

“You are on the verge of wrecking your life.”

– Russell Moore, Tempted and Tried: Temptation and the Triumph of Christ



Lessons from the Temple – Jump and See

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" (Matthew 4:5-7)

The Place of Temptation: The Temple in Jerusalem

- ❖ The place of God in the city of God
- ❖ The tempter brings the Son of God to the earthly residence of Father God to test their relationship

The Point of the Temptation

- ❖ The tempter's underlying question: Can you really trust the Father?
- ❖ The tempter's sermon from Psalm 91
Satan knows the Scripture! He quotes from Psalm 91:11-12, calling to his and Jesus' mind the whole of the Psalm. The 91st Psalm describes the confidence believers may have in the Father through all kinds of dangers and trials.
- ❖ The tempter's implications
 - You don't and can't really trust the Father's Word.
 - You don't and can't really know that the Father truly loves you.
- ❖ The tempter's lure: when you are swept away from the brink of destruction, only then will you know that you are truly secure and loved by the Father.

- ❖ The tempter's desire: create disbelief in the Word and character of the Father just as he did with Eve; he wants Jesus to think that the relationship between the Son of God and Father God is not fully secure.

Jesus' Response

- ❖ Jesus quotes from Scripture – Deuteronomy 6:16-19
The full passage references *Massah*, a word that means “testing”. Shortly after God provided them manna from heaven for food, they ran out of water to drink. The people quarreled with Moses (Exodus 17:2, 7) asking, “Is the Lord among us or not?” After all the signs they had seen, the people disbelieved the provision of the Father and put Him to the test.
- ❖ Jesus sees the *Massah* temptation and rejects it

Jesus refused to force God protection – by throwing himself from the pinnacle – because he already “saw” it by faith. Jesus saw through the Devil’s implications, understanding that Psalm 91 does not teach that the anointed of God will not face trouble. The song says instead that the trouble will not triumph over the anointed. (Russell D. Moore)

Understanding Disbelief

- ❖ Disbelief is most tempting when we are feeling vulnerable – bad health, troubled marriage, work woes, financial struggles...
- ❖ Disbelief is the jumping off point – not trusting the Father, the Father’s Word and the Father’s provision becomes the springboard to despair, affairs, embezzlement, consuming anger, etc.
- ❖ Disbelief pursues security (prove you love me) and vindication (prove to others that you love me).
- ❖ Disbelief leaves us miserable and renders us useless to God, ourselves and others.
- ❖ Disbelief is the exact opposite of what God wants from us (Hebrews 11:6).

Standing on the precipice, struggling with insecurities and feelings of desperation, will you remember what God has said and what God has done already for you and trust your Father or will you disbelieve your Father and jump? Turn to Jesus, talk to Jesus, trust Jesus – He knows the feeling with which you are struggling and He will see you through.

Next Week: Lessons from the Mountain – You Can Have It All!