

Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.
Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.
Psalm 25:14

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Straight and Narrow

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Photo courtesy of John Romano D'Orazio

Moses viewed the Promised Land from Mount Nebo, and it is possible that this is the site of the temptations of Christ. This view overlooks the Dead Sea and Jericho area.



The Temptations of Christ, Part 1

By Allen Stump

Throughout the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, we find many important points vital to the plan of salvation; yet, Jesus was a great economist in his life because he did not waste time.¹ Jesus understood the preciousness of the talent of time, and everything he did was important and vital. An aspect of his life that is most important to the plan of salvation is some relatively short and concentrated moments that compose what we refer to as the temptations or as the temptations of the wilderness.

During his time in the wilderness, Jesus obtained a special victory over Satan, and this series is designed to look at some of the details of those temptations and to find important lessons for us living during a time when Satan's temptations will be hurled against us with great fury.²

The first verses of Matthew 4

The narrative of Matthew begins:

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. (Matthew 4:1, 2)

The context of this experience takes place immediately after the baptism of Jesus Christ, at which time God pronounced heaven's endorsement upon Jesus as not only being the Son of God but also as one in whom God was well pleased (Matthew 3:17).

1. "Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time" (Ellen White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 342.1).

2. We encourage everyone to read Chapter 12, "The Temptations," in *The Desire of Ages* as a precious help for these studies.

Matthew 4:1 begins with the word *then*. We might think this is simply a transition word and not meaning much, but may I remind you of what Jesus said shortly after this:

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:4)

We will look at this verse in more detail later, but Jesus is telling us that every word has its place and bearing in Scripture and should not be casually received.

Beloved, there is an economy of use in the Scriptures. Although we think of the Bible as being one book, we know it is a collection of sixty-six smaller writings, which compose the one Holy Bible. Yet, in this one book is a lifetime of learning and a depth of understanding that no volume or volumes of the world can give.

The word translated *then* in Matthew 4:1 is *τότε* (*tote*). This word does indicate a transition, but it means "a transition of thought and locates the new section of the narrative at a definite point of time which may immediately be following the preceding incident" (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 308).

Verse 1 also notes that Jesus *was led up into the wilderness*. If you live in a relative flat area, this may not mean much to you, but that country was an area of mountains, valleys, and plains. Jesus had been baptized in the Jordan River, and topographically it was an area very low in elevation; in fact, it is over 1,200 feet below sea level! The Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea just a few miles from the area in which Jesus was baptized. If Jesus had gone into the wilderness area either to the west or the east, he might have gone to an elevation of over 2,500 feet, making the total ascent over 3,700 feet. He truly went *up* to the wilderness.

Matthew 4:1 further says that Jesus was "led up of the spirit." Mark uses an even stronger term in his gospel. He writes:

And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. (Mark 1:12)

Immediately after the baptism, at this distinct point of time, Jesus was led or driven into the wilderness. From his birth Jesus Christ had been under the guidance, inspiration, and instruction of God's Spirit and at his baptism, the Spirit was given to Jesus in rich measure to provide him with wisdom and skill for his appointed mission. Matthew writes:

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: (Matthew 3:16)

Luke records the testimony of Peter:

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. (Acts 10:38)

The text says Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit. When gospel workers are anointed, oil is used because it represents the Spirit of God. We also know that the Spirit is "given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). Jesus kept his Father's commandments (John 15:10). Jesus is our substitute. He takes our place and dies for our sins, but, dear reader, do not ever think that Jesus is only our substitute; he is our example also. Jesus did not die and become our substitute so that we could continue in sin. Jesus is our example, and we want to be like Jesus.

Jesus was led by the Father at every step, even at an early age when he was left in Jerusalem at twelve years of age. Jesus had gone with his parents to the Passover, and they had lost sight of him for a day. They came back to Jerusalem looking for him and when they finally found him, he said unto them,

How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? (Luke 2:49)

Jesus was involved in his Father's business from a very early time. The Spirit of God was directing him and in John 5, we read of Jesus dialoguing with some of the religious leaders of his day:

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. (John 5:19, 20)

Jesus said that the Father showed him what he was going to do.

Before He came to earth, the plan lay out before Him, perfect in all its details. But as He walked among men, He was guided, step by step, by the Father's will. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 147.2)

Praise our Father that he is not a respecter of persons. What God did for Jesus he will do for you because he loves you too. Jesus said in John 17:23 that the Father loves you just like he loves his only begotten Son:

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (John 17:23)

That is a magnificent statement! It is one of the greatest and most profound statements of scripture.

Jesus was led up into the wilderness. Some believe that the site of the temptations is in the rugged barren hills that rise to the west of Jericho in Judea, while others think it was to the east and perhaps Mount Nebo, where Moses died. The exact location has not been revealed, so it is not necessary for us to know the exact location.

The Spirit drove Jesus to the wilderness to be tempted. The Greek word that is translated *tempted* is from *πειράζω* (*peirazō*). This word can carry the idea of testing, perhaps with an evil motive. *Peirazō* is used in Matthew 19:3:

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting (*peirazō*) him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

Here *peirazō* carries the idea to entice to improper behavior. A lesson that we need to learn is that Jesus did not invite temptation. He did not conscientiously place himself on the devil's enchanted ground. Jesus retired to the wilderness to be alone with his Father and to meditate upon the task that was before him, and that is why he was there. Satan used the opportunity to tempt Jesus, but Jesus did not give him any advantage by his actions or by his thoughts.

When Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted, He was led by the Spirit of God. He did not invite temptation. He went to the wilderness to be alone, to contemplate His mission and work. By fasting and prayer He was to brace Himself for the bloodstained path He must travel. But Satan knew that the Saviour had gone into the wilderness, and he thought this the best time to approach Him. (White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 114.2)

Could Jesus really be tempted?

I am going to ask a question that may sound like a very stupid question. Could Jesus really be tempted? The Bible says he was tempted, but can you really be tempted to sin, if you cannot sin? Let that thought sink in for a minute because if you cannot be tempted to sin, you cannot sin. The majority of the professed Christian world teaches that Jesus could not choose to sin. Satan, however, did not believe that for a minute, and that is why he tempted him not only in the wilderness but all through his life. Satan truly believed that Jesus could be tempted. Satan believed that Jesus could fail and ruin the plan of salvation, and that is why Satan tempted Jesus and harassed him so hard.

I recently did a Google search with the phrase “could Jesus have sinned?” In theological terms the question that would be asked is “was Jesus peccable, or was he impeccable?” *Peccable* means *capable of sinning*. *Impeccable* means *incapable of sinning*. The vast majority of references declared that Jesus was not capable of sinning but if he could not sin, how could he really be tempted?

Could Jesus have temptations from within as well as from without? Do you have temptations from within as well as from without? Did Jesus really suffer from temptations?

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; (Hebrews 5:7)

In other words, there was within Jesus a struggle to stay pure, true, and holy. Praise God he did, and he understood well what was within man. John writes:

But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man. (John 2:24, 25)

It was not because Jesus, while on earth, had the foreknowledge God has or because Jesus was omniscience that he knew what was in man. No, it was because he, himself, was a man and knew the struggles within man. Jesus was a human being with our flesh. He understood the trials and temptations that we have both from without and within, the inner urgings to do wrong that we have because of our fallen natures.

There is a difference between temptations from without and those from within. Maybe someone comes up to you and provokes you to wrath. They are begging you to hit them. This is something from without, but you can have temptations from within also. You could be sitting in the solitude of the forest, even praying, and still think of something evil to dwell upon. There need not even be a demon

to suggest impure thoughts; yet, we are to overcome as Jesus overcame. We are told:

We must war against temptations without and within. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 47.1)

So, if we must fight against battles from without and from within, Jesus must have had the same battles so as to help us; otherwise, he was not tempted in all points like we are. But the Bible says he was tempted in all points:

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

In *The Ministry of Healing*, we read:

Not until the life of Christ becomes a vitalizing power in our lives can we resist the temptations that assail us from within and from without. (Ellen White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 130.5)

So, his power enables us to “resist the temptations that assail us from within and from without” But how can Jesus help us, if he only had temptations from without? We also have this inspired facet of this truth:

We need not place the obedience of Christ by itself as something for which he was particularly adapted, because of his divine nature; for he stood before God as man’s representative, and was tempted as man’s substitute and surety. *If Christ had a special power which it is not the privilege of a man to have, Satan would have made capital of this matter.* But the work of Christ was to take from Satan his control of man, and he could do this only in a straightforward way. He came as a man, to be tempted as a man, rendering the obedience of a man. Christ rendered obedience to God, and overcame as humanity overcome. *To attribute to his nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan, is to destroy the completeness of his humanity.* The obedience of Christ to his Father was the same obedience that is required of man. (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, April 10, 1893, par. 3; emphasis supplied)

Whatever power Jesus had with which to overcome, it is the privilege of mankind to have that same power. If we are born of the Spirit as Jesus was, we have all the help of heaven:

. . . God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, subject to the weakness of humanity. He permitted Him to meet life’s peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss. (White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 49.1)

Many evangelicals do not have any issue with the first part of the above statement, but they do with the last part, which says “at the risk of failure and eternal loss.” This means that Jesus could have sinned and that he could have failed. Jesus could have had eternal loss, which means he could have chosen to sin.

The eternal loss mentioned above included the whole universe. All of creation was at risk. The government of God was riding upon the shoulders of Jesus. That is why Isaiah 9:6 says the government was upon his shoulder. This means that the whole government of God balanced upon the shoulders of Jesus Christ and if he had not stood firm, the government of God would have crumbled and would have ceased to exist.

Jesus was tempted in all points like we are tempted. We read that in Hebrews 4:15. Also in Hebrews, Paul states:

For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2:18)

Beloved, you need help from temptations that are from without and from temptations that are from within and if Jesus is going to help you, he has to understand both temptations. You truly do have a representative before the Father who fully understands you.

Remember the Google search on “could Jesus have sinned”? It is amazing how many different theological websites quoted verses like these from Hebrews and acknowledged that *Jesus was tempted just like we are* and that *Jesus knows our temptations*, but they almost always stated that Jesus was impeccable. He was tempted but those temptations meant nothing and could bring no real risk. If that were true, Jesus would not be a full Saviour, and we would not have a high priest who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses.

Jesus does know by experience what humanity can endure, and he has promised to temper the power of the tempter, according to our individual strength to endure, and to provide a way of escape from every temptation. Jesus takes and weighs out very carefully every temptation before it comes to us. How can we know this? Because we have this promise:

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Within each person’s heart, the great conflict, which Christ passed through in the wilderness of temptation, is, to a lesser degree, repeated, but this is needed for our development. Without testing, without the opportunity to

choose to do what is right or to choose what is wrong, there cannot be any character development. It is by resisting lesser temptations that we develop the power to withstand greater temptations.

Matthew 4:1 says that Jesus was led up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (διάβολος, *diabolos*). *Diabolos* means *slanderer* or *accuser*. The name *Satan* means *adversary*. There are those who contend that there is no personal devil, but Christ considered him very real. Jesus said:

And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. (Luke 10:18)

In fact, according to Colossians 1:16, it was Jesus who created Lucifer a shining angel. Jesus did not create him as a devil. He created him pure and holy.

Before his fall he was a covering cherub, distinguished by his excellence. God made him good and beautiful, as near as possible like himself. (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, September 24, 1901, par. 4)

But the mystery of sin arose in him. Self-exaltation entered his heart, and he became the devil and Satan.

Verse 2

After fasting for forty days and nights, Jesus was hungry. The Greek word translated *fasted* is from νηστεύω (*nēsteuō*), and it means “to go without food for a set time as a religious duty” (Johannes Louw, Eugene Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, vol. 1, p. 540). This was obviously not just simply a ritual fast that Jesus was engaged in. Another lexicon says it was “as a preparation for prayer” (Frederick Danker, William Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., p. 672).

Jesus was asked why he and his disciples did not fast like the Pharisees and the disciples of John:

Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? (Matthew 9:14)

Little did they know of the supreme fast of Jesus. In connection with this point, we face today the same danger of trying to make fasting a means of earning merit before God and of commending ourselves to God that they faced in the times of the Bible. Among some people today, fasting is the ultimate weight loss method, but that is not the biblical fasting that God wants us to have. We read about the true fast in Isaiah:

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? 6 Is

not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? (Isaiah 58:5, 6)

Fasting certainly has its place today. Jesus spoke of a boy possessed by a demon and noted that “this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting” (Mark 9:29). Fasting today should be with the great purpose of achieving clarity of mind in order to think and pray better and to know how to discern the will of God and how to do God’s will. This is the absolute antithesis of the drowsiness that comes from overeating! Maybe you have never overeaten and have never felt the drowsiness that goes with it, but I assure you the experience is common to many. After a large meal, most people want to sleep, and their spiritual perception of truth is dulled.

The will of God is best discerned by a temperate diet and at times even by a complete abstinence from food. You may hear of someone on a juice fast, where they only use juice, but Luke 4:2 records that Jesus ate nothing.

There are two similar fasts mentioned in the Bible. Moses was “with the LORD forty days and forty nights; [and] he did neither eat bread, nor drink water” (Exodus 34:28). Also, Elijah was without food for forty days, according to 1 Kings 19:8.

The longest modern recorded case of survival without food and with a very meager amount of water is eighteen days by Andreas Mihavecz of Austria. When Mihavecz was eighteen, he was put into a holding cell in prison on April 1, 1979, in a local government building in Austria. Tragically he was forgotten by the police; however, on April 18, 1979, he was discovered, close to death. He did get some water from condensation on his cell walls.

Mahatma Gandhi’s longest of many fasts lasted twenty-one days.

The longest-lasting hunger strike in recorded history was undertaken by an Irish political prisoner, Terence MacSwiney, whose seventy-four-day strike ended with his death in 1920.

Forty days, for most people, will leave them either dead or extremely weak and near death. There is no question about this matter. Contrary to breatharians, forty days without food will decimate anyone and according to Matthew 4:3, this was when Satan came to Jesus.

The need for the right arm

Satan comes to us and tries to attack us at our times of greatest weakness because it is at this time that we are most likely to fall. For this reason, it is of vital importance to preserve the physical, mental, and emotional powers at the

highest level of strength and efficiency possible. This is why health reform has such an important part in the three angels’ messages. Especially in these last days, God’s people need all the spiritual perception that they can get to fight against the devil.

Satan is going to come to you and even at your best, you are weak. Health reform is a necessity for the believer living at the end of time. While good nutrition is a large, important part of health reform, it is not the totality of the plan. We call it *health reform* not just *diet reform*. Diet is one of the eight natural remedies that God has given us, but it is not the whole program. Diet is one-eighth of the program. You still need fresh air, exercise, water, and the other parts to complement diet.³

We need all the help we can get, and following the whole health plan is important. Anything that weakens the mental and physical powers weakens our defenses against the wiles of the tempter and opens the way for the evil one to enter the soul. Some things to especially avoid are:

- ☞ overwork
- ☞ lack of exercise
- ☞ overeating
- ☞ poor diet
- ☞ lack of sleep
- ☞ anything that lessens intellectual alertness and emotional control

It is also important to not entertain thoughts of discouragement, defeat, or resentment. These negative emotions have a similar effect as well. That is why we are counseled:

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (Colossians 3:2)

Paul also counsels us:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (Philippians 4:8)

These are the things Jesus was doing in the wilderness when he was tempted, and they are things we can do to help us when we are tempted. Jesus was praying and thinking on heavenly things. He was setting his affections on things on high, and that helped him when the devil came to tempt, test, and try him.

3. Exercise actually increases your cognitive abilities. There have been clinical studies which prove that people who exercise regularly have increased cognitive abilities!

We must bring our bodies into subjection to the laws of nature given us by our Creator, or we run the risk of being lost.

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. (1 Corinthians 9:27)

Paul said that he must *keep under his body*. That English is a little difficult because it sounds like he has gotten something underneath his body. The difficulty evaporates when we understand that the syntax can actually be best arranged *I keep my body under*, or in control, and bring it into subjection. The English Standard Bible says:

But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:27)

The RSV is even stronger:

but I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:27)⁴

The expression to *keep under* is from the single Greek word ὑποπιᾶζω (*hupōpiazō*). *Hupōpiazō* means to literally *strike under the eye* or *to give a black eye*. It implies to put under strict discipline, to punish, or even to torment.

Are you willing to put yourself under strict discipline so you may have the victory that Jesus had? Are you willing to live like Jesus lived? Are you willing to bring everything into subjection to him? Are you willing to set your affections on things on high? Beloved, we must keep our minds fixed on the things that are true, honest, just, pure, and righteous and true. Remember that Satan will come to you at your weakest times and even your strongest time is too weak to stand against him.

You need all the help you can get. Our example, Jesus, prepared for every temptation. He had a clear mind. He was ready to go and as we will see in the next part of this series, he was victorious, and his victory can be your victory! 卐

4. The Greek text for 1 Corinthians is the same for the KJV, ESV, and the RSV.

Youth's Corner

Sharing a Blessing

(The following is from the book, *1000 Illustrations for Preaching & Teaching* by G. Curtis Jones.)

R. L. Middletown shared a scintillating story concerning a wealthy industrialist who stopped every morning at a certain shoeshine parlor. An Italian boy always shined his shoes. Tony liked Mr. Ward, and the feeling was mutual. One morning Ward asked his young friend, "If you could have one wish fulfilled, Tony, what would that wish be?"

The boy stopped, looked his friend in the eye, and replied, "I would like to study medicine. Above everything else in the world, I would like to be a doctor....But I have to take care of my mother."

Deeply moved, the philanthropist retorted, "Tony, suppose I told you that I would give you—not lend you—enough money to see you through the university and medical school, what would you say?"

Smilingly the boy answered, "I would say you wouldn't do it."

"I will do it, Tony. You are shining your last pair of shoes."

The boy laid down the shine rag and kissed the shoes that were being bathed in tears.

Their friendship continued. Arduous years of schooling were completed. Time passed. Tony married. He enjoyed a lucrative practice. Then one day, a beautiful car stopped in front of Ward's office. The young doctor hurried up the familiar stair. The meeting of the men was very tender. Finally, Doctor Tony said, "This is a great day for me. Here's a check for all the money you have spent on my education, with interest."

Ward took the check, looked at it for a brief moment, slowly endorsed it, and handed it back, saying, "Tony, I never expect any returns from the investments I make in human life. Anyhow, God has credited me with it on His books, so it does not belong to me. Take it and find another boy that is worthy. Send him through school on it. Maybe someday he will hand it back to you." 卐

The Temptations of Christ, Part 2

By Allen Stump

Total dependence upon the word of God

Jesus has trod the path before us. He has met every temptation and has conquered. If you have ever gone hiking in a rough area that has not been cut down or have gone hiking through deep snow, you know the person who is leading has to break the trail, and that this is always a lot harder than following from behind. The good news is that Jesus has broken the trail for us.

In the first part of this series, we learned that when the Bible says Jesus was tempted, it really means he was tempted. That might sound obvious, but in reality most theologians think that Jesus was impeccable and could not sin. But if he could not sin, he could not have been tempted. The Greek word we translate *tempted* in Matthew 4:1 is from *πειράζω* (*peirazō*), and it means to attempt to entrap through a process of inquiry. You can only be tempted if you can choose to sin.

This part of the series is on the lesson of total dependence upon the word of God, based on Matthew 4:3, 4:

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:3, 4)

Verse 3

Satan is called the tempter. This is from the Greek word *peirazōn*, a participle form of *peirazō*. Satan has many titles in the Bible. The name *Satan* is used fifty-six times in forty-nine verses, and it means *adversary*. He is called *Lucifer* in Isaiah 14:13, meaning *shining one*. He is called the devil, meaning *slanderer*, 116 times in 105 verses. He is called *accuser of our brethren* once in Revelation 12:10, and *Beelzebub* seven times in seven verses. Beelzebub was a Philistine deity. The name means *lord of flies*.

This formerly mighty angel is also referred to in the Bible as the *dragon*, the *great dragon*, the *great red dragon*, the *man of sin*, *murderer from the beginning*, *old serpent*, *prince of the devils*, *prince of the power of the air*, *prince of this world*, and *the wicked one*, among others. These are certainly not flattering names or titles.

These names and titles reflect what his character has become. They are not simply a personification of evil characteristics. It was a personal devil that came to Jesus. It was a personal devil that Jesus defeated and routed. There is no evidence anywhere in Scripture that the temptations of Christ were some type of subjective experience, occurring

exclusively within the mind of Jesus. The devil is very real and as he came to Jesus, he will come to you! He comes as the accuser of the brethren. The sad fact is, beloved, many times the father of lies can tell the truth when he accuses us before God because we have not lived up to the light that we have been privileged to have. But I want to live in such a way, and I pray that you will want to also, that Satan must lie when he accuses me before God.

Now it is true we can put ourselves upon his enchanted ground and make ourselves more of a prey than we would be otherwise, but even if we do all things perfectly and even if we go into the woods or into the wilderness to pray, Satan can come to tempt us.

Notice how Satan begins. He tempted Jesus to deny that he is the Son of God:

If thou be the Son of God. Satan had witnessed the baptism of Jesus and had heard the proclamation from heaven:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (Matthew 3:17)

Jesus knew he was the Son of God and would clearly proclaim it later:

For God so loved the world, that he gave *his only begotten Son*, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because *I said, I am the Son of God?* (John 10:36)

This is the issue of the gospel. If there is no Father and no Son, then there is no supreme gift and no salvation. No wonder John writes:

Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. (1 John 2:22)

It is the spirit of antichrist to deny the Father and the Son. When Peter made his great confession, he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). He understood that the Christ was the Son of God. To deny that Jesus is the Son of God is to deny he is the Christ, and that is antithetical to the gospel. The temptation for Jesus to doubt his sonship would have destroyed the plan of salvation, if Jesus had failed on that point.

Remember that Jesus had been fasting for forty days and, unlike with Moses or Elijah, there had been no supernatural intervention to preserve him physically. He was

pale, weak, emaciated from hunger, worn, haggard with mental agony, and famished beyond measure! Isaiah prophetically described Christ at the time of his temptations:

As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: (Isaiah 52:14)

Jesus looked terrible and even pathetic. There are pictures which portray Jesus in a normal-looking manner during the temptations, but he would not have looked like those pictures. He would have looked terrible.

All good generals attack when their opponent is the weakest, and this was Satan's opportunity. Now he believed he could overcome Christ.

Certainly from a visual point of view, Jesus hardly gave the appearance of being the Son of God.

Satan's words "if thou be" confronted Jesus with the question, How do you know you are the Son of God? It was a way of saying: *You look terrible! If you were God's Son, if you were his darling, you would not look like this. You would not be as destitute and alone as you are.* But God had spoken, and Jesus knew it was the voice, the word, of God, and God never lies.

It was Satan's purpose to lead Eve to disbelieve the clearly stated word of God in regard to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan wanted Jesus to disregard, to deny, and to forget the word of God. In the same way, Satan approaches you today, endeavoring to get you to disbelieve the plain truths clearly stated in the revealed word of God. These plain truths include the Father and Son; living by faith; the Royal Law, including the fourth commandment; when you die, you truly die; etc.

Remember, Jesus came as a baby in Bethlehem, and there is no evidence anywhere in the Bible that he came with memories of everything that had happened before the incarnation. Jesus was taught, and he studied, scripture. It is true Jesus had revelations and special communication with the Father, but all of that is also available to us. His knowing he was the Son of God was based upon the word of God, and God's word had declared Jesus to be his Son. Repeatedly Jesus said *it is written* in reply to the traps set by Satan and by the fallen angels.

The words of Satan upon this occasion were later echoed by the scornful Jewish leaders as they addressed Christ on the cross:

And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. (Matthew 27:40)

Notice the test was *to command* the rocks to become bread not to simply *turn the rocks* into bread or to *create* bread. The temptation was based upon the authority of Jesus and not upon superhuman power within himself. This would not be the last time Jesus would be asked to perform a miracle to prove his sonship to God, but Jesus always refused to perform miracles when challenged to do so. In each case he performed a miracle, it was to meet some specific need of the people to whom he sought to minister.

Even after his resurrection, Jesus said:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power [ἐξουσία] is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (Matthew 28:18)

The Greek word for power in this verse is ἐξουσία (*exousia*), which means *delegated authority*. All *authority* has been given unto Jesus by the Father. When Christ was on earth, he had authority. He could command things, and it would be done, but not because of any intrinsic power he had but because he had the authority, and God would grant him what he asked.

Satan was challenging the authority of Christ. Satan knew that Jesus, of himself, could not turn the rocks into bread. He realized that in the incarnation Jesus would have no advantage that is not available to us. As Jesus himself would soon note:

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. (John 5:19)

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. (John 5:30)

Ellen White comments on Christ's inability to perform miracles in his own power:

When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in perfect peace. There was no trace of fear in word or look, for no fear was in His heart. But He rested not in the possession of almighty power. It was not as the "Master of earth and sea and sky" that He reposed in quiet. *That power He had laid down*, and He says, "I can of Mine own self do nothing." John 5:30. He trusted in the Father's might. It was in faith—faith in God's love and care—that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the power of God. (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 336.1; all emphasis supplied in this article unless otherwise noted)

All the miracles of Christ performed for the afflicted and suffering were, *by the power of God, through the ministrations of angels.* (Ellen White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 67.2)

The *miracles of Christ* were performed by his authority through the power of the Father by the holy angels. They were not miracles that Jesus did of himself from power within himself. When Jesus was tempted to command the stones to become bread, it was not to use his own power but to use his authority, which would have been wrong in this case. We are further told:

To attribute to his nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan, is to destroy the completeness of his humanity. The obedience of Christ to his Father was the same obedience that is required of man. (Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, April 10, 1893, par. 3)

All the power of God that was available to Jesus is available to us. At times Jesus could know the thoughts of people while on earth. That seems to indicate that he used power within himself, but there was a time when Elisha could read the thoughts of the king of Syria when he was in his bedchamber (2 Kings 6:12). Jesus healed the sick and raised the dead, but so did the apostles (Acts 3:2–10; 9:36–40).

Satan tempted Jesus to command the stones be made into bread. He, no doubt, pointed to the stones lying on the ground at Jesus' feet, some of which were roughly in the shape of the disk-like oriental loaf of bread.

Jesus had fasted for forty days. He was in need of food; there is no doubt about that. Appetite was, thus, the basis of Satan's opening attack on the Son of God, even as it was the basis of his approach to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Jesus proved he has conquered appetite.

Do you think most Americans have conquered appetite? When we consider that two-thirds of Americans are overweight and that half of these are clinically obese, it would be impossible to think that most Americans have conquered appetite. I first learned the three angels' messages from a church that was composed of people connected to a very conservative self-supporting institution. Everybody followed health reform pretty strictly. This was the only Adventism I knew at the time. I thought to myself, *there will never be such a thing as an overweight Seventh-day Adventist.* The truth is too many of our people are carrying excessive weight that is not healthful, but the good news is that Jesus has conquered appetite, and he can help you conquer appetite too.

A word of caution. We are not to judge people. A person might be thin as a rail and still not have overcome appetite.

We can eat the wrong things, at the wrong time, and in the wrong ways, and it might not show outwardly, but our appetites may be just as perverted as one who is overweight.

The physical nature must be constantly under the control of the higher powers of the mind—the will and the reason—in order to avoid ruin. Paul states the need to keep the body under the control of the higher powers:

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. (1 Corinthians 9:27)

This can be done, when we have the mind of Christ:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (Philippians 2:5)

Satan wants to use the lusts of the flesh to control the mind. Christ, on the other hand, wants to use your mind to control your body and the lusts that it has. We are to bring “into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5) and when we do that, the control of the body will follow.

Let us notice the following two paragraphs, and let us remember that the brain is not the mind. The mind functions through brain. The brain is an organ of the body, a part of the body. The body is not everything minus the brain.

The body is the only medium through which the mind and the soul are developed for the upbuilding of character. Hence it is that the adversary of souls directs his temptations to the enfeebling and degrading of the physical powers. His success here means the surrender to evil of the whole being. The tendencies of our physical nature, unless under the dominion of a higher power, will surely work ruin and death.

The body is to be brought into subjection. The higher powers of the being are to rule. The passions are to be controlled by the will, which is itself to be under the control of God. The kingly power of reason, sanctified by divine grace, is to bear sway in our lives. (Ellen White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 130.1–2)

In perfect agreement with Paul, we read here of the need of the body to be brought into subjection. The passions are to be controlled by the will, when it is controlled by God.

In his temptation, Satan suggested that Christ satisfy his hunger in a wrong way, without regard to what the Father's will might be. Satan's temptation implied that God must be unkind to leave his Son alone to suffer hunger, particularly when it was entirely unnecessary.

Verse 4

Jesus answered Satan with *it is written*. Christ's faith and dependence were in God. How did he learn about God? Did he come with the knowledge of the Bible imprinted in his DNA? Did Jesus have a memory card in his brain? Of course not. He learned the knowledge about God just like we do, from the Scriptures. Christ's knowledge of God's will was founded on the Scriptures. From childhood Christ had studied the Scriptures with diligence and was intimately acquainted with them.

Since He gained knowledge as we may do, His intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures shows how diligently His early years were given to the study of God's word. (White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 70.2)

You will not, neither will your children nor your grandchildren, learn the Bible miraculously. If you have young children or if you have access to young children that you can help, you need to do all you can to inculcate God's word into their hearts and minds from childhood. Christ had studied the Scriptures with diligence and was intimately acquainted with them. We know this based upon the way that he could wisely quote the Scripture.

We are to have the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12), and he received faith the same way we receive faith.

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17)

Faith comes through learning and through obeying the word of God. "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). That faith is not abstract but real, solid, and based in the word of God. With that faith we are to overcome as Jesus overcame. We are told by John:

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (1 John 5:4)

Jesus told Satan that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Where did Jesus get this idea? From the Scriptures:

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. (Deuteronomy 8:3)

The reason God gave Israel the manna was to teach them that humanity does not live by bread alone but by every word that perceives from the mouth of God, to teach them to not merely satisfy hunger but to live by the word of God.

Remember that at this point in time, Jesus was weak. He was emaciated and ready to die. Satan was insinuating that unless Christ departed from the path of duty that God had given him, he was going to die. Why did Jesus go through this experience? Because he knew that some of his followers would one day be faced with the same challenge—to obey God's word or to possibly die. Those of us living in this last generation know that, based on biblical prophecy, we are going to face a death decree, if we are faithful to God. We need to be prepared for that time by deciding now to be faithful to God. We must decide now that we will keep God's commandments and die if necessary rather than break the word of God and live a life that would only be temporary, for it would cost us eternal life.

The first words of Jesus declared complete and unquestioning submission to the Father's will, as expressed in the word of God. He could say later:

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. (John 15:10)

Please do not place great value upon the many different things of this world, the material things. Do you know what is going to happen one day to the house you live in? Do you know what is going to happen one day to your car? What is going to happen one day to the wardrobe you have? The answer to all of these questions is simple—they are all going to burn up and be destroyed. Why do we place so much value upon these things instead of upon things eternal?

Through Micah, God has told us what he expects:

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? (Micah 6:8)

Christ's reply to the devil is a condemnation of the materialistic philosophy of life in whatever form it may appear.

And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. (Luke 12:15)

Instead of living for himself, Jesus lived for the higher purpose of doing the will of God.

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. (John 4:34)

The story this text comes from is when Christ's disciples had gone to get food and had left Jesus by Jacob's well, and Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman. When the disciples returned, they urged him to eat because it had been a while since he had had anything to eat, but Jesus said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." Jesus could fast

for a short time relatively easily because he had already fasted for forty days, and he had conquered appetite. What we need more than temporal food is the food of the word of God. We need to live and eat it. Jeremiah said:

Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts. (Jeremiah 15:16)

And Job said that he esteemed the words of God's mouth more than his necessary food (Job 23:12).

Jesus is the living Word. He brings us the word of God:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3)

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. (John 6:35)

It is of vital importance that we heed every word of God. We are not at liberty to select from the word of God those portions that appeal to us and to reject others. I watched a video of a woman who has rejected all the writings of Paul, but this cannot produce good spiritual fruit. We need the works of Paul and those of the other biblical writers. Reading from the Old and the New Testaments, we will find that God has provided a balanced spiritual diet for his children. But if we only receive the portions of the word that please us, we cannot expect to enjoy a healthy Christian experience or to reach Christian maturity. Jesus noted:

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19)

Even the "least commandments" of God are indispensable for the one who would enter the kingdom of heaven. If will we take the naked word of God and believe it and live it, we can be spiritually safe.

What about you? Will you live by every word from the mouth of God? Will you die rather than sin? Don't give Satan extra leeway, but expect him to come to you and be ready.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

Jesus submitted himself to God and resisted the devil in the wilderness. The result was that Satan left him.

The first two verbs in James 4:7 are both in an imperative form in the Greek language, meaning it is something you must do. If you want to have victory over Satan, you have to first submit yourselves to God because there is no power outside of him, and then it says you must actively resist the devil. You cannot go upon his enchanted ground and expect victory. You cannot sit back and expect victory to come without a fight! All must be done to avoid giving Satan any advantage. Paul notes:

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. (Romans 13:14)

Beloved, we cannot willingly place ourselves where temptation is the greatest. Do not do the things that you know can cause temptations. All people are different, and all have different backgrounds. There are some things that may not be a temptation to me at all, like injecting heroin, but it might pose a great temptation to people who have used the drug before. There may be things that I have in my background that you have never heard of before and would not even understand, but I understand them well, so I must avoid those things.

We are all different, but Jesus understands our differences, and he understands that no matter what aspect of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life that draws us, he knows how to help in our time of need! And because he can help, we have this great promise:

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:15, 16)

Because Jesus overcame in the wilderness of temptation, we can overcome and sit with him on his throne.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. (Revelation 3:21)

If you have never had the experience of knowing Jesus as your personal Saviour, you can right now, and you can know the sweet peace of victory over sin. Simply kneel down and pray and just say, Father, I want to accept the Lord Jesus as my Saviour. I acknowledge that he suffered on the old rugged cross for me. I know I am worthless, have done nothing good or deserving, but I am depending upon thy mercy and upon the merits of Jesus. Please make me your child. I want to have victory over temptation, just like Jesus did, and thou hast promised to give it, if I submit to you and resist the devil. Father, thank you for the victory. In the name of Jesus, Amen!

WV Camp Meeting June 7–11, 2022

This will be the first camp meeting since the reorganization meetings in March. We certainly hope you will make the effort needed to attend and that you will join us.

The theme is “Pressing Together To Finish the Work.”


We are living in a time of peril, a time of temptation, of despondency. Every one is beset by the wiles of Satan, and we should press together to resist his power. We should be of one mind, speaking the same things, and with one mouth glorifying God. When unity prevails, the church advances from success to success, and the various departments of the cause of God fulfill their part in the finishing of the great work before us. (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, November 12, 1914, par. 5)

With the reorganization, a greater need than ever exists to understand gospel order in the local church; therefore, we will have a seminar on church structure and how ser-

vants, such as elders, deacons, deaconesses, and treasurers function in the church.

We also are planning more food preparation classes. Last year these classes were well attended and interesting.

For those who cannot physically attend, you may participate virtually on the web by using the following link: <https://join.onstreammedia.com/live/smyrna/go>. To listen with a telephone within the United States call 1-805-744-6450 and enter conference room number 73407721, when prompted, followed by the # symbol.

Please plan now to attend. Each year we see developments that clearly show things are swiftly closing up, and who could have anticipated the way things have gone during the last two years? 

Camp Meeting Schedule

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sabbath
6:45–7:45		Michael Brown	Winnie Anderson	Ron Toel	Onycha Holt
	Break				
9:00–10:00		Food Class R. Akens B. Motsinger	Food Class R. Akens B. Motsinger	Food Class R. Akens B. Motsinger	J. C. Bolotte
	Break				
11:00–12:00		J. C. Bolotte	J. C. Bolotte	Communion	Daniel Mesa
	Break				Fellowship Lunch
1:30–2:30		Local Church Organization “Elders” Allen Uhl	Local Church Organization “Deacons” M. Woodward	Local Church Organization “Treasurers” A. Woodward	Q & A Session Presenters
	Break				
2:40–3:40		Ron Toel	HSDA “Administration” Robert Motsinger	“Country Living” Brandon Knight	Martin Barlow
3:55–5:00		Youth Meetings with Todd and Rhonda Brown			
	Break				
6:10–6:30	Song Service				
6:30–7:00	Welcome Allen Stump	Testimonies			
7:00–7:30	Testimonies	Dr. Glenn Waite	Dr. Glenn Waite	Dr. Glenn Waite	Dr. Glenn Waite
7:30–8:45	Robert Motsinger	Martin Barlow	Daniel Mesa	David Sims	Allen Stump

1889 HSDA NEWS

Annual Council of the 1889 HSDA

On Sunday, May 22, 2022, an annual council meeting of the 1889 HSDA organization was held. The council is composed of elected representatives of four church groups and of the conference church, their ministers, and the organization's officers. The meeting was convened to discuss the business of the organization and to elect a committee to manage the work of the organization when the council is not in session.

The officers of the organization were officially voted into office. In addition, the four churches and the members of the conference church were accepted into membership of the organization.

It was voted that the committee be composed of the representatives elected to serve on the council, plus the trustees and the officers of the organization. This is a total of seventeen people, which was felt to be a reasonable number of people to work together. As the church expands and as others join, the committee will need to stay at or near this number, while the representatives on the council can increase as membership increases.

Plans were made to open a bank account for the organization.

Discussion occurred concerning the legal requirements of opening a small sanitarium.

If you love Jesus and want to work with other like-minded believers, we encourage you to join with us in this endeavor. Just write us, and we will let you know how to part of this last work of salvation.



"The Rest that . . . continued from page 15

When Christ shall descend in glory, sitting upon the throne of his glory, having received the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, that he may rid it of all that corrupt it, he will say to the righteous who have kept the faith, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34); and when they with him shall have executed upon the wicked the judgment that is written (See Jude 14, 15; Psalm 149:5-9), then will be fulfilled the promise given through the holy prophet: "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." Isaiah 32:17, 18. Then shall the people of God enjoy the rest which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world.



The Rest That Remains for the People of God

By E. J. Waggoner

(This is a reprint of the booklet, *The Rest That Remains for the People of God.*)

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Hebrews 4:9. This text and its context require frequent explanation. We accordingly give the following, which, although brief, will, we think, be found a sufficient key to the entire chapter. That God made to Abraham a promise of an inheritance, is well known. We will quote only two texts. The first is Genesis 13:14-17: "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."

Again the Lord said to Abraham, after he had offered Isaac:

"I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." Genesis 22:17.

Putting these two texts together, we learn that the inheritance promised to Abraham contemplated peaceable and quiet possession of the land; not simply of a few square miles, but of the whole world. Romans 4:13. Now it was in pursuance of this promise, that the Lord delivered the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. See Exodus 6:1-8.

Passing by the wanderings in the wilderness, we come to the address which Moses made to the children of Israel just before his death. Speaking to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, who were allowed to settle on the east side of Jordan, he said: "The Lord your God hath given you this land to possess it; ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, . . . until the Lord have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and until they also possess the land which the Lord your God hath given them beyond Jordan; and then shall ye return every man unto his possession, which I have given you." Deuteronomy 3:18-20.

From this we learn that the giving of them rest was nothing more nor less than the establishing of them in their possession. The same thing is also shown by the following words:—

“For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; then there shall be a place,” etc. Deuteronomy 12:8 – 11.

In further confirmation of the idea that the promised rest comprehended quiet possession of the land, we read 2 Samuel 7:1, which says that “when the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies,” then he thought to build a house for the Lord. In refusing to allow him to do this work, the Lord made great promises to David, and said:—

“Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime.” 2 Samuel 7:10.

It is evident, then, that the “rest” promised to the Israelites was the inheritance. Into this rest Joshua led them, as it is written: “And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers; and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.” Joshua 21:44. Yet in the face of this declaration, the apostle declares (Hebrews 4:8, margin) that Joshua did not give them rest, and that the Lord afterward spoke of “another day,” in which they might secure rest. We have just read from 2 Samuel 7:10 the promise of that rest. If Joshua had given them that rest, then another day could not have been spoken of.

Although God did give to the Israelites the land of Canaan, Abraham had no part in it (see Acts 7:5), neither did Isaac and Jacob, to whom the promise was made as well as to Abraham; and the apostle, after mentioning these patriarchs, and many other worthies, says, “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” Hebrews 11:39, 40. This shows that the possession of the land of Canaan by the Israelites did not fill all the specifications of the promise. This is still more evident from the fact that they were at peace when the Lord renewed the promise in 2 Samuel 7:10.

But how shall we explain the statement in Joshua 21:43–45, that God gave to the Israelites that which he

promised?—Simply on the ground that the partial inheritance which they had, might have been made complete, if they had obeyed and trusted God. That they did not have the complete rest and inheritance that was promised to Abraham, is evident from the fact that the promise to him included nothing less than the possession of the whole world. Romans 4:13. Now from Jeremiah 17:19–27, we know that God designed that the Israelites should be forever established in the land of Canaan, whose capital, Jerusalem, was to be the capital of the whole world, even as the New Jerusalem will be the capital of the earth made new. But although they were given possession of the capital of their inheritance, they entered not into the full possession thereof, because of unbelief; so that it was the same as though they had never had any of it.

But the “Lord is not slack concerning his promise,” and so “there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” This rest is the same as that promised to Abraham, namely, the whole earth; for, after evil-doers have all been cut off, “the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” Psalm 37:11. The fact that some could not enter into rest because of unbelief, does not invalidate the promise that those who will now believe shall enter into it, for the rest was prepared and completed from the foundation of the world; and God will not allow his original plan to be frustrated. With the knowledge that the earth is the rest that was promised to Abraham and to his seed, and which remains for us who believe, it is very easy to understand Hebrews 4:3, 4, and the relation which the facts there stated bear to that rest. Thus:—

The apostle says, “And God did rest on the seventh day from all his works.” This is positive proof of the statement made just before, namely, that “the works were finished from the foundation of the world.” Genesis 2:3 says that God “rested on the seventh day from all his works which he had made,” and that his blessing pronounced upon the seventh day was “because that in it he had rested from all his works which God created and made.” He made the earth “to be inhabited” (Isaiah 45:18), and gave it to men for a peaceful abode; and the fact that he rested on the seventh day was a proof that the works were finished and the rest prepared. The Sabbath, therefore—the memorial of God’s rest—a day in which to be glad through the work of God, and to triumph in the works of his hands, as we meditate upon their greatness (Psalm 92:4, 5), is an assurance that God has prepared a rest for his people, and that they will share it just as surely as he is the great Creator who changes not. The rest that remains is, therefore, the coming inheritance and kingdom of the saints. The “another day” of Joshua is the day of final reward.

Continued on page 14, left column

More About Bees

For the last two months, we have written about bees, and the fascination of bees has motivated the editor of this paper to start a beehive. I am glad to report that in this last month I have finished preparing the hive and have received one queen and approximately 12,000 worker bees.

Since being bombed by a swarm of honeybees when I was two years old, I have been very careful around bees and hardly comfortable near them. My current experience with bees, however, has been very different. Having learned how to manage bees and about getting the proper protective gear and a smoker, I have had my concerns greatly reduced. (I have not been stung . . . yet.)

I was blessed to get a swarm of very gentle bees who love their queen and are even friendly. I have even opened the hive without my bee hood and have withdrawn a frame and was not stung or attacked. Honeybees are generally friendly and will not attack unless provoked. They do not like loud noises, strong vibrations, or the smell of gasoline engine exhaust; so, being careful when mowing around the hive is important.



The hive

I am hopeful that my bees will make enough honey so that they can survive the winter well. Generally, a stand of bees will need one large box or brood chamber and a smaller or mid-size super to sustain them through the winter. If they produce enough honey for extra supers to be stacked up, that is honey the keeper may harvest.

To watch the bees as they work is to watch a miracle of God in action. They are never in disharmony and always work in a cooperative way for the best of the hive. Each worker is willing to give her life in defense of the queen or the hive. What a lesson in unselfishness we can learn from the honeybee.

Honeybees are now considered an endangered species, with their numbers on a drastic decline. Disease, pesticides, and other issues have been problematic. Bees are needful to our world and humanity and are considered the most important animal on earth! We could not survive without bees. I do not know of any other insect or animal for which that can be said. I would encourage anyone who has the outdoor space to consider starting their own apiary. Please keep my little apiary in prayer that the bees will be healthy and productive!



One frame pulled from hive



Close-up of frame. Notice the perfect symmetry of each individual cell of the honeycomb.



Bees on top of frames inside the hive

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