

## THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS:

NOT BY BREAD ALONE

Matthew 4:1-4

Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 4:1-4

Intro: The account of the temptation of the Lord Jesus is given in each of the Synoptic Gospels. It is very brief in Mark's Gospel. Matthew and Luke gave the same account, but the order of the temptations is slightly different. They both began with the account of the Devil seeking to make the Lord turn stones into bread. Matthew followed this with the temptation to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. Luke put this last. Matthew gave the temptation to worship the Devil last; Luke put this second.

We probably do not need to concern ourselves too much with the explanation for the different orders of temptation which we find in comparing Matthew and Luke. The fact remains that all three are recorded in both accounts. Obviously it was not Mark's purpose to place much emphasis upon this.

Both Matthew and Luke agree that the temptation of our Lord followed His baptism. The baptism was a glorious event. As we have seen, all Three Persons of the Godhead were involved in it. The baptism was significant because it not only marked the beginning of our Lord's public ministry, but it portrayed His primary purpose in coming to the earth, that is, of fulfilling all righteousness. He came to provide salvation. The Devil obviously would have known this, but one thing he apparently had not yet learned was the effect of our Lord's humanity upon His Deity. The Devil is a very wise and intelligent being, an angel, and perhaps the wisest of all creatures. But he is not omniscient! Neither is he omnipresent. He is very powerful, but he is not omnipotent.

However, when the Lord became a man he became a member of the human family which was lower than angels. And so it seems that by these temptations the Devil (which means accuser; Mark called him Satan, adversary) was seeking to find out what effect our Lord's humanity had upon His Deity. Could the Lord be made to sin? If so, not only would the Lord fall under the judgment of God, but it would put an end to all hope of salvation for the human race. The Devil knew that God could not sin, but he evidently was not sure of the Son of God Who had become a man.

Let us notice, first of all,

- I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR LORD'S TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:1, 2).

He had not yet started His public ministry, but He had been baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit for His ministry. It must have been a time which the Lord had looked forward to with great anticipation. He would not have been primarily eager to meet man's need. That, of course, was the reason that He had come. But His first purpose was to do that which would please the Father. Many of the servants of the Lord had served God faithfully, but none of them had served Him perfectly. The Lord Jesus had come to serve the Father faithfully and perfectly. It clearly was the design of the Devil to put a stop to that, if he could.

In addition we learn from the Scriptures that our Lord had not had anything to eat for forty days and forty nights. That is a long time to go without food, longer than any of us have gone without eating! And so we are not surprised to read that our Lord was hungry.

It was just at this time in our Lord's ministry, and just at the time when he had been without food for this long period of time, that the Devil appeared with his temptation. Physically our Lord must have been weak. And, from the standpoint of His humanity, His body would have craved food. So, the Devil's timing was perfect.

But let us think for a moment about the word "tempted." The Spirit of God had led the Lord into the desert specifically "to be tempted of the devil." The Devil would have us think that he was in charge, but the Scriptures tell us that the Holy Spirit was in charge. The Devil took advantage of a situation which had been introduced by the Holy Spirit.

Why did the Holy Spirit do this? And what does it mean that our Lord was there by the Spirit's design "to be tempted"?

Basically the word that is used in Matt. 4:1 means to be tested, or tried. The Devil was given the opportunity to see if the Lord Jesus could sin, and if so, if He would sin. The Lord often tries us; it is the Devil who sees to it that a trial is turned into a temptation. And he is always quick to take advantage of us in our trials.

## II. THE TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:3).

The Devil came to the Lord, and this is what he said.  
(Read.)

Now there would have been nothing wrong for the Lord to turn stones into bread. Later on at least two occasions He was to turn some bread into enough bread to feed thousands of people at one time. There is no doubt but what the Lord could have

done this. What, then, was wrong with what Satan said?

Well, the first thing was that the suggestion came from the Devil. If the Lord had done this, He would have been doing what the Devil wanted Him to do. There is no indication at all that God, the Father, wanted Him to do this. Even we need to remember that there is a difference between what we can do, and what we ought to do. Just because we can do something is no proof that we ought to do it. You could go out and buy a lot of things on credit, but that is no proof that you should do it. The Lord was here on earth to please the Father -- not Himself, and certainly not Satan.

Secondly, the Devil wanted the Lord to do this as proof that He still was the Son of God just as He had been before He became a Man.

That expression, "If thou be the Son of God," ought to remind us of what the crowds said to the Lord on the Cross. Some said, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross" (Matt. 27:40). Others said, "If he be the King of Israel, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe in him" (Matt. 27:42). And then they added, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God" (Matt. 27:43). And at first both of the thieves who were crucified with Him said the same thing.

Did the Lord come down from the Cross? Of course not. The miracles which the Lord performed were proof of His Deity, but the Lord never responded to this kind of a challenge. He knew that if they would not respond to the Word of God, they would not respond even if He were to rise from the dead -- which He did! But He did not rise from dead to convince them. He rose from the dead because that was the will of the Father for Him.

The third point that we can make about this temptation is that it focused attention on our Lord's physical needs as though that were the most important issue of the hour. It is as though the Devil were saying that the most important thing for our Lord at that moment was for Him to get some food in His stomach.

Does this sound familiar?

We live in a world that is occupied with the satisfaction of man's physical needs. We have a government which believes that if the physical needs of people are met, then we will have a peaceful and happy world. When have we heard our political leaders talking about man's spiritual needs? Most people don't even know that they have spiritual needs. They

couldn't define what a spiritual need is if their lives depended upon it. To state what was going on in this situation, the Devil was giving our Lord the impression that always the physical needs take precedence over everything else.

Now let me be clear. Physical needs are important. We all need to eat. It is important that people have food. And we all deeply regret that anyone in this whole world has to go to sleep tonight hungry, especially the children of the world. But if you devote your life to the meeting of physical needs, but never do anything else for them, what have you gained. Many people will wake up some day when it is too late only to find that they have overlooked the greatest need that they have: their spiritual need, their need for the Lord and His blessing, their need to do God's will, not their own.

In John chapter 6 we have John's account of the feeding of the five thousand (probably more like 10 or 15 thousand when you included the women and children). The next day the crowd followed the Lord, and He rebuked them because they were interested in getting another meal, and not because they understood the meaning of the miracle which had been performed before them. And so this is what He said,

Labour not for the meat which perisheth,  
but for that meat which endureth unto eternal life,  
which the Son of man shall give you;  
for him hath God the Father sealed (John 6:27).

Was the Lord saying that it was wrong for them to seek food, or that it was wrong for them to work so that they could eat? No, that was not the point. The Lord wanted them to realize that they had needs which were greater than their physical and bodily needs, and that they were completely overlooking their greatest need which the Lord was there to supply.

It is important to see that the Devil did not come to the Lord because he felt that the Lord could do something for him. He had passed that point in his life when he decided to rebel against God even before man was created. His whole purpose was to get the Lord to prove that He was the Son of God, but to prove it on the Devil's terms.

What was the Lord's response?

### III. OUR LORD'S RESPONSE (Matt. 4:4).

This whole account of the temptation of our Lord gives us an excellent lesson on who we are to deal with the Devil. The Lord did not argue with him. The Lord did not even originate

at that moment anything which could be added to what had already been written. Instead He referred to the written Word of God. He quoted Deut. 8:3. Please turn to that passage of Scripture. (Read.)

The children of Israel were in a situation that was similar to that which our Lord faced when the Devil tempted Him. And they were in that place many times during their journeying in the desert. (He, too, was in the desert.) And time and time again they complained about their lack of food, or about the kind of food that the Lord was giving them. And if it were not food, it was water. They rarely seemed to realize, if ever, that the Lord was seeking to teach them the truth that is expressed in Deut. 8:3. The Lord often withholds the physical in order that our attention may be turned to the spiritual. This is true also in the case of sickness, isn't it? None of us wants to be sick. We don't like to be sick. But the Lord often uses physical problems to make us aware of our spiritual needs.

But it is important for us to see what happened when the Lord quoted Scripture. That ended the temptation. The Devil moved on to something else. Our Lord resisted him in the faith, and the Devil failed in his attempt to get our Lord to sin.

What does it mean to live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord"? Does it mean that we read our Bibles instead of eating food? No. Notice that the Lord said that man does not live just by bread alone. He needs bread, but he needs more than bread. He needs the Word of God. He needs the Lord. He needs to get His guidance from the Lord, not from a ridiculous challenge from the Enemy. And when the Devil sees that we are like Luther who said that his soul was captive to the Word of God, he knows that our defense is a wall which he cannot break down.

Concl: We are going to be studying about angels this summer, and we are going to be learning one of the most important passages of Scripture in all of the Word of God, especially where our conflict with the Devil is concerned. And be sure that if the Devil would attack our Lord, he is not going to leave us alone. Already we have had many dealings with him as he sees to it that temptations are placed in our way. But Paul made it very clear that our defense is in the Word of God -- knowing it, believing it, and obeying it. The Word of God is our sure defense. A person can have a strong body, but be spiritually weak. Samson proved that.

Let us thank God for His provision for our bodily needs, but let us not make the mistake that that is the most important.

THE DEVIL AS AN EXPOSITOR  
Matthew 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12

Intro: In Matthew's account this temptation is given second; in Luke, third and last. More than one commentator has said that it is fruitless for us to say which is the correct order (although it appears that Matthew probably gets the most votes). The difference certain has something to do with the different purposes of the two Gospel writers, as well as the people to whom each Gospel was addressed.

It is important to notice that in both cases there were three temptations, and only three! And this ties in with the three temptations of Eve:

- 1) "Good for food."
- 2) "Pleasant to the eyes."
- 3) "Desired to make one wise."

Cf. Gen. 3:6. In the same way it ties in with John's definition of the world:

- 1) "The lust of the flesh."
- 2) "The lust of the eyes."
- 3) "The pride of life."

Cf. 1 John 2:16.

The order of these statements, which seem to be parallel in Genesis and 1 John, may be an argument for Luke's account as the one in which the temptations occurred, but we cannot say for sure. The point is that there were three separate temptations, and only three. After the Devil has tested the Lord in these three areas, he left Him because there was no other area in which He or anyone else could be tempted.

There is no question but that the temptation we considered last week has to do with that which was "good for food," or "the lust of the flesh." We are often tempted with that which will satisfy our fleshly needs.

The temptation where the Devil showed our Lord all of the kingdoms of the earth, and promised them to Him if He would fall down and worship him, was "beautiful to the eyes," or "the lust of the eyes."

This leaves "desired to make one wise" and "the pride of life" as descriptions of the temptation which we are considering just now. Evidently the Devil thought that such a testing would be proof to Him that the Lord really cared for Him, and would protect Him under any conditions. "The pride of life" is an expression which means that we long to be able to do something which will enable us to boast about something, even about something related to God, such as, wisdom in Gen. 3:6, or the spectacular display of God's willingness

to do for us what He has never done for anyone else. Even in our relationship with God there is a tendency in our hearts to hope that God will do something special for us to show that we are somebody special. "The pride of life" points to something not only that we have, or that we will do, but also to the fact that we want to talk about it, brag about it, be sure that everyone knows about it.

Now let us look at some of the details of the temptation as they are given to us by Matthew (although Luke concurs fully with the details. First,

I. THE PLACE OF THE TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:5; Luke 4:9b).

I don't know how you visualize what the places of temptation in your own life might be. Perhaps you know that there are certain places that you need to avoid--and there certainly are for all of us. But the temptation of our Lord in this instance took place in "the holy city," and in the holy temple, the place out of all the earth where the Lord had chosen to place His Name. So there was not a more holy location on the face of the earth than where the Devil took our Lord.

This would teach us that we are not safe from the Devil's temptations wherever we might be. The Lord does not now dwell in Jerusalem (although some day He will again). He is present everywhere. But perhaps the application that can be made to us is that the Devil does not respect any sacred place, or any sacred activity. Who has not been tempted with evil thoughts while in prayer? Or who has not been distracted by thoughts of sin even when reading the Word, or while sitting in church listening to the Word? In the Lord's case, the Lord was not in the temple. He was not even in Jerusalem. But the Devil took Him there! And in doing so, he unwittingly gave the Lord an opportunity to teach us.

The setting of this temptation shows us that we need to be on our guard against the enemy wherever we are! We are never in any place where the Devil cannot get to us.

Let me add one more thing. Why do you think that the Devil took the Lord to the Temple in Jerusalem? It was because there were many people there. As far as we know, no one was in the desert where the Devil had tempted the Lord to turn stones into bread. But there would have been people in Jerusalem, many people! And so this would have been an opportunity for the Lord, at the beginning of His ministry, to do something that would have immediately attracted great attention from hundreds, perhaps thousands of people. Today businesses would pay thousands of dollars for that kind of

publicity. So this added to the pressure which was put upon our Lord.

## II. THE PURPOSE OF THE TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:6a; Luke 4:9b).

The purpose of the temptation was to prove that the Lord Jesus was really the Son of God. "If thou be the Son of God." That was the purpose as stated by the Devil.

Now, doesn't this seem to be not only a legitimate thing to do, but also something that was very important for the Lord to do? As I think I mentioned last week, was this not the purpose behind our Lord's miracles, not just meeting human needs, but to show that He was "the Christ, the Son of the living God"? In many of our Lord's messages, particularly those recorded in the Gospel of John, our Lord sought to establish this fact very clearly, that He was the Son of God. So the purpose which Satan suggested was not in and of itself an evil thing. No person can really be saved who does not know and believe that Jesus is the Son of God. So it would seem that such proof could have far-reaching results in bringing people to salvation.

## III. THE TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:6a; Luke 4:9b).

We have it in the Devil's words when he said, "Cast thyself down." Luke adds the words "from hence."

Where were they? They were up on a pinnacle of the temple. This means that they were on the highest point of one of the wings of the Temple, our where they would be visible to the crowds coming to the Temple.

Anyone, by giving this a little thought, can see that the Devil was encouraging the Lord to use of the spectacular to prove that He was the Son of God. This is the way that the Devil encourages us to think. If only something outstanding can be done, then people will know that what we are doing is the work of God. And it works! Look at the nature of the charismatic movement today. It depends upon the spectacular! Of course they say that it is the work of the Holy Spirit, but they make sure that you understand that they are accomplishing more than most of us are accomplishing.

But the Devil did something else here which is important for us to make sure that we see. He used the Word of God! He quoted Scripture. He quoted Psalm 91:11. That seemed to be proof positive that the Lord would be doing God's will if He did what the Devil wanted him to do. Our Lord's first response to the Devil's first temptation was with the Word of God, and so it seems that the Devil was trying to show the



Lord that the Word was important to Him, too.

Back in Genesis 3, when the Devil tempted Eve to disobey the Lord, we can see that sometimes the Devil appears as an expositor of Scripture. He tried to explain to Eve that she really did not understand what the Lord had told Adam, and so he gave his own explanation of what the Lord meant.

One of the most effective things that the Devil ever does is to use the Bible. The cults which do the most damage even today are the cults which use the Bible. Many people are inclined to think that a teacher must be a true teacher if he uses the Word of God. What they may not even stop to consider is, how is the Bible being used? Is it being used correctly, or incorrectly? Perhaps you have heard some people say that you can make the Bible say anything that you want to make it say. And there is some truth to that IF you take a very out of its context, and do not check it with the rest of the Word of God. Many false doctrines owe their origin to people who lift verses out of context, and then put them together to make them say what they want them to say.

Read Psalm 91. You will find that it does not promise that if you do something foolish like jumping off of a building or a bridge, that the Lord will send angels to make sure that you do not hit the street below. Psalm 91 talks about the troubles and dangers that come upon us, even from our enemies, and it is from them that the Lord promised His protection and care. However, there are even times in those circumstances when the Lord does not intervene. But by no stretch of the imagination can you make Psalm 91 say that if we create our own hazardous situation, that we can depend upon the Lord to intervene. He doesn't even promise to protect bungie jumpers.

What was the Devil trying to do? He was trying to destroy the Lord. And that is what he will try to do with you and with me if we impose upon the goodness of God and the power of God by creating situations where we supposedly are putting the Lord in position where He has to do something to protect us. We would be amazed at the many times the Lord takes care of us when we don't know anything about it. But don't be foolish enough to create a hazardous situation just to show how great your faith is, or to prove that you are a child of God.

#### IV. THE LORD'S RESPONSE (Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12).

The Lord turned again to the Word of God just as He had done during the first temptation. (Read v. 7.) He quoted Deut. 6:16.

What was the Lord doing? He was doing something which every careful expositor of Scripture should always do; He was comparing Scripture with Scripture. Before you feel that you know what a verse means, look at the verses that go along with it, and then make sure that there aren't any other passages which contradict your explanation.

Liberal theologians and pastors feel that they have a case against the Deity of our Lord because of a few passages of Scripture which seem to indicate that He was only a man. But what is their mistake? They fail to include all that the Scriptures say about Christ. If they did, they would see that the Bible teaches that Jesus Christ was, and is, the Son of God.

I think that it is interesting that the Lord did not give the Devil an exposition of Psalm 91. Sometimes I wish that He had. But for Himself He didn't need to because He knew that it would have been sin to "tempt the Lord" when the Bible clearly says that that is something which we are not to do.

What does it mean to tempt the Lord?

It means two things:

- 1) It means that you and I are never to put the Lord in a position where He is forced to prove His love for us, or His power, through some situation which we create. If, by the providence of God we find ourselves in a position where we need a manifestation of God's blessing upon us, that is one thing. But we are never deliberately to create such a situation. And that is what the Devil was trying to get the Lord to do.
- 2) It means, from this word's use in 1 Cor. 10:9, that we are not by our unbelief, or our immorality, or by our impatience, to test the patience and love of God.

Such testing of the Lord is always, under all circumstances, forbidden by God. We will always have many opportunities to experience God's provision and His protection for us, but we are not to decide how and when and where He is going to do this?

Concl: How important it is that we know the Word of God! It will keep us from sinning against the Lord. And let us remember that the Devil will often tempt us to prove something good by getting us to do something which is contrary to the Word of God. Let us trust the Holy Spirit to teach us. This means that we will carefully compare Scripture with Scripture. Doing so will keep us from sinning against the Lord by doing something foolish, which will bring dishonor upon the Lord's Name instead of glory.

THE CROWN WITHOUT THE CROSS  
Matthew 4:8-11; Luke 4:5-8, 13

Intro: We come tonight to the third of our Lord's temptations, the second according to Luke's record. The issue in the first two was, "If thou be the Son of God, ..." (vv. 3, 6). No such issue was introduced in this third temptation. But there was a condition. It is expressed in the words, "If thou wilt fall down and worship me" (v. 9b).

In the first temptation, the Devil was tempting the Lord to do something on His own. In the second temptation he was tempting the Lord to make God do something. In this third temptation the Devil was tempting the Lord with a promise of his own.

Therefore, we can see in the first temptation we are looking to see what the Lord could do, and if He would do it. In the second temptation we are looking to see if God would do what the Scriptures said He would do. In this last temptation we are encouraged to see what the Devil would do. But in each temptation the test was dependent upon what our Lord would do first.

Let us note first:

I. THE SETTING OF THIS THIRD TEMPTATION (Matt. 4:8; Luke 4:5).

The Devil took the Lord up into an exceedingly high mountain and showed the Lord all of the kingdoms of the world "and the glory of them" (Matt.) "in a moment of time" (Luke).

We have to recognize that something very supernatural was taking place. I do not say that the Devil had divine powers (because he did not), but he certainly had powers which even today we do not possess. I have no question at all in my mind but that this happened. Let me make that clear. But let me remind you that there is no mountain on earth from which you can see "all of the kingdoms of the world," and especially would it be impossible to see them "in a moment of time." The meaning of this must be that the Devil and the Lord could see them all at once!

But notice also that both writers, Matthew and Luke, said that the Devil did not just show the Lord "the kingdoms of the world," but that he showed the Lord "the glory of them." What is the glory of the kingdoms of the world?

Well, it would be their population. It would be their geographical location. It would be their beautiful cities. It

would be their wealth. It would be their military power. It would be the ability of the nations to parade their might and power, as well as to demonstrate their achievements in literature, science, and education. It would be the position of each nation in its relationship with the other nations. One of the things that is usually said about the United States is that it is the last and strongest of the great world powers of the western world. If the Devil were showing the Lord the glory of the United States, that is one thing that he would show Him.

And so this was something very spectacular that the Devil showed to the Lord.

Now if it were possible for us to go some place on earth to see the kingdoms of the world, we still could not see their glory. In order to see their glory we would have to visit each nation and do in that nation what the Queen of Sheba did when she visited Solomon, and what the visitors from Babylon did when they visited Hezekiah. The Queen of Sheba said that the half had not been told her. Isaiah 39:2 tells us this about Hezekiah and his Babylonian visitors:

And Hezekiah was glad of them,  
and shewed them the house of his precious things,  
the silver, and the gold, and the spices,  
and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour,  
and all that was found in his treasures:  
there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion,  
that Hezekiah shewed them not.

How long do you think that took? It is doubtful if it all could have been done in a day. It probably took several days. What was Hezekiah doing? He was showing the Babylonians the glory of Judah. And this is what Solomon did with the Queen of Sheba. One of the main differences with Solomon was that he showed her his wisdom. All of these things added up to the glory of Israel and Judah at those times.

When a leader of one government visits the leader of another government today, what does the host nation do? It is very common for the host leader to have the visitor review some of the troops, and this can be followed with a visit to various parts of the country, or various businesses. Leaders are usually very willing to show their glory.

This is what the Devil did with the Lord, not with a visit to each nation, but from one high position our Lord saw all of the nations at once, and he saw the glory of each one so that He could distinguish one nation from another.

If I were to say that the Lord sees all of the nations all of

the time and everything that is going on with each one, that would not surprise anyone of you. We know that He could do that because He is God, and we know it also because that is what the Scriptures teach us about Deity. But the Devil is not Deity; he is a created angelic being. However, we can see from what is said in this temptation that the Devil has powers which man today cannot possibly duplicate. I repeat: he does not have divine powers, powers equal to that of our Lord, but he has powers so much greater than we do that once we realize that, no one would have to tell us how much we need to know Eph. 6:10 through 18.

I hope that I have been able to picture what I see in the setting of this temptation.

But now let us go on to note:

## II. THE DEVIL'S OFFER TO THE LORD (Matt. 4:9; Luke 4:6).

He promised to give the Lord all of the kingdoms of the world, and their glory, to the Lord on one condition: that the Lord would fall down and worship him.

Did he have the right to do this? I think that he did. Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit, called the Devil "the god of this world" in 2 Cor. 4:4. And Luke tells us that the Devil said,

All this power [authority] will I give thee,  
**and the glory of them:**  
for that is delivered unto me;  
and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Now let me ask you a question: Was it the plan of God for our Lord Jesus Christ to have the kingdoms of this world? If you know your Bible, you know that the answer to that question is YES. Revelation 11:15 tells us this:

And the seventh angel sounded;  
and there were great voices in heaven, saying,  
**The kingdoms of this world are become  
the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ;  
and he shall reign for ever and ever.**

What, then, was wrong with this offer which Satan made to our Lord? He was saying that he would make the Lord the Messiah right then, and He could have it without going by way of the Cross. He was offering the Lord **THE CROWN WITHOUT THE CROSS**.

What was wrong with this offer?

First, the Devil is a liar and he never would have done it. Our Lord called him not only "a liar," but "the father of it,"

i.e., the father of lies. There has never been a lie told but what the Devil has had a part in it. He never would have done for the Lord what he promised to do.

Second, we learned last Sunday that the Devil has designs upon the Messianic throne. Cf. Isa. 14:13b.

Third, if the Lord had fallen down before the Devil, He would have been removing Himself from the Father's authority (if such a thing were possible). And think what this would have done to the whole divine order in the universe.

Fourth, this would have put an end to salvation.

Fifth, it would have put an end to any hope that there would ever be a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness would dwell. Those kingdoms which the Devil showed to our Lord were all wicked, sinful kingdoms. And for the Lord to have bowed down to Satan would have been to confirm the world forever in its sin.

Talk about great plans! The Devil had them, and he still has them. And he will never give up until he is finally cast into the lake of fire. Bind him in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, and as soon as he gets out he goes back to his old business of stirring up the nations against God. You can read that in Rev. 20.

The first two temptations were of little significance as compared with this. Either one of them would have proven disastrous for the Lord, but this would have been the worst of all. Only the Devil could have masterminded such a plan.

But let us go on to see what happened.

### III. THE LORD'S RESPONSE (Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8).

Our Lord, of course, could see the whole diabolical plan. And there are many things that He could have said to the Devil. But what did He say? Read Matt. 4:10.

Up to this point Matthew has called our Lord's enemy, the Devil. Now He spoke of him as Satan. He was not the Lord's friend, nor anyone else's friend. He is not our friend. He is our Adversary, our chief adversary, out to ruin anything that has to do with God, anything that is holy and just and good.

But as Martin Luther said in his hymn, A Mighty Fortress, speaking of the Devil, "One little word shall fell him." That is true if the "little word" is the Word of God!

There were many reasons why what the Devil wanted the Lord to do was wrong. But one reason overshadowed all other reasons: It would have been a violation of the Word of God! Our Lord simply quoted Deut. 6:13. The Devil was trying to replace God in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### IV. THE OUTCOME (Matt. 4:11; Luke 4:13).

The Devil, a fallen angel, left; the elect angels came and ministered to the Lord. The lust of the eyes had failed to make our Lord submit to Satan because the Word of God was in His heart. (I am speaking of Him now as a Man.)

Luke adds the statement that the Devil left the Lord "for a season." However, we have no record in the Gospels that the Devil ever confronted our Lord again as he did on these occasions. He sought to do it in more devious ways--like getting one of His disciples to betray Him.

How did the angels minister to the Lord? We are not told exactly, but we can be sure that they fed Him. How humbling this was for our Lord! We can be sure that they worshipped Him, and possibly there was some angelic singing. The shades of Scripture are closed to us as to what took place, but we can be sure that it must have been one of the most glorious times ever to take place on the earth.

Concl: What are we to learn from this very important passage of Scripture? I am sure that there are many lessons I have not seen, but let me point out just a few that I have seen.

First, let us see how trustworthy our Savior was, and is. He was faithful to God when the Devil threw the worst that he had at Him.

Second, notice how this qualified the Lord to be our High Priest. These temptations gave the writer of Hebrews the right to pen those wonderful words we have in Heb. 4:15, 16, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched..."

Third, we see how certain it is that we, too, will be tempted by the Devil. If he did not hesitate to tempt the Lord, he certainly will not hold back from us.

Fourth, I hope we see in these temptations the power of the Word of God--power not only to strengthen us in our times of testing, but power to turn the Devil away. As many have pointed out before me, every part of the armour in Eph. 6 has something to do with the Word of God.

Finally, let us be thankful that the Apostle John could write what he did in 1 John 4:4,

Ye are of God, little children,  
and have overcome them [the false spirits],  
because greater is he that is in you,  
than he that is in the world.

Let us never be casual and careless about the Devil. But let us be forever grateful that because we are "of God" and "in Christ" we have a sure provision for victory over all that the Devil may bring against us. We are weak in ourselves, but we have a mighty Savior. And ours is the victory through Him.