

## Contrast between failure of Adam and obedience of Jesus

The theme for our meditation is the 'contrast between the failure of Adam and the obedience of Jesus, whose victory we are called to share.' In the gospel of Matthew we note that as soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Mat 3:16-17 NIV). After this Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Jesus had fasted forty days and forty nights and He was hungry. It is at this point that the devil comes and tempts Him.

Three times Jesus is tempted. The devil comes to Him and tells Him that if He was indeed the Son of God then he should command these stones to become loaves of bread. The temptation here is two- fold. First of all he tries to put doubts into the mind of Jesus as to whether He was indeed the Son of God. Secondly, he also tempts Jesus by wanting Him to think that material things would satisfy His hunger. Jesus responds by saying that 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' The devil continues to use this tactic with us. He tries to fool us by tempting us to fill our lives with material things and pursue that as our goal so that we have no time left for God. We also need to respond to Satan using God's word as our sword.

In the second temptation, the devil sets Him on the pinnacle of the temple and tells him that if he is indeed the Son of God then he should jump from there because it was written concerning the Messiah that, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.' The temptation here is to be famous and to make a name for Himself. He was to do the spectacular and the miraculous so that everyone will recognize Him. Jesus replies by saying, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' We are equally tempted in this area as well. Satan tempts us to make a name for ourselves so that we become proud and arrogant and rebel against God. That was how Satan himself once an angel fell.

In the final temptation, Jesus is again taken to a high mountain and shown all the kingdoms of heaven. Satan then tempts Jesus by saying that all these kingdoms would belong to Jesus if only He would bow down and worship him. Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only' (Mat 4:10 NIV). Here Satan tempts Jesus with a short cut to gain power. "I know you will have all authority at the end of time, but why do you have to go through the way of the cross. Worship me and I will give you power and authority". The end justifies the means. Compromises can be made to achieve power. But Jesus answers with a strong response, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only."' (Mat 4:10 NIV).

Adam and Eve failed in the Garden of Eden when they were tempted by Satan. Jesus on the other hand overcame all the temptations using the word of God. We too will be tempted by the evil one to go against God and his directions for our life. We will be tempted to depend on material things rather than God; or to become famous and proud that God is not in the picture; or to take shortcuts in life and avoid taking up our cross and following Jesus daily. We cannot stand firm on our own strength, but we have to resist the devil by the word of God and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

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