

Christ

Christ and The Temptations - Part 1

Introduction

- 1) The recorded temptations of the Lord in the New Testament are:
 - a) The temptation in the wilderness, the temple and mountain (Lk. 4:2, 5, 9).
 - b) The temptation by Peter (Matt. 16:23).
 - c) The temptation in the Garden. The Lord said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness" (Lk. 22:53).
 - d) The temptation to take the vinegar (Matt. 27:34). That would have helped ease the pain.
 - e) On the plain after the feeding of the five thousand they wanted to make the Lord King (Jn. 6:15).
 - f) The temptations we are told nothing about (Lk. 22:28).
- 2) The temptations (commonly called the temptations in the wilderness) are mentioned in the first three gospels but not in John. While the temptations are not in John, there is the corresponding contrasts in His gospel account.
 - a) In the first, the Lord is tempted to "make these stones bread" (Matt. 4:3). In John 6 the Lord provides bread for five thousand and presents Himself as the bread of God (Jn. 6:33).
 - b) Another temptation was, "Cast thyself down" (Matt. 4:6), an act against that which is natural. This is answered in John 6 when the Lord shows His trust in God over the natural instability of water and walks on it when it is the will of God (Jn. 6:19).
 - c) The other temptation, Satan offered the Lord all the kingdoms of the world but in John the Lord says, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (Jn. 3:35).
 - d) Furthermore, the temptations are not mentioned in John for our Lord is viewed as God incarnate and God cannot be tempted of evil, that is, God cannot be tempted (Jam. 1:13).
- 3) Matthew and Luke change the order. Mark does not deal with the temptations but records that the Lord was in the wilderness with the wild beasts (Mk. 1:13).
- 4) The temptations give evidence that Jesus was a real man and that Satan is a real person. The temptations gave a two fold revelation:
 - a) That Christ, being man, was tempted and after all the temptations was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Our Lord was completely impeccable. The second is the unveiling of His defeating Satan and his wiles. This was the beginning of the Lord "spoiling principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, triumphing over them" (Col. 2:15). The writer to the Hebrews writes of the ultimate defeat when he wrote, "He destroyed him that had the power of death" (Heb. 2:14).

Christ The Man

In the past some taught that our Lord was just like Adam or us. This is error and therefore susceptible to sinning. This I judge to be a great error for a careful consideration will show He was not identical to either Adam or us. The scriptures inform us of four sorts of manhood:

- a) Unfallen and holy manhood as was Adam. Some might argue that Adam was never holy, just that he was innocent humanity. He was innocent before the fall because he was not guilty of any transgression against the commands of the Lord. However, to my understanding he was more than innocent because the Lord declared, "The Lord. . . is holy in all His works" (Psa. 145:17) and man was part of God's works (Gen. 2:2). Therefore, when man was created he was holy. The Holy Spirit caused Peter to write, "Holy men of God spake" (2 Pet. 1:21); "holy children" (1 Cor. 7:14); "holy brethren" (Heb. 3:1).
- b) Fallen and sinful manhood from Adam to every other human being except the Lord.
- c) Redeemed humanity.
- d) Essentially holy humanity which refers exclusively to the Lord.

There can be no doubt concerning the true humanity of the Lord. There are many distinctions between a theophany and a real man, between an animal and a man.

Christ

Christ and The Temptations - Part 1

- a) A theophany was when the Lord appeared either as a man (Gen. 18:1-10) or an angel (Jud. 6:21) but until His condescension and incarnation it was strictly an outward appearance.
- b) Only humans have a God consciousness, animals do not pray, have morals, or have conferences to deny the existence of God, or celebrate His name.
- c) Man was created a tripart being having spirit, soul and body (1 Thess. 5:23). In reading the gospels it is noted that the Lord had a spirit (Lk. 23:46), a soul (Jn. 12:27) and a body (Heb. 10:5). Being a human being He was God conscious, speaking:
 - i) To God the Father (Jn. 17:1, 25).
 - ii) About God as Father (Jn. 6:32, 45; 8:18).
 - iii) Revealing God (Jn. 1:18; 14:9).
 - iv) Coming from God and going to God (Jn. 8:42; 16:28).

Apart from Adam (and possibly Eve, depending on how one views things) every human has a human ancestry for we all came from Adam and Eve. Christ also had a human ancestry. Indeed, He is the only Jew who can, in detail, trace His ancestry back to David, to Abraham and to Adam. If He were not a real man then He would never have been the King of Israel, our High Priest (Jn. 1:49; Heb. 2:17), nor our Kinsman Redeemer (Ruth 3:12). Being a human being the Lord grew from infancy to childhood (Lk. 2:40), to a young man (Lk. 2:42), to an adult of about 30 years of age (Lk. 3:23). In those years He lived in Jewish communities. He had the normal features of a human. He was born (Matt. 1:25; Lk. 2:7); hungered (Mk. 11:12); thirsted (Jn. 19:28); wept (Lk. 19:41); slept (Matt. 8:24); was weary (Jn. 4:6); wrote (Jn. 8:6); had compassion (Matt. 9:36); was angry (Mk. 3:5); forgave (Mk. 2:10); passed judgment (Mk. 11:33; Jn. 8:11); suffered (Lk. 24:26); and died (1 Cor. 15:3). One of the distinct manifestations of humanity is sorrow for the scriptures record, "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). Christ truly was a man who knew the sorrows of life (Isa. 53:3).

- a) It ought to be a constant source of wonder and worship how close the Lord came to us. So completely did Christ become a man that He shared the trials of life for me. This makes necessary His being tempted, sometimes sorely by Satan.
- b) Bishop Beverage (1637-1708) wrote, "If Jesus were God only, and not man, He could not suffer anything whereby to satisfy Divine Justice. If man only, and not God, He could not satisfy Divine Justice, even though He suffered. If man only, His satisfaction could not be sufficient for God. If God only, it would not be suitable for man. Therefore, to be capable of suffering for men and able to satisfy God, He Himself must be both God and man."

Can it be true, the things they say of You?
You walked this earth, sharing with friends You knew
All that they had the work, the joy, the pain,
That we might find the way to heaven again.¹

Contrasts Between Christ and All Humanity Since The Fall

The scriptures are very clear that the Lord was a true but unique human being:

- a) His holiness marked Him as unique (Lk. 1:35).
- b) His entrance into this world was unique (Heb. 2:14).
- c) It was God who took Him from the womb, that was unique (Psa. 22:9; Psa. 71:6).
- d) He did **not** take on a human nature. Never once is the word nature ever used relating to Christ. "He took not on Him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham" (Heb. 2:16).
- e) His conception was by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18, 20), thus He was "conceived" of the virgin (Isa. 7:14). His was a body "prepared" of God (Heb. 10:5); "made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4:4).
- f) He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, but did not have sinful flesh. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). It is not that He was made in sinful flesh, He never was!! It is not that He was made like a man of flesh, He was not!! He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh.

¹ This is a chorus from "Youth Praise" 1966.

Christ Christ and The Temptations - Part 1

- g) He lived in complete dependence on God as seen by His praying (Isa. 50:4).
- h) He exhibited a thankfulness that was constant. Man's first major sin is unthankfulness (Lk. 22:17-19; Rom. 1: 21).
- i) He manifested a determination to do the will of God completely (Jn. 5:30; 8:29; 10:36-38; 17:4).
- j) Man was created from dust, not virgin born (Gen. 2:7; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23).
- k) Man was the created, not the Creator (Gen. 1:27; Col. 1:17).
- l) Man did not come into this world, he was part of it because he was made of the dust of the ground, whereas the Lord came into this world (Gen. 2:7; 1 Tim. 1:15).

To be continued

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia