

## 40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS©

By Keith Z. Yezdanian

**Mark 1:9-11 KJV, *After Jesus was baptized came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.***

**Matthew 4:1, *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.***

I have been facing some questionable challenges, some little and others well life changing. I have also shared in rejoicing in Christ both in good times and the bad times. There have been days of victory when defeating a temptation or overcoming a challenge in my personal life or work life. And there have been days I felt broken and defeated... separated if you may from God.

Now my past, well it's just that my past. I don't hide from it or try to hide it from others. I take no pleasure in the things that I have done, nor do I glorify them. Yes, I do share some of my past now and the reason is only to show where God has brought me from. God has allowed me to share...that our choices although negative at times, do not dictate who we are, but who we can become with His help.

There was a time, and not very long ago, that I truly thought I needed what this world had to offer. I was so wrapped up in having this...to do this, doing this...to have this. I was so focused on trying to be me that I was anything but myself. I was caught in the snare that the world had laid for me. Sadly I catch myself watching a commercial seeing a guy watching the big game on a TV that truly trumps my kitchen table and thinking I could rent that TV also... I could be that guy! The TV is a subtle falsehood, and there are the extreme lies that this world feeds us, lies that get us to start cutting on ourselves to have less wrinkles, flatter stomachs, to buy bigger houses or newer cars. And in the end we have less wrinkles more debt and still an emptiness we can't seem to fill.

Now before some flip it, let me say that the pursuit of these things is not bad or evil. It is just how we go about obtaining them or how we view them. Is having a boat bad? No. Is going into negative debt for it? Maybe...If it leads you to make a choice that involves' buying less food for your family to make the payment bad? YES! And with that we cannot make these things our focus either. We cannot allow these things to come before God, our families or career. In other words we must not idolize them. I write this not as a hypocrite, I write this as one who still has to be on the lookout for the snare.

Now that I am a Christian and I stay in study and focus on helping others like myself, I see the pain on the faces of people just like me (Christians) today and also pain on the faces of people like I used to be (Lost). We have allowed the beauty of God's creation to become obscene and the darkest acts of immorality entertainment.

What does this have to do with the baptism of Jesus and His 40 day journey? Well as I made mention earlier I have shared in both temptation and emotional pain. I didn't understand temptation and pain as I understand them today. Back then when I wanted something or I was tempted, I fulfilled that temptation no matter what the cost. And when I was in pain, I was hurt and mad. Today when I am tempted I no longer act the same. Instead today I look to give instead of take and in return temptation is lessened. And today when storms arise and I am hurt, I view the emotional pain as an opportunity to grow.

When Jesus was baptized and the spirit descended and led Him into the desert. This is where He would face temptations and emotional/physical pain. You need to understand that God sent His beloved son into the desert to be tempted and tested by Satan himself. His beloved son! When Jesus was baptized the first thing His Father did was He allowed Him to be tested. This went on for 40 days and 40 nights, Jesus was tempted by Satan and He didn't stumble. He used the Word of God to combat the enemy. He drew close to God! Jesus could have taken the easy way out to avoid hunger, He could have used His divine power wrongly and He could have escaped death on the cross. This would have left us with no hope of salvation and no hope of eternal life.

You see within 40 days and 40 nights of which could only have been torture in my eyes, God was shaping His son Jesus for the ministry that God had for Him. From here Jesus went on to continue to bring glory to the Kingdom of God and set us free from death and Satan himself. We should not expect anything less. Whether we are saved at 6 or 76 we shouldn't think that it will make life easier, in fact we should accept that trials will come and tears will fall. And like our great Savior we shall resist temptation and find growth through our pain and most importantly turn to God to help us. Jesus never got wrapped up in what others wanted Him to be or even who He really was...there was no power trip with Jesus.

Remember Satan wants us to follow the ways of the world, he wants you on that corner, drinking that 40, slinging that rock, buying that car you can't afford and loving yourself instead of Christ. He hates you and the image you are created in. Watch for the snare he lays out for you! It just might come in a pretty package or a loss of a job. Combat him with the Word of God, stay in prayer, rejoice in your trials and always give God the glory.

*"40 Days 40 Nights"* was written 26 December 2009