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## How Satan Gains Access to Work in our Lives

### Part 10: Violence and Mistreatment

In this issue we will examine how the mistreatment of another person whom God has created provides a foothold for Satan in the offender's life. Acts falling under this broad umbrella of abuse include overt physical violence, such as assault, battery, destruction, captivity, and theft, as well as hostile mental and verbal acts, such as slander, cursing, strife, conspiracy, and all forms of deception, oppression, and injustice (e.g., Ps. 10:7-10; 36:3-4; 64:2-6; Ezek. 22:29; Micah 6:10-12).

Violence has its origin in Satan (Ezek. 28:16). Therefore, anyone who exhibits violence towards another person gives evidence that Satan has already gained a foothold in his life (Mat. 8:28 is an extreme case). The manner in which this foothold is established is not unique but applicable to a broad range of other spiritual bondages as well.

Generationally, Satan gained the right to take dominion over mankind (Rom. 6:16; 7:14; Col. 1:13) at the Fall. As a result of this victory he was able to establish what has come to be known as the "flesh" in the very heart of man (Jer. 17:9; Mat. 15:19). This part of our being carries corrupted desires for self-gratification that lead us away from God and into Satan's cleverly laid snares (Rom. 7:5, 18; 8:7-8; Eph. 2:3; James 1:14-15; 1 Peter 2:11). Because Satan could not take away man's free will, however, we still have the ability to choose whether or not to follow the ungodly desires of the Satan-tuned flesh stirring within us (Gal. 5:16). Scripture reflects the internal struggles between good and evil that mankind has wrestled with since our earliest ancestors.

Within the context of what is ultimately a competitive battle between God and Satan for the hearts of mankind, God made His will known through the Law, which contained a host of detailed commandments prohibiting the plotting and executing of violence against the innocent (Ex. 22:21-22; 23:1-2; Lev. 19:11, 13-14, 16, 33, 35; 25:14; Jer. 22:3; Ezek. 45:9-10ff). He also clearly warned that those who did not obey His commands would be cursed (Deut. 27:17-19, 24-26; Zech. 5:3-4).

In the New Testament Jesus simplified the Old Testament legal code with the command to love your neighbor as yourself (Gal. 5:14). Love does no wrong to one's neighbor and thereby fulfills all the Old Testament commandments (Rom. 13:10).

Jesus also took all curses upon Himself at the Cross (Gal. 3:13), providing the means for them to be removed from everyone who is willing to apply His shed blood to the specific sins, generational or personal, that have brought curses into their lives. Those who do not avail themselves of this opportunity, however, will continue to live under the curses they have reaped through their mistreatment of others.

After His resurrection Jesus made another major change in the dynamics of man's struggle against evil when He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell every believer (Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 1:22; James 4:5). This divine

infusion (1 Cor. 6:17) serves as a powerful counterbalance to the internal drive of the flesh (Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:16-17). Even so, man can still choose to become a friend of the world and a companion of sinners (Gal. 6:8; James 4:4). Anyone who does so, however, puts himself on a dangerous path to becoming complicit with their ways (Ps. 1:1). As soon as he crosses the line to personal participation in plots or acts that disparage or disregard the rights of another person, that is when, I believe, God's curse comes against him.

While most of the curses mentioned in Scripture come from God rather than Satan (Micah 2:1-5; 6:10-16; etc.), God may use demons or demonized people to carry out those curses (Judges 9:23). Thus, He seemingly not only allows a spiritual door to be opened in the person's life that will allow for demonic attachment, but He actually sends demons on assignment to enter that door and bring about a specific result in the person's life.

When repentance does not occur and the person continues to involve himself with further acts of violence and injustice, the foothold that has been established can grow, potentially developing into a stronghold involving multiple demons and higher-level cosmic beings as well. Such a situation can only be reversed by God in accordance with the will of the person (Luke 11:21-22).