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"Get Behind Me Satan!"

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Recall the Lord's wilderness temptation. After the last test, we're told, "When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an *opportune time*" (Luke 4:13, italics mine). Satan didn't give up on his plan to bring down Jesus. From the moment the two parted in the wilderness, Satan looked for an opportunity to divert Jesus from the Cross. What moment could be more opportune than right after Jesus had praised Peter for hearing from the Father and declaring him the Messiah, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16)?

Not Peter — Satan

Shortly after that experience, Peter took Jesus aside and rebuked him for saying he must go to Jerusalem to die (I don't think Peter heard the Lord say he would be raised from the dead). How did Jesus respond? He did not say, "Get behind me, Peter." He said, "Get behind me, Satan" (Luke 16:23). Never forget that every anti-resurrection lie finds its source in Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44).

A Satanic Lie

We seldom view disappointment in a way that associates it with resurrection. When something goes wrong, we think about it getting worse, not the Lord improving. When we say, "God can't redeem this" we're believing a Satanic lie. When we view loss through the lens of despair, we align with Satan's dark kingdom.

Death Precedes Resurrection

The writing of Paul helps. He said: "That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies" 1 Corinthians 15:36. While Jesus, and the Apostle Paul, taught that death precedes resurrection, we cling to the idea of resurrection but ignore the loss that precedes it.

Running From a Toy Tiger

Because of this we focus on a loss, or potential loss, and obsess over the suffering it will cause. Such toxic thinking poisons us as it triggers the release of cortisol into our body. This stress hormone helps when we're running from a tiger but destroys us when we're running from a toy tiger.

I fled an illusion of danger for years. It filled my mind with fear and despair. Yet, nothing I feared happened. Why? Because I feared a shadow with no substance.

For followers of Jesus, no loss is final. Yet, we focus on the passing rather than the permanent. Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). This is the substance, the reality we must focus on, not the powerless shadow of

death.