

# The Temptation of Jesus

## Golden Text

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet he did not sin. (Hb 4:15).

## Useful Practice

Jesus held onto the Word of God to overcome<sup>1</sup> Satan. So we must act to obtain victory.

## Scripture Reading

Luke 4: 1-13

**1** - Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

**2** - where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.

**3** - The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”

**4** - Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’”

**5** - The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world.

**6** - And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to.

**7** - If you worship me, it will all be yours.”

**8** - Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’”

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<sup>1</sup> **vt** (*ps* **overcame**, *pp* **overcome**) superar, conquistar, dominar.

**9** - The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here.

**10**- For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully;

**11** - they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’

**12** - Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’

**13** - When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

### **General Objective**

To show that Jesus was tempted, but overcame all temptations by the power of God's Word.

### **Specific Objectives**

I – **TO UNDERSTAND** the reality of temptation.

II – **TO EXPLAIN** how Jesus overcame the temptation of getting satiated<sup>2</sup>.

III – **TO KNOW** how Jesus overcame the temptation of being lauded.

IV – **TO ANALYZE** the wiles of the enemy to make Jesus give in to the temptation of being noticed.

### **Introduction**

Temptation is a reality which every believer, at some point, will come across. No one is immune to temptation, because even Jesus, the perfect man, was tempted! The answer to temptation is not, therefore<sup>3</sup>, to deny it, but to face it in the light of the Word of God.

In this lesson we will learn how Jesus faced temptation and defeated<sup>4</sup> Satan. We will see the devil's subtlety<sup>5</sup> in tempting the Son of

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<sup>2</sup> **vt 1** saciar, satisfazer. **2** fartar, encher. **adj** satisfeito, farto.

<sup>3</sup> **adv 1** por essa razão, conseqüentemente, por isso. **2** portanto, por conseguinte. **3** então.

<sup>4</sup> **n 1** derrota, desbarato, revés. **2** frustração, malogro. **vt 1** derrotar, destroçar, desbaratar. **2** vencer em discussão, competição ou jogo. **3** frustrar, anular, baldar, malograr.

<sup>5</sup> **n 1** sutileza, sutilidade, delicadeza, finura, tenuidade. **2** coisa sutil.

God at a time of extreme deprivation and physical need, and how the Son of Man defeated him by saying "no" to each of his proposals. Finally, we will also highlight that the victory of Jesus is ours as well.

## **I - THE REALITY OF TEMPTATION**

**1. A human reality.** It has been reported in previous commentaries that we must take into account the indisputable biblical and theological fact that Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man. As God, he could not be tempted, but as a man, despite being perfect, he could (John 17:5; Phil 2:5-11; Heb 2:17). In the mystery of incarnation, Jesus did not lose his divine nature, nor his divine attributes, but, as the American translation of Philips says, He "emptied himself" (Philippians 2:7). As a man He was tempted in every way, just as we are, yet he did not sin (Heb 4:15). In the light of biblical teaching, however, the temptation of Jesus Christ was real, not just a play-acting. The perfect man, Jesus, was tempted in every way, but did not sin! (1 Peter 2:22).

**2. Overcoming temptation.** Luke reveals that Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Jesus, in his human condition, was empowered by the Holy Spirit to confront Satan. The empowering upon Jesus reveals the messianic side of his mission. In Luke's theology, the Messiah would be empowered by the Spirit to do the work of God and that included to undo the work of the devil. Jesus' victory over temptation is also our victory. Jesus, the perfect man, overcame the allurements<sup>6</sup> of sin with prayer, with the Word and by walking in the Spirit. All of those who are in Christ can also overcome temptation (1 Cor 10:13).

## **II - THE TEMPTATION OF GETTING SATIATED**

**1. The subtlety of temptation.** The first temptation of Jesus occurs in the sphere of appetite. Jesus responded to this temptation this way, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone'" (Luke 4: 3,4). The devil, of course, knew that at the baptism of Jesus, God the Father had told him of his divine filiation (Luke 3:22). Jesus, as the perfect man that he was, had to face temptation in his human condition, not making use of his divine attributes as the devil desired. As the Son of God, Jesus could obviously use his divine attributes to transform all that wilderness into bread. However, if he had done so, he would deny his mission of a perfect man. Whether the devil stimulates a legitimate appetite or not, his

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<sup>6</sup> **n 1** fascinação, encantamento. **2** tentação, sedução. **3** atração, engodo.

goal is always the same – to put stumbling<sup>7</sup> blocks in the path of the servants of God.

**2. Personal satisfaction.** After 40 days of complete fasting, Jesus, without a doubt, was physically weak. His whole being, of course, demanded to be satiated. Both water and bread are necessary elements to the maintenance of the body. There is, therefore, nothing wrong with the desire to eat or drink. However, if this desire is only for a personal satisfaction, as the devil wanted, then it becomes a sin. Satan wanted Jesus to see material things as being more necessary than spiritual ones. Jesus shows that the spiritual bread, the Word of God, was more important than the material bread. Even today, the devil uses the same wiles<sup>8</sup> when he convinces men that having plenty<sup>9</sup> of things, abundance and material prosperity, is better than enjoying fellowship with God.

### III - THE TEMPTATION OF BEING LAUDED

**1. The prince of this world.** In the text of Luke 4: 5-8, the devil offers Jesus dominion over the kingdoms of the world. Jesus did not dispute the words of Satan when he said that he had authority over this world (Luke 4:6). Indeed, Christ himself stated that Satan is the prince of this world (John 16:11). The apostle John tells us that "the world is under the control of the evil one" (1 John 5:19). And the apostle Paul says that the devil is "the ruler of the kingdom of the air" (Eph 2.2). We live in a fallen world, with a wicked system, but, like Jesus Christ, we are not part of it (John 8:23; 17:9; 18:36). It is unfortunate when believers not only live up to the standards of this world, but also are fully committed to it.

**2. The pursuit<sup>10</sup> of earthly power.** Behind this wicked system there is a whole philosophy of domination. This power can be present both in the material sphere and in the spiritual one. It is the quest for glory and earthly power. The devil knows that the desire to be lauded<sup>11</sup>, to be called "lord," is something that fascinates men. Satan knew that he would make Adam fall by convincing him that he could become powerful

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<sup>7</sup> **n 1** erro, ato impróprio, lapso, deslize, falta. **2** tropeço, passo falso. **vt 1** tropeçar, pisar em falso. **2** fazer tropeçar. **3** cambalear, andar sem firmeza. **4** falar ou agir de modo hesitante. **5** errar, falhar. **6** encontrar por acaso, topar com. **to stumble at** chocar-se com. **to stumble into** meter-se em alguma coisa sem querer. **to stumble over** tropeçar sobre. **to stumble upon** achar por acaso, topar com.

<sup>8</sup> **n 1** ardil, astúcia, manha. **2** engano, embuste. **vt** enganar, atrair, usar de malícia.

<sup>9</sup> **n** abundância, profusão, fartura. **adj** abundante, copioso, farto. **having plenty of** abundantemente provido de. **in plenty** em excesso. **plenty large** bastante amplo. **plenty of time** tempo de sobra. **plenty of times** muitas vezes.

<sup>10</sup> **n 1** perseguição, persecução, caça. **2** ocupação, atividade. **3** busca, procura. **in pursuit of wealth** em busca de fortuna. **literary pursuits** atividades literárias.

<sup>11</sup> **n 1** louvor, elogio, enaltecimento. **2** hino religioso. **3 lauds** laudes: horas canônicas. **vt** louvar, elogiar, enaltecer, celebrar.

by acquiring knowledge. Adam believed that he could even be like God (Gen. 3:5). The bait<sup>12</sup> was thrown and Adam took it! The devil certainly believed that the same would happen to Jesus, the Son of Man. But Jesus did not bend before Satan. Certainly, many are exercising power and dominion in this world, but they are probably also bowing down to Satan.

#### IV. – THE TEMPTATION OF BEING NOTICED

**1. The trick<sup>13</sup> of the enemy.** The devil does not give up in the first losses and risks tempting Jesus once again with his favorite jargon: "If you are" (Luke 4:9). But now he adds the phrase "For it is written" (Luke 4:10). Satan tries to defeat Jesus by using the Bible! Obviously, he uses Psalm 91 out of context! When the Word of the Lord has exactly the meaning of what the Creator said, then it is indeed<sup>14</sup> His Word. But when it begins to have a particular sense, that is, one that God did not say, it is no longer His Word, but the word of Satan. The Bible, used out of context, as done by the devil and the sects he has created, is not the Word of God, but a weapon of the evil one. We must be very careful when we see someone handling the Bible. This "handling" may not be at the service of God!

**2. The pursuit of prestige.** When the devil wants to see someone fall, he seeks to take them up to the highest point (Luke 4:9). It is the temptation of being seen, of being noticed. It was something very tempting to know that dozens, perhaps hundreds of people, would be there to see and applaud that scene with cinematographic characteristics. Jesus did not bend to Satan's appeal.

There are a recognition and a fame that are biblical and there is nothing sinful about that (Gen. 12:2, 2 Sam 7:9). However, when the desire for publicity becomes an end in itself, then one begins to play into the hands of the devil. Unfortunately, many endeavor<sup>15</sup> to show off. This is sin, even though it is in the religious or the spiritual sphere.

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<sup>12</sup> **n 1** isca. **2** tentação, engodo. **3** alimento, lanche (tomado durante viagem). **4** pausa, parada, descanso para lanche. **vt 1** iscar, (anzol ou armadilhas). **2** tentar, atrair, seduzir. **3** açular cães. **4** atormentar, molestar com palavras cruéis. **5** deter-se para tomar alimento. **6** dar razão a animais (em viagem). **baiting place** a) lugar onde se açulam cães contra grandes animais como touros, ursos etc. b) hospedaria, estalagem. **to take the bait** cair no laço.

<sup>13</sup> **n 1** engano, embuste, fraude, trapaça.

<sup>14</sup> **adv** de fato, realmente, certamente, na verdade, naturalmente, entretanto. **interj** realmente!, decerto!, deveras! é mesmo?

<sup>15</sup> **n 1** esforço, empenho **b** empenhar-se, esforçar-se

## CONCLUSION

Jesus overcame Satan in the wilderness and in all other situations in which He faced him during his earthly ministry (Luke 4:1-13; 10:18,19). On the cross of Calvary, the Son of God defeated Satan definitively (Col. 2:15; Heb 2:14). Later, the apostle Paul would teach the church that all those who are in Christ also participate in this victory (Eph 1:20-22; 2:6). In Christ we are more than conquerors<sup>16</sup> (Romans 8:37); 1 Cor 15:57), however, as discerning Christians, we should not underestimate evil (Luke 22:31-34).

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<sup>16</sup> **n 1** conquistador, vencedor. **2 Sport sl** jogo final.