

Doctrinal Summary of
Satan & Company-Their Ability to Influence Through Lies, Circumstances, and Man

Satan & Company are incapable of making decisions for man. Thus, they rely on a well-honed strategy of deception to dupe man into believing lies. In doing so, they utilize perversions of truth, circumstances, and even other people under their influence and control to entice individuals away from God and His world system. This is painfully evident in Genesis 3:6 where Satan successfully influenced the woman in the garden to disobey God by means of perversions of truth.

“When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.”

The word “took” is translated from the Biblical Hebrew תָּקַח (“tiq-qach”), which more literally means, “she performed the incomplete action to take something for her own use or possession by means of her own ability.” Satan & Company did not inhabit or possess the woman in the garden, but rather influenced her to perform the action that Satan desired her to perform. Her decision making was influenced by the lies of the serpent, but she made the decision, both to believe the lies of Satan, and to take the fruit. While Satan used perversions of truth successfully to influence the woman in the garden, he attempted to use circumstances to influence Job, an upright man who feared God and turned away from evil (cf. Job 1:1).

Satan’s objective was to cause Job to curse God (cf. Job 1:9-11). The means by which he sought to accomplish that objective was an onslaught of terrible tragedies reported to Job in immediate succession. First, Satan used Sabeans to steal Job’s oxen and donkeys and kill the servants watching them. Second, Satan used fire from heaven to destroy Job’s sheep and the servants watching over them. Third, Satan used a great wind to collapse the house in which Job’s sons and daughters were eating and drinking (cf. Job 1:13-19). Fourth, Satan used boils, skin sores akin to inflamed ulcers, to bring about misery and suffering on his body. Yet, Satan’s use of circumstances failed to influence Job to curse God. Job indeed feared God, not even hearkening to the voice of his wife (cf. Job 2:9). It should be noted that none of the circumstances with which Satan attacked Job were in his personal authority to carry out; God granted him permission (cf. Job 1:12; 2:6) knowing full well the integrity of Job (cf. Job 2:3). While Satan failed to influence Job through tragic circumstances, he was successful in influencing Pilate through those under the control of his thought process, the chief priests and elders of Israel.

In Matthew 27:11-32 Pilate is influenced by Satan to crucify the Son of God. While seemingly a successful attack of Satan against God and His kingdom, this became the greatest misstep of Satan’s military campaign. In the dialogue between Pilate and chief priests and elders of Israel Pilate is worn down to the point of willingly permitting the Jews to crucify Jesus despite finding no guilt in Him (cf. Jn. 19:38). Here too, Pilate did not hearken to the voice of his wife (although, on the one hand it may have been a good time to do so; cf. Matt. 27:19). He did, however, hearken to the raucous voice of the chief priests, elders, and the people that had been persuaded by the chief priests to demand that Pilate, “Crucify Him!” (cf. Matt. 27:20, 22-23). Satan had long worked in the thought process of the chief priests and elders of Israel to bring them under His control through their sinful nature. It was that control which allowed Satan to utilize man, even God’s chosen people and nation, to influence Pilate into consenting to the death of Jesus Christ by his own free will.