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## How Satan Gains Access to Work in our Lives Part 5: Rebellion

As we continue our study of the avenues that provide open doors for Satan in our lives, I remind you again of the great competition occurring in the heavenlies between God and Satan for the devotion of mankind. This is the context within which we must understand and weigh both our actions and the inner contemplations of our hearts. No neutral territory exists in the God/Satan rivalry. A step away from one is always a step towards the other. God created us to be His perfect counterparts in love. He paid the supreme “bride price” to redeem us from Satan’s hand after the Fall and has showered us with innumerable, great, and awesome spiritual blessings (John 10:10; Eph. 1:3; 2 Peter 1:4). As a jealous lover, He desires absolute loyalty to Him in every aspect of our lives (Ex. 20:4-5; Jer. 11:3-4; Mat. 28:19-20) and is deeply grieved when we respond to Satan’s flirtations and take steps in his direction (Isa. 63:10; Ezek. 6:9).

In this issue we will look at the sin of **rebellion**, which represents a willful disobedience or turning away from God (Isa. 59:12-13; Jer. 5:22-24; Neh. 9:26) or a failure to believe Him or His promises or to treat Him with reverence (Deut. 9:23; 1 Sam. 12:14). It is most overtly evident when one turns from serving God to another false deity, such as the ancient Israelites did over and over again both before and after they entered the Promised Land (e.g., Ex. 32:1-4; Josh. 22:16; Judges 2:11-13). Perhaps more subtle is the rebellion of the person who places his own will above God’s will (Isa. 65:2), as Moses did when he struck the rock in the wilderness (Num 20:9-12), or gives greater homage to a human role-model than to God, as the Corinthian believers did (1 Cor. 1:12-13). Any of these actions represents a yielding to the flesh (Rom. 8:7), demonically-inspired lies (James 3:15), or other forms of temptation coming from within Satan’s world system (John 14:30) and puts out a “welcome mat” to his family of evil beings.

God sees rebellion as such a serious betrayal of one’s loyalty and commitment to Him that He equates it with the sins of divination and idolatry (1 Samuel 15:23), which definitely involve collusion with the evil spiritual realm. Since rebellion is putting one’s own self, another person, or a spiritual being in the place that God wants to occupy, the connection to idolatry is certainly clear.

When God instructs us, above anything else, to love Him with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our might (Deut. 6:4-5), He truly means *all* of us *all* of the time. One momentary lapse in Moses’ life caused him to forfeit being able to enter the Promised Land (Num. 20:12). David also suffered severe losses in his life because of his brief period of rebellion and giving in to the lusts of his flesh (2 Sam 12:9-14).

In the case of the nation of Israel, Scripture clearly speaks of the many curses they brought upon themselves because of their great and repeated rebellion against God (Deut. 28:15ff; Jer. 11:3-4; Dan. 9:9-11). These curses were probably carried out by evil beings assigned by God Himself to afflict both the nation and the individuals in it (cf., 1 Kings 22:19-23). We have no reason to believe that God responds to rebellion any differently today (Heb. 13:8).

As serious an offense as rebellion is, it does not supersede God’s compassion and willingness to forgive when repentance is made, however. While some of the judgments, losses, or consequences incurred may

remain, God eagerly welcomes the repentant rebel back into a place of fellowship with Himself and even to a place of blessing and prosperity (Deut. 30:1-5; Ps. 107:10-15; Luke 15:11-24). Regardless of how many times the Israelites repeated their cycles of rebellion, God always extended His compassion to them when they turned their hearts back to Him (Neh. 9:26-31). David was restored to a place of great honor, blessing, and service in His kingdom (Ps. 32:5; 2 Sam. 7:8-16) and is remembered as Israel's greatest king. Truly, God is our model of perfect love and supreme example of a forgiving heart.