

JESUS' BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION

BIBLE TEXT: Matthew 3:13-17; 4:1-11; Luke 4:14-32.

LESSON 17 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Matthew 3:13-17;

¹³ ¶ Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

¹⁴ But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

¹⁵ And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

¹⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Matthew 4:1-11;

¹ Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

² And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

³ And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

⁴ But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

⁵ Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

⁶ And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down:

NOTES:

The Lamb of God

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29)! With those immortal words John introduced Christ into His ministry, which ushered in the dispensation of grace.

Great throngs had gathered to hear John preach, and he had baptised many converts in the River Jordan. One day he noticed in the crowd an unusual figure. Jesus was coming to be baptised! How John's heart must have thrilled as he recognised the Son of God! John had preached to the people that One much greater than himself was to come -- and now He was here!

John did not feel that he was worthy to baptise Jesus, but at His command those two walked down into the water "to fulfil all righteousness." John always obeyed Christ because he knew He was the Son of God. As we study this lesson we learn how God proved this fact to John.

John baptised Jesus just as he had baptised everyone else, but when Jesus came up out of the water something happened that had never happened before. The Spirit of God descended on Him in the form of a dove and a Voice was heard from Heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). You would have thought that all would have believed on Jesus when they heard the voice of God, and saw the dove; but they didn't all have honest hearts.

John was a prophet, and God had told him that the One upon Whom he saw the Spirit descending and remaining would be the Messiah. John and his disciples were there when it happened; they saw and believed. John said, "I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John 1: 34).

The Holy Trinity

We have a beautiful picture of the Trinity in this lesson -- the three Persons in the Godhead. God the Father spoke from Heaven to God the Son Who was coming up out of the water, while God the Holy Ghost descended on Jesus in the form of a dove. Later Jesus called the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and promised that when He went away the Comforter would come to abide with them. Jesus also called the Holy Ghost the Spirit of Truth, which would guide His followers and lead them into all truth.

The Spirit is as gentle as a dove. He will not come into an unclean heart. But if we are washed in the Blood of Jesus, we, too, can receive Him. When He comes in, we are filled with great love and joy and everything that is in the heart of Jesus. The Holy Ghost is a Person and He is one with Jesus. He occupies only a heart where Jesus is.

Forty Days of Testing

Although the Spirit had descended on Jesus, He still was not ready to begin His ministry. There was a time of temptation before Him. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2:18).

Anyone who wants to work for God has to go through a testing time. The Lord wants to prove us to see whether or not we mean what we say when we tell Him we will "go all the way" and do anything He wants us to do.

for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

⁷ Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

⁸ Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

⁹ And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

¹⁰ Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

¹¹ Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Luke 4:14-32.

¹⁴ ¶ And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

¹⁵ And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

¹⁶ ¶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

¹⁷ And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to

The Spirit led Christ into the wilderness where He stayed for forty days, alone with the wild animals, and with nothing to eat. Of course He was hungry after that long fast, and Satan thought: Here is my chance. At that moment the Lord's weak point was His hunger, so the devil told Him that if He was really the Son of God He should make bread out of the stones so that He could eat. It would have been easy for Jesus to change the rocks into bread, because Jesus can do anything. But He had no intention of obeying His tempter.

The Sword of the Spirit -- the Word

The Lord showed us how to resist the devil. When Satan wanted Him to make bread, Christ quoted Scripture to him. Many hundreds of years before, Moses had told the Children of Israel that "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD" (Deuteronomy 8:3). If we know the Scriptures we can answer the enemy the same way when he comes with a temptation. It is important that we study the Bible and know what promises God has made to us.

Just because Satan lost one battle with Jesus, he did not give up. He next took Him to the top of the Temple in Jerusalem and told Him to jump off the high pinnacle. He said that if Jesus was really the Son of God, His Father would not let Him get hurt. He knew David had prophesied of Jesus that the angels would bear Him up lest He dash His foot against a stone (**Psalm 91:12**; ¹² They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.). Jesus knew that Scripture, too; but He knew more than that. He answered again with the Word: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Still Satan wouldn't leave Jesus. Until we leave this earth, the enemy of our souls will never give up trying to turn our steps from following the Lord. But Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, and has promised to help us overcome every trial if we look to Him for aid.

Satan took Jesus into a very high mountain where they could see all the kingdoms of the world. The devil knew that many people would sell their souls to be rich and powerful, and he wanted to see if Jesus would. But it was not time for Jesus to rule a natural kingdom on earth – and, besides, when that time comes, God, not Satan, will give Him the power.

The devil had the nerve to ask Jesus to bow down and worship him. We cannot see how anybody would want to worship the devil, but there are many people in foreign countries, and even in our own country, who worship devils and build temples to them. Sometimes they even sacrifice their children to the devil. But Jesus said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

A Conqueror

After all those temptations Jesus was very tired -- but He had triumphed. God said when Jesus was baptised that He was pleased with His Son, but how much more pleased He must have been now when He saw that our Saviour had won great victories over the enemy. He sent down an angel to minister unto Him and strengthen Him. The Lord is pleased with His children, too, when they overcome the tempter, and He sends sweet blessings as their reward.

QUESTIONS

1. Did John feel worthy of baptising Christ?
2. Do you think that John had seen Jesus before He came to be baptised?
3. Who was He Who descended on Jesus in the form of a dove?
4. Do you think Jesus could have made bread out of stones?
5. When Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan. . ." we read that "the devil leaveth him." What lesson does this teach us?
6. What happens every time one follows the instructions of Satan?

set at liberty them that are bruised,

¹⁹ To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

²⁰ And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

²¹ And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

²² And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

²³ And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

²⁴ And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

²⁵ But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

²⁶ But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow.

²⁷ And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

²⁸ And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

²⁹ And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

³⁰ But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.