

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW; YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH

Week 17 – Jesus’ Temptation...Proof That He Is The Son Of God – Pt. 2

October 31, 2021

First Temptation

Matthew 4:3-4 – *Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’ But He answered and said, ‘It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’* The word “if” in the Greek is better translated as “forasmuch as You are the Son of God.” WHY? **CONSIDER:** We need to remember that Satan never questions the deity of Jesus, the demons don’t even question the deity of Jesus, only religious liberals question the deity of Jesus. Satan and the fallen angels knew Jesus before they fell. They were at one time holy angels. They knew Jesus to be God.

James 2:19 - ...*Even the demons believe—and tremble!*

Matt. 8:28-29 - . . . *in the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, ‘What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?’*

The first temptation is a temptation to distrust God's love...to distrust God's plan for the Son of God. Satan was attempting to get Jesus to rethink God’s plan.

Regarding changing the stones into bread...Jesus had the power to do so. He turned water into wine – for others! He fed 5,000 hungry people with a child’s lunch. He fed another 4,000. Satan was attempting to get Jesus to divert His power to serve Himself. At no time did Jesus use His miraculous powers to gratify Himself. The work of God cannot be accomplished through self-indulgence. The gifts that God gives to us as believers are for the purpose of equipping others for the work of the ministry.

Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3 – *Man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.* God had led the children of Israel into the wilderness and they had no alternative but to trust Him. They had to depend on God for food. Even their food, the manna, was decreed by the word of God because the manna came by God’s command (Ex. 16).

Second Temptation

Matthew 4:5-7 – *Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, If (forasmuch as) You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’*

It appears that the devil somehow physically transported Jesus to the temple pinnacle...a platform where a trumpeter sounded the call to the morning sacrifice from on top of the temple walls. It was a 450-foot drop to the Kidron Valley below. Satan told

Jesus to throw Himself down and trust God to take care of Him – to test God. What a sensational feat for all to see. Instantly the people would accept Jesus as Messiah. Jesus could forego the agony of the cross! Was this going through Satan’s mind?

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Jesus didn’t come to be swept up by the crowd. He didn’t come to be accepted. He came to be rejected. He came to die.

Jesus quoted Deut. 6:16 – *It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’*

For Jesus, was the temptation then real? YES!

Heb. 4:15 – *“He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Jesus’ temptation was REAL.*

Because Jesus could not sin, He could never succumb to the temptation. CONSIDER: Jesus was tempted to the absolute limit of the capability of Satan to tempt. Jesus never gave in. Every temptation ran to its limit.

When we’re tempted, many are the times that we give in.

Jesus withstood every temptation to its full limit!

CONSIDER: the temptation could be presented to Jesus because of His humanness. Sin could not occur because of His deity!

Third Temptation

Matthew 4:8-9 – *Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.’*

Psa. 2:8 - God the Father said to God the Son, *Ask of Me and I’ll give the nations for Your inheritance and the ends of the earth for Your possessions.*

These are the words of God the Father to God the Son – speaking of what would happen in the Millennial Kingdom – after the humiliation, after the suffering on the cross, after three days and three nights in the grave, after the resurrection, after Jesus’ ascension, after sitting at the right hand of God, after the rapture. Satan was offering this to Jesus NOW! Again, Satan offered the means by which Jesus could bypass the cross.

How could Satan offer Jesus all the kingdom of the world?

John 12:31; John 14:30; John 16:11 – he is called “the ruler of this world.” Satan is NOT the ruler of the universe. He is the ruler of the world system.

I John 5:19 – *The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.*

II Corinthians 4:4 – he’s called “the god of this age.”

These passages do not proclaim that Satan literally possesses all the nations of the world. He rules the system of evil that dominates the nations of the world.

Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, praised the Most High God Who rules over the realm of mankind and bestows it on whomever He wishes (Dan. 4:17).

Satan doesn't possess the kingdoms of the world. Satan does not determine the nations or who rules the nations. Satan is essentially telling Jesus, "I can make life easier for You. You're supposed to have the kingdoms of the world for Your own, You're supposed to be the ruler. You can go right to the crown. You can forget the cross. However, there's one condition..."

Matt. 4:9 – *All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.*

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Isa. 14:13-14 - *For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; ... ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, ... I will be like the Most High.'* And, with those words, Lucifer was kicked out of his place in heaven. He wanted to be worshipped.

But Jesus knew that before He would wear His crown of glory, He would first wear His crown of thorns. Jesus' baptism signified His death and resurrection. Jesus' baptism announced that He would be the ultimate sacrifice offered to everyone!

Jesus had to submit to the Father – there was no other way.

Jesus had to go to the cross to bear our sin – there was no other way.

Jesus told John that He had to fulfill all righteousness.

And so Jesus proclaimed...

Matthew 4:10-11 – *'Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'* Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

Jesus had to conquer Satan in the wilderness. He had to destroy Satan and his power over death at the cross (Heb. 2:14). Resurrection was VICTORY. When the 1,000 years of the Millennial Kingdom have "expired," Satan will be released from the pit (Rev. 20) and will go out to deceive the nations – to gather them to battle, surrounding the camp of the saints and Jerusalem. God will devour Satan and his minions with fire. And the devil will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone and will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

At the outset of His public ministry, Jesus, Who was declared to be the Messiah/the Son of God at His baptism, proved that He is the Messiah/the Son of God at His temptation! This is our GLORIOUS ALL-POWERFUL GOD!

