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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

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Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness –Part 2.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

After a very long fast in the wilderness – 40 days and nights – the Lord Jesus resisted Satan’s temptation to turn stones into bread to satisfy His hunger. Despite how starving He felt, Jesus used the words of Scripture to reject Satan and his cunning way of trying to get Him to not trust in God His Father.

Are there any ways that disciples of the Lord Jesus can reject Satan’s temptations too? Because Satan will tempt us, and often when we least expect it, we should prepare for it. In the Apostle Paul’s epistle to the Colossians, Chapter 3, he said: “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” Praising God for His goodness to us changes our focus from self to Him and He will help us to overcome temptation.

We are warned in James, Chapter 1, that each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own fleshly desires and enticed. The temptations you face in your life are no different from what others experience. But God is faithful. He’ll keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can’t stand up against it. When you are tempted, He’ll show you a way out so that you will not need to give into it. When you are face-to-face with temptation, remind yourself of God’s truths in the Bible and look for the way out that God has promised. Then follow this as fast as you can.

We can resist temptation using the Word of truth because Hebrews, Chapter 4, says that God's Word is living and active. We need to bring every thought into captivity into the obedience of Christ. This is done by regularly reading and thinking about what God is telling you is in the Bible. Letting the Holy Spirit guide you inside with life-giving and God-honouring thoughts, will help you identify Satan's voice, condemnation and lies when he whispers to your thoughts and feelings. When you prepare yourself for temptation by following God's principles in your daily life, the Holy Spirit will remind you of God's truths from Scripture whenever temptation comes.

The Bible verse in Romans, Chapter 8, reminds us that "in all things God works for the good of those who love Him." Have you ever wondered how anything good could come out of temptation? Why does God allow Satan to attack our faith and shower us with doubts? The more the devil tries to take away our faith in God, the tighter we have to hold onto it. God allows temptation so that we will cling more closely to Him.

Have you ever noticed how sometimes Satan seems to catch us by surprise? Something happens unexpectedly and we're caught off-guard? Yet at other times, we can see the possibility of a temptation coming from a long way off?

Yes, it is dangerous to persist in sin. We need to repent quickly when we do fail and fall into temptation. Otherwise sin will become an addiction to strangle the life out of our commitment to live faithfully for God. In James Chapter 1 it says: "Sin when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

In today's Bible Adventure, our arch-enemy Satan has two more tries to tempt the Lord Jesus sinning against His heavenly Father while incredibly weakened out in the wilderness.

Satan's first efforts to get Jesus to fall into sin took place before Jesus had even started His public ministry. All public ministries for God must be built on private victory first. We need our private victories over Satan before we take on leadership roles in the church. Our Lord wasn't tempted so that God could examine Him and see if He was worthy to be called the Son of God. God had already approved Him at His baptism, at the Jordan River months before.

Jesus was tempted for our sakes, that He might personally know temptation and be able to help us when we are tempted. He overcame the devil by using the same weapons available to us today. He used the Word of God, the power of the Holy Spirit and prayer.

The second temptation Satan brought against Jesus was to do with the interpretation of Scripture. Satan knows the Bible well and just because a person can quote Scripture, it doesn't always mean that they're a child of God. Some people use the words of God by twisting them to mean things they were never intended to mean. This is usually the case with religious groups called sects and cults. A verse of Scripture or text taken out of context can become a pretext or a false and misleading idea of what the phrase means.

Satan quoted from Psalm 91 and expected Jesus to carry out the quote. Jesus didn't plan to put Himself into danger unnecessarily. He refused to presume on God to save Him because He would be testing God.

In response, Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy, Chapter 6. We're not to tempt or test God. That chapter was very well known to Jewish people of ancient times. They quoted verse 4 several times a day, saying: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!" This was done to declare and remind them of their faith in God.

In the third temptation encounter, Satan tried to get Jesus to buy back all the kingdoms of the world from Satan by worshipping Satan. Jesus already knew that He was the Suffering Servant who would buy back individuals, and not kingdoms, with His own blood. God's methods for doing things are far different from Satan's. We must be careful that Satan doesn't tempt us to do things under the method of 'The end justifies the means.' This method never honours God.

Jesus again used Scripture from Deuteronomy, Chapter 6, to remind Satan that all created beings should worship God and serve Him only. After this answer, Satan left Jesus alone and angels came to help Jesus so Jesus could recover from his near-death experience out in the wilderness.

Sometimes people have the mistaken idea that Satan wants to give people pleasure. They want to have fun with the crowd and have a good time. Satan no more wants to give us pleasure than an athlete wants to lose a match. Satan hates us and wants to inflict as much suffering into our lives as he possible can. Satan offers the pleasure of sin only to inflict suffering on us later, and to make that suffering permanent.

A well-known Christian writer, Joni Erickson Tada, was paralysed from the neck down after a diving accident as a teenager. By the time Joni had gone through the trials of extended hospitalisation and had come to grips with her future life situation, she was in her late 20s, single and likely to remain so.

Satan came to tempt her. As she was greatly disabled, it would be alright to allow her mind to linger on thoughts of lust and fantasy. She could justify that after all the things that she had been forced to give up. Didn't her wheelchair entitle her to a little slackness now and then?

She wrote to her readers: “When God allows you to suffer, do you have the tendency to use your very trials as an excuse for sinning? Or do you feel that since you’ve given God a little extra lately, by taking such abuse, [that] He owes you a ‘day off’?”

This lady teaches us that there is no excuse – not suffering, not great sacrifice, not even paralysis, for indulging in impurity in our hearts and minds. Whatever temptation comes to us, we must not lose our loyalty to God and our dear Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the best ways of making Satan flee from us is to take authority and power over him in the name of Jesus. We can bind Satan and his deceiving spirits using the mighty name of Jesus that rose from the grave. When we speak out aloud in the name of Jesus against Satan and his attacks and schemes, he has no option but to recede from the situation.

To be effective against Satan, before binding Satan, we must confess our sins and be walking in obedience to God’s Word. When the devil harasses us, we must operate in faith and love; not in fear. This is spiritual warfare, and in each different situation we face, we must rely on the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us.

One woman wrote that the principles of praying in spiritual warfare to be these: ‘Be aggressive toward the enemy, ruthless with our own fleshly pride and selfishness, and kind and loving toward one another.’

Here’s a verse to put in your Scripture memory bank: James, Chapter 4, Verse 7: “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up.”

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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