

TEMPTED OF SATAN

MARK 1:12-13

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¹² And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. ¹³
And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan;
and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

Introduction:

As we continue to move through the Gospel of Mark, we are observing Jesus as He begins His earthly ministry. His coming was announced by John the Baptist, v. 7-8. Then Jesus appeared and submitted to baptism, v. 9-11.

As soon as He is baptized, the Spirit of God “driveth” Jesus into the wilderness.

The word “driveth” is a strong word. It means “to throw or cast out, to force out.” This word does not suggest that Jesus had to be forced to do the will of the Father; it simply means that the Spirit of God moved on Jesus in a strong manner and led Him into the wilderness to be tested.

This passage offers some much needed help and hope when our own times of testing and temptation come.

This account in Mark is very brief. We'll also look at Matt. 4:4-11.

Matthew 4:4-11

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. ⁵ Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 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. ⁷ Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 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; ⁹ And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 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. ¹¹ Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Notice:

1. THE TIMING OF HIS TEMPTATION (VS.12)

Mark 1:12

¹² And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

A. This happened immediately after His baptism.

One moment Jesus was hearing the approval of the Father; receiving the anointing of the Spirit and confirming the acceptance of His mission; the next moment, He finds Himself being compelled to go into this time of temptation.

There is a great lesson here for the children of God. We are never more vulnerable than when we are coming out of a time of great victory. Satan loves to attack us when we think we are the strongest.

1 Corinthians 10:12

¹² Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Illustration: Elijah

Look at Elijah on Mount Carmel. He prays a short prayer and the fire of God falls consuming the sacrifice. He takes the 450 prophets of Baal and has them all put to death. He prays again and it rains for the first time in three and one-half years. He even outruns the chariot of King Ahab all the way back to Samaria. Elijah is at the top of his game! Fast forward less than twenty-four hours. Jezebel sends him word that she is going to do the same thing to him that he did to the prophets of Baal.

1 Kings 19:2

² Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.

What does Elijah do – He runs in fear, after such a great victory on Mt. Carmel.

2. THE TERRITORY OF HIS TEMPTATION (VS. 12)

Mark 1:12

¹² And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

We are told that He was sent into the wilderness.

The Jews saw the wilderness as a place of danger, gloom and as the abode of demons. For them it represented everything that was evil and separated from God.

Jesus was sent into the wilderness to do battle with the devil on his own territory.

As the Son experienced the ability of the father to take care of Him, we too know that there is help for us when we face our own times of testing.

3. THE TRIALS OF HIS TEMPTATION (VS. 12-13)

Mark 1:12-13

¹² And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. ¹³ And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

When temptations to evil come, they never come from the hand of God.

James 1:13

¹³Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

God never leads people into sin. He leads us away from evil.

1 Corinthians 10:13

¹³There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

He will send us into periods of testing. He does this, not to cause us to fail, but to help us grow in the Lord.

Often we do our best growing when the pressure is on.

The difference in a piece of coal and a diamond is heat and pressure.

Satan however will use these times to tempt us.

A. The Loneliness

In that wilderness place, Jesus was cut off from friends and family. He was shut off for a time so that He might be tested. His only companions were “the wild beasts”, “the angels” and “the devil”

We do not know why Mark mentions the “wild beasts”. He may have mentioned them to emphasize the fact that Jesus was in a barren place inhabited only by wild animals.

The angels did not give Him food until His testing was finished.

B. The Length

This time of testing lasted 40 days.

It’s interesting that the number 40 is used in the Bible for “times of testing, times of probation, and times of preparation.

Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness.

Moses spent 40 years on the backside of the desert in training.

The spies spent 40 days spying out Canaan.

It rained for 40 days and night during the flood.

We’re told in Matt. That Jesus fasted those 40 days.

Matthew 4:2

² And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

He was preparing Himself spiritually for the showdown that was coming when Satan unleashed his temptations.

This time of testing lasted forty days for Jesus. We never know how long our times of testing will be when they do come our way. Our duty is to be prepared for them when they come.

We do not know how hard the battles may be, but we do have His promise that He will support us through them all.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. ⁸ For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. ⁹ And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

C. The Load

Mark simply tells us that Jesus was “tempted of Satan”. This implies that He was attacked by the devil during the entire forty day period. Matthew tells us that it was at the end of the forty days, when Jesus was weak from

fasting, that Satan came against Him with his strongest and most pointed attacks.

Matthew 4:2

² And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

To understand what Jesus faced we need to look at Matthew's account of these events.

1. The First Temptation – To Doubt God's Provisions

Matthew 4:3-4

³ And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 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.

Satan tempted Jesus to turn the stones into to bread; this was in essence a temptation to doubt God's provision. Jesus had been fasting 40 days. There is no doubt that he was extremely physically hungry. He was at the point that if he did not eat soon he would die.

The temptation then and now, is to believe that God is not going to take care of you. When Satan tempted Eve in Gen 3 he tried to make her believe, "God is holding out on you." We face that temptation as well; it is the temptation to take matters into our own hands.

Jesus was physically vulnerable, He was tired and hungry. It is often a time of great temptation when one is tired – just plain physically wore out. It when one is vulnerable that Satan attacks.

Yet Jesus faced his tempter with God's word.

2. The Second Temptation – To doubt the Father's Protection

Matthew 4:5-7

⁵ Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 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. ⁷ Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Satan proceeded to tempt the Son to put His Heavenly Father's love and power to a test. Satan was still hoping to undermine Jesus' relationship to God in His divine Son-ship. Satan again introduced his temptation with the words "If you are the Son of God. Prove to yourself and to the world that you are the Son of God, and throw yourself down."

Now what is interesting about this temptation is that now Satan quotes Scripture as well, he quotes Psalm 91:11-12.

Psalms 91:11-12

¹¹ For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. ¹² They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Satan was saying; “You claim to be God’s Son and You claim to trust His Word, so, why don’t you demonstrate you are really God’s Sons and prove the truth of God’s Word by putting Him to a test.

If you won’t use your own divine power to help yourself, let your Father use His divine power to help you. If you won’t act independently of the Father, let the Father act. Give your Father a chance to fulfill the Scripture I just quoted to you.”

We are reminded here that Satan knows the Word, but he always twists the word. (Psalms 91:11)

Literally it says, “In all God’s ways.” Jesus knew this and answered accordingly.

Jesus was saying the Father will protect me but I am not going to do something foolish in order to satisfy you or anyone else. I am not going to test the Lord.

3. The Third Temptation – To Doubt God’s Promise

Matthew 4:8-11

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; ⁹ And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 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. ¹¹ Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Satan comes to Jesus and says, “Bow down to me and I will give you the kingdoms of the World.”

Close:

Temptations are to be expected as a part of the Christian life.

Remember

- It’s not a sin to be tempted.

Temptation is not sin. Jesus was tempted, but He never sinned.

Hebrews 4:14-15

¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession.

¹⁵ For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.

- Temptation can be resisted

1 Corinthians 10:13

¹³ There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted

above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

- We resist temptation by turning to God's Word

The Lord demonstrated this for us in each of the three times that Satan tempted Him.

That's why we need to know the Word of God.

Psalms 119:11

¹¹Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

- Waiting on God's provision is always better than settling for Satan's Substitutes.

Notice what the Bible says happened after Satan left.

Matthew 4:11

¹¹Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

The devil left and the angles came.