

PATHWAY TO PEACE: BIBLE STUDY GUIDE – LESSON 5

Lesson 5: A Test of Loyalty

First John 4:16 says that “God is love.” God’s love is the foundation of His government, law, and creation. God’s love does not force loyalty or obedience. He desires all living beings that He created, from angels to human beings, to reflect His love and serve Him freely. As we learned in our previous lesson God is not responsible sin, misery, tragedy or death. God did not originally create life for it to be in pain, and misery and experience death. Satan is the person directly responsible for pain, misery, tragedy, and death. He openly rebelled against God, God's love for him, and God’s heavenly government. Satan then known as Lucifer caused all out war in heaven deceiving one third of the heavenly angels to be on his rebellious side. Because of their rebellion Satan and his angels cast out of heaven.

Lesson 5, “A Test of Loyalty” is a continuation of the previous study, “The Master of Disaster.” This lesson will reveal why God did not destroy the originator of sin, the master of disaster, Satan and his evil angels, immediately especially when He knew the horrible evil consequences of sin. Also, you are going to explore why we have the fatal disease of sin on this earth today. You are going to study about the greatest controversy known to man. The grand stage of this great controversy is this planet earth.

1. Why did God not destroy Satan and the fallen angels immediately after they openly sinned and rebelled against God’s love and His government?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Revelation 12:9; Revelation 12:10; Matthew 4:3 – 11; Matthew 12:22 – 29; Mark 14:55 - 65; Joshua 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21; Ruth 1:15 - 16; John 6:61 - 67

Write Bible Answer:

Remember from the previous study Lucifer rebelled and was cast out of heaven his named changed from Lucifer which means “light bearer” to Satan. It is obvious that Lucifer’s name change to Satan reflects his rebellious character that was displayed in Heaven. In **Revelation 12:9**, Satan means “adversary” in Greek. Satan also known as the Devil means “false accuser.” In **Matthew 4:3** Satan falsely accused Jesus of not being the son of God by saying, “If thou be the son of God..” In **Matthew 12:22 -24**, you see how Satan falsely accuses Jesus after Jesus heals a person who is blind, dumb and demon possessed. Working through the Pharisees, Satan accuses Jesus to be “Beelzebul the prince of the devils”. Jesus just sets someone free of blindness and the demon possession and Jesus is accused of being the devil. This is a total fabrication of the truth. In **Mark 14:55 - 65**, Satan used people to present false accusations against Christ in order to put Him to death. Jesus was innocent of all these false accusations. Seeing how Satan accused Christ here on earth, it is evident that in the war in heaven that Satan openly and falsely accused God and His government of many false things such as God is not love, He is a God of force, and very restrictive. These are all bold face lies and Bible makes this clear, but Satan tried to tarnish God’s lovingly reputation before the angels and all the other created worlds. Yes, believe it or not, Earth was not God’s only created world. **Hebrews 11:3** says that “³through faith we understand that the **worlds** were framed by the word of God.”

So think about it if God killed Satan and all of the fallen angels immediately, would you think the angels and other worlds would have thought of God? They probably would have thought that Satan was right in his many accusations, for example that God did not love them and forced them to worship Him not by choice. So it is evident that God put Satan's accusations to the test in order to totally redeem His reputation and character to all His created beings throughout all the worlds including heaven. In other words, this test tested each created being's freewill to worship God or Satan. It is evident that the test of loyalty began in heaven where the war began. Think about it, God did not force 2/3 of the angels to choose and serve him, because if He did 1/3 of the angels would have not been cast out of heaven with Satan. The 2/3 of the angels chose to be loyal to God out of their freewill and the 1/3 of the angels that were deceived by Satan freely chose to be loyal to Satan instead of God. God did not force either to make a decision for Him or against Him. All the angels each had a free will choice to choose God or Satan. The scriptures reveal that God gives all people the freedom of choice. When you go to Genesis chapter 2 you also see that Satan's accusations were put to the test on God's created worlds such as Earth in which a tree of knowledge of good and evil was placed in the midst of the Garden of Eden. It is evident that this tree was a test of loyalty.

2. What did God put in the middle of the Garden of Eden to test human's loyalty to God?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Genesis 2:8-9

Write Bible Answer:

God placed the first human created, Adam and Eve, in the Garden of Eden as their home. In Genesis 2:9 you can imagine this garden with all of the different types of trees that was adorned with beautiful green grass with its air filled with sweet fragrances of the many flowers that decorated Adam and Eve's first garden home. The trees that God made were not only beautiful to look at but it was full of various fruits that were for food, but in the garden God specifically made two types of special trees that were placed in the midst of the Garden of Eden. The tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. These two trees were set apart from the other millions of trees that God created. These two trees had a special function. God created millions of various types of trees which had fruit on them that was good for food to sustain life. Adam and Eve ate the food from these trees to maintain life, but food from the special tree of life according to **Genesis 3:22** God had endowed it with supernatural power to extend their life. In other words as long as Adam and Eve ate from the tree of life, they would have lived forever. The tree of life's fruit was an antidote for death. When they continually ate from this special tree of life, it expressed their loyalty and faith in God as their creator, sustainer and extender of their life. The second special tree, the tree of knowledge of good and evil also in the midst of the garden was there to test their loyalty to God. It was only a test.

3. What was God's explicit instruction to Adam and Eve concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil? What lessons can we learn here?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Genesis 2:16, 17; 1 John 3:4; James 2:10-11; Romans 13:8-10; Romans 6:23; James 4:17

Write Bible Answer:

God told Adam and Eve that they can eat from any of the millions of trees in the world except one, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God clearly warned them if anyone eats of the tree of knowledge of good and evil will **surely die**. Not half way die or kind of die, but surely, positively die. So the tree of knowledge of good and evil represented death as opposed the tree of life which represented life.

Now image God telling Adam and Eve about the war in heaven and Satan and his evil angels being cast out of heaven because of their sin and rebelliousness. But, why did God warn Adam and Eve that they would surely die if they ate from the forbidden tree? Because they would have violated God's law. They would have put something else before God. They would have in essence chosen Satan and believed his lies. It says in **1 John 3:4** "for sin is the transgression of the law (that's God's law). **James 2:10-11** and **Romans 13:8-10** makes it abundantly clear that God's law is His Ten Commandment law written with His own finger found in Exodus 20:3-17. **Romans 6:23** says that "the wages of sin is death." Sin is fatal and it destroys anyone or anything that's in its path. Sin is enmity with God. In other words sin hates God and God hates sin. Sin causes pain, misery and death. It self-destructs. We all see the results of sin all around us everyday. The fruit on the forbidden tree was not poisoned, physically harmless, but God explicitly instructed Adam and Eve not to eat from that tree because it was sat apart to test man's loyalty and obedience to God or Satan.

So when Satan chose to harden his heart and stick to his position and lies in heaven, he sinned and rebelled against God's law. His fate of death was sealed. So if Satan would have sinned alone, he would have died alone. Satan is very deceptive. He challenged the freedom of choice that God gives to all created beings. He challenged God's reputation. Satan's plan was to deceive others to believe and worship him instead of God and set up a new kingdom that opposes God. Satan's plan to establish his new kingdom was by deceiving one of God's created worlds to eat of the forbidden tree that was put there as a test. **James 4:17** says that "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin." So, if Satan can deceive someone in not doing God's explicit will, meaning that the person is **fully aware** of God's law, he knows that person would be in violation of God's law. He knows that they are disobedient and rebellious to God, in essence choosing and worshiping him instead of God.

4. **How did Satan deceive Adam and Eve in making a choice to eat from the forbidden tree and to go against God's explicit command not to? What lessons can we learn about communicating with the Satan?**

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Genesis 3:1 – 13; Genesis 3:22 and 24; Romans 5:12

Write Bible Answer:

Satan used a snake to talk to Eve. Snakes were not created with the ability to talk. It is obvious that Satan used the snake to catch Eve's attention when she was near the forbidden tree. Satan already knew that God warned Adam and Eve not to eat of the forbidden tree. He said, "hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden" in order to set Eve up for his cunning deception.

Eve actually responded to the snake! She knew God did not make snakes with the ability to talk. But it is obvious here that she was so intrigued by this beautiful talking snake that she decided to talk to the snake at the forbidden tree unaware of the voice behind the snake, Satan. All of Satan's deceptions are attractive and pleasing. When you are faced with a situation like Eve was, you better run run run away. Don't play with it. Once you play with the attractions of Satan you are on dangerous grounds like Eve was. And she made a fatal fatal fatal decision to have a conversation with this snake.

Satan challenged Eve's loyalty and faith in God's word. He told her if she would eat of the forbidden tree that she would not surely die. But God said that "ye shall surely die." It is apparent that Eve did not run away and catch on to Satan's deceptive plan. She obviously contemplated on Satan's lies of her being wise as a god knowing good and evil. Eve allowed Satan's lie to mess with her perfect mind. She began to look at herself with pride thinking that she can actually be like a god. She probably imagined the euphoric false feeling of wisdom she would get if she ate of the tree.

Sadly Eve ate of the forbidden tree. Caught up in the lies and herself she violated God's explicit command. Then Satan used Eve to deceive her husband, Adam and he also ate from the forbidden tree. Adam and Eve miserably failed the test of loyalty to God and gave their loyalty to Satan. Satan is the ultimate deceiver who even mix truth with lies in order to trap you into sin. Adam and Eve sinned against God. They disobeyed God by breaking His commandments. It is evident when you read Genesis 3:7-13, immediately after Adam ate of the fruit from the forbidden tree, there was no euphoric feeling of godly wisdom, there were instead thoughts and emotions that they had never felt before that flooded into their living souls. Their innocence turned in to guilt and shame. Their happiness turned into sadness. Their peace turned into chaos. Their freedom turned into captivity. **Romans 5:12** says, "12Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Through one man sin, death, pain, tragedy, and misery entered this world. It is sad but it is true. They, Adam and Eve were disloyal to God, because that were deceived and believed a lie. As a result of believing Satan's lies that had to be evicted from the beautiful Garden that God made for them according to **Genesis 3:22 and 24**. The Bible reveals, in Genesis 2:9 that the tree of life was in the midst of the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve was placed. According to **Genesis 3:22** the tree of life allows created beings to live forever. So Genesis 3:22 makes is clear that if Adam and Eve were allowed to live in the garden and eat of the tree of life after their sin, they would have had and their offspring the ability to forever. And sin would have been allowed exist eternally. Of course God would not want the disease of sin to live on forever.

Satan is a great deceiver and those are all lies. Don't believe him. Believe in God. Study God's Word and promises in the Bible for yourself. This is the ONLY antidote against Satan's lies. If Satan can deceive 1/3 of the angels in heaven and Adam and Eve who were made perfect and have seen and experience the God of heaven, what will he do with us who are marred with the results of sin? Satan and his demons are real. They are nothing to play with. Satan and his evil demons have made earth their residence. They are still inflicting pain and death on all of its inhabitants. But friend we must listen to what **2 Peter 5:8** says, "8Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." The same deceptive schemes that Satan used with Adam and Eve are still being employed today. But Friend, even though sin has gripped this planet, even though Satan has reap havoc and chaos on this planet, God did not abandon us and leave us here to die. There is good news. Amen. In **Genesis 3:15** God initiated a plan of hope for all who live on this earth. Next lesson we are going to study about this good news.