

February 10, 2008

First Sunday in Lent

Please read

[Matthew 4:1-11](#)

Read also

[Genesis 2:15-17](#)

[Genesis 3:1-7](#)

[Psalm 32](#)

[Romans 5:12-19](#)

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished.

The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Into the Wilderness

Clever, this wilderness tempter,
knowing all the right buttons to push,
and sugar-coating each temptation
with scripture.

It didn't work with Jesus,
and by his grace
it will not work with me.

When the devil comes my way,
turning any setting
into a rock-strewn wilderness,

I must remember
that we are not there alone,
Satan and I,
for I have been led
to this time, this place
by the Spirit.
And the same resource
that equipped the man from Nazareth
is at my disposal.
So I will arm myself with prayer
And defend myself with Scripture,
the Spirit's Sword,
parrying each clever satanic thrust
with the divine Word.
And with each invitation
to indulge my appetite,
or exercise power,
or enjoy the adulation of the crowd,
I shall refuse the tempter's ploy.

And when the day is done,
I will say, "*Away with you, Satan!*"
and banish the tempter for a time,
and return from my wilderness
to worship the Lord my God,
and serve only him,
with joyous satisfaction.