

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

The Temptation

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.

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.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.

And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him. *Matt.* 4:1-11.

The powers which spiritual development brings are of such potency that proof must be given by the candidate of his intention to use them entirely unselfishly. Like a two-edged sword they may be used to heal or to destroy. So it is that from time to time the aspirant is tested for his purity of purpose. *Unselfishness* is the keyword, and only he who demonstrates

a pure unselfish attitude can hope to attain to the spiritual heights.

The desires of the flesh (even physical hunger) must be brought under control, and Christ Jesus demonstrates the perfected ability in this by His resistance of the temptation to turn stones into bread. Actually, He had the power to do this as does every advanced white magician. We know that sound is vibration and different sounds will mold sand or other light materials into figures of varying forms. "The Christian Mystic has learned at the fountain of Life to sing the *Song of Being*, which cradles into existence whatever such a master musician desires. . . . There is no need to partake of earthly bread for one who has access to the Fountain of Life," however and Christ Jesus answers, "Man shall not live by bread alone."

The second part of the Temptation had to do with using spiritual power to gain praise and adulation, but never must the spiritual aspirant demonstrate his powers merely for the purpose of showing what he can do. He must learn to say with Christ Jesus, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Neither are those on the Path allowed to use their powers, particularly that of the mind, to gain power and possessions. Many and subtle are the tests which come to prove the aspirant free of this inclination! Eventually he acquires the strength to say unqualifiedly with Christ Jesus: "Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."