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THE Teachers' Preparation Leaflet

LESSON 7.

AUGUST 12th, 1894.

3rd QUARTER.

Temptation of Jesus. Matt. 4: 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: "In all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4: 15.

COMMIT TO MEMORY verses 1-4. Children's Hymnal 40, 148, 102, 116.

PROVE THAT—We should search the Scriptures. John 5: 39.

SHORTER CATECHISM—(Quest. 88. What are the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?)

DAILY PORTIONS.

(The Selections of the International Bible Reading Association.)

MONDAY.	TUESDAY.	WEDNESDAY.	THURSDAY.	FRIDAY.	SATURDAY.	SABBATH.
Matt 4: 1-11	Deut 5: 1-6	Ps. 21: 2-16	Deut 5: 12-19	Jas 1: 12-21	Heb 2: 2-18	Heb 4: 11-16

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

INTRODUCTORY. The temptation of Christ followed immediately upon his baptism. (Mark 1: 12.) Adam, the sinless man, was tempted and fell; Christ, "the second Adam," the sinless Saviour, in like manner met man's arch-enemy and vanquished him. As the garden was a fitting type of Adam's innocence, so the wilderness in which Christ met Satan, corresponded to man's condition of moral desolation through sin. The temptation of Christ was as real as that of our first parents. Read parallel accounts and note variations. Mark 1: 12, 13; Luke 4: 1-13.

LESSON PLAN. I. The First Temptation. vs. 1-4. II. The Second Temptation. vs. 5-7. III. The Third Temptation. vs. 8-11.

I. THE FIRST TEMPTATION. 1. **Then**—Immediately after his baptism. Mark 1: 12. **Led up**—from the banks of the Jordan to the mountainous and barren district between Jericho and Jerusalem. The traditional place is called *Quarantania*, from a Latin word meaning "forty," in reference to the time of our Saviour's fast. From the analogy of Moses and Elijah some think that Christ was led into the Arabian desert of Sinai. **Of the Spirit**—He was constrained by the Holy Spirit to go. Luke says that he "was full of the Holy Spirit," and Mark that "The Spirit driveth him." While we pray "Lead us not into temptation," we should never shrink from danger if the Spirit bids us face it. When we meet temptation while obeying the will of God we may be sure of victory over it (1 Cor. 10: 13). He will "carry us through." Mark says that he "was with the wild beasts." This made his solitude all the more dreadful. It was "A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades." Name some others who were led away by the Spirit. (1 Kings 1: 18; 2 Kings 2: 16; Ezek. 3: 14; Acts 8: 39.) **To be tempted**—He was led up for the purpose of being subjected to temptation. Why was this? (1) The scene in Eden must be re-enacted with a happier result. The "second Adam" must shew that he can stand where the first Adam fell. (2) He must pass through all human experiences with sin in order to be able to sympathize and help. Heb. 4: 15. (3) Although the issue was not doubtful, yet he him-

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self had to be "put to the proof," as the word for "tempt" literally means.

Two leading views are taken of the mode of Christ's temptation. (1) It is a literal narrative of objective facts. Satan really appeared in a visible and tangible form, and placed Christ actually in the circumstances mentioned. Of course it is admitted that the display of all the kingdoms of the world was not literal, but it was rhetorical, with a suitable basis of reality on which to build the word picture. (2) It describes, in dramatic language, a real but internal experience. Satan whispered his suggestions to the mind of Jesus. He was carried in imagination to the pinnacle of the temple, and in vision saw all the kingdoms of the world. Both views are full of difficulties but the first seems to accord best with the unartificial style of the Evangelist.

How could any suggestion of evil be a temptation to Christ? There was nothing in him which responded to it. We are unable to answer this question for: (1) the psychology of divine-human nature is beyond our philosophy; (2) we are assured that it was not on the best authority, that of the Holy Spirit who led him into it and who understood his nature thoroughly (Heb. 4: 15: 13) the evil cannot have originated in his pure and holy mind; (4) he was not tempted to do anything sinful in itself but to do or get, what he had a right to do or obtain, by wrong means. To procure food, to trust God's providence, to desire a world-wide empire, were not wrong, but to do these things after the devil's fashion would have been sin. This kind of temptation is the only one that could have been used with any prospect of success.

The devil — "The Slanderer," that is what the name means. He is the prince of evil spirits. He took the form of a serpent when tempting Eve, but we do not know what form he assumed to Christ. He could not have concealed his real nature from him. "The Christian" doctrine of the devil, as revealed in the word of God, is, that he is a created being of a higher order than man, who has fallen away from God (Jude 6); that he is related to sin as its primeval and seductive originator (John 3: 8: 44); that he is an adversary, accuser and a tempter of God's people (Gen. 3: Rev. 12: 9: Matt. 4: 1: 13: 39: John 14: 30); that he stands to the Redeemer in the relation of a conquered enemy (John 12: 31; Rev. 12: 9); and in relation to the redeemed as an enemy absolutely vincible (1 Pet. 5: 8, 9; Jas. 4: 7); that he nevertheless continues to rage and persecute on earth (Rev. 2: 10; 3: 9); and is finally related to universal heathenism and the world, as well as to apostate Judaism as a patron, prince and father (John 8: 44: 14: 30; Eph. 2: 2: 6: 11, 12); and that together with everything anti-Christian, he shall be delivered up to eternal punishment." (Butler.)

Fasted—Luke says, "he did eat nothing." Shewing that the fasting was real, not figurative, and also that it was absolute. The added words, "forty nights," also shew that the

time is to be reckoned literally, and not as an indefinite period. Compare Ex. 34: 28; Deut. 9: 9; 1 Kings 19: 8. He was too much absorbed in his spiritual conflict to feel hunger. He afterwards hungered (R. V.)—Luke seems to say that the temptation was going on all this time. The three given in our lesson may have been the three last and hardest. "Upborne and upholden above the common needs of the animal life by the great tides of spiritual gladness; in the strength of that recent baptism, in the solemn joy of that salutation and recognition from his Father, he found and felt no need these forty days. As a slighter incident of the same kind, he forgets hunger and thirst, or rather feels them no more, by the well of Samaria, in the joy of winning a lost soul (John 4: 31-34.)" (Trench.)

3. The tempter—the first instance of the use of this word as meaning "one who solicits to sin," a sense which it does not have in the classic writers. (Alford) 1 Thess. 3: 5. **If thou art** (R. V.)—does not imply any doubt of the fact that he was the Son of God, but was intended as an irritating taunt. (Compare ch. 27: 40.) "What is it worth to you if you can't keep yourself from starving," is the underlying suggestion. **The Son of God**—lit. "If a Son, thou art, of God," as the Voice declared (3: 7,) you have the right and power to do this. **Command that these stones be made bread**—"Speak, in order that these stones may become loaves." Exercise the creative power by which you made all things at first. John 1: 3; Ps. 33: 9. The stones were in the shape of the loaves generally used in Palestine, and looked not unlike them. The temptation was to use his miraculous power to satisfy his personal wants, and so shew distrust of his Father's care. Since he had voluntarily undertaken to become a man he must submit to all human wants without any other relief than other men have. He made water into wine and fed thousands miraculously but this was to relieve others, not himself. **Man shall not live by bread alone**—Deut. 8: 3. Jesus repels the attack of Satan in every case by the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6: 17.) He speaks and acts from the standpoint of his humanity all through the ordeal. Man needs something more than food. He needs an obedient and submissive heart. To eat food obtained by wrong means is to die spiritually; to starve rather than do wrong is to live forever. **But by every word**—i. e. by cheerfully submitting to every appointment of God. A Son's duty is filial trust in his Father's paternal love.

II. THE SECOND TEMPTATION. 5. Taketh him up—the verb implies taking him with him by constraint. - He is led by Satan's will, not by his own choice. Luke makes this the second temptation. The order is a matter of little consequence. Satan may not have been visible to others, or he may have seemed to them like a human companion, as they travelled to Jerusalem and entered the

temple. Jesus was willing to go with him, for he was ready, to be tested to the utmost, else Satan could have had no power over him. Some while admitting that the first temptation was literal, insist that the second and third must have taken the form of visions. But, as we do not feel any merit or demerit for what we do in our dreams, other than so far as it is taken to be indicative of radical traits of character, so, the resistance to Satan's temptations exhibited by Jesus when in such an abnormal physical condition as this theory supposes, would have lacked the essential element of moral victory. He must have been in the full possession of his natural senses and conscious of his surroundings, or else he was not tempted "like as we are." **The holy city**—The Arabic name of Jerusalem is *El Kuds*, or "the Holy." Neh. 11: 1, 18; Isa. 48: 2; 52: 1; Dan. 9: 24 Matt. 27: 33; Rev. 11: 2; 21: 2, also Matt. 5: 35. **The pinnacle**—lit. "the little wing." Some well known point, as the definite article implies. Probably the roof of "Herod's Portico," overlooking the Valley of Kedron at a height of 600 feet. "If any one looked down from the top of the battlements, or down both those altitudes, he would become giddy, while his sight could not reach to the immeasurable depth." (Josephus.) Others suppose it to have been the roof of Solomon's porch on the east side. James, our Lord's brother, suffered martyrdom by being thrown from the "pinnacle of the temple."

6. Cast thyself down—The temptation here was to put God's loving care to the test without good reason. It was a demand that he should make an unwarranted use of God's gracious promises. There is nothing to suggest that this was intended as "a daring miracle of display" to win over the people to his side. The temple is selected as being "his Father's house," where he might be more easily tempted to presume on his Father's presence and aid. The first temptation was answered by an expression of supreme trust in his Father, in the second Satan invites him to shew how much he trusts his Father. He says, in effect, "If then, you are prepared to go any length, even to starve, rather than distrust God, do what the promise of God warrants you in doing, see whether his angels will bear you up or not." **It is written**—Ps. 91: 11, 12. Notice what words Satan leaves out.

7. It is written again—i. e. "on the other hand." Deut. 6: 16. We can get the true meaning of a text only when we compare it with others. **Thou shalt not tempt**—a stronger word than is used of Jesus in verse 1, and in the connection, it carries with it the idea of testing beyond legitimate bounds. "Thou shalt not *dare* the Lord thy God." (Barnes). We must not expect that God will protect us if we rush into dangers unnecessarily. The words also contain a rebuke to Satan for tempting Christ, who was God.

III. THE THIRD TEMPTATION. 8. An exceeding high mountain—We are not

told where this mountain was. The traditional mountain of the temptation, *Quarantanta*, overlooking Jericho and the Jordan valley, with the distant prospect beyond, would furnish a sufficient local basis for the exhibition in glowing description, of the world-wide sovereignty which Satan offered. **All the kingdoms of the world**—This would have been impossible in a literal sense. Some very high mountain is meant, from which the prospect would afford a suitable basis for an eloquent description in words of the glories of temporal supremacy over them. Satan, as the Prince of this world, describes his empire. "By an angelical power he draws into one centre ideas from all the kingdoms and glories of the world, and makes an admirable map of beauties, and represents it to the eye of Jesus," (Jeremy Taylor). If we suppose that there was any "diabolical phantasmagoria" (Godet) we attribute to Satan a power which scripture does not indicate that he possesses. We detract from the dignity of the scene when we introduce Satan's magic. If all was represented miraculously to the eye of Jesus what need for ascending a high mountain? It was combination of sensible perception with rhetorical description. An actual exhibition of what lay within the boundary of vision, and an enumeration of the kingdoms which, in different directions, lay beyond it, with a glowing representation of their wealth and power ("and the glory of them") (Alexander) Luke adds "in a moment of time," which does not mean that the view lasted for a moment only, but that it was a "conspicuous," or exhibition of all together, so that the whole might be intellectually comprehended at once.

9. All these things will I give thee—"I will be your friend and not your enemy, if you will give me a formal acknowledgement of superiority." According to Luke, Satan asserted his right to give these things to whomsoever he would. He is the "ruler of this world" and can bestow many of its honors, but only as permitted by God. He had no power to give Christ the kind of sovereignty he came to obtain. The temptation here was to gain his kingdom by the help of Satan instead of through the cross and the grave—to use unlawful means to gain a right end.

10. Get thee hence—"Begone." Satan—"Adversary." **Thou shalt worship**—Deut. 6: 13; 10: 20; Josh. 24: 14; 1 Sam. 7: 3. No success is real that does not come through God's blessing, and obedience to him. Compare John 18: 36; Phil. 2: 6-8; Matt. 28: 18; Acts 10: 36.

11. The devil leaveth him—Jas. 4: 7. Luke adds "for a season," he came back again. Luke 22: 53; John 14: 40. **Angels came**—and supplied him with food and comfort. Compare 1 Kings 19: 5; Heb. 1: 14. Read Jas. 1: 12.

SUMMARY AND REVIEW.

By MR. DAVID FOTHERINGHAM, Toronto, Ont.

The wilderness and its temptations. What a strange introduction this seems to our Lord's public ministry. To-day publicly recognizing God's claims and ordinances; to-day receiving in fullness the priceless gift of the Holy Spirit; and to-day carried away from holy society that could comfort and sustain into the solitude of a wilderness, into a hand to hand conflict with the mightiest and most relentless foe of our race, of the Master himself. Yet equipped with God's word and Spirit and fully consecrated the victory was sure.

Four thousand years before the first Adam was laid low by an attack through his appetite, sinless in itself, but gratified in a sinful way, the second Adam repelled a similar temptation by appealing to the divine law that man must live in God's appointed way and not by mistrusting or forestalling it. Baffled here Satan suggests an easy way for the Messiah to establish his reputation as such before Israel and at the same time to secure a token that he is indeed under the divine care by casting himself down from a dizzy height. This uncalled for tempting of Providence was instantly rejected. "It is written thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" flashed from the sword of the Spirit and the temptation fell harmless at the Saviour's feet.

The third temptation was an appeal to ambition, lawful in itself, but suggesting an unholy alliance with the ruler of the darkness of this world and for a worldly dominion instead of a spiritual and enduring kingdom. With a mighty indignation at Satan's unblushing but dazzling effrontery Jesus cries "avaunt" and hurls back the temptation with the victorious word "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him alone shalt thou serve."

1. The disciple must be as his Lord in service and trial.
2. Great privilege is attended by great trial.
3. Satan skillfully adapts his temptations to the peculiar conditions of the tempted.
4. We must meet them with God-given weapons—his Spirit and Word.

BLACKBOARD.

- I. Temptation succeeds through weak flesh, weak faith, false ambition.
- II. Temptation is overcome through God's Scriptures, Spirit, Strength.

Ten Minutes Normal Drill

Based on the text-book, "The Sabbath School Teacher's Handbook; or, The Principles and Practice of Teaching, with special reference to the Sabbath School," and prepared by Principal Kirkland of the Toronto Normal School.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

(Continued.)

VIII. The Sabbath School Teacher should possess an agreeable manner and a cheerful disposition.—To many a pupil his teacher is the representative and embodiment of what a Christian ought to be, and if that teacher is of a fault-finding, sad and whining disposition, the pupil will naturally think that Christianity is not that joyous and beautiful thing that it is represented to be.

IX. Earnestness is a powerful factor in making a successful Sabbath School Teacher.—If we wish to impress others, one of the first requisites is to be ourselves impressed. That which we know and greatly care about we very soon learn to impart, but that which we know and do not care about we will soon cease to know at all. We must feel deeply what we wish others to feel.

X. And lastly Hopefulness is by no means the least important of the characteristics of the Sabbath School Teacher.—The teacher should remember that he is doing God's work, and that God has never proved unfaithful, but has always owned and blessed every work done for him. The blessing may not always come when and in the manner we expect, but that it will come there is no doubt.

Read pages 33, 38 of the Text Book.