

Satan's Prayer by [John T Polk II](#)

All Scriptures and comments are based on the **New King James Version**, unless otherwise noted.

And the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon! Indeed, **Satan has asked for you**, [emphasis mine, **jtpII**] that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.' But he said to Him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.' Then He said, 'I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me' (**Luke 22:31-34**).

The Devil's actual words are only recorded 3 times in the Bible: (1) **Genesis 3:1-5**; (2) **Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6**; (3) **Matthew 4:1-11** (& parallels). This "prayer" of the Devil for Peter is unrecorded, but is duly noted by Jesus. When Jesus repeats a name, He shows love and concern (**Luke 10:41; Acts 9:4**). Because Jesus' kingdom was established through the Apostles, they needed to know how the Devil would be after them (**Luke 22:28-30**). Understanding "The Devil's Prayer," and knowing Jesus also prays for His disciples, should encourage all Christians today.

The Devil's Prayer – "Satan has asked for you"

To Whom does Satan pray? Only God is in complete control of heaven and earth, so it must be to God.

For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, And the wild beasts of the field are Mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all its fullness" (**Psalms 50:10-12**).

There is no other god but God (**Isaiah 45:4-7**).

Jesus Christ demonstrated power over the Devil (**John 12:31-33**) and his demons (**Mark 5:1-13**). For Satan to tempt Peter, or any disciple of Christ, he must make his request known to God! Job's temptation came because Satan's request was granted, but with Divine limitations (**Job 1 & 2**). NONE are tempted by God to cause them to sin (**James 1:13-15**), but only to challenge them to overcome and be stronger (**I Corinthians 10:13**). Hence we should never forget that God rules and only disciplines His children but does not destroy them (**Hebrews 12:3-11**).

Why Does He Pray? He is powerfully described as a roaring, devouring lion (**I Peter 5:8**), the "Prince of the power of the air" (**Ephesians 2:2**), and with the ability to transform himself into an angel of light (**2 Corinthians 11:14**), in order to alert saints to the danger he can cause. But Satan's actual power has been "bound" by

Jesus Christ, who has "cast out" the ruler of this world (**John 12:31**), destroyed the Devil's power to rule by fear of death (**Hebrews 2:14-16**), and destroyed the "works of the devil" (**I John 3:8**) by his death and resurrection, as God promised (**Genesis 3:15**).

For what does he pray? He prays that he may have the disciples, one at a time. Satan does not make public pronouncement to the disciples or a church that he is after them. Rather he sifts, so that, like wheat, each grain sheds its husk individually. Satan had already won over Judas Iscariot (**Luke 22:3**), and now he requested Peter. Maybe he has requested you or me for permission to do his evil work. He is constantly seeking to separate Christians from one another by complaints, criticisms, disappointments, oppressive worldly concerns, and misrepresented Bible teaching. Satan can only request, but not demand this of God, and God determines the extent of our challenge.

Jesus' Prayer – "I have prayed for you"

Jesus' prayer was not for the expected things, that Peter would: (1) be so strong as to not be tempted; (2) be protected so as to not be tempted (like some who have fabricated a "once-saved, always saved" doctrine); (3) or for God to send a "guardian angel" to prevent him from falling!

But rather, *Jesus' prayer was for:*

1. *Peter's faith not to "fail."* "Fail" here means, "cease, stop, end" (**CF Luke 16:9; Hebrews 1:12**). Jesus' prayer was that once sin occurred, Peter would hold onto his faith AND that Peter would return. What love and confidence Jesus shows in a fallen disciple! How this needs to be taught today to those quick to "withdraw fellowship" from fallen and erring brethren, and those who refuse to forgive brethren's sins and trust them again!
2. *Peter (and all recovered disciples of Christ!) to be used to "strengthen your brethren" because of the experience of growing stronger* (**CF Hebrews 5:14**). It is by recognizing one's own "plank" that the eye can be focused to help a brother with his "speck" (**Matthew 7:1-5**). Peter's overconfidence was soon shattered by his denials of Christ (**Luke 22:54-62**). Jesus' prayer was answered when, after Peter's denials of Jesus,

The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.' Then Peter went out and wept bitterly (**Luke 22:61-62**).

Christians will sin (**I John 1:5-10**) and Jesus Christ is our only hope to return (**I John 2:1-2**). It is frustrating to know the Lord was/is right about us and depressing to realize that we don't know our own weaknesses as well as He does. It is penetrating to know the Lord sees us in our failures and humbling to know the Lord still wants us to serve Him.

There are two forces over each one of us at all times: God & Satan, and to whom we yield ourselves is determined by our own hearts (**Romans 6:16-18**). Yielding to Satan does not "undo" us as Christians (**Acts 8:13, 20-24**), but should rather cause us to redouble our resolve to serve Christ, as it did for Peter.

Right now, many must decide whom they will hear to be saved (**Mark 16:15-16**).
Prayers are in Heaven for you – what will you do?

-----John T. Polk II