

Matthew 4

The Devil Tests/Tempts Jesus

MATT 4:1-11 MARK 1:12-13 LUKE 4:1-13

MATT 4:1 – Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. {Similar to Mark 1:12 & Luke 4:1}

[led up of the Spirit] – G0321 = lead up, bring out, loose; of navigators it means to launch out, or set sail. The Spirit LED Jesus, but Satan TOOK Jesus (Matt 4:5). There is a contrast in Satan and the Spirit in that the Spirit leads gently as a dove (Matt 3:16 & Matt 10:16). I personally imagine the Holy Spirit as a dove on Jesus shoulder flying off in front of Him to the wilderness where He was supposed to go. Like Jesus, we all have a choice to follow the Holy Spirit or not, but if we don't, then we're following a lie.

[into the wilderness] – *Why was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness?* – To cut distraction for fasting and prayer. Satan took Jesus to the people; the temple. Israel wandered the wilderness for 40 years (Deut 8:2). Jesus was already in the wilderness with John (Matt 3:1), so it means that He went DEEPER in the wilderness. Mark 1:12 says, “immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness”, showing haste, implying that Jesus was baptized and went straight into the wilderness from there.

[to be tempted of the devil] – *Why did Jesus have to be tempted by Satan?* – It was possible for Jesus to be tempted because He desired certain things (James 1:14). That is why He was able to be tempted at all. Even God can be tempted (Matt 4:7) because He has desires. Satan is the god of this world (2Cor 4:4, John 12:31, Eph 2:2). He knew that Jesus came to destroy him (1Jn 3:8). Since he's the god of this world, it's within the devil's power to test anyone, like Job for example (Job 1:12). What a person must do is resist the devil so he will flee (James 4:7). Had Job resisted the devil by drawing close to God as in James 4:8 instead of blaming Him as in Job 6:4, Job 16:11-14, Job 27:2, etc, then the story would have been different. Satan wanted to destroy Jesus immediately before Jesus could start His 'devil destroying ministry' (1Pet 5:8).

MATT 4:2 – And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. {Similar to Mark 1:13 & Luke 4:2}

[fasted] – G3522 = To abstain from food; to abstain as a religious exercise from food and drink. Did Jesus drink water, or just abstain from food? I suppose if Jesus didn't drink water that it would say here, “he didn't eat bread or drink water” like Moses recorded of himself TWICE (Deut 9:9 & Deut 9:18).

Why did Jesus fast for 40 days? – For spiritual strength to resist the devil (James 4:7). Once, there was a demon that could not be overpowered by anything but prayer and fasting (Matt 17:21). Only Jesus was spiritually strong enough to cast it out (Matt 17:18). Jesus compared demons to strong men who He had to overpower in their own house (Matt 12:29). Imagine how much more prayer and fasting it would take to overpower the king of demons (Matt 12:24)! Jesus continued fasting and praying from time to time after this test.

[fourty days and fourty nights] – symbolizing the 40 years the Jews were in the wilderness. Notice that every time Jesus answered the devil, it was from Deuteronomy, written by Moses in the last days of the 40 years that Israel spent in the wilderness.

[he was afterward an hungred] – Through personal experience, at the time of writing this, I've fasted a few times, but my longest fast was 5 days, only drinking water. After day 3, I was weak and slow and

dreaming about food at night, usually with hunger pain passing while I slept. By the last day, the pain didn't leave when I slept; my heart was beating fast and my body was hot, even though it was winter. I thought, "uh oh, this isn't good", so I broke the fast. The reason I say this is because I've heard that hunger passes after 1 or 2 weeks of fasting, and then returns after 5 or 6 weeks, which pretty much means that person is dying at that point. I READ THAT, but I don't think the person who wrote that had personal experience in that area, and urge you not to trust anyone who comments on what fasting does to the body after 40 days who has never even fasted ¼ that time.

MATT 4:3 – And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. {Similar to Mark 1:13 & Luke 4:3}

[the tempter] – The devil (Matt 4:1), Satan (Matt 4:10).

[If thou be the Son of God] – Satan immediately tested what God last declared "This is my beloved Son" (Matt 3:17). Remember, Satan tests the truth to convince us of a lie. It's similar to how God said, "Don't eat the fruit" (Gen 2:17) and soon after, the snake challenged what God said, "Did God say..? ... He was wrong." (Gen 3:1-5).

[command that these stones be made bread] – Jesus had power to do this by the Holy Spirit. Why would it be wrong? Breaking His fast wouldn't have been wrong. Obviously, doing anything Satan says is wrong. The answer here, and in all 3 temptations, is that Jesus could only do what He saw the Father doing (John 5:19). He didn't see the Father changing a rock into bread at that moment, and it would be wrong to do what He didn't see the Father do.

Jesus never did a miracle before He was baptized – Jesus only worked miracles through the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit wasn't on Him until baptism. NO MIRACLE that Jesus did was from His own godly power, but from the Kingdom of God or "the finger of God" (Luke 11:18), which is the Holy Ghost, who is the key to the power of Jesus and His followers (Acts 1:8 & Matt 9:8). By being born as a man, Jesus had given up His power by becoming lower than the angels (Heb 2:7). Jesus got his power back after His resurrection (Matt 28:18).

MATT 4:4 – But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. {Luke 4:4 & Deut 8:3}

[Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God] – Quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3. Jesus was saying, "I have not heard a command out of the mouth of God telling me to turn these stones to bread, and it is God's word that I live off of. Even though I can turn these stones to bread, I choose not to because I laid my power down. I rely on God, not on myself."

MATT 4:5 – Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, {Similar to Luke 4:9}

[the devil taketh him] – G3880 to take, receive, take unto, take up to, take away. Luke 4:9 says, "brought" G0071. The Holy Ghost "led" Jesus, but the devil "took & set" him. G3880 isn't always forceful, but doesn't usually imply much choice. Matt 27:27 – Soldiers TOOK G3880 Jesus.

[the holy city] – Jerusalem (Luke 4:9).

[setteth him] – G2476 = stand, set, established. In most verses it's used of people standing around, but in John 8:3, the Pharisees brought G0071 the adulteress and SET G2476 her in the midst (same as here).

[a pinnacle of the temple] – G4419 = the top of the temple at Jerusalem.

MATT 4:6 – And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. {Similar to Luke 4:9-11 & Psalms 91:11-12}

[cast thyself down] – What would this accomplish? There were many people in Jerusalem, and the most important part of Jerusalem was the temple. The point of Jesus jumping off the top of the temple was so that all the people would see a miraculous event where angels catch him. This would have been “a miracle from the sky” that the Pharisees wanted to see (Matt 16:1). What would the result be? The verse that says ‘the angels will bear Him up’ was associated with the messiah. The result would be that all the Jews would declare Him as the messiah, and then His own people would not give Him over to be crucified. But crucifixion would redeem mankind (Titus 2:14 & Gal 3:13).

[In their hands they shall bear thee up] – Quoted from Psalms 91:11-12, except Satan did not quote the end of verse 11, “To keep thee in all thy ways”.

MATT 4:7 – Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. {Similar to Luke 4:12 & Deut 6:16}

[Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God] – Quoted from Deuteronomy 6:16. Taking this path that God had not designed for Jesus was testing that God’s path of death and resurrection. In His baptism, Jesus was saying, “God, I will die so that I can be raised from the dead to redeem mankind”. Taking this path would have made Him a king, but also a liar. Satan would have succeeded.

MATT 4:8 – Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; {Similar to Luke 4:5}

[taketh him up] – G3880 = same as Matt 4:5, but does it mean that Satan miraculously transported Jesus to the top of the mountain, or that he made Him walk? I cannot imagine Jesus walking at all after fasting for 40 days, much less climbing an “exceeding high mountain”! Neither can I imagine Satan making Jesus walk from the wilderness to Jerusalem and climb to the top of the temple after being so physically spent on day 41 of a fast.

[all the kingdoms of the world] – All of the kingdoms that could be seen from that mountain (not every single kingdom on planet earth). It’s impossible to see all kingdoms from one mountain. Ask yourself, if Satan was miraculously giving Jesus a vision of all the kingdoms on earth, why would he take Him to a mountain to do that? If Satan wanted to give Jesus a vision, there’s no need to take Him up a mountain.

[the glory of them] – How big the buildings are, the size of the cities, etc. It emphasizes the amount of people inside, which was the reason Jesus came; to buy humanity back through the cross.

MATT 4:9 – And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. {Similar to Luke 4:6-7}

[All these things will I give thee] – This was a lie; there is no truth in the devil (John 8:44). This is the only temptation where Satan did not say, “If you are the Son of God”, because in doing this, Jesus would

have become “the Son of Satan”, obeying Satan rather than God. Were “all these things” his to give? Yes, because Satan is the God of this world (Eph 2:2).

How did Satan become the god of this world? – The earth is God’s because He created it (Psalms 24:1) but God is not the god of this world, therefore there is a conflict of interest between the two. How did that happen? God created the world and gave dominion to Man (Gen 1:26). Man sinned and became a slave to sin (John 8:34). Satan is the father of lusts, murder, lying (John 8:44) and sin. He is the father of disobedience (Eph 2:2) which is lawlessness, and all lawlessness is sin (1Jn 3:4). Since Satan is the father of sin, and since whoever sins is a slave to sin, it’s also accurate to say that whoever sins is a slave of Satan. Hence, Man became a slave and debtor to Satan, and the very dominion that man had was transferred to Satan, because whatever a slave owns is given to his master, which in this case is dominion over the earth. God sent His Son to buy us back from iniquity and purify us (Titus 2:14). Who was Jesus buying people back from? Their owner, Satan. Satan can do whatever he wants to his own property and to his own children.

[if thou wilt fall down and worship me] – What would it accomplish for Satan if Jesus fell down and worshiped him? For Satan, it would mean that he had finally succeeded in exalting his throne above God & His angels (Isa 14:12-13). The result is that all of the prophecies about the messiah would have become a lie, and since those prophecies came from God, God would have become a liar and would have been in sin, putting Him under Satan, making Satan able to overpower God’s word. Here, Satan offered a shortcut to Jesus, “You don’t need to go to the cross and die a horrible death like you showed that you would at baptism, and the result will be that you will own these people.” Therefore, for Jesus it would mean “redeeming” the people without crucifixion, though they wouldn’t have been truly redeemed. Even if Jesus did accept this and Satan honored his word, people would still be sick, dying, and demon possessed; probably more like Hell on earth.

Why was Jesus tempted 3 times? – Why didn’t Satan tempt Jesus more? Why not less? It’s because “in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established” (Matt 18:16 & Deut 19:15). If Jesus agreed with Satan 3 times, it would have established His complete agreement with Satan. Peter denied that he knew Jesus 3 times (Matt 26:75), establishing his denial of Jesus. Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him 3 times (John 21:17), reestablishing that Peter loved Him. The 4 beasts in Revelation say holy three times, “holy, holy, holy” (Rev 4:8) establishing that fact. Since Jesus refused Satan 3 times, His refusal was established. Satan would have tempted Jesus over and over without stopping if possible.

MATT 4:10 – Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. {Similar to Luke 4:8 & Deut 6:13-14}

[Get thee hence] – Go away! If Jesus hadn’t made Satan leave, the temptations would have continued. No temptation was as directly against God as this.

[Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve] – Paraphrased from Deuteronomy 6:13-14. You can only fall down and worship/serve God.

MATT 4:11 – Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him. {Similar to Luke 4:13}

[the devil leaveth him] – But only “for a season” (Luke 4:13). He left Jesus on the exceedingly high mountain to climb down alone.

[angels came and ministered unto him] – They brought Him food, which was Jesus #1 need at that moment. Perhaps they also helped Him down the mountain.

Jesus Moves to Capernaum & Preaches

MATT 4:12-17 **MARK 1:14-15** **LUKE 4:14-15**

MATT 4:12 – Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;
{Similar to Mark 1:14 & Luke 4:14-15}

[had heard that John was cast into prison] – John was put in jail for saying that Herod was wrong for committing adultery (Matt 14:3-4). John being thrown into prison was ‘the violent people seizing the Kingdom of Heaven by force’ (Matt 11:12). Did Jesus hear that John was in prison from God or from the people around Him? Probably from the people, just as He heard about John’s death (Matt 14:13). In any case, this is what triggered the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. John was sent to “prepare the way for the Lord” (Matt 3:3), and since John was in prison, the preparation was complete. John’s gospel never mentions the baptizer in prison; it only says “John was not yet cast into prison” (John 3:24).

[departed into Galilee] – Jesus came off of the mountain and went to Nazareth.

MATT 4:13 – And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

[leaving Nazareth] – Jesus left the wilderness and went to His hometown in Nazareth. While in a synagogue of Nazareth, Jesus’ teaching offended people, so they tried to kill Him (Luke 4:16-30). That is the reason why Jesus left Nazareth.

[he came and dwelt in Capernaum] – He moved and made Capernaum His new home.

[the sea coast] – Near the Sea of Galilee.

MATT 4:14 – That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

[That it might be fulfilled] – This is why Jesus chose Capernaum instead of, for example, Jerusalem.

[spoken by Esias] – In Isaiah 9:1-2

MATT 4:15 – The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; {Similar to Isa 9:1}

[The land of Zabulon, and the land of

[Nephthalim] – See Gen 49:21, Josh 19:32 & 2Kings 15:29.

Isaiah 9:1 – “Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.”

MATT 4:16 – The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. {Similar to Isa 9:1}

[sat in darkness] – Because it was so near to the Gentile territory, it was considered spiritually dark.
[saw great light] – Quoted from Isa 9:2, Jesus was “the Light” (John 1:4-10, 1Tim 6:16, & 1John 1:5).

MATT 4:17 – From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. {Similar to Mark 1:15}

[from that time] – After John was put in prison and Jesus moved to Capernaum.

[Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand] – This is what John preached (Matt 3:2) and John being taken to prison is what started Jesus preaching the same message (Matt 4:12). How did Jesus know to start preaching at this time? John’s purpose was to prepare the way for Jesus (Matt 3:3). After John was taken to prison, Jesus knew that John’s work was done and “the way” wasn’t going to get any more prepared than what John had already made it. It was time.

Jesus and the Fishermen Brothers

MATT 4:18-22 MARK 1:16-20 LUKE 5:1-11 (Compare to John 1:35-42)

MATT 4:18 – And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. {Similar to Mark 1:16 & Luke 5:2}

[walking by the sea of Galilee] – People pressed upon him to hear the word of God as He was by the lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1). Luke always refers to the Sea of Galilee as a lake.

[Simon called Peter] – Which is the same as Cephas, meaning “a stone” or “a rock” (John 1:42).

[Andrew his brother] – John the Baptizer’s disciple (John 1:35-42).

[casting a net into the sea] – Luke’s account is different, and records, “but the fishermen were gone out of them (the boats), and were washing their nets” (Luke 5:2). To escape the crowds, Jesus got in Peter’s boat and taught them from a comfortable distance. Afterwards, He told Peter to cast his net into the sea and he caught a miraculous amount of fish (Luke 5:3-9).

MATT 4:19 – And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. {Similar to Mark 1:17 & Luke 5:10}

[I will make you fishers of men] – “thou shalt catch men” (Luke 5:10), which means that Jesus would teach these disciples how to turn the hearts of the people back to God by doing His works so that the people would enter the Kingdom of God.

MATT 4:20 – And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. {Similar to Mark 1:18}

[left their nets] – They hadn’t just forsaken their profession; they had forsaken all (Luke 5:11 & Matt 19:27).

MATT 4:21 – And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. {Similar to Mark 1:19 & Luke 5:10}

[Zebedee their father] – [Zebedee](#) was the husband of Salome (Mark 15:40), same as the mother of Zebedee's children (Matt 27:56). Nothing more is known of Zebedee except that he was a fisherman.

MATT 4:22 – And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. {Similar to Mark 1:20 & Luke 5:11}

[left the ship and their father] – “with the hired servants” (Mark 1:20); they had a fishing business. “they forsook all” (Luke 5:11). They left home, family, and lands (Matt 19:27-30).

Jesus' Acts Bring Fame

MATT 4:23-25

MATT 4:23 – And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. {Similar to Luke 4:15 & Matt 9:35}

[the gospel of the kingdom] – What message was this exactly? It was something like, “turn from your sin back to God, because the kingdom of God is here, and that means that the Spirit of God will work through Me to heal anyone who believes” (Matt 12:28). This phrase means, “the good news of the kingdom”. It is not what we call the gospel of Jesus Christ. He did not preach, “I am the Christ”, because he didn’t even tell His disciples He was the Christ until almost the end (Matt 16:13-15).

[healing all manner of sickness] – This was the gospel (Matt 9:35). There was not one sickness that Jesus couldn’t or wouldn’t heal. There is no record of Jesus turning anyone away, except perhaps a Canaanite woman whose request was granted through persistence (Matt 15:22-28). Never did Jesus deny a person healing, tell them that it wasn’t their time, or tell them there was some lesson to learn from the sickness because God was working the sickness out for their own good (see Rom 8:28).

[disease] – G3119 = infirmity, debility, bodily weakness, sickness

MATT 4:24 – And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

[Syria] – The country north and east of Capernaum. Damascus is the capital of Syria.

[torments] – G0931 = torturer, torture, a torture rack, acute pains of the pains of a disease.

[possessed with devils] – G1139 = daimonizomai - to be under the power of a demon/devil. In the NT, these are persons, afflicted with especially severe diseases, either bodily or mentally. The cure required the expulsion of the demon.

[lunatick] – G4583 = to be moon struck, crazy, to be epileptic, epilepsy; being supposed to return and increase with the fullness of the moon. See *Jesus healing the child with epilepsy* (Matt 17:14-20).

[palsy] – G3885 = paralytic, sick of palsy, suffering from the relaxing of the nerves of one's side, disabled, weak of limb.

MATT 4:25 – And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.

[Decapolis] – G1179 = the ten-city region; a district in Syria; a track of land so called from the ten cities that were in it according to Pliny, these cities were: Damascus, Opaton, Philadelphia, Raphana, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippondion, Pella, Galasa, and Canatha (Gill).