

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the [Holy] Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they [the days of fasting] were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him¹, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God {Deu 8:3}. And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve {Deu 10:20}. And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone (Psalm 91:11,12). And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God {Deu 6:16}. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

I. Introduction

A. Satan is adversary to God's plans, God's people, and God's kingdom

1. Jesus Christ was tempted as a human being, like everyone else

Hebrews 2:18 *For in that he himself [Jesus] hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour [help] them that are tempted.*

2. After Jesus' baptism, He was filled with the Holy Spirit Who led Him into the wilderness

a. Experienced a time of difficulty

i. Fasting 40 days in the wilderness

ii. Tempted by Satan himself

b. His protection was God's presence (full of Holy Spirit)

3. Christians are on Satan's target list

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant [on guard, aware of danger]; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

¹ Note the three times "...the Devil said to Him...", and three times Jesus replies "...it is written...", meaning, written in the Bible.

B. Sources of human temptation²

1 John 2:16 *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

II. Approach of the Tempter (Satan)

A. Temptation of the flesh (the desires of the physical body)

1. Satan challenges Jesus to misuse His authority

- a. Jesus was hungry & at a weak physical point
- b. Satan tempts Jesus to misuse his power
 - i. Satan mocks Jesus power to make bread.
 - ii. Jesus obeying God's revealed plan is the issue, not making bread. Jesus later made bread more than once, example: at the Feeding of the 5000 – Mark 8:19
 - iii. Satan tempts Jesus to doubt His Father would provide for Him

2. Satan questions God's authority

- a. Temptation is bait on a fish hook, appealing but with a deadly secret inside. Satan often tempts us at time of weakness
- b. Satan designs traps for humans fall into sin
 - i. Eve in the Garden of Eden
Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil [cleaver, tricky] than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?
 - ii. All believers from all generations
2 Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled [an appealing deceit] Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

3. Jesus later taught His disciples how to face temptation

Matthew 26:41 **Watch** [for danger] **and pray**, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

B. Temptation of the ambition (eyes)

1. Satan proposes that Jesus worships him in exchange for rule over all the kingdoms of the earth
 - a. Jesus taken to high mountain, shown the kingdoms of the earth

² See the pattern in 1 John 2:16, 1) The lust of the flesh; 2) The lust of the eyes, and 3) The pride of life. Satan used all three here on Jesus (1) food for the flesh, 2) showed Him all the kingdoms of the world before His eyes, and 3) tempted Him to do a public miracle in Jerusalem (the pride of life). Satan used these three on Eve before she ate the forbidden fruit, see Genesis 3:6; "...good for food..."; "...pleasant to the eye..."; and "...to make one wise...". The results were much different.

- b. Satan offers Jesus a shortcut to avoid going to the cross
- c. Satan tempts Jesus to forsake His Father and worship him
 - i. Satan's desire is for everyone to worship him.
 - ii. God's plan is for Jesus to pay the price for sin.
 - iii. Jesus will later rule all the kingdoms of earth. Jesus trusted God's plan – Philippians 2:9-11.

2. Satan desires the worship that only God deserves

- a. From the beginning Satan desires to replace God

Isaiah 14:14 *I [Satan] will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.*

- b. Satan tempts humans to devote their time to other pursuits, such as gathering possessions:

Luke 12:15, 18 *And he [Jesus] said unto them [a crowd], Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. ... And he [a rich man] said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater [bigger barns]; and there will I bestow [store away] all my fruits and my goods.*

- c. Satan tempts humans to replace God with other things in their affections

1 Corinthian 10:7 *Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them [Israel in wilderness]; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play [immoral behavior].*

3. We worship only our Creator

Psalm 95:6 *O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.*

Mark 12:17 *And Jesus answering said unto them [Jewish religious leaders], Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's [taxes], and to God the things that are God's [worship]. And they marvelled at him.*

C. Temptation of pride

1. Satan challenges Jesus to misuse His position

- a. Jesus taken to highest point of the Jerusalem temple
- b. Satan tempts Jesus to test God's care for Him

- i. Satan is trying to change God's plan – John 7:30, 8:20

- ii. Later God the Father would declare His approval of Jesus' actions at the Mount of Transfiguration

Matthew 17:5 *While he [Peter] yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them [Jesus, Peter, James, and John]: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, **This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.***

- iii. Ultimately Jesus will rule the earth – Revelation 19:11,15-16 – but God’s plan is for Jesus to redeem mankind, offering salvation to all by faith in His finished work.

2. Satan questions Jesus’ deity as God the Son

a. Background on Satan’s creation & actions

- i. Satan original position to serve & minister to God as the covering cherub (a type of heavenly being) above God’s throne – Ezekiel 28:14-17

- ii. Purpose of heavenly beings as ministering spirits

Hebrews 1:13-14 *But to which of the angels said he [God the Father] at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool [a phrase that indicates conquest]? Are they [the angels] not all ministering spirits, **sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?***

- iii. Satan lost his position as God’s most powerful created being in heaven due to pride in his heart – Isaiah 14:12
- iv. Satan was cast out from heaven due to his sin – Luke 10:18
- v. Satan does not worship God

- Satan offers humans religion but not relationship with God through the person of Jesus
- Satan offers unbelief & distrust in God

b. Satan tests Jesus to question His Father’s Word by quoting God’s Word partially – not completely

- i. Faith does not force God to keep His promise
- ii. When Satan thinks he has his greatest victory, he will understand God’s plan will remove the fear of death from people, his ultimate defeat

c. Only pride tests God, humility does not test God

3. This is the Christian’s victory

a. Son of God will deny Satan’s desires by attracting all men to Himself

John 12:31-33 *Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world [Satan] be cast out. And I [Jesus], if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.*

b. Jesus, as the Son of Man, will fulfill God’s plan by dying on the cross

John 3:14-15 *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up [on the cross]: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

III. Application of the Scriptures

A. God promises a way of escape

1. God's faithfulness that you are not tempted beyond your ability
 1 Corinthians 10:13 *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer [allow] 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.*
2. Stay close to Jesus and seek to please Him; John 4:34 *Jesus saith unto them [His disciples], My meat [food] is to do the will of him that sent me [God the Father], and to finish his work.*

B. God provides a way of escape

1. Stay close to the Holy Spirit; Galatians 5:25 *If we live in the [Holy] Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*
2. Jesus models **our primary defense against Satan**, God's Word, with "It is written ..." 3 times in Luke 4:4, Luke 4:8, & Luke 4:12

IV. Awareness of the Believer

A. Revealed tactics of the Tempter;

2 Corinthians 2:11 *Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices [tactics, methods].*

B. Revealed victory for the believer through God's grace

James 4:6 *But he [the Holy Spirit] giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*

V. Conclusion

A. Satan will use every tool he has to defeat each believer: discouragement, anger, fear, substance abuse, greed, many others. There are four keys to our victory.

1. Victory by the Word of God – 2 Timothy 3:16
2. Victory by walking in the Holy Spirit – Galatians 5:16
3. Victory in fellowship with God's people – Acts 2:42
4. Victory by a strong focus on Christ – 2 Corinthians 10:5

B. Consider Christ alone

Hebrews 12:2-3 *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him [Jesus] that endured such contradiction [hostility] of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied [tired of fighting] and faint [give up] in your minds.*