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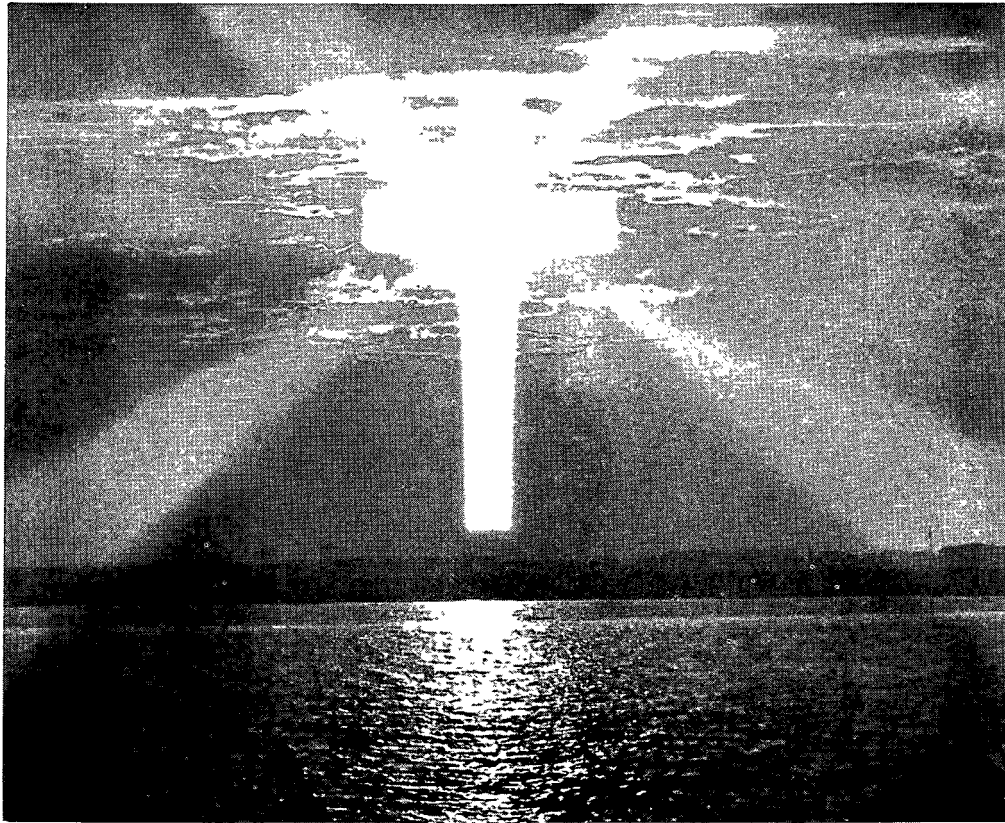
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## THE MASTER LECTURES

MAYAN REVELATION NUMBER 126

LESSON NUMBER SIX

IN

THE LORD'S PRAYER SERIES

**Lead Us Not Into Temptation  
But Deliver Us From Evil**

**Prayer**

**The Setting**

**What Is Temptation?**

**Would God Lead Us Into Temptation?**

**Strength Through Testing**

**Deliver Us From Evil**

**What Is Evil?**

**The Power To Decide**

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Beloved Centurion:

We are drawing close to the end of this wonderful series. There will be one more lesson to follow after this one.

The meaning of "LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION", has been a very controversial subject. It has been discussed by ministers of the gospel, by Bible students, by the layman. The principal cause of the controversy has been the phrase, "Lead us not into temptation ..." Many do not think that God would lead them deliberately into temptation.

Your instructor firmly believes that these words do not mean, "Lead us not into temptation..." as we might interpret them, but rather the meaning is, "Lead us away from temptation."

First of all, what is temptation? We are often tempted, even in our thoughts. So many of us think we are strong and we subject ourselves to temptation. You have often heard the adage, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread", and that is what a great many of us do. This should not be. You should never have the idea that you are so strong you can play with temptation; instead, close your eyes to it; avoid it. If there is that around you which tempts you, get away from it. TEMPTATION IS A TEST; we cannot escape it but we can escape falling before it. God has given us the ability to make a choice when we are tempted, a choice between right or wrong. THE VERY CHOICE OF CHOOSING BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG OFTEN BECOMES A TEMPTATION.

Christ does not tell us to pray for health, riches, love, power, etc. We are told to pray for freedom from temptation, from evil. When we have accomplished this state of being, all other things can be added unto us.

When you have a thought that is unworthy of you, or you have done wrong and are deeply regretful, do not lend an ear to a well-meaning friend who, perhaps in trying to be kind, tells you that you are only human, that none of us is perfect, that we all make mistakes, or other similar comforting remarks. You have all heard them, but much as you would like to believe it, way down deep in your heart you know better. The voice of conscience tells you that you were tempted and you did not resist. Guard against "lulling yourself to sleep" with such phrases, which are only excuses - Be Honest with Yourself.

You, as a Mayan in the higher degrees, are seeking perfection. True happiness and achievement can only be obtained through the avoidance of all that is evil in thought, word and deed. Remember this also, as you become more highly evolved you will be more sensitive to your temptations. God gives us a choice to build character; He does not tell us what to do. He sets a perfect pattern for us and if we violate that pattern, many tragedies of life result which could have been avoided.

There are many temptations in life, the emotions of people being what they are. If a person commits a wrong or an injustice against us, we are tempted to hate; we can't forgive; or, if we are handicapped in some way, it is a temptation to be bitter and wonder why God has done this to us; if we lose a loved one, we may feel that it is a personal assault against us as an individual; and when we are successful, we are tempted to think of ourselves as more important than we are; a touch of success makes us eager for more power. All of these are conditions which you must seek with all your heart to overcome; pray about it. J. Q. Adams makes a true statement when he says, "Every temptation is an opportunity of our getting nearer to God." As a matter of fact, the realization of God's presence is the one sovereign remedy against temptation, as expressed by Fenelon.

Do not allow yourself to be tempted; do not attempt to excuse these temptations. If you do so, you are only defeating your own purpose. Rather than making excuses for yourself when you succumb to temptation and follow the voice which tempts you, instead say, "Forgive me, Lord, for being so weak as to be tempted; forgive me for sinning, lead me not into temptation in the future but deliver me from evil."

PUT INTO DAILY PRACTICE YOUR MAYAN TEACHINGS

STRIVE FOR PERFECTION

BE TRUE TO YOURSELF, YOUR COMPANIONS AND YOUR GOD THROUGH ALL THE DAYS,  
AND YOU WILL ATTAIN THE PERFECT LIFE, THE BLESSED LIFE

Let us begin the study of this lesson with the following prayer:

PRAYER

Our heavenly Father, our prayer today is that Thou wilt lead us by the safest road that is in accordance with Thy purposes. Wherever we must go, keep us strong to meet any test, even that of temptation. Amen.

THE SETTING

**W**E now pass to the final petition in the Lord's Prayer. Considering it together with those that have gone before, you will see that it is a climax - the high point to which all the foregoing have been building. It first established the worshipful attitude toward the One to whom we pray. Then it moved on to a prayer for the fulfillment of the divine purpose for the world, its people, and its future. Then it passed to a petition for the maintenance of our material welfare in order that we may demonstrate the larger meanings of life in the development of personality and the doing of a worthy service. Then the prayer became still more searching as it moved into the area of seeking and bestowing forgiveness, of having the kind of hearts that do not hold grudges.

Now we pass to a higher point yet, that of developing souls that are temptation-proof. This is not a question to debate about. Whether or not God would lead us into temptation is not for us to say. It is for us to try to understand and

abide by whatever this petition means. We never understand any kind of expression till we have first taken the whole situation into account.

The situation is more than that Jesus was there on a pleasant hillside outlining in a voice of authority to a crowd of attentive hearers what His plan and program were to be, among other things, how to pray. That is the foreground of the picture, but let us now consider its background.

The Master has just come from His own terrible wilderness of temptation, one into which He was led, and one that included a sample of every kind of temptation anyone ever has. In the heat and hunger of the Syrian desert He has met and parried clever attacks at the three weakest points in human nature - hunger for food, hunger for popular favor, and hunger for possessions. In each case He has been tempted to obtain these things, in sore need of which He has been placed, by the misuse of divine power. He has endured and won, but the experience has left His body like a wrung garment and His soul with a supreme dread of temptation.

Is it any wonder, then, that He would like to see others delivered from the awful trial He has just been through? Is it any wonder that He warned His hearers to fortify themselves by prayer against any such experience? The temptation had been a chance for Him to prove Himself. It could become the same for any of us.

At any rate, provision has now been suggested against irreverence, narrow conceptions of the good life, wrong ways of meeting material needs, and corroding effects of hate and malice, and now against the temptation to misuse our lives and wreck their powers and possibilities for doing God's will.

#### WHAT IS TEMPTATION?

**W**E use the word "temptation" much, and perhaps more freely than thoughtfully. Let us now ask what it really is, seeking the answer from the supreme source book on any such subject, the Bible.

For one thing, we discover that we are not alone in being subject to temptation. Many passages in both the Old and New Testaments refer to God's having been tempted (tried), or the possibility that He may be tempted, by human disobedience or hardness of heart, to deal more vigorously with His people than the fact of the divine fatherhood would warrant. We see again and again that Jesus claimed no immunity from temptation. At least one reference indicates the possibility of tempting or trying even the divine spirit.

In the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew we see that the temptation of the Master in the wilderness was not the only one, and perhaps not even the hardest one He endured. In the Garden of Gethsemane He faced the supreme temptation, even to turn aside from Calvary. He rose from that victory of the spirit over the flesh with the struggle so heavy in His thoughts that He woke His sleeping disciples to warn them to watch and pray lest they too should enter into temptation, as one of them, Simon Peter, did the very next morning, and not victoriously either.

In the Parable of the Sower as St. Luke retells it in his eighth chapter Jesus explains what He means by the seeds that fall on a rock and wither and die for lack of moisture. They are people who hear the message of the kingdom, enjoy it, and undertake to live by it; but they are weak, and when temptation comes they

fail of all their good intentions.

In Galatians 6; 1 is a solemn and significant warning. It reminds us that in the Sermon on the Mount the Master warned us against judging others lest our judgments be turned upon ourselves. In the citation indicated the Apostle Paul almost paraphrases the teaching of the Master, making it even more objective. He says that if ANYONE FALLS IN OR BY ANY TRESPASS, THOSE WHO ARE SPIRITUAL SHOULD TRY TO RESTORE HIM IN THE SPIRIT OF GENTLENESS, THINKING NOT SO MUCH OF HIS TRANSGRESSION AS THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE SIMILARLY TEMPTED.

In First Corinthians 10;13 we have what seems to be the answer to our prayer for deliverance. St. Paul writes to the Church at Corinth that so far no temptation has taken them but such as men can bear, that God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can endure, and that with every temptation He also provides a way of escape. What assurance could be more wonderful than that for people living a life like ours in a world like this?

These are but a few of the many citations that might be mentioned. Suffice it to say now that in almost every mention of temptation in the Bible we can see that it means a trial or a test. In fact the newer translations tend to use the word "trial" rather than the word "temptation", for that is exactly what temptation is. We know God will not try us beyond our power to endure, but it is well through PRAYER TO MAKE THAT ENDURANCE AS STRONG AS POSSIBLE. God always does His part. We must show ourselves willing to do ours.

#### WOULD GOD LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION?

**S**OME people trouble themselves about the question as to whether God would lead us into temptation. Some even feel more or less violently about it, claiming that it is a slander on God, and that the assumption that He would lead us into temptation makes Him out cruel and unjust.

Whether such claims are warranted is probably not for us to determine. It is rather for us to take the writings we have before us, together with what experience may have taught us, and try to understand them. When we have done so, all we can do is to accept them at what seems to be their true value, not in opinion but in fact. We are not judges of God, or His words, or His works.

We have already noted that God is tempted (tried) at times by what people do, especially by human hard-heartedness, and at such times has a struggle to deal out mercy instead of justice. If we can, and sometimes do, try God, it hardly seems unfair that He should at times take the right to try us.

Then we have the towering instance of the fact that Jesus suffered temptation. The great temptation was one phase of His being set apart and prepared for His redemptive work. His public baptism was an open symbol of His consecration to the task. His temptation was His final examination as to fitness for undertaking His mission to mankind. There had to be assurance that He could go through with it.

The first thirty years of His life had been years of growth, development, and preparation. At the end of them He felt ready to announce His mission to the world and to give it open acknowledgement. But before actually entering upon the

work He must once for all prove His fitness. As the man on the street might say, He had first to show that He could take it.

So He went hungry forty days before showing that He could decline to use His power to feed Himself. Obscure and unknown, He showed that He could refuse to publicize Himself to gain needed influence by showing that He could leap from the pinnacle of the temple to the ground without being hurt. Poor and without the means needed to promote His great world plan, He showed that He could refuse to bow to evil even though the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them were the promised reward. If Jesus had not been strong enough to do these things, HE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN STRONG ENOUGH TO REDEEM A WORLD.

In this and other cases we have seen that temptation is trial or testing. It is a common practice among honest and careful men. Manufacturers of merchandise test their products to be sure they are all that is claimed for them. Teachers test their students to see whether they are ready for promotion, and schools test them to see whether they are prepared to graduate. Tests are given candidates for the various professions to determine whether they are qualified to undertake them. There is nothing cruel or harsh about giving tests. It is a compliment to anyone to be considered worthy to take them. They are merely matters of meeting standards of excellence.

We all find ourselves facing temptations at times. Undoubtedly on some of these occasions we are being put through the crucible of trial to make sure the dross has been burned away, or can be burned away.

#### STRENGTH THROUGH TESTING

**S**UPPOSE this were not true. Suppose that all the people who think it is contrary to God's nature to test us should have their way, and God would try us no more, the result could be a really cruel one. People who are never called on to meet tests are never strong. People who are not called on to make their own choices between right ways and wrong ones never develop the capacity to choose wisely and well. People who are not capable of doing wrong would deserve no credit for doing right. Think this over very carefully.

One of the ways in which we are made in the spiritual image of God is in the fact that we have the power to make and are given the privilege of making our own choices. Young people glory in the fact. Older ones likely remember the mistakes they have made, and ask God to help them decide. But in any case we have been made kings and queens of our own personal worlds with the power to give orders and make decisions. Our fitness for any crown of authority depends on how wisely and well we use that power. In other words, life itself is the undergoing of a series of tests in any of which we could do the wrong thing. The person who makes a good showing in all this has a wise head and a strong heart.

Is that not the way it should be with living - each day a test for fitness to meet the next, and life itself a proving ground for all the rest of eternity? Would it be kinder if God made us automatons doing right automatically like mechanical toys, or is it kinder that He gives us this opportunity to choose and prove ourselves as we go along?

Yet here is Jesus teaching us to ask not to be led into temptation, or so the language seems. But language is not always adequate to express so great a meaning. Fresh from His own terrible experience in the wilderness, He would naturally like to have us spared; but does it not seem that He meant to let our testings be as seldom and gentle as possible, or to bring us into no unnecessary temptation, or to be sure to deliver us from the power of any temptation we have to meet?

The theme, or one of the themes, of the drama of Job is temptation and deliverance from it. The forces involved are all personified, but what it amounts to is that a man who has gained riches, honor, and happiness, seems to have gained them rather easily, and it may be in order for him to be subjected to some tests for worthiness.

These tests are applied by the spirit of evil who hopes thus to win him over to the kingdom of darkness. They are aggravated by the advice of three friends who think they are comforting the unfortunate man when they are only rubbing salt into his wounds.

The outcome of it all is that at the last we see Job better situated than at first, because he has come through this great test stronger, wiser, and better. He has also learned the graces of humility and forgiveness in the process. So, though Job has suffered infinitely much, he becomes infinitely the gainer for the trial through which he is called upon to go.

#### DELIVER US FROM EVIL

**I**N the last part of the petition also we must not try to pass judgment, but leave it to the Father how He proposes to deliver us from evil. It is enough for us to know that we have the promise, and that all God's promises are sure. We will not be subjected to any temptation we cannot meet, for when our resistance begins to run out a way of escape will be provided.

If you will read again the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew and perhaps the first chapter of the Gospel of Mark, you will find a wonderful thing that many have overlooked. Mark puts it more briefly and perhaps more graphically, which is characteristic of his writing. He describes the temptation in a few sweeping sentences. Then he closes his account by saying that Jesus was among the wild beasts, and the angels ministered unto him.

Please ponder this very deeply. It is a picture in contrasts of the temptation experience. Whether it is ordered of God or not, in the wilderness of temptation one finds himself between two forces. He is with the powers that seek to pull him down to the brute level, but on the other hand there are angels - messengers of God, for that is what the word "angel" means - ministering to his tired spirit and seeking to hold him up to the ideals of his better self. The angels symbolize the way of escape that is always there.

If it is always there, then why pray that it may be there? Here is an important point in the psychology of prayer. It is not a prayer for a given thing that induces God to do that thing, for He may even have done it already. The prayer opens the channels between us and God so we may receive it, and centers our attention on it so we will not overlook it and fail to take advantage of it. SO



MUCH OF WHAT GOD DOES FOR US WE NEVER NOTICE UNLESS SOMETHING CALLS IT TO OUR ATTENTION. OUR OWN PRAYERS MAY SERVE TO CALL IT TO OUR ATTENTION.

We have been plainly told that God will always provide a way of escape, but in the heat of the temptation trial some may forget that promise, while others may not even know of it. You may be conscious of the promise, but if you are clinging to it you are a great deal more certain of it, and likely to be putting more of the necessary faith into it. The way of escape is probably already there, but asking for it will help keep you from failing to see it. The angels are not mentioned till the end of the story, but we may assume that they were there all the time. God would not leave us among the wild beasts without them.

One good thing about having to endure temptation is the fact that it is certain to help us get acquainted with those messengers of God called angels. Whether we see them as visible presences or not, we can sense their nearness and see what they do. Everyone needs this experience, for his life will be forever enriched by it. It will give him a knowledge of two worlds and a keener realization of God and heaven than he might otherwise have had. At times of crisis we have to have angels; and behold, they are there.

#### WHAT IS EVIL?

**W**E should not proceed further in our discussion of evil without doing what we can to clarify the meaning of the word. The things we most often mention are sometimes the things we most take for granted.

The word "evil" as used in the Bible generally means about the same in whatever part of speech it appears. It refers to something negative, mischievous, and destructive, or to the effects and results of such a thing. It may be said to be a word for sin or moral misdoing, but it is what makes so-called sin and misdoing. They are negative and harmful because their sources are so. They undermine and despoil beauty, worth, goodness, and happiness, because they are their opposites.

There is no denying that such powers are present in the world, nor is there any denying that there is good and worth enough to triumph over them. They grow from within ourselves, but having done so they are very real.

When Jesus teaches us to pray that we may be delivered from evil the idea undoubtedly includes evil in both its general forms - evildoing and the evil conditions which result from evildoing. It is the same as it is with building a great structure or machine. One may build it rightly, that is according to the plan, and meet with success; or he may violate the plan of rightness and get into much trouble. It is as simple as that.

We must always bear in mind that all these have their fountains in our own minds and hearts. RIGHT DOING ALWAYS ROOTS IN RIGHT THINKING, and vice versa. No fountain rises higher than its source, and it can be of no other nature than its source provides. If we want to change the output we have to change the origin. In the heart is where all things go right or wrong as the case may be. The Master has told us that the kingdom of heaven is within us, and of course the same is true of its opposite. We ourselves must choose which of the guests we will admit, and we ourselves have to take the responsibility for the result.

Another thing often wondered about is the spirit of wrong, personified as a being we call by such names as the devil, Satan, the tempter, the adversary, and so on. When we do not understand a thing we just give it a name and go ahead, which is probably well enough. But one thing we have to face is that some kind of an adverse influence does seem to bid for our allegiance. Call it what we will we have it to contend with, and it sometimes makes it harder to do the right thing than the wrong one, at least in the immediate sense.

The Greek word "diabolos", from which the word "devil" comes, means something like a picker. Two of the New Testament words also used to designate this spirit of evil have similar meanings. One is "the accuser", and the other is "the destroyer". That should make it clear what meaning originally was attached to the word. Satan, so-called, then, is the influence that attacks the beauty and goodness of life, destroys its hope, breaks down its confidence, and leaves it too weak and distrustful of God and man to meet life's issues bravely and courageously again. It is this from which we are taught to pray to be delivered.

#### THE POWER TO DECIDE

**W**E sometimes hear it said that we must answer our own prayers. This is not always or wholly true, but it does have an element of truth in it. When we pray not to be brought into temptation but to be delivered from evil we surely ask God to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. We ask Him to guide us as much as may be away from temptation, and to soften its power if and when we must face it. We ask to be led around it, which is deliverance; but we may instead be helped to meet it victoriously, which is rescue.

We do, however, have to face the fact that these processes - deliverance and rescue - are carried out largely through our own wills. God helps us by strengthening us. It is as though His good angels whispered strength and courage into our sagging spirits. He helps us to decide, but when the thing is done it is we who have arrived at the decision and sealed the choice.

If you have observed court procedure, you have often seen a judge with power to act on his own authority still avoid doing so. Instead he calls the parties concerned in a court action into council, talked the matter over with them, and asks them what they really want done. When the decision is handed down it is not what he has arbitrarily decided but what they have agreed to as right and just. Such a decision is much more likely to be carried out afterward. In many cases it removes the element of contention and stops the action altogether.

The heavenly Father, the just and righteous Judge of all the earth, often does something very similar to this. He has made it plain by His word and the guiding influence of His spirit what He thinks and desires, but the final decision in the matter He leaves to us. It is as though He said: "This is my way, but to force you to walk in it would do you no good. You must decide whether you will take it or not. I will help you be strong enough to resist temptation, but the real choice must come from within your own soul. That is what will make you strong and give you the credit for having done right."

Two men sat together in a very difficult situation. One had just crawled out of the gutter and called the other to come and talk with him. The yet half-drunken man wept as he told how he had resisted temptation for weeks, then starting

home tired and discouraged the night before he had yielded again. He asked his friend to say what would help him. The sober man said:

"I am sorry for you with all my heart, but it isn't worth much because I have never been in your place. I have never used liquor because I have never had any desire for it. I deserve no credit because I have met with no temptation. You have this awful desire to contend with, and you may have done better than I would have done in your place. You need the counsel of someone who has made the fight and won. I am going to ask our friend, Jim, to come up. He has been through it. It takes no manhood on my part to keep sober, but it does on his - and yours."

Some have one weakness and some another, but we all have the downpull to deal with at some point and some time. We have to decide to overcome, but in carrying out that decision the HELP OF GOD AND THE HOLY ANGELS IS OURS FOR THE ASKING.



The use of your affirmation in D.M. each day will give you the strength which you need, and so with this thought in mind, let us repeat together the following affirmation:

AFFIRMATION

God strengthens me in response to my request for help in meeting my particular kind of temptation to be less than my best self. When I turn from the wild beasts I find that angels are there to minister to me.

May this lesson be blessed unto you,

YOUR CLASS INSTRUCTOR

I must admit that it will be with regret that your Instructor brings to a close the Lord's Prayer Series. We next take up the last clause, "FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOREVER, AMEN", and the following subjects:

Prayer  
The Authority of a Prayer  
The Kingdom  
The Power

The Glory  
Forever  
Amen  
Conclusion