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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1611 ~ Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness –Part 1.

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

Immediately after Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Jesus fasted and prayed out there for 40 days and nights. By the end of that time, He was physically very weak.

At the time of Jesus, the religious Jews fasted regularly. One of their more important fasts occurs on the 9th day of their month 'Av' (which is around mid-August). On that day, Jews have a complete fast from all foods and fluids, and they sadly remember the destruction of two Jewish Temples and other historical calamities, which happened on that date.

Before the fast starts, those taking part drink plenty of fluids to ensure they don't get dehydrated. They try to rest in cool shady places while others visit the Wailing Wall. To break the fast, they have small snacks along with plenty of fluids. The day of the fast is used for self-examination, and all the commercial businesses are closed for that day.

The Pharisees in Jesus' time were in the habit of fasting twice a week, and they did so to get recognition from the working people that they were so very spiritual. Jesus pointed out the correct way to fast in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 6. He said: "When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites; they make their faces unsightly so that other people may see that they are fasting. I tell you this: they have their reward already. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that men may not see that you are fasting, but only your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees what is secret will give you your reward."

Some of John the Baptist's disciples came to Jesus, saying that they fasted often and so did the Pharisees. Then why didn't Jesus' disciples also fast? This question they asked is recorded in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 9. In reply, Jesus gave Himself the role of a bridegroom. He said that His disciples wouldn't fast while He was there with them but later on, He would be taken away and then they would fast.

Fasting hasn't been given very much attention in Christian churches over the generations. Some people have held their own private fasts for a day, drinking only water in that time. Others use fruit juice or some other drink. People with certain health problems should only fast after checking first with their doctor.

In today's Bible Adventure, the exchanges between Jesus and Satan during Jesus' temptation period in the wilderness are presented from Satan's side. Satan, however, mustn't be treated as anything but a powerful enemy of God. We need to be aware of how he operates so that we are not harmed by his deceptive ways.

There are two major errors about the devil that we can believe. One is to disbelieve that Satan and his hordes of demons and evil spirits even exist. The other is to take an excessive and unhealthy interest in him and his evil powers.

When a person gives their life to the Lord Jesus, they immediately engage in an ongoing spiritual battle against the devil. In Ephesians, Chapter 6, it says: “For we are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities and cosmic powers of this dark age.”

People often have a wrong idea of the battle going on between God and Satan. God is the uncreated Creator who owns the world. Satan was a beautiful, created angel who became a thief and stole the world from God’s appointed manager, Adam. Since that time, all the people are born into a state of sinfulness and belong to Satan as master. But they don’t have to stay under this. Each individual can call on the Lord Jesus to save them out of Satan’s hands.

Both God the Father and the Lord Jesus are more powerful than Satan. But human beings without Christ are weaker than Satan. After Jesus’ birth, Satan tried to kill the Messiah through King Herod’s order to kill all Bethlehem baby boys under 2 years old. Later, Satan engineered Jesus’ crucifixion and thought he’d won at last. But that was Satan’s greatest mistake. Jesus’ sacrificial death, burial and resurrection fulfilled the Father’s plan to atone for sin and make God’s salvation freely available to anyone who calls on Jesus’ name.

Since then, Satan still tries to keep people from hearing this saving message or he will distort it. People think that they can run their own lives without God. But to try to live without God is to try to be God.

This is exactly the same thing Satan did in the beginning and for which he was thrown out of heaven. Satan wants you to believe that he is winning in this world, but it is nothing more than a lie. People need to be set free from the bondage of Satan by the power of the blood of Jesus.

Many Christians say they don't want to be in a battle with the devil. They just want to be normal Christians, go to church, mind their own business and not cause any trouble. But then one day, they find out that their child is on drugs or some other unexpected, demoralising trial comes to them, so they cry out for help and wade into the battle at hand to save themselves or their child.

We need to have faith that God is in charge and is always at work, even if we don't see this or recognise it as such. Satan knows that God is in complete control. Nothing catches God off-guard. Things that appear to be evil are still all part of God's plan. When Jesus went into the wilderness, He was led there by the Holy Spirit and not Satan.

Food caused Adam and Eve's downfall in the Garden of Eden. After Jesus hadn't eaten for almost six weeks, He most certainly was very hungry. So Satan tried to appeal to His urgent need for food. But Jesus answered Satan with a verse of Scripture from Deuteronomy, Chapter 8 and didn't sin.

This temptation showed how much discipline Jesus had over Himself. Some people try to avoid the word 'discipline', as they might have been over-disciplined as a child or have an impulsive-type of personality. True discipline is not imposed upon us but is rather, the inward discovery of God's ways.

Discipline in a person's life causes the unnecessary and second best things to be discarded in favour of the most important or best things of all. Discipline results in development of God's plan for a person's life.

A pastor who wrote a daily devotional booklet series for 40 years found that he had to say “No” to requests to speak at meetings, be on committees and even decline friendly invitations to dinner. He did this because these things would have interfered with his highest priority in life. He said that as Christians, we must discipline our lives so that nothing remains except that which counts and contributes.

The secret of self-discipline is to decide on your priorities according to God’s will and stick to them. The resolve to do the will of God, whatever that entails, must be paramount. That decision determines all other decisions. The surrender of self into the hands of God means self must be disciplined to die to itself. At the centre of God’s kingdom is a cross. Every one of us must continually go through spiritually what Jesus went through physically. We must die and be buried to our self to experience a resurrection into a fuller and freer life.

Does Satan find it easy to tempt you into doing things that you don’t want to do and that you know that you shouldn’t? Avoid these tempting situations wherever possible and escape straight away. Know and use Scripture as the truth of God to combat the lies of Satan.

Here’s a good song to learn and sing:

Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin.
Each victory will help you, some other to win.
Fight manfully onwards, dark passions subdue,
Look ever to Jesus, He will carry you through.

Ask the Saviour to help you, comfort, strengthen and keep you.
He is willing to aid you. He will carry you through.

Yes, Christians are in battle with Satan until they breathe their last breath on earth. They need to ask Christ for His strength to overcome the devil during each and every day.

Set into your mind James Chapter 4 Verse 7 which says: “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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