

## Notes for Matthew 4:1-11

- **Three Temptations: Provision, Protection, and Promotion**
- Messiah's work as Son of God on *behalf of his people*- -this is more than merely *how* to resist temptation and testing in the Christian life, it is more about *why we are able* to resist temptation- - Christ's victory over death, hell, and the Devil.
- This Scripture is teaching us how Jesus is standing in the place of Adam and Israel as the True, Trusting and Faithful Son of God where they failed. Christ is the True Son of God who Trusts and Obeys the Word of God.
  - A. Adam- He was the Son of God- tempted in paradise—given dominion as vice-ruler or prince over creation- - he failed to trust God ultimately. He believed Satan's lie and handed over man's natural disposition of not trusting God and having Satan as ruler.
  - B. Israel- Received salvation from Egypt - -were to have dominion over the land God had promised to them- -As Ex. 4 teaches, they were called God's "first-born son" whom he loved. However, they failed, they ended up believing lies and "did what was right in their own eyes." Both Adam and Israel did not fully trust the Lord their God- -they sinned against God, yet his compassion, his mercies are neverending- - In the fullness of times, he sent Christ- -both God and man.
  - C. Christ- He is standing firm by trusting God's word in the wilderness rather than in a perfect paradise. Israel as a type of God's Son who was to rule in God's Kingdom, was tested for 40 years by God and failed to enter the land because of disobedience. Christ is fulfilling this type by experiencing and being faithful in a 40 days wilderness.
    - 1. As true Son of God, he is resisting the tests and temptations of the devil, the accuser in order to restore God's Kingdom and overthrow Satan's Kingdom. This is no challenge to God's sovereignty, he was always Sovereign King over creation, but here he is reconciling fallen man in order to faithfully serve him. What Jesus is ultimately doing here is "binding the strong man" as he would say in Matthew 12, in order that he may plunder the strong man's

house. He is destroying Satan's kingdom and dominion over fallen man in order to redeem those who believe in him.

- The good news of this portion of Scripture is: Where man had failed to serve God, Christ served God fully; Where man lacked trust and faith in God's Word, Christ trusted God's Word fully; Where man was weak, Christ was strong- - made like man in every way, yet without sin- - He resisted the testing and temptation of the Devil.
- This Scripture gives a beautiful picture of our High Priest and Mediator overcoming the tests of Satan on our behalf, prior to beginning his ministry in Galilee and ultimately to the cross that awaited him! This is the hope of the author to the Hebrews when he says: "[Jesus] was tempted in all ways as we are- -yet without sin- - therefore he can sympathize with our weaknesses!
- This is our High Priest who mediates and intercedes for us at this very moment before God when we fail to be faithful. He offers to God his own faithfulness and righteousness and covers our sins!

### **The Three Temptations or Tests**

- They are legitimate needs for Messiah, for God's Son: (A) Food; (B) The need of God's protection; (C) Glory and rulership which were rightly his because he is the Son of God - -the Only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth. In other words, we have here Messiah's need for Provision, Protection, and Promotion.
- All of these three things rightly belonged to God's Son, he deserved to have provision, protection, and promotion. However, he came to fulfill all righteousness and willingly took upon himself human flesh in order to trust and obey where man failed. Therefore, he had to earn these by his perfect obedience and righteousness, these could not be given to him except by the Father for his completed work on behalf of his elect.
- Also, Messiah is overthrowing Satan's Kingdom by fully trusting the Word of God and God's faithfulness to his people and his promises! All of the temptations and test from Satan are different ways of saying the same thing: "Has God truly said?" This is

the way he got Adam and Israel to sin against God, and the very way he tests us today.

- In these tests, and in all of the miracles of Jesus in his earthly ministry, we see him overthrowing Satan's Kingdom, establishing God's right rule as Creator of Heaven and Earth, and by his grace, he is delivering us from the dominion of sin and Satan- - and *transferring his people into the Kingdom of the Son he loves.*
  
- People of God, we need provision, protection and promotion from the Lord. They are indeed legitimate needs as long as they are obtained God's Way! As people who have been united to Christ by faith, we have been given a portion of his Spirit and we must be obedient to God's Word in all we do. We must seek after holiness and obedience to God's commands. Remember, blessed is the man who walks according to the Law of the Lord...he will be like a tree planted next to living waters...whatsoever he does will prosper. Also, we are commanded to Trust in the Lord with all of your heart- - not to lean upon our own understanding, in all of our ways acknowledge him and *he shall* direct our paths!
  
- Satan subtly tempts us to trust him rather than God. The whole world is born into the Kingdom of Satan, he is the "god of this age" or the "prince of the power of the air" as Paul describes him. He is a created being, not a Creator, yet he fools men into following him to destruction. He has no power to change us or to convert us to his way, we naturally follow his ways and impulses because of the lures of the world and the flesh. BUT as our Savior did in his confrontation with Satan- - so must we, *entrust ourselves to God* who is faithful and we must trust his Word whatever the circumstance.
  
- Sons of God, look to the Son! Beloved, what manner of love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called the sons of God- - and that is what we are! Those who believe in Jesus Christ by faith alone; those who have trusted his perfect work on their behalf, these no longer serve sin and Satan. You have the ability to resist the world, the flesh and the devil.

- (1) Wait upon the Lord for all of your PROVISION. Remember the Psalmist in Ps. 37 who said: “I am old, yet I have been young and I have never seen the righteous forsaken, or the children (of the righteous) begging for bread.”
- We need food and drink. We have needs that must be fulfilled for our survival in this world. We do hunger and thirst. But we must remember that the Lord knows these needs before we ask him. We must seek first the KINGDOM as Mt. 6: 33 teaches us and “all these things” (what things?)- - all that we need shall be given you. All of our needs shall be met.
  - Entrust all of your needs to God. Pray faithfully that God will indeed “Give us this day our daily bread” and trust in the Lord to provide for you faithfully. Meditate upon God’s Law to prevent the subtle temptations and tests of Satan that cause you to turn away from our Gracious God to meet these needs in disobedient ways. Watch and pray!
    - (a) Whenever you question God’s faithfulness to you, or his goodness; anytime you question any of his promises to you- -REPENT- -and look to the faithfulness of God revealed in the Person of Christ. Resolve by God’s grace that you will trust him no matter what situation you find yourself in! Remember you have a gracious Mediator who can sympathize with your weaknesses! Never grumble against the Lord!
- (2) The LORD is a Strong Tower, the righteous run into him and are safe! The LORD is our PROTECTION Ps. 91 when understood in its context, and with correct application (contrary to the devil’s incorrect hermeneutics) is true! The LORD will cover you under the shadow of his wings. He will covenantally gather you as a hen gathers her chicks. Remember, he has gone out as the Great Shepherd, sought you out, and tenderly carried you back to the fold. The many times you have strayed and listened to the taunts of wolves and “strangers” outside the sheep pen. He is your protection and will watch over to guide you to your true resting place - -the place that even now Christ is preparing just for you! Why? Because he loves you.

- Don't trust in the things you can accumulate in this world as your protection. Don't trust in your finances. Your worldly securities are never fully reliable- -The things you see, the things you own- - these are wasting away. Remember to entrust yourself to God and his faithful protection in his Word in order to persevere and stand firm. The love of money is the root of all evil because men seek full security NOW, when they should have been looking to the LORD. All kinds of problems occur when we trust in money.
- Remember, even when chastisement and suffering comes your way- -it was because God wisely orchestrated it to make you more like Christ. In a similar way that the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tested, so he leads us in this way at times. We must be strong in the Lord and the power of his might so that we may stand. Perfect love casts out all fear that you may have in certain situations.
- Submit yourselves to God- - be not anxious- - God will protect you from all the storms of this life- - you must trust him and resist the temptations of the Devil that say that "God is unfaithful" - -"God has dealt you a bad hand" - - "God is weak and unconcerned with your trouble"- - these are lies. The Word of God says He is faithful and will provide for his own not what they deserve, but what they do not deserve. How rich is his grace to us in Christ!
- Watch out that you do not seek protection in this world by seeking after the ease of the world. Never rest self-confidently in yourself! Protection for the Christian does not come from "securities" or "nest eggs" that we gather as a sort of "pillows of comfort"- - savings accounts, investments, or stocks! Where is your trust? Is your trust in the Lord or on Wall Street?

(3) The Lord is your PROMOTION. Although you may live a moderate and an even suffering existence here. You must remember you are a pilgrim. Pilgrims are "passing through" not setting up permanent camps. Your citizenship, your commonwealth is not in Maryland, but in heaven. It is from heaven that you await your Living Hope, who is your Faithful Savior.

- As the Psalmist prayed- -while in this world ask for *not too much*, nor *too little*. Too much you might forget God and live self-satisfied lives here in this world; too little you might curse God. Your promotion is your hope – the hope of your resurrection to come. Your once-and-for-all deliverance to be with the LORD forever- -to dwell and worship in his presence! Live peaceable lives now in this world, on your pilgrimage - -but do not expect the world to treat you and promote you as their own.
  - Promotion is about ruling and “lording it over” others in this world, promotion in God’s Kingdom is a “descending into greatness” as our Savior did before us. It is serving others in this world, being the best at what we do as Christians, but doing it as a service to our Lord.
  - Worship and serve the Lord your God- - Do not look to the riches and ease of others who have no hope. Without God’s grace, they are like the chaff that will be blown away. Remember, godliness with contentment is great gain.
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- Christ has filled you now with his Spirit because he has brought in God’s Kingdom- - and is continuing to bring in his Kingdom by his Word and Spirit. All authority has been given to Jesus, not by Satan, but by His Father! Because Jesus was faithful where God’s people failed- - and still fail- -because he was faithful to God’s commands and trusted and obeyed God’s Word - -we have hope! Now, people of God you “GO!” in the power of the Spirit, resisting the Devil, watching and praying against temptation, and looking away from yourselves and your works to Christ and his!
  - Be not deceived- - the Lord’s Word is true; the Lord’s Word is sure. The grass it withers, the flowers they fade, but the Word of the Lord endures forever!

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