



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE MATTHEW 4:1-14a

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION WITH THE WORD –

March 12, 2023

INTRODUCTION:

Matthew 3:13-17 Jesus, the Savior of the world asked to be baptized by John the Baptist. John already filled with the Spirit of God came to prepare the people for Jesus' coming. Jesus humbled himself that we might have life. He came to save the people from their sin. Heaven opened up and God the Father spoke, and the people heard His voice from heaven, and the Spirit of God came down in the form of dove upon Jesus. The Father's voice proclaimed and identified publicly Jesus' Sonship. He came to save the people, and set forth His redemption mission. One of His greatest periods of temptation was at the beginning of His public ministry... Immediately following His baptism by John – *Matt. 3:13-17*—just prior to starting His preaching ministry – *Matt. 4:12-17*.

LESSON: I. PREPARATION FOR TEMPTATION MATTHEW 4:1-2

14:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Right after His baptism, Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness for a time of temptation by the devil. The Devil is, of course, Satan. Jesus said he was a murderer from the beginning, and that he has no truth in him (*John 8:44*). The word "Devil" means "adversary" or "accuser." That's Satan's true character. This is Jesus' experience as a man and the Spirit of God led Him, then the tempter came to Him

²Why was Jesus tempted? This season in the wilderness did not start because Jesus upset God. It was quite the opposite. Remember, the Father was well-pleased in Him, and it was the Holy Spirit Who led Him into the wilderness for this testing. Even though Jesus was God, He was also man. Therefore, Jesus hungered as a man, thirsted as a man, suffered as a man, and ultimately died as a man. He was also tempted as a man, yet without sin (*Hebrews 4:15*). This was necessary "He had to be made like His brothers and sisters in every way. This was so that He could become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things relating to God, in order to wipe away the sins of the people" (*Hebrews 2:17 CEB*).

The wilderness of Judea was a rocky, barren, scrubby environment more or less hostile to human life. God cannot tempt any man (*James 1:13*). His Word says it! But, Jesus is led into the situation where Satan would present the temptations. Jesus will show us as a man how to overcome temptations.

Saints, I want you to remember this the next time your life seems to take a horrible turn for the worse, God is your friend, and not your executioner, then you will remember to deal with the tests and temptations the way you're supposed to. Also remember three reasons:

1. To prove and demonstrate your faith.
2. To strengthen and prepare you for heavier responsibility.
3. To demonstrate the mercy, grace, and power of God in human life.

4:2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. How could He prepare Himself? There was only one way—through fasting and prayer. "Fasting" means abstinence from eating food for a period of time (*Luke 4:2*). Jesus fasted so as to focus himself for the challenge of

¹ <http://www.rondaniel.com/library/40-Matthew/Matthew0313.html>

² <http://preachersfiles.com/matthew-41-11-jesus-is-tempted-by-satan/>

www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html





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temptation that He was about to face. He had to get alone with God and subject Himself; to gain complete control over His body, as the Spirit of God led Him. He had to get completely apart from the world. Being tempted directly by Satan was no ordeal into which one ought to enter unprepared. Prayer is often accompanied with fasting (*Mark 9:29, Luke 2:37, Acts 14:23*). A WISE TEACHER ONCE SAID, "YOU CAN PRAY WITHOUT FASTING, BUT YOU CAN'T FAST WITHOUT PRAYING." Just imagine the pressure and weight pressing upon His body. Jesus had to be prepared—prepared mentally, prepared spiritually, and physically.

POINT:

How much more could be done if believers sought God with the same intensity! How much more growth and ministry could be gained!

Fasting helps the prayer life. There are special times when communion with God is absolutely essential:

- In times after a mountaintop experience (i.e. Christ's baptism)
- In times before a great trial of time of temptation (i.e. Jesus' 40days and 40nights* with the tempter)
- In times of periods of great service for God (i.e. Jesus' ministry- going before the public)

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"
Matt.6:33.

NOTE:

**There seems to be a significance in the number 40 here. The earth was cleansed in 40 days and 40 nights of rain during the flood. Joseph's embalming process was 40 days (Genesis 50:3). The children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. It seems to be a number that indicates cleansing and purification. The numerology is consistent in the case of Jesus' fasting as well.*

II. PROCESS OF TEMPTATION MATTHEW 3:-10

Three Temptations

The devil

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. We have to notice that being mature does not exempt a person from temptation. Jesus' first temptation was for Him to use His power to meet a personal hunger. He could then see fit to feed the world and prove Himself to be the Son of God. Men would rush to serve any Messiah or man who could meet their physical and material needs. However, Jesus would have failed to meet their spiritual need:

- By teaching error in saying that the physical is more important than the spiritual.
- By teaching that receiving was more important than giving.

Jesus was alone and hungry. He may have seemed defenseless when the devil came to Him with three temptations. But He was not. He was packing a massive broad sword, the Word of God (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12).

Jesus' Answer

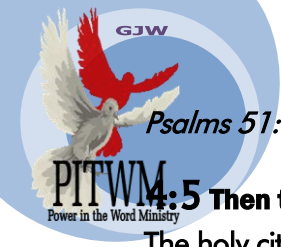
4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Every time the devil attacked with a temptation, Jesus quoted the Word of God to repel the attack:

1. The devil said, "You're hungry, so turn these stones into bread." Jesus quoted *Deut.8:3*.

Saints, the Word of God is your offensive weapon against the devil. God has given it to us to wage war against trials, tests and temptations. Matthew calls Satan "the Tempter" in verse 3. The tempter can only tempt, appeal, entice not force. Four clear lessons are seen in these temptations.

1. Temptation often attacks an area of desperate need such as hunger.
2. Temptation is to be resisted by using the Word of God.
3. When needs arise, be strengthened in God's presence and plan alone not yours.
4. Trust that the enemy will flee by the Spirit's Power.





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Psalms 51:11 says, "Cast me not away from thy presence; And take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

4:5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,—

The holy city was Jerusalem and the pinnacle of the temple was the highest point on the top of the temple which overlooked the lowest valley on one of its sides making for a height of around 700 feet.

The devil

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. The second temptation was to prove His deity by the spectacular, so the devil thinks. The worshipers at the temple, seeing such an event would accept and proclaim Him to be the Son of God.

2. The devil said, *"Jump off this high place to prove that God's angels will protect You."* Jesus quoted *Deut.6:16*. The thing that's wrong with this reasoning is that God is not to be tested or tried (that is to attempt to ensnare Christ; challenging God to sin). *In Acts 5:9, But Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?* This is not something we want to be caught doing. While in contrast, the challenge God gives in *Mal.3:10c*, is a challenge to prove Him regarding the rewards of tithing. God is to be trusted and He wants men to believe Him because they love Him as their Father, not because of the events and happenings. God would have failed if He had given in to this temptation:

1. This act would have abused God's Will and misused what God had promised. This would have ignored what God really wanted and had really said.
2. This would have had the people's attention centered on the spectacular instead of faith in God.

The power of Satan is limited. He can only tempt. He could not push Christ off the pinnacle, and he cannot push or force us to sin. The lust or desire is from within man. Satan's temptation can only stir and arouse the desire and lust. Satan cannot cause a man to lust. Therefore, if a person is living in communion with God and living in God's Word, he will be stirred to obey God more than he is stirred to yield to the temptation. Satan knew scripture, but he always put a twist on it. It's possible to know the scripture and not know God. It's also possible to know the scripture and stand against God, abusing and misusing His Word.

Jesus' Answer

4:7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. So, we see Jesus continues to speak the Word that can come against Satan's lies. Jesus lets him know that he can't tempt the Lord thy God.

- Satan deceives and lies. The kingdoms of this world are only temporary—for a few short years.
- Believers cannot receive from Satan what God has promised them.

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;— The third temptation was to prove His deity by compromise. The temptation was to secure the world without the cross, without paying the price.

The devil

4:9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

3. The devil said, *"Take the easy way out, and I'll give you the world."* Jesus quoted *Deut.6:13*. If Christ would have given into this temptation, he would have failed.

- Compromising with the devil and the world is not God's way. God's way is to conquer the corruption and death of this world.

The temptation was to choose another way instead of God's Way. The temptation was to compromise His life and His loyalty—switch loyalties. He was offered the world and the sovereign leadership of the world if He would just do one thing: worship the devil. What does this mean? It means that Christ would have been



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tempted to allow the world (including man) to remain corruptible and dying with no hope of life eternal with God.

- God alone is to be worshiped, not the devil nor the world and its power.

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Matt. 16:26.

Jesus' Answer 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. Jesus had to command Satan to leave. A believer is often tempted to compromise both his life and his work or ministry if he doesn't command the enemy to get out.

- Temptation must be resisted immediately. Jesus did not hesitate a moment in resisting temptation.

When a believer is tempted time after time, he faces two critical dangers:

1. Discouragement – Succumbing to temptation and sinning can discourage a person. In fact, the greater the fall of a person, the more unworthy and self-accusing he becomes. Self-pity, shame, guilt, and failure always discourages to some degree.
2. Over-confidence – A person can feel strong and mature, feeling above temptation, leading them to think that everything they do is bound to be right; feeling they can conquer any temptation on their own; pulling scripture out of context to justify their ungodly and loose behavior.

III. PROTECTION AFTER TEMPTATION MATTHEW 4:11-14a

Angels Ministering To Him

4:11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him. This was the triumphant victory. Jesus resisted the temptation the only way He could!—He simply spoke His Word, and it commanded the enemy to bow. Therefore Jesus never got out of the Will of God. The end result of Jesus' successful battle was twofold. **First**, the devil left Him. This is how we are to obey James' command: *James 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.* **Secondly**, after the devil left, angels came and ministered to Him. You might think, Well, Jesus was special, so He was ministered to by angels. And you might say I'm nobody; what makes you think that I would ever qualify to be ministered to by angels? Well, the writer of *Hebrews 1:14* says that angels are, "...all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation." We are accounted to receive this salvation that Christ gave His life for.

4:12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;— Whether we believe it or not, God shows or gives us signs to start being about our Father's business. Well, this was Jesus' sign—John's imprisonment! God showed Jesus the time of when He was to begin His ministry, for it was certainly after the wilderness experience and not before. God always has a right timing. That's why Jesus shows us that He had to begin with fasting and prayer. It is important when we are led into the desert. If you don't count the cost in a business and you get so far in it that you might want to turn tail and run; you want to give it up, but, starting at God's right timing, you can never go wrong. How would it seem if Jesus was perceived competing with John? John had prepared the way in the wilderness, and after preparing the way, John had to remove himself. It seems that John had to decrease while Jesus increased. This was not the way John wanted to leave his ministry, but God allowed him to be imprisoned. God had prepared Jesus to be in Galilee down through history for the coming and beginning of His Son's ministry.

4:13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthaim:— Nazareth is a town in Galilee, 70 miles north of Jerusalem. Jesus left Nazareth (Jesus' hometown). The reason? - The city had rejected Christ and rose up and threw him out of the city (Lk.4:29). Jesus then came to Capernaum which is on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, in the borders



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of Zabulon and Nephthalim. And Capernaum became the home base for Jesus' ministry.

4:14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,— This refers to the coming of Christ into Galilee in fulfillment of the prophecy spoken of in Isaiah 9:1-2.

SUMMARY:

Jesus is led into the wilderness by the Spirit. He didn't eat anything for 40 days and 40 nights, in contrast with John the Baptist being in the desert eating locust and wild honey. Satan, the devil, the tempter came to Jesus with three temptations (**4:1-3**).

TEMPTATIONS

1. Turn these stones into bread (tempting the lust of the flesh).
2. Cast Yourself down from this pinnacle (tempting the pride of life; fame).
3. Fall down and worship me, the devil, (tempting the lust of the eyes) and you can have it all.

Jesus does not hesitate on any. He says, "*IT IS WRITTEN!*"

IT IS WRITTEN

1. *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (4:4).*
2. *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God (4:7).*
3. *Get thee hence Satan, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve (4:10).*

The primary focus is doing the Will of God when tempted by the enemy—not to compromise. It therefore shows you, who you are and who God is. It showed Jesus, who was both God and man that resisting the enemy can be done—not in our power alone but in the power of His might Eph.6:10.

As a man, He had to be filled with the Holy Spirit (*the Spirit of God descended upon him like a dove Matt.316*). As a man He had to confess the Word of God (*It is written Matt4*). As a man, He was hungered (*fasted 40 days and 40 nights Matt.4:2*). As a man, he had to pray and keep in constant contact with the Father.

Every trial and temptation was for our learning and example because at the end, the devil had to leave. When He said *away from me Satan*, he had to leave. When He endured the temptations, and didn't give in, Satan had to leave (**4:11**). When He submitted first to God, and resisted the devil, the devil had to flee. *1Corth.10:13* says, "*There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it*". God always has someone to minister to us in our time of need. Jesus did not minister to Himself. "*...Behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*" This was a time of complete exhaustion for Jesus. As the enemy departs, he departs for a season, meaning that there would be other temptations. But for now, we have the victory because of Jesus! One of the blessings of having Jesus as our Savior is His ability to comfort and aid those who are tempted. He is sympathetic, and can provide mercy and grace to help in the time of need – *Heb. 4:14-16*. This is because He too was tempted – *Heb. 2:18*.

Upon hearing that John the Baptist had been cast into prison, Jesus went to Galilee. He left Nazareth and dwelt in Capernaum, by the sea coast in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim. The region of Galilee was prophesied by Isaiah. (**4:12-14**). Adding verse 17, "*From that time Jesus began to preach and say, Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"