

Can Satan read our thoughts?

I personally don't think so. I've been finishing up the book of Daniel recently and one example immediately jumps out to me. When the king had his dream about the great image, none of the magicians/sorcerers (those associated with the works of Satan) could come up with the dream let alone an interpretation. This was also true regarding Joseph and the dream of the Pharaoh. The magicians/sorcerers would have been dependent on revelation supplied by Satan and his angels. If they had been able to read the kings' minds, wouldn't Satan have taken that opportunity to increase his influence in the world of men and not leave an open door for the Lord to show His *unique* ability.

Daniel even declares (through the inspiration of the Spirit) the existence of secrets and associates them with the *thoughts* that occupied Neb's mind as he slept.

Dan. 2:27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king;

Dan. 2:28 But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these;

Dan. 2:29 As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came *into thy mind* upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.

I Kings 8:39 is another verse that supports the concept of a secret place of communication with God.

1Kings 8:39 Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, *even* thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)

The word hearts is a reference to "feelings, will, and intellect" according to the Hebrew. This verse states as a fact that only God knows what is in a man's heart, his place of thought and feeling.

I think the following verse in Matthew brings up another point.

Matt. 6:6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

I know the context of this verse is a reference to guard against doing spiritual things with the wrong motives. Still the Lord is referencing a place where we can meet with him in secret. I cannot believe that He would allow Satan to be privy to our private outpourings of our heart to Him. If we choose to pray out loud, then we are not talking to God in secret (although I'm not sure we are always attuned to that fact). We are allowing the spirits/angels to witness/hear our conversation. I think Satan operates on the point of law stating, "Anything you say can and will be used against you."

The ability of Satan to impact our thought processes is a whole different thing from him being able to know our thoughts. I believe he and his angel/demon forces have astute observation skills regarding our actions and can certainly hear the words we say, and based on that information have plenty of ammo to know our weaknesses and the areas in which deceptions/temptations are most likely to succeed. Also, they have had the opportunity to study people for thousands of years. They know the common weaknesses of men and the areas in which they have proven to be most susceptible to deceit/temptation.

When Jesus was ministering as a man on planet earth, I believe He was filled with the Spirit. He laid aside His Divine attributes, but He was still attuned to the Spirit. He knew as God chose for Him to know. He did not know of the day or hour of His second coming because the Father did not choose to give Him that information at that time. When He knew what the people were thinking, He knew because the Father did choose to reveal those thoughts through His Spirit at that time. He was not born with the sin nature. He had the Spirit indwelling Him just as we as believers are privileged to have in the new covenant. He lived His life according to the leadership/direction of the Spirit just as we are supposed to do now. The fact that Jesus could perceive man's thoughts does not support Satan, as a spirit being, having the ability to read our thoughts.

The Bible does support the idea of angels observing our actions and hearing our speech:

1Cor. 4:9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

1Cor. 11:10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head because of the angels.

1Tim. 5:21 I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

They were created to minister on behalf of men of faith according to God's directive:

Heb. 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

They can take the form of man and interact with man:

Heb. 13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

The word angel means messenger—not from us to God but from God to us. The only One that intercedes on our behalf through knowledge of our thoughts is the Son and the Holy Spirit. Satan made his statements about Job based on his observations of Job specifically and men in general. Satan's answer to God's question as to whether he had considered Job referenced things that he knew from observation, not from being able to read his mind.