

Further Reading

THE TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS CHRIST

(Luke 4:1 – 13)

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from Jordan into the desert. He ate and drank nothing for 40 days and nights. He was hungry and at this time of weakness, the devil tempted Him.

1. The devil told Jesus to prove that He was the Son of God by turning stone to bread. Jesus replied that it is written, 'Human beings cannot live on bread alone' (Deut 8:3). Satan was telling Jesus to use his Messianic power and Spirit to obtain material security for himself and his followers for selfish, materialistic purposes.
2. The devil led Jesus up and showed Him in a second all the Kingdoms of the world. He told Him that he would give Him all their power and wealth, if He bows and worships Satan. Jesus replied... 'It is written, worship the Lord your God and serve him only. Do not worship other gods' (Deut 6:13-14). Satan wanted Jesus to use Godly power and influence.
3. The Devil led Jesus to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple. He told Jesus to throw Himself down if He was the Son of God for it is written that the Lord will command angels to take good care of Him, they will hold Him up with their hands so that not even His feet will be hurt on the stones (Psalm 91:11 – 12). Jesus replied and said, 'it is written, do not put the Lord your God to the test. Satan wanted Jesus to presume God's good care by jumping from the roof of the temple.

Notice that the temptations came after Jesus' Baptism, where he had solemnly accepted the opening of his public ministry and God confirmed it. Therefore, the temptations were a testing of his loyalty to God's chosen way of life.

Importance of the temptations of Jesus

1. Jesus proved His loyalty to God by not yielding to the temptations
2. By overcoming, Jesus had power over Satan.
3. Jesus relied on the Holy Spirit for guidance
4. Jesus used the word of God to counter temptations.
5. Jesus sets an example for the believers when they go through hard times.
6. Prayer and fasting helped Jesus to gain power and strength.
7. To fulfil the Old Testament prophecy about the suffering servant.

Relevance (lessons) of Jesus temptations to Christians

1. Jesus, though without sin, was tempted. His followers must expect to be tested in their faith.
2. Christians must always pray and fast to overcome temptations.
3. Since Jesus was tempted, he understands Christian's difficulties when they are tempted.
4. Jesus is always ready to help Christians to cope with temptations.
5. Through temptations and trials, Christian's faith in God is strengthened.
6. Christians learn to refer to the Bible for guidance when tempted. Jesus said that it is written... in reference to scripture.
7. Christians should seek the Holy Spirit to give them strength to fight any form of trials and temptations.
8. Through temptations, Christians learn that God does provide a way out.

9. Christians should not put God to test.
10. Thus, followers of Jesus Christ (Christians) should not be seekers of spectacular signs to believe in God.

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF TEMPTATIONS AND TRIUMPH OF JESUS ON CHRISTIAN LIFE

1. **Nature of Temptation:** Just as Satan tempted Jesus, Christians today face temptations in various forms, with the goal of enticing them away from God. The temptations of Jesus serve as a reminder that Christians must stay alert and prepared to resist temptation, putting on the whole armor of God as mentioned in Ephesians 6:10-18.
2. **Relying on God's Word and teachings:** Jesus responded to each temptation by quoting Scripture, which is a reminder of the importance of knowing and applying God's Word in resisting temptation. Christians need to regularly study and apply God's Word, recognizing it as a source of strength, wisdom, and guidance for daily living.
3. **Obedience to God:** Jesus' response to temptation demonstrated his complete obedience to God. As followers of Christ, Christians are called to obey God even when it's challenging or uncomfortable in the face of temptation. This can be challenging, but through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christians can overcome temptation and stay obedient to God.
4. **Communion with God:** After the temptations, angels came and attended to Jesus. This highlights the importance of Christians seeking God's presence, for it is in his presence that they will find safety and security when facing temptation. Christians are encouraged to pray, worship, and fellowship with God regularly, knowing that they will find strength, restoration, and guidance in his presence.
5. **The nature of temptation:** Christians can learn that temptation often comes disguised as something good, attractive, or desirable. Satan tempted Jesus with food, power, and prestige, but these things were not worth compromising his relationship with God.
6. **The importance of relying on God's Word:** Jesus responded to each temptation by quoting Scripture, showing the importance of knowing and applying God's Word in resisting temptation. Christians should regularly study and apply God's Word, recognizing it as a source of strength, wisdom, and guidance for daily living.
7. **The need for obedience to God:** Jesus' response to temptation demonstrated his complete obedience to God. Christians are called to obey God even when it's challenging or uncomfortable, knowing that God's way is always the best way.
8. **The benefits of communing with God:** After the temptations, angels came and ministered to Jesus, highlighting the importance of Christians seeking God's presence. Christians are encouraged to pray, worship, and fellowship with God regularly, knowing that they will find strength, restoration, and guidance in his presence.