

## Message #6

## Matthew 4:1-11

**JESUS CHRIST WAS TEMPTED IN ORDER TO PROVE THAT HE IS THE DIVINE KING AND SAVIOR WHO COULD NOT SIN, BUT WHO CAN SAVE A NATION AND SAVE INDIVIDUALS FROM THEIR SIN.**

**Observation #1** - There is no interval between Christ's baptism in the Jordan and Christ's temptation in the wilderness (**4:1**). Notice carefully Mark 1:12 "immediately."

What this tells us is that this is all part of establishing the credentials for Jesus' public ministry.

**Observation #2** - The temptation of Jesus Christ was orchestrated by the Holy Spirit. **4:1**

Jesus Christ is not tempted by His own flesh or by any lust or by a sin nature like you and I have, for Christ does not have a sin nature (Heb. 4:15; II Cor. 5:21). The temptation of Christ is one that is designed to prove His credentials. In fact, the Greek word "tempt" is one that means to test something or try something to prove reality (Smith, p. 351). This temptation is Spirit-led to prove that Jesus Christ is the Holy Deliverer.

**Observation #3** - The temptation of Jesus Christ took place in a real wilderness. **4:1**

A real wilderness area features high mountains (**4:8**), sporadic weather patterns and wild beasts (Mark 1:13). When you are alone in this type of setting, it is both thrilling and intimidating. We can be tested and proved faithful when we are alone surrounded by rugged, tough, threatening things.

**Observation #4** - The temptation occurred **after** Christ had fasted 40 days and 40 nights. **4:2**

This is truly Spirit-led fasting, not self-mortification fasting. The number 40 seems to be a peculiar number connected to Israel. Israel was in the wilderness for 40 years. Moses, when given a special assignment from God to record God's Word, fasted for 40 days and 40 nights (Ex. 34:27-28). Elijah, when under threat of execution and before given a special assignment from God to anoint God's king, fasted for 40 days and nights (I Kings 19:6-8). Christ taught things about the Kingdom to His Jewish ambassadors for 40 days prior to His ascension (Acts 1:3). Clearly this number 40 is connected to Him being the Messiah and King.

**Observation #5** - Twice Satan identifies Jesus Christ as the Son of God. **4:3, 6**

The "if" clauses are first class conditional clauses meaning reality is assumed. In other words, Satan is challenging Christ in view of the fact or since He is the Son of God. Make no mistake about this—Satan does not question the deity of Jesus Christ.

**Observation #6** - The satanic temptations increase in intensity—they go from lesser to greater.  
**4:3b, 6, 9**

**Observation #7** - Satan knows the written Word of God extremely well. **4:6**

In fact, Satan quotes a Messianic Psalm—Psalm 91:11-12. One fact needs to be carefully seen and understood—**whenever Satan quotes or uses Scripture, it is “always in the wrong way”** (Gaebelein, p. 86).

**Observation #8** - Jesus Christ demonstrates to us the importance of understanding every single written word in the Bible for that was His weapon. **4:4**

**TEMPTATION #1** – The temptation to turn stones into bread. **4:3-4**

Now in answering Satan, Jesus Christ does not have a verse that specially addresses the issue of turning a stone into some bread. But there is an important principle in **Deuteronomy 8:3**, which does deal with a food issue. If Israel would focus on knowing and obeying God’s Word, God would take care of her. Jesus Christ must function in perfect obedience to the Word of God and will of God and this meant He could trust God to take care of Him. Now notice carefully the end of **verse 4**—we are to know and understand “every” word that is written in Scripture.

**TEMPTATION #2** – The temptation to jump off the top temple to prove to all He is God’s Son. **4:4-7**

Satan quotes two verses from a Messianic Psalm—Psalm 91:11-12. The only problem in his quote is that he leaves out seven critical words—“to guard you in all your ways.” Why did Satan leave out these words? Because this Psalm was given to prove that the Messiah would be guarded as He carried out and fulfilled all of the divine ways of God. The promise was not that He could do stupid things, but as He fulfilled the divine will of God. The Messiah would be kept and protected in all the ways of God and jumping off the top of a temple so you could float to the ground is not part of the divine plan. Again Jesus refutes Satan by quoting the written Word of God (**Deut. 6:16**).

**TEMPTATION #3** – The temptation to pay homage to the devil. **4:8-10**

This is a last ditch effort to get Christ to turn from doing God’s will, which will end with Him being King of Kings and Lord of Lords; but which includes a plan for Him to go to Calvary. Undoubtedly as Satan showed these kingdoms to Christ, Satan saw them as glorious. But when Christ saw them, He saw them as kingdoms in sin under the doom of death and eternal damnation. When Satan said to Christ I’ll give you them right now if you fall down and worship me, Satan is trying to get the second member of the Trinity to worship him. In return, Satan would give Christ these kingdoms and He would not have to go to Calvary. He would have had the glorious Kingdom on earth, but there would be no Kingdom in eternity, for if He doesn’t go to Calvary, no sinner can be saved and get into God’s Kingdom.

Christ names Satan and tells him to be gone and He again quotes the written Word of God (**Deut. 6:13**) and the devil left Him. All quotes come from Deuteronomy, which show Christ was fulfilling all of the Law, even in surviving temptation.