

Thought for the day – Tuesday 29th March 2022

By Revd Kit Gunasekera

Did Jesus feel like giving it all up?

I don't know, but we should at least ask the question.

We are in Lent, with Jesus during His 40 days in the wilderness, where He is tested and tempted by the devil. The third temptation according to Luke is:

The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you
to guard you carefully;

¹¹ they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

¹² Jesus answered, "It is said: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"
- Luke 4:9-12

He was tempted to throw himself off a high building, to see if God would save Him. The temptations have a strong element of doubt (if you are the Son of God...) So, one of the ways of understanding this temptation is that there would have been the possibility in Jesus mind the that He was not God's Son, and that God would not save Him. The fact that Jesus was seriously tempted to take this chance, to test this out, even raises questions about the state of his mental health at that time.

We should not be surprised by this. God came to us as a human being, to experience life as human beings and to give us an example as to how to live. That can only be useful if he experienced the lowest points that we face physically, mentally, emotionally. As Henry Drummond once said "There is no other religion which is down on all fours with us as Christianity". This is only the case, because the founder of our faith, got down on all fours with us, He experienced life at its most vulnerable, despairing and at its shittiest. He is the Good Shepherd, because He has gone through the valley of the shadow of death, and so, we can say with David, the evil will not overwhelm us, for God is with us (Psalm 23:4)

At His most tested, tempted, and tried, Jesus, chooses to trust in his heavenly Father. He has chosen the way that will lead Him to the cross and beyond. He trusts in the goodness of God. He will not test God.

May we too, even when we walk the darkest valley, the most difficult of times, look to Jesus, and the family of faith, and find hope. Jesus who sympathizes and empathizes with us, because He has walked in our shoes.

He knows us. He understands us. He loves us.