

no longer lack faith in the safety of the Bridge. So with the Temptation of Jesus. It was the rest of His Sonship and of His power to overcome and destroy the works of the Devil, and we need no longer fear but that He is a Perfect and All-Powerful Saviour." _

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COULD JESUS HAVE SINNED?

By Bro. Cockrell

This question is hotly debated by some of our brethren today. What did the old Baptists say on this subject? Please consider these men on this subject.

John Broadus (1827-1895):

""How could Jesus be tempted? Was it possible for him to sin? If this was in no sense possible, then he was not really tempted, certainly not "like as we are." (Heb. 4:15). But how can it have been possible for him to sin? If we think of his human nature in itself, apart from the co-linked divinity, and apart from the Holy Spirit that filled and led him, then we must say that, like Adam in his state of

purity, like the angels and every other moral creature, his humanity was certainly in itself capable of sinning, and thus the temptation was real, and was felt as such, and as such overcome; while yet in virtue of the union with the divine nature, and of the power of the Holy Spirit that filled him, it was morally impossible that he should sin.---A substantially similar view is well stated by Edersheim... (*Commentary on Matthew, p. 61, 1886 edition*).

William L. Pettingill (1880-1950):

""The question is often raised as to whether there was any possibility of Jesus falling before the tempter's power. I answer, No. He was God in the flesh, and God cannot be tempted with evil. He was ever holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. If

someone objects that in that case there was no temptation, I answer that though there was no desire on Jesus' part to yield to the devil's allurings, yet there was a real temptation, in the sense of testing, and this is the meaning of Hebrews 4:15, which being literally translated reads: **""For we have not a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our infirmities, but Who has in all points been tempted like as we are, apart from sin.""** That is, He did not have the inward craving for evil things, as you and I have, for that would be indwelling sin, and there was no sin in Him. He is nevertheless quite able to sympathize with us, for He made us and knows us altogether.

If Jesus had failed under the test, His failure would have

proved, not that God could sin, but that Jesus was not God. For in this sense, **""God cannot be tempted with evil.... (Jas. 1: 13). (The Gospel of the Kingdom, p. 51).**

Clarence Larkin (1850-1924):

""There are those who claim that Jesus could not have been tempted in all points like as we are if it were not possible for Him to sin. Others claim that while it was possible for Jesus to sin there was no *probability* that He would, and therefore there was no risk incurred in His Temptation. Those who claim that it was *possible* for Jesus to sin compare Him with Satan and Adam, who, though created pure and sinless, had in them the *possibility* of sinning as is evidenced by their fall. But Satan and Adam were created beings, while Jesus was the

Only Begotten SON OF GOD, born of the Virgin Mary,"" and it was said of the body of Jesus that it was THAT HOLY THING." Therefore the *humanity* of Jesus was SINLESS, and when joined to the *Eternally Holy Personality of the SON*, there could have been no possibility of Jesus sinning.

""If Jesus could have sinned then the whole scheme of Salvation *hung in the balance* until after the Wilderness Temptation. Such a thought is not only unthinkable but unscriptural. Jesus was the Lamb--""**foreordained before the foundation of the world**"" (I Pet. 1: 18-20), and a lamb accepted for sacrifice must be **""without spot or blemish.**"" The Scriptures declare that **""Whosoever is born of God CANNOT SIN.... (I John 3:9).** Therefore Jesus

could not sin. If He could have sinned at the Temptation, since there has been no change in His nature since then, for He took His humanity back with Him to Heaven, what is there to prevent His yielding to Temptation in the future? What guarantee have we that the whole plan of Salvation shall not yet be upset? The thought is contrary to the whole trend of the Scripture.

""What then was the purpose of the Temptation if it were not possible for Jesus to have fallen? The purpose was simply to show that Jesus was a PERFECT SAVIOUR, and that there was NO SIN IN HIM, nor possibility of failure. He was thus set before us, not as an example to be followed when we are tempted, but as an object of Faith to whom we can look as our DELIVERER

when we are tempted.

A simple illustration will make this plain. We will suppose that a double track Suspension Bridge has been built over a deep canyon connecting two mountain ranges. To the people in the valley the Bridge seems to be but an airy nothing hardly capable of carrying its own weight and they are afraid to trust themselves to it, but one day to their amazement two long trains of freight cars loaded with pig-iron approach from opposite directions, and when both have reached the center of the Bridge they stop. At once they expect the Bridge to collapse. But no, it remains intact. And when, after remaining 24 hours on the Bridge, the trains continue on their way, they