

An article for children

Jesus Was Tempted Too

Susan Verstaete

Just after Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit led him to a place to be alone, to be tempted by the Devil. The Bible calls the place “the wilderness” because it was a wild place where no one lived. It was a hot, desert area with rocks all around—mountain-sized rocks towering up into the sky and loose rocks all over the ground. In some places, Jesus could walk along paths with great rock walls towering on either side of Him, and in other places He found hills made of nothing but sand. Sometimes, as he walked along a cliff, loose rocks would go skittering down the steep chasm beside Him. You can understand why no people would choose to live in such a place.

Jesus stayed in the desert wilderness for forty days, fasting and praying to God. (Fasting means that Jesus didn't eat any food; that's something believers sometimes do when they are praying seriously about something and longing for God's help.) Then, the Bible says, Satan came to Jesus to tempt Him.

Satan must have known that Jesus was very hungry after not eating for 40 days. Satan said, “If You are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” But Jesus didn't do it. He answered Satan with some verses from the book of Deuteronomy in the Bible, saying, “Man does not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” Obeying His Heavenly Father was more important to Jesus than what He ate, or anything else. Sometimes we are tempted to want other things more than we want to obey God. It helps us to know that Jesus was tempted in the same way.

Next, Satan took Jesus up to the top of the temple, which was on the top of a mountain, and said, “If you are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command His angels concerning You. . . so that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.’” Wasn't Satan sly to quote the Bible to Jesus? Jesus answered Satan with another verse from the Bible, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” Jesus knew that His Father had planned for Jesus to teach and preach, and that the Holy Spirit would open the ears of the



people and help them understand His message. Even though jumping off the building might have caused some people to be interested in Jesus, it wasn't the Father's plan and so Jesus didn't do it. Sometimes we are tempted to do things our own way instead of God's way. It helps to know that Jesus was tempted in just the same way.

Then Satan led Jesus to a high mountain where He could see all the great cities of the world. Satan said, “All this I will give You if You will bow down and worship me.” You see, if Jesus were the King of all these cities, He could command them to worship God. Would that be a good thing? Well, it wasn't what the Father had planned for Jesus. He had planned for Jesus to die on the cross and take away the sins of His people, not for Him to be a great government leader. Jesus quoted the Bible to Satan again, saying, “Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.” Sometimes we want people to admire us more than we want them to honor God the Father. It helps us to know that Jesus was tempted in this way too.

Satan finally left Jesus in the wilderness. He had offered Jesus everything he could think of, but Jesus didn't sin.

The Bible tells us in the book of Hebrews that Jesus was tested like we are so that when we come to Him we know He understands our weaknesses. Yet unlike all of us, Jesus never sinned. And because He never sinned and also did all the right things that God asked Him to do, Jesus was able to make a way for us to come to God. Jesus trades places with us. We get the reward for Jesus' goodness, and He takes the punishment for our disobedience. We receive this gift of Jesus' righteousness by trusting Him.

After we trust Jesus, He will help us obey God. One of the ways He does that is through the Bible. Like Jesus, we need to have verses memorized that will help us do the right thing when we are tempted. Let's start by memorizing the verse below:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.

Hebrews 4:15

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