

The End of Our Testing

Matthew 6:13

That way

This way

Gary Hargrave

In the Lord's Prayer, the last verse reads, "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13). This idea of being delivered from evil is very important for us as believers. The Greek word for *temptation* can also be translated as "trial, testing, calamity, affliction." So *testing* is a better translation than *temptation* in this verse. Testing involves being held captive for the purpose of torment and torture; thus, we are able to pray to our Father, "Do not lead us into testing." Testing is not the same as spiritual warfare or satanic hindrance. Testing comes to a conclusion; it has a beginning, and it has an ending. We know that God allows testing, but it is satan who brings torment into it. We have lived in testing. And for that reason, we pray, "Lord, bring the end of the testing and deliver us from evil."



After the Testing God Himself Will Establish You

The Scriptures contain many examples of people who were tested for a period, and then their testing came to an end. We read in Genesis 22:1–2 that God tested Abraham by telling him to sacrifice his son Isaac. In his faithfulness, Abraham did not withhold Isaac from being sacrificed, so Abraham's testing came to an end (Genesis 22:10–12). Job was severely tested. He went through many tormenting tests, but the time came when the testing was finished. We read in Matthew 4 that Yeshua (Jesus) was tested. But there was a point at which He said, "Go, Satan!" and the testing ended (Matthew 4:10). Peter also went through testing, and that testing had a beginning and an ending (Luke 22:31–32). God tested Israel in the wilderness and that testing too had a beginning and an ending (Deuteronomy 8:2).

Every time you read about a testing in the Scriptures, you also see that it ends with a blessing and with God ministering to those who were tested. As Peter stated, “After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you” (1 Peter 5:10). At the end of Abraham’s testing, the angel of the Lord came to him (Genesis 22:15–18). At the end of Job’s testing, his eyes were opened to see God, and he received a double portion (Job 42:5–6, 10). At the end of Israel’s testing in the wilderness, they received the blessing of the land of Canaan (Joshua 1:1–4). When Yeshua was finished with His testing in the wilderness, the angels came and ministered to Him (Matthew 4:11). We know that Peter’s testing ended by the Day of Pentecost when he was filled with the Spirit, stood up with the eleven, and spoke a Word from God (Acts 2:14).



Testing Is Different Than Spiritual Warfare

Testing is different than spiritual warfare. For instance, we see that satan still came against Peter later in his ministry after he had been tested. There are several examples in the Scriptures of people coming against Peter to try to hinder or destroy him (Acts 4:1–3, 18–21, 5:17–20, 12:3–4). However, that was different than his testing. Yeshua said to Peter that satan had demanded permission to sift him like wheat (Luke 22:31). The implication in the original Greek is that Peter was turned over to the hands of satan to be tortured and tormented. That is the way testing is. According to Mark 1:12–13, we also see that the Spirit drove Yeshua into the wilderness where He was put into satan’s hands for testing. Do you see the difference? Testing involves being captured or imprisoned for torment and torture; spiritual warfare is different.

Satan complained to God concerning Job: “Why wouldn’t Job worship You? You have a hedge of protection all around him” (see Job 1:9–10). In other words, satan was walled off from Job. What happened in the testing was that Job, just like Peter, was put outside those walls of immunity and into satan’s atmosphere. After their testing, both of these men were delivered from the hands of the wicked one, and their walls of immunity were restored. Later the devil was still there attempting to destroy or hinder them through spiritual warfare, but satan was positioned outside the walls of God’s immunity.



Job Held Fast His Integrity

When someone is turned over to satan to be tested, it is tormenting and destructive (1Peter 5:8–9). You get the sense of that in Job 2:3 where we find the Lord saying to satan regarding Job, “And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.” We understand this capability in testing for satan to ruin and destroy what God has given us because that has been our experience. It is one thing for satan to remain outside the walls or hedges that God builds and attack us the way someone would attack a fort; that is spiritual warfare. It is completely different to be locked in a prison for satan to torture and torment us. The impact of the torment we have experienced is beyond our understanding, and it is not a result of spiritual warfare. It is the result of satan being released against us in a time of testing, and his purpose has been for our ruin and destruction.

It may seem repetitive to keep pointing out the difference between testing and spiritual warfare, but many have blended these two concepts together until in their thinking they are the same experience. We have felt the full force of satan turned loose against us, and we have called that spiritual warfare. But it has not been spiritual warfare; it has been testing. If we have been in

testing, and thus in the hands of satan, then we have the prerogative to pray, “Deliver us from evil.” Paul wrote that God has “rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Colossians 1:13). That is the concept. When we understand the difference between testing and spiritual warfare, then we recognize that testing has a beginning, and it has an ending. Therefore, I believe it is time for us to pray, “Deliver us from evil. Translate us out of this prison and into the Kingdom of Your beloved Son. Deliver us out of the evil one’s control and put us within the walls of immunity and protection of Your Kingdom.” We know that satan will rage against the Kingdom of God and that there will be spiritual warfare, but we want to be protected inside the walls of the fortress of God in that warfare.



Do Not Be Surprised at the Fiery Ordeal

This concept of testing became real to me during a conversation I had with a pastor. I realized that his situation and problems in his walk with God were not spiritual warfare. As he was talking about how difficult it was for him to break through into what he was seeking, I thought to myself, “I know this person. This man has hungered after the Lord. He has repented before God. He has sought the will of God for his life. He is determined to be a man of righteousness and to be a shepherd to God’s flock.” Yet year after year, I have watched his incapacity to experience what he was seeking. Thus, the Lord spoke to me, “This is the result of testing.” And He reminded me of what Peter had instructed:

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. (1 Peter 4:12–13)

Going back to Job 2:3, we read, “The LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job?

For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.” We know from reading the story that Job was not only perfect but according to God he was blameless and upright. That was God’s opinion of Job. I had that same experience while talking to this pastor. I thought, “This is an upright man. This is a righteous man. This is a man who has sought God.” Even more than this one individual, the Spirit was speaking to me about many Christian believers who are righteous and upright and are seeking the Lord. He reminded me that this experience of testing is a common ordeal throughout the whole Body of Christ where men and women are pressing in to walk blameless and in righteousness before the Lord.



God's Sons Are Righteous and Blameless

God is bringing forth His sons in the earth and just like Job there are no others like them. There is nothing else like what He is doing in the Body of Christ to raise up sons of God (Romans 8:19). Someone could point to all his or her problems and failures and say, “I am a destroyed person. Therefore, Christ must not be working in my life because if He were, my life would not be ruined.” When you are tested, you never look good. I know many of us have looked ruined and have lived under the condemnation of that perception. But I know the hearts of many people who have lived under that oppression. I know my heart. I know the heart of this pastor that I mentioned. It is a heart of integrity, a heart of righteousness, a heart to do the will of God, to seek the will of God, and to become the will of God. That is who we are! Anything else is a lie from satan. Any evidence of something else in our lives is the ruin caused by satan.

Instead, let us put things back where they belong. The ruin is Satan's and the righteousness is ours. The judgment is Satan's and the integrity is ours. The uprightness and the blamelessness are ours in Yeshua our Messiah. I know this is true for everyone throughout the Body of Christ who has experienced this testing. Together we reject the ruin brought by Satan because we are blameless and upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. Has any one of us ever done evil? Of course we have. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). But what do we do when we sin? We turn away from evil and we reject it. We fear God and we turn our hearts to Him. We repent before Him and draw the blood of Christ to cover our sin. We pray, "God, save us from our sin because we fear You; we love You, and we trust in Your salvation."



Condemnation Is Satan's Lie

God said of Job, "He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause" (Job 2:3). Many of us have also held onto a Word from God for many years—not by our own strength or ability but by sheer faith. For us it is impossible, but God spoke a Word, and He will fulfill that Word for us. We have held onto that Word. Therefore, we rebuke the lie that calls us unbelieving. We have not let go of the Word. We are not unbelievers. We have held onto the Word of God by pure faith in the midst of testings, torments, and tortures.

What many in the Body of Christ have been through is truly beyond people's ability to understand. We can read about Christ's temptation, but we cannot really grasp what that was like for Him. We cannot really understand Peter's torment. Imagine denying Yeshua at the very hour of the Lord's trial and crucifixion. What a torment Peter must have gone through! Yet at some point, God saw that he was an upright man and held fast his faith.

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:6-7)

Peter did not walk in condemnation. He walked in the grace of God as a man of God, as an apostle of God, and he performed the works of God. He came out of that time of testing freed from condemnation and without emotional scars that could have continued to torture him for the rest of his life. May you also be free from the condemnation that tries to follow you and speak to you all day long. You must say as Christ did, "Go, satan!" When Peter was free from his testing, he was free from the condemnation because the condemnation was satan's lie. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). Lord, loose us from the condemnation of satan's lie! Everything that satan has said to you about you and against you is brought into judgment, in the name of the Lord. We say, "Go, satan! Go from this family. Go from the Body of Christ, in the name of the Lord."



You Have Not Withheld Anything From God

We are blameless. We are upright. We are fearing God. We are a people who turn away from evil. We are a people who hold fast to the Word of God (1 Corinthians 15:1-2).

We are a people who walk before God in the integrity of Christ, despite the ruin that Satan has brought. We understand that there is a difference between the testings we have experienced and spiritual warfare. We also understand that the testing has a beginning, and it has an ending. We pray, “Lord, if You have not finished testing us, then finish it now!” Today we declare the end of our testing, in the name of the Lord, and we cry out, “Deliver us from evil.”

Like Abraham, we have not withheld anything from God.

But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” (Genesis 22:11–12)

Therefore, at some point the Father will say to us, “I know that you fear God and that you have not withheld anything from Me.” Abraham received Isaac back from God and the testing ended. God also knows that you fear Him and that you will not withhold anything of your life from Him, so the testing must end. At the end of Abraham’s testing, the angel came to minister to him. Likewise, as the restoration of the Lord comes to us, the angels will begin to minister. Therefore, we pray, “Lead us not into testing, but deliver us from evil.”



Put Your Word Within Our Hearts

Father, send Your angels to minister refreshing to Your people. Bless us so that our lives are able to fulfill Your Word rather than be ruined. Allow Your power and Your promises to come forth from Your people. Let us finally be able to be what is in our hearts to be, for You and for one another. Enable us to be what Your Word says that we are. Let us live as Christ lived on this earth: to do Your will, to speak Your Word, and to bring this age into Your Kingdom. We have lived under the absolute torment of not being able in our hearts to do Your will, but

we establish this teaching as the reality for our lives today. Lord, bless us to do Your will. Fulfill Your promise in Jeremiah:

“But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” (Jeremiah 31:33)

Lord, put Your Word in our hearts, and we will be able to live it, become it, and speak it. Amen.



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All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible 1995 (NASB1995).

ABOUT GARY HARGRAVE



GARY HARGRAVE has a passion for leading people into spiritual maturity. Gary effectively ministers the life-changing truth of God's Word through Bible teaching and prophetic revelation that emphasizes the Lordship of Christ.

Gary embraces the teachings and insights of the Hebrew Scriptures as the essential foundation of God's Kingdom and the roots of Christian faith.

By cultivating spiritual maturity in Christians, Gary is deeply committed to teaching and inspiring unity in the Body of Christ and between Christians and the Jewish people.

Throughout decades of ministry, Gary has worked closely with leaders in the Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant communities to build relationships based on commonality and understanding. He frequently leads study tours to Israel in the land of the Bible.

Gary is the host of a weekly podcast entitled *Growing In God* and is the founder of Shiloh University, an accredited online Bible college and seminary.

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For other insightful resources by Gary Hargrave, including podcasts, books, articles, videos, and other educational materials, please visit: www.HargraveMinistries.org.

ABOUT HARGRAVE MINISTRIES

The calling of the Lord upon this ministry is to lead people into spiritual maturity by revealing biblical truth. **Our passion is to see the Kingdom of God manifest on earth** as the Body of Christ grows in unity, power, and love.

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