

Matthew 4
Part 1 (1-11)
Jesus' testing

- I. Jesus is tempted by the Devil. (1-11)
 - A. Jesus is the King of kings, but before He can rule others He must first prove that He can rule Himself. (1, 2)

Note: E.g., King Saul, and King Solomon both failed to rule themselves as the leaders of Israel.

 1. Matt 4 begins with the testing, or proving, of Christ.
 - a. Of the 30+ occurrences in NT, “tempted” means tempted to do wrong in only two passages. (cf. 1 Cor. 7:5; James 1:13, 14)
 - b. The primary sense of “tempted” is to prove. (cf. Jn 6:6; 2 Cor. 13:5)
 2. Satan wanted to persuade Jesus to do wrong, but God allowed the testing to prove Him.
 - a. This is not the only time Satan tempts Jesus. (cf. Lk. 4:13; 22:28 Heb. 4:15)
 - b. Jesus willingly submitted to this testing.
 - B. Temptation number one: to use His power contrary to the Father’s will. (3, 4)
 1. The Devil selects the “golden moment” of opportunity. (3)
 - a. Jesus was hungry. He had fasted for forty days. (cf. Moses, Ex. 34:28; Elijah, 1 Kings 19:8)
 - b. Luke tells us it was a complete fast. (cf. Lk 4:2)
 2. Satan always selects the most opportune time to tempt us.
 - a. The more intense the desire, the more intense the temptation.
 - b. Here, Jesus is tempted with a very strong temptation.
 3. Satan’s temptation: “make these stones bread”.
 - a. “If thou be...” prove it.
 - b. “You have the power over physical things, You don’t need to endure this torture.”
 - c. The act of turning the stones to bread was not wrong in itself.
 - d. Satan wanted Christ to distrust the Father’s power to sustain Him.
 - e. The sinfulness of this act was skillfully disguised.
 4. Jesus response: feeding the spiritual man is more important
 - a. Jesus quotes from Deut. 8:3, the context is taken from the wilderness wanderings.
 - b. Israel was dependant on God to supply food and drink, yet questioned His ability to provide their needs. (cf. Ps. 78:18,19)
 - c. Jesus was not like Israel of old. “It is written...”, shows His high regard for scriptures.
 - C. Temptation two: prove that you trust the Father. (5-7)
 1. Satan takes Jesus away from the wilderness to Jerusalem. (5)
 - a. We don’t know how this was done because we haven’t been told. (vision or reality)

- b. "A pinnacle of the temple" = some projection of the temple. Probably on the valley side. 180 feet above the bottom of the valley.
- 2. Satan's temptation: "cast thyself down." (6)
 - a. You said you trusted the Father, prove it!
 - b. Satan cites Ps. 91:11, 12. (The only scripture Satan quotes in the bible)
 - c. "If this scripture is true you have nothing to worry about."
 - d. This temptation is real. What person who is challenged does not want to immediately comply with the challenge?
- 3. Jesus' response: God does not need to be put on trial. (7)
 - a. Jesus quotes Deut. 6:16.
 - b. Again, the context is the wilderness experience of Israel. (vs. 7 actually sums up Ex. 17:1-7)
 - c. The words of Ps. 91:11, 12 are true, but one does not have to throw themselves in danger just to prove it.
 - d. Important: Satan can "twist" the scriptures to give us all kinds of "bible reasons" to sin.

Note: Modern day snake handlers are a good example of this type misunderstanding. Several die each year needlessly putting themselves in danger.

- D. Temptation three: take the easy way out. (8-10)
 - 1. Satan and Jesus travel to a high mountain.
 - a. All the kingdoms of the world were shown to Him in a moment of time. (cf. Lk. 4:5)
 - b. How was this done? In some supernatural way.
 - 2. Satan's temptation: all this can be yours without any pain.
 - a. God had already promised Him all the kingdoms of the world. (Ps. 2:6-8; 72:8-11)
 - b. However, this could not be done without Jesus' suffering and death on the cross.
 - c. Satan offered an easier way: "worship me"
 - 3. The temptation was real. Jesus knew what was before Him. (cf. 26:36-46)
 - a. Some say that this was a trick. Satan had no power over all these kingdoms.
 - b. If that were true, where would the temptation be?
 - c. Surely Jesus knew Satan's power.
 - 4. Jesus' response: "Get thee hence, Satan." (vs 10)
 - a. "Get thee hence" = be gone, go away. It shows Jesus disgust in this approach.
 - b. Interestingly, it is the very same rebuke Jesus levels toward Peter. (cf. 16:23)
 - c. This should give us some idea of how God feels about obstructing His will.
 - 5. Jesus quotes Deut. 6:13.
 - a. The context is the same as before.

- b. If the worship of men (Acts 10:26) and the worship of angels (Rev. 19:10) are both forbidden, how much more so is the worship of the Devil?
 - c. Jesus, at the end of His earthly ministry, received far more than Satan could offer.
- E. Having been defeated, Satan departs for a period of time. (11)
- 1. Satan only left Him for a season. (cf. Lk 4:13)
 - a. The temptation ended for a short period.
 - b. His whole life is called “temptation”. In Luke 22:28.
 - 2. The angels supplied His physical needs.
 - a. This was something that He was in serious need of since He was in human flesh.
 - b. Struggling with Satan preceded the enjoyment of company with angels.
 - c. So it will be for all of us.
 - 3. The Devil can be defeated!
 - a. Like Christ, we can defeat Satan with the word of God. (cf. Eph. 6:17, 18)
 - b. Proper application of God’s word is vital.
 - c. If we are faithful to God, we will receive more than Satan can offer now, and in the future life.

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