

*Behind
The Scenes*

God Is At Work....

Part I

Key Passages

Job 1:6-12 (NIV)

6 One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them.

7 The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it." 8 Then the Lord said to Satan,

"Have you considered my servant Job?

There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."

9 "Does Job fear God for nothing?"

Satan replied. 10 "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land.

11 But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

12 The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

Key Passages

Luke 22:31-34 (NIV)

31 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

33 But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death."

34 Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."

Daniel 10:11-14 (NIV)

11 He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.

12 Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. 13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. 14 Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."

Introduction

One of the **greatest frustrations** in the Christian life is living in the gap between **what God has promised** and **what we presently see**.

We pray, but nothing changes ~ We trust, but circumstances seem unchanged.

What we often fail to realize is that while we are focused on what is happening around us,
GOD IS WORKING ON THINGS WE CANNOT SEE.

Just because **GOD IS SILENT** does not mean **HE IS ABSENT**.

Just because nothing is changing **in front of you** does not mean **God is not working for you**.

God often does His greatest work behind the scenes **BEFORE** He does His greatest work in public.

One of the greatest challenges of the Christian life is **LEARNING HOW TO TRUST GOD**
WHEN NOTHING APPEARS TO BE HAPPENING.

The real test comes when heaven is silent and **CIRCUMSTANCES REMAIN UNCHANGED.**

That is where **FRUSTRATION** enters the picture.

Introduction

That is why *faith is necessary*.

Faith and frustration are often COMPETING VOICES in the life of the believer.

We become frustrated because we judge God's activity BY WHAT WE CAN SEE.

Frustration occurs when what we see doesn't match what we expected God to do.

We prayed for healing but still feel pain. We prayed for provision, but the bills keep coming.

We prayed for change, but the situation looks exactly the same.

AND BECAUSE WE DON'T SEE MOVEMENT, WE ASSUME GOD ISN'T MOVING.

Faith, however, believes God is working even when there is no visible evidence.

Faith says: I don't see it, but God is working ~ I don't understand it, but God is working.

I don't like it, but God is working ~ I can't explain it, but God is working.

Romans 8:28 becomes the believer's confidence:

*"And WE KNOW that all things work together for good to those who love God,
to those who are the called ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE."*

Frustration occurs when I FOCUS on what God has not done YET.

Faith says God is still working on WHAT COMES NEXT.

The curtain is pulled back in these passages... so we can learn a life-changing truth...

Behind The Scenes, God Is Regulating What Is Allowed

Job 1:11-12 (NIV)

11 But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face."

*12 The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, **BUT** on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.*

SATAN WANTED ACCESS....GOD ESTABLISHED BOUNDARIES.

"THE ATTACK HAS LIMITATIONS"

The enemy does not possess **UNRESTRICTED AUTHORITY** over the child of God.

Satan could only do **WHAT GOD ALLOWED.**

God never *surrendered control....HE REGULATED THE ATTACK.*

WHAT REACHES YOU MUST FIRST PASS THROUGH GOD'S PERMISSION.

Job 2:4-6 (NIV)

4 "Skin for skin!" Satan replied. "A man will give all he has for his own life.

5 But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face."

6 The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life."

AS YOU MATURE... THE BOUNDARIES INCREASE

You Have Developed Power From Your Previous Testimony

Behind The Scenes, God Is Preparing You For What Is Next

Luke 22:31-32 (NIV)

31 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.

32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail.

And WHEN you have turned back, STRENGTHEN YOUR BROTHERS."

Satan's goal was **DESTRUCTION** ~ Jesus' goal was **DEVELOPMENT**.

Sometimes *the season* that feels like it is **BREAKING YOU....** is actually **PREPARING YOU**.

Before Peter entered the storm, Jesus had already covered him in prayer.

Before Peter failed publicly, Jesus had already prepared restoration privately.

Before Peter became the leader of Acts 2, God was developing him in Luke 22.

Acts 2:40-41 (NLT)

40 Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners,

"Save yourselves from this crooked generation!"

41 Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—

ABOUT 3,000 IN ALL.

What You Are Dealing With **NOW** is God's preparation for what comes **NEXT**.

Behind The Scenes, God Is Preparing You For What Is Next

Luke 22:33-34 (NLT)

33 Peter said, "Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you, and even to die with you."

34 But Jesus said, "Peter, let me tell you something. Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me."

*God often develops us **in private** before He elevates us **in public**.*

Matthew 14:29-30 (NLT)

29 "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus.

30 But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink.

"Save me, Lord!" he shouted.

Matthew 16:21-23 (NLT)

21 From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead.

22 But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things.

"Heaven forbid, Lord," he said. "This will never happen to you!"

23 Jesus turned to Peter and said, "Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me.

You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's."

Matthew 26:40 (NIV)

40 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "

*Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" **HE ASKED PETER.***

Behind The Scenes, God Is Fighting Battles You Can't See

Daniel 10:12-14 (NIV)

*12 Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, **YOUR WORDS WERE HEARD**, and I have come in response to them. 13 But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me **TWENTY-ONE DAYS**. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. 14 Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."*

DANIEL HAD BEEN PRAYING AND FASTING FOR TWENTY-ONE DAYS. Nothing happened ~ No answer ~ No breakthrough ~ No visible movement. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN THERE....PRAYING AND NOT SEEING NOTHING

A spiritual battle was taking place behind the scenes....God Was Taking Care Of Your Next

*Many believers **abandon prayer** because **they assume delay means denial**. But Daniel teaches us that **delay** often means **God is handling matters we cannot see**.
*Some battles are not physical ~ Some obstacles are not natural
Some delays are connected to spiritual realities **BEYOND OUR UNDERSTANDING**.**

THAT'S WHY WE MUST PRAY WITHOUT CEASING



Remember This....

Behind The Scenes, God Is Regulating What Is Allowed

Behind The Scenes, God Is Preparing You For What Is Next

Behind The Scenes, God Is Fighting Battles You Can't See