

“If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down...” – Matthew 4:6



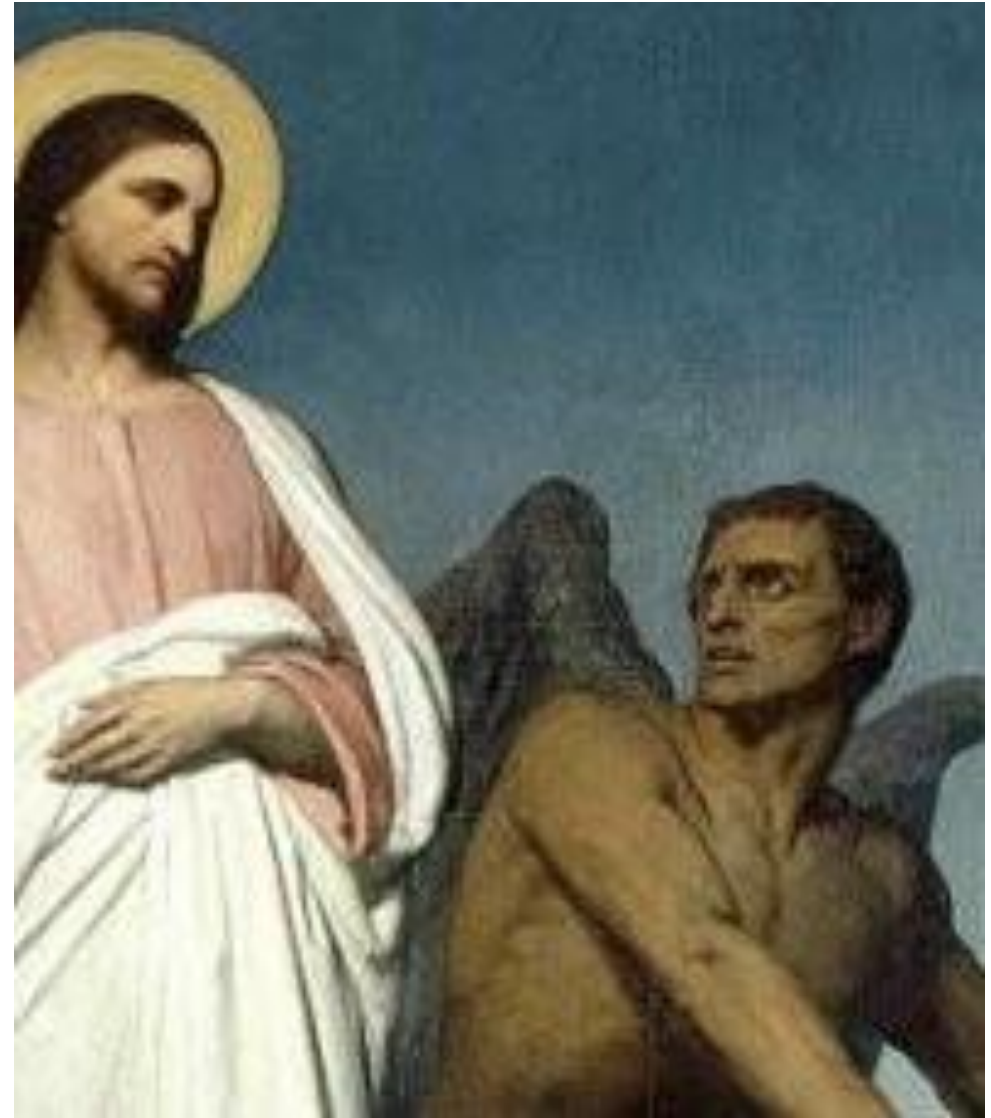


Do not throw yourself down

Second Sunday of the Great Fast | 2024

Introduction

- Trials vs temptations
- The Lord was tempted by Satan
- “For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.” (1 Jn. 2:16)
- “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'”(Matt. 4:6; Ps.91:11,12)



Psalm 91

- “Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place, 10 No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; 11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. 12 In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.” (Ps. 91:9-12)
- How is it that we sometimes heed the enemy and throw ourselves down?

1. Pursuing Greatness



- The disciples were tempted with greatness
- “Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest.” (Lk. 9:46)
- Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?" 34 But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest.” (Mk. 9:33-34)
- “Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them...” (Mk. 9:35)



1. Pursuing Greatness

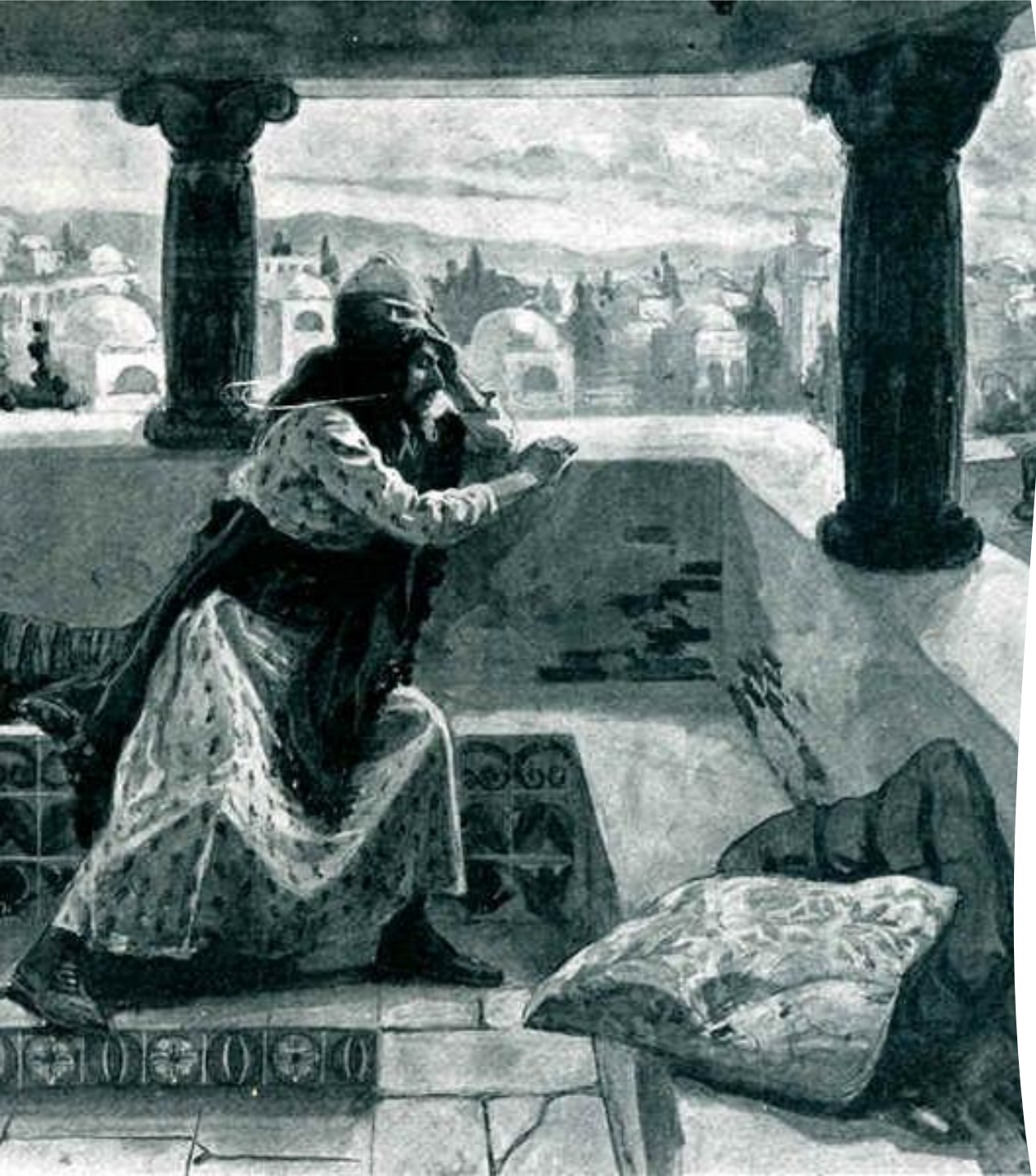
- “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.” (Matt. 20:25-26)
- There are many sins associated with the desire for greatness.
- “*All the martyrs shall come bearing their afflictions, and the righteous shall come bearing their virtues.*” (Conclusion of the Vatos Theotokia, Midnight Psalmody)
- EX: Herod
- And the people kept shouting, “The voice of a god and not of a man!” 23 Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.” (Acts 12:22-23)

2. Distorted Teaching

- Adopting a distorted teaching is a type of throwing oneself down from the truth.
- EX: “His mercy endures forever.” (Ps. 118:2)
- “Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God...” (Rom. 2:4-5)

2. Distorted Teaching

- “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.” (2 Tim. 4:3-4)



3. A Lost Cause

- EX: David
- Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab: 'Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Strengthen your attack against the city, and overthrow it.' So encourage him." (2 Sam. 11:25)

4. The Burden of Righteousness

- Some put the burden of their righteousness on God
 - “You shall not tempt the LORD your God.” (Matt. 4:7)
- EX: Romans
 - “For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"—as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.” (Rom. 3:7-8)

The Remedy: Pursuing Greatness

- The easy life is dangerous to our salvation
 - EX: David, Solomon
 - “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them.” (Eccl. 12:1)
- Do be too occupied by greatness
- You cannot have earthly greatness and heavenly
 - EX: Rich man and Lazarus
 - But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.” (Lk. 16:25)



The Remedy: Distorted Teaching

- Get your teaching from the Church
- “...as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby...” (1 Pet. 2:2)
- Distinguish between a promise vs a commandment

The Remedy: A Lost Cause

- When we realize our mistake or sin, stop the bleed.
- “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...” (Rom. 12:2)



The Remedy: The Burden of Righteousness

Do not tempt
the Lord

- “For I am conscious of iniquity; and my sin is at all times before me. Against You only I have sinned, and done evil before You, that You might be just in Your sayings, and might overcome when You are judged.” (Ps. 50:3-4 LXX)

Put for
yourself limits

- “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” (1 Cor. 9:17)