to test their obedience to him. This is exactly what he did with the first man on earth. Do you realize that God had all the ability to plant the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil elsewhere – far from Adam? Do you realize that in the Garden of Eden God had the ability to stop Satan from tempting Adam? God could have spoken one word and the serpent would have vanished or even perished. God permitted Satan to carry out this temptation to see if Adam would always obey his directives and remain faithful. God may allow tempting or trying situations in your life to see if you will always remain faithful to him. This is the reason why Jesus instructed us always to plead to the Father not to lead us into hard testing.

3. God wants to prove for himself if the accusations against us are true or not.

Before God makes judgment he wants to find out for himself whether the accusations he has heard about us are true or not, some of these accusations may be from the devil or from our fellow human beings. This is exactly what happened in the case of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Many accusations had been made against these two cities until God said:

I must go down and find out whether or not these accusations are true. Genesis 18: 20-21 GNB

God led these two cities into temptation by directing two angels to pose as male visitors into these cities. What happened at night to these two angels proved to God that the accusations he had heard about these two cities were actually true. Christians, especially those in ministry, should not disregard all the accusations being made by their enemies. As it was in the case of Job, God may permit Satan to tempt you in some of the very areas you are being accused of. Also, just as our Father used Job and Jesus to shame the devil, God may permit the temptations and trials in your life to prove to the world that you are innocent.

One important lesson we learn from the temptation of Jesus is that **no matter how much anointing you have on your life**, no matter how close you are to God, when the

Father allows Satan to tempt you, the devil many put you into very difficult tempting situations.

When Satan is permitted to tempt you, God is not looking for your defeat or failure. God is looking to see if you would glorify his name. All this depends on you because He has given you the power to do so. When Satan succeeds in tempting you, he rejoices over God. He tells God how right he was with his accusations against you. But when you succeed to overcome temptations, glory goes to God. Satan's accusations are proved wrong.

The moment you overcome temptation, something will happen in the supernatural:

- God's name will be glorified [Daniel 3:28-29]
- God will be pleased with you [Daniel 1:8-9]
- God will laugh at Satan [Isaiah 37:22, Psalm 37:13]
- Jesus will be filled with joy as he intercedes for you [Hebrews 7:25]
- Blessings will come your way [Prov. 3:33]
- God will send his angels to protect you [Ps. 91:11]
- The latter part of your life will be more blessed [Job 42:12]

Let all Christians know that when temptations come to them, it is our loving Father who has let it be. Satan may not tempt a child of God without permission from God. Know that the moment you accepted Christ, Satan started accusing you before God. Even at this moment he may be pleading to God that he sifts you as wheat. There are no limitations to what God does. When God allows Satan to tempt believers, he wants us to rely on him for power, wisdom and guidance, instead of trusting in our human abilities.

A sister falls

Recently, I was told of this sister in Christ who had progressed so much in business. She had started from humble beginnings and the Lord prospered her abundantly. This gave her more love and trust in God. She always moved with her Bible and attended Church regularly. One evening, after an unusually very busy day, she collected all the money from the day's sales and got into a car back home. It was a lot of money because she had almost sold everything in stock. On her way back home, robbers struck and grabbed her bag of money. They threw the Bible at her as they vanished. This sister was so shocked that she went into tears. She looked at the Bible and saw that it was useless in her life. I was told that she got hold of the Bible and left it at her church. She left Christ that day.

We need to have fixed faith in God. Faith that will not be shaken by negative circumstances. Faith that will stand trials and temptations. Now I want you to see what happened to the spiritual realm as this sister fell. She fell because she was tempted by the devil. This temptation was permitted by God. Satan went before God and stated accusing this sister.

“You say that she loves you and that you are pleased with her? Is it not because of that money you have given her? Take it away and you will see if she still loves you”.

God permitted Satan to carry out this temptation and the devil succeeded with the trial. God has no way to proving to Satan that we love him from the bottom of our hearts. God has trust in us therefore he tells the devil to go and prove for himself that we are true friends of God.

Another sister falls

This is another true story. There is this couple who loved God so much. Every now and then the man would ask his wife that they pray and repent lest they have sinned against God. They were always repenting on behalf of their sons and daughters. The man would never allow evil to come to their house. This couple's fear of God was known to great distances. This was Job and his wife as recorded in the Bible. Without their knowledge Satan accused Job before God in heaven and he was granted permission to tempt this innocent servant. God told Satan:

Very well, then everything he has is in your hands... Job 1:12

What followed was this:

All Job's 1000 oxen and 500 donkeys were stolen.

God's fire burnt all Job's 7,000 sheep.

Job's 3000 camels were stolen

Job's seven sons and three daughters were killed.

This was too much for Mrs. Job. She lost all her faith and trust in God. If only Job's wife had got the revelation of the accusations Satan has made against her husband before God, and she knew that Satan was the real enemy behind their trials. If only she knew the double blessing God had prepared if Job succeeded to remain faithful, probably she could have been patient and be a source of encouragement to her

loving husband. Meanwhile Job's wife became more restless and impatient. She denied the name of God and wanted Job to do the same. She told her husband,

"Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" Job 2:9

If Mrs. Job had known that God was carefully watching to see what she does, and if at all she had got a revelation of the reward God was preparing for Job, probably she would have resisted the devil. Glory would have gone to God.

The battle is for the faithful believers.

Let all Christians always read the book of Job and realize that the person God mentioned to Satan was blameless, faithful and always pleased God. This still continues today. Every time Satan presents himself in heaven, God mentions to him the names of his faithful children on earth.