

THE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL TODAY

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Chris Katulka, The Temptations of Jesus, Part 3

Matthew 4

Today we're going to wrap up our series on The Temptations of Jesus from Matthew 4:1-11. I have to tell you, I have thoroughly enjoyed studying this portion of the Gospels for several reasons, first- it tells the story of who Jesus is, it clearly describes His character and mission, and second -it shows how Jesus overcame Satan's temptation. And as I've said before, this is an invaluable lesson for us, the disciples of Christ who are tempted by Satan on a daily basis.

Now I've said in the previous messages that the Temptations of Jesus serve as an introduction to His ministry. By the way, if you haven't had a chance to listen to previous shows you can simply go to FOIRadio.org and there you can listen to previous broadcasts and subscribe to our podcast.

So as I was saying earlier, the Temptations of Jesus found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke serve as an introduction to His ministry. The one thing these gospel writers want to convey to us, the readers, is that Jesus was qualified to be the Son of God, the King of Israel, and His qualification is seen by Him remaining completely obedient to the Father, even when He's being pressured during a

time of agony. The story of Jesus' temptations are really a moment for us to see Jesus become the new Adam. Remember from the beginning of Genesis how Adam and Eve disobeyed God and acted in their own self-interest, which led to the Fall.

In Matthew 4:1-11 Jesus has a choice, just as Adam and Eve had a choice, to remain obedient to the Father's mission or to take matters into His own hands.

Now we're entering into the last of the Temptation of Jesus, which can be found in Matt 4:8-11. Listen to what the Scriptures say:

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."

Then Jesus said to him, "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.

This is the crowning moment for Jesus in all three temptations. In Jesus' hunger, after not eating for 40 days, Satan has cornered Jesus in His weakest moment and urged Him to worship Him. Satan does this by transitioning Jesus from the pinnacle of the Temple, which is the second temptation, to the "exceedingly high mountain". I find this location, and "exceedingly high mountain" so interesting because it's from there Satan shows Jesus his dominion over the earth. We must remember my friends, that Satan still has dominion over the earth. he still controls today the kingdoms of the world, and so what Satan was offering to Jesus was his to give him.

The "exceedingly high mountain" is a very prophetic place in the Scriptures to take Jesus. The prophet Ezekiel for instance is taken up to a "very high mountain" in Ezekiel 40:2 to see the Millennial Temple in Jerusalem, and again in Revelation 21:10 when John is brought in a vision to a "high mountain" to see the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven. Here in the passage Satan is acting as a counterfeit god, revealing to Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, that he believes he has the power to give to Jesus to rule over.

Satan is a liar though, while Satan paints the picture that he is the end-all be-all and has equal authority with God he is essentially making empty promises which he cannot not keep. Satan will soon learn that he has limitations, unlike God who has sovereignty over all created things... and Satan is a created being.

The one stipulation for Jesus to have dominion and rule over the kingdoms of the world is that He must bow down and worship Satan. Satan said, All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.

This is such a momentous claim.

Satan isn't simply demanding Jesus to bow down in front of him, and the deal is done. Satan is requiring Jesus to worship him as god. Worshiping Satan means Jesus must show allegiance to Satan and all that he stands for. If Jesus accepted Satan's offer it would be one empty promise, but would ultimately reveal Jesus' priorities.

Here's what's interesting. As the Son of God and Messiah of Israel, Jesus knew that dominion and power was a part of having that title in God's Kingdom. Jesus understood that God wished to bestow on Him the control His Kingdom.

Listen to this prophecy from Daniel 7:13-14:

“I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, One like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,

And they brought Him near before Him.
Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And His kingdom the one
Which shall not be destroyed.

Jesus was fully aware that God promised Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.

And yet at the same time Jesus was also fully aware that He must suffer first, before He is exalted according to the plan of God. When you think of it like that... Satan's offer isn't so far fetched... Jesus, today you can receive power, rule, and dominion... right now, without any suffering. Just worship me, show allegiance to me.

Jesus knew from the very beginning that there could be no short cuts in God's plan of redemption. He knew suffering was necessary.

Jesus remains completely obedient to His Father and says, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" Jesus quotes from

Deuteronomy 6:13, which very plainly states you shall only worship the Lord.

When Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:13 he says, “and Him only you shall serve.” The greek word used for “serve” is a very specific term. It’s used only within the confines of worship, it’s a service only offered to God. And here Jesus is saying to Satan, I will only serve the Lord my God.

It’s not too long after that moment Satan departs from Jesus and angels came and ministered to him.

Remember I said this is Jesus’ Adam moment. He either has a choice to obey God’s will or allow Satan to tempt Him to fall. Adam failed, but Jesus remained obedient to the Father.

Here’s what’s interesting.

Adam’s disobedience to the Father resulted in him and Eve being banished from the Garden of Eden. God stationed angelic security to prevent Adam and Eve from returning. On the other hand, Jesus’ obedience to the Father resulted in angelic relief, help, and aid.

All three temptations that we have looked at over the past three weeks have one purpose, to show us that Jesus is qualified to rule as Son of God, King of Israel..