

The Temptation of When

Matthew 4:1-11: ¹ Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. ² And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 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. 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.”

I. Verse 8—“Again the devil”

A. The third and final temptation is found in **Matthew 4:1**.

1. The verse reads, “Again the devil.”

B. This word “again” shows us that after two defeats the devil wasn’t finished with his temptations.

C. That word “again” shows us that our lives will be one temptation after another.

1. The Christian life is a life of intensity.

2. On the one hand as we go on in our Christian life, the intensity of our love for the Lord Jesus Christ grows. I am reminded of the hymn that goes as follows:

*Since I started for the Kingdom
Since my life He controls
Since I gave my heart to Jesus
The Longer I Serve Him, the sweeter He grows*

D. On the other hand as we go on in our Christian life, the intensity of our temptations also grows as another hymn puts it:

*See the mighty host advancing,
Satan leading on;
Mighty men around us falling,
Courage almost gone.
“Hold the fort, for I am coming,”
Jesus signals still,
Wave the answer back to Heaven,
“By Thy grace we will.”*

E. Verse 8 that signals what the rest of the Christian life is going to be for us—one battle after another.

II. Verse 8—“Devil taketh him up into...mountain”

A. We have seen how after forty days of fasting, when He was really hungry, the devil tempted the Lord to turn the stones into bread.

B. The devil transported the Lord into Jerusalem and set the Lord right on the highest point of the Temple. Then, He set the Lord on that place and said to the Lord, “Jump.”

1. **Matthew 4:8-9** says, “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.”
- C. The only reason that the devil could transport the Lord was because the devil was given that limited power against the Lord by God.
 - D. The only reason the Lord submitted to the devil’s limited power against Him was because God had given the devil that limited power against Him.
 - E. The devil transport the Lord up into an exceeding high mountain to show the Lord all the kingdoms of the world.
 - F. We don’t know where the mountain was. It was likely not the Mount of Olives because that would not be described as an exceeding high mountain.
 1. We are not told what mountain it was because that is not important for us to know. All we are to know is that it was an exceeding high mountain.
 - G. The highest point of the Temple was not high enough, so the devil took the Lord even higher to an exceeding high mountain.
- III. Verse 8—*“Sheweth him all the kingdoms...glory”*
- A. What Satan did when he set the Lord on the exceeding high mountain was to show the Lord all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.
 - B. The devil showed the Lord all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.
 - C. The devil showed the Lord all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. This is what we travel as tourists to see is ruins. We see the ruins of Rome and the ruins of Greece and the ruins of the Inca civilization and the ruins of the Aztec buildings.
 - D. The devil showed the Lord the kingdoms of the world in the grandest glory.
 1. The Imperial Palace of Ceasar in **Rome**
 2. The Hanging Gardens of **Babylon**
 3. The Royal Gardens of **Versailles**
 4. The Grandeur of Palaces of **Egypt**
 5. The Advanced **Aztec & Inca** Civilizations
 6. The capital of the **Persian** Empire
 7. The greatness of the **Macedonian** Empire under Alexander the Great
 8. The vastness of the **Mongolian** Empire under Ghengis Khan that covered Russia and China and India
 - E. The devil showed the Lord all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them at one time.
 - F. The one word that makes this temptation different from the other two temptations is the word “sheweth” or “showed” in verse 8.
 1. **Matthew 4:8** says, “*The devil...sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.*”
 - G. The devil did not show the Lord stones turned to bread in the first temptation.
 - H. The devil did not show the Lord the scene of the Lord sailing falling through the air at the Temple.
 - I. Here, the devil showed the Lord all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.
 1. The first temptation was the lust of the flesh—satisfying the hunger of the flesh with bread from stones.
 2. The second temptation was the pride of life—being seen as the impressive Messiah that could leap safely from the highest point of the Temple.
 3. But, this third temptation was the lust of the eyes—as the devil set before the eyes of the Lord Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.

- J. The devil pulled out a temptation that the devil had successfully used for the original fall in **Genesis 3:6**.
1. **Genesis 3:6** says, “*And **when** the woman **saw** that the tree was good for food, and that it was **pleasant to the eyes**, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*”
- K. The devil did not just use words to describe all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. The devil showed the Lord all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.
1. In the the same way, the devil did not just use words to describe to Eve the beauty of the fruit of the forbidden tree.
 2. The devil showed Eve the beauty of the fruit of the forbidden tree.
- L. They were not just words that swayed Eve to take and eat that forbidden fruit; it was when she saw for herself the beauty of that forbidden fruit that she was moved. She took it and fell when she saw it for herself.
1. The words are in **Genesis 3:6**.
 - a. **Genesis 3:6** says, “*And **when** the woman **saw** that the tree was good for food, and that it was **pleasant to the eyes**, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took.*”
- M. That was the same temptation that was set before the Lord Jesus when the devil showed the Lord all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.
- N. Job was a typical man who had a weakness when it came to looking at a pretty woman.
1. When Job looked at a pretty woman, he fell into sinful thoughts of what he wanted to do with that woman.
 2. Job knew that he let his eyes gaze on a pretty woman that he would fall into sinful thoughts.
 - a. Job took control of his eyes to not look and he said what he did in **Job 31:1**.
 - a. **Job 31:1** says, “*I made a **covenant with mine eyes**; why then should **I think upon a maid?**”*
 - b. We can imagine Job having this conversation with his eyes.
 - a. “Eyes, let’s make an agreement that you will not gaze at pretty women, because I don’t want to think those kind of thoughts. Those kind of thoughts are foolish and those thoughts are described in **Proverbs 24:9**.
 - i. **Proverbs 24:9** says, “*The thought of foolishness is sin.*”
 - c. Job did not want to sin, so he made an agreement with his eyes.
 3. The greatest tragedy in the life of King David that cost the lives of tens of thousands of Israelites all came from what happened one warm, sleepless night in Jerusalem this is described in **2 Samuel 11:2-4**.
 - a. The passage says, “*2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof **he saw** a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon...³ Bathsheba...the wife of Uriah the Hittite? ⁴ And David...took her...and he lay with her.*”
- O. The fall of King David came because David “*saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.*”
1. All it took was looking at her for David’s mind to plan out how he would take her and have his way with her.

2. David knew that he was so vulnerable from what he saw that David. He cast himself on the Lord in asking for help to keep his eyes from seeing what he should not see when David wrote in **Psalm 119:37**.

- a. The verse says, *“Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.”*

- P. All these falls came from what was seen. This third temptation was all about what the Lord Jesus saw in **Matthew 4:8**.

1. **Matthew 4:8** says, *“The devil...sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.”*

IV. Verse 8—*“Devil...sheweth...the glory of them”*

- A. The devil showed the Lord not only all the kingdoms of the world, but “the glory of them.”
- B. The devil showed the Lord the glory of all the kingdoms of the world.
- C. The devil showed the Lord all the splendor and the riches and the grandeur and the magnificence of them all.
- D. But, the glory of them is only part of them.
- E. The devil was very selective on what he showed the Lord. He only showed the Lord the glory of all the kingdoms of the world.
- F. There is another part of all the kingdoms of the world that the devil did not show the Lord. He did not show him the following:
 1. All the sin of all the kingdoms of the world
 2. All the sorrow of all the kingdoms of the world
 3. All the death of all the kingdoms of the world
 4. All the despair of all the kingdoms of the world
- G. The devil only shows the glory and not the pain.
- H. He only shows the excitement of living it up and not the gloom of hopeless depression.
- I. The devil only shows the excitement of the slot machine spilling out a fortune and not the suicide of the compulsive gambler who has lost it all.
- J. The devil is very selective to show the glamour and glitter and not the sorrow and despair.

V. Verse 9—*“All these things”*

- A. The devil presented the temptation when he said in verse 9, *“All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”*
- B. This temptation is different from the first two temptations because the devil not start this temptation with the words, *“If thou be the Son of God...”*
 1. The reason is that it seems as though the devil feels that he has established his point that the Lord Jesus is not the Son of God.
 2. The devil feels confident that he has proven that the Lord Jesus is not the Son of God because the Lord did not prove His Sonship by turning stones into bread.
 3. Similarly, the Lord Jesus did not prove His Sonship by casting Himself down from the Temple.
- C. Since Satan feels he has established the fact that the Lord is not the Son of God, Satan takes the position as the Son of God. Satan’s next move is to demand worship as if Satan was the Son of God. Satan is here actually claiming to be the Son of God here.
 1. He is claiming to be the Son of God because when he challenged the Lord, there was no response from the Lord. He concluded that the Lord was not the Son of God.
 2. People today challenge the Lord by sinning with the position of “If Jesus is the Son of God, then let’s see if He stops me or makes something horrible happen to me as a result of my sin. If there is no response, then He must not be the Son of God.”

- a. **John 5:22** says, “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”
 - b. **Matthew 28:18** says, “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”
 - c. **Mat 25:31-34...41** says, “³¹ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: ³² And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: ³³ And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...⁴¹ Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”
- D. The devil comes in with this great offer of all the kingdoms of the world, and the devil is doing this because the devil believes that “every man has his price at which he can be bought.”
- E. The devil has saved this last bold offer until the end after he has (he hopes) worn the Lord down in terms of resistance. He challenges the Lord with the most terrible of all exchanges—to fall down and worship Satan.
- 1. This worst temptation was kept by the devil to the last.
 - 2. This especially shows us again the value of the Shogun’s saying—“*following victory tighten the straps of your helmet.*”
 - a. **2 Corinthians 6:4** says, “*In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God*”
 - b. **2 Corinthians 6:7** says, “*By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness **on the right hand and on the left.***”
- F. There is another undertone in what the devil is saying to the Lord in his offer in verse 9, and it comes from his words in verse 9—“*All these things will I give thee.*”
- G. What Satan was saying to the Lord was “You have been abandoned by God. Turn to me instead.”
- 1. This first temptation of starving started with the devil making the Lord feel as though He was abandoned by God.
- H. This temptation of being made to feel that He was abandoned by God reached its climax on the cross.
- 1. **Matthew 27:46** says, “*And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*”
 - 2. When confronted with the feeling of being abandoned by God after 40 days of no food, the Lord held on tight to His trust in God.
 - 3. On the cross when confronted with the feeling of being abandoned by God, the Lord held on tight to His trust in God.
- I. This is exactly what Satan does to us. Satan makes us feel that we have been abandoned by God, and that is the time when we need to follow God even more.
- 1. After this temptation of feeling abandoned by God, “angels came and ministered unto Him.”
- J. The same is true for us. After we feel that we have been abandoned by God, there will be a deliverance.

VI. Verse 9—“*All these things will I give thee, if...*”

- A. The devil offered the Lord in **Matthew 4:8-9** which says, “*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.*”
- B. The devil offered to give the Lord all the kingdoms of the world—a pretty substantial offer.
- C. But, with Psalm 2 in mind, let’s take a closer look at what the devil was offering the Lord.
1. **Psalm 2:6-8** says, “*6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. 7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. 8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*”
- D. In the light of **Psalm 2:6-8**, Satan is offering the Lord what the Lord has already been promised.
- E. Furthermore, this offer that Satan was making to the Lord was based on a lie which Satan stated in **Luke 4:6**.
1. **Luke 4:6** says, “*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.*”
 2. This was a lie because all the kingdoms of the world were promised to the Lord.
- F. The Lord has already been promised to receive all the kingdoms of the world. **Just not yet.**
- G. Satan is offering the Lord what the Lord already has been promised to receive. The Lord is going to receive the kingdoms of the world—**Just not yet.**
1. The temptation for the Lord really boiled down to “You are being offered by Satan what you already have been promised to receive—**only just not yet.** What Satan is offering you now is to get now what you already will receive later.”
 - a. That is the temptation for the Lord here in verses 8 and 9.
 - b. It is a temptation to take now what you will receive later—**just not yet.**
 - c. It is a temptation to take now from Satan what you already will receive **just not yet**, but it will be given to you later by God.
- H. The temptation for the Lord here is whether to take the kingdoms now from Satan, or wait for God to give the same kingdoms later. **It is a temptation of “When?”**
- I. For the Lord, it was “You are going to get the kingdoms. Do you want them **now from Satan, or** do you want them later **from God?**”
1. That was what the temptation all boiled down to—“**Now** from Satan or **later** from God.”
 2. That is exactly the same temptation that you and I face in life.
 3. Just as the Lord had the promise in **Psalm 2** to receive the kingdoms, just think of the promise that we have from God.
 - a. **Matthew 25:34** says, “*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, **inherit the kingdom prepared for you** from the foundation of the world:*
 - b. **Luke 12:32** says, “*Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to **give you the kingdom.***”
 - c. **Psalm 16:11** says, “*Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is **fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.***”
 4. We have the promise to have pleasures forevermore and to inherit the kingdom. The temptation for us is the same.

- a. “Do you want pleasures and possessions **now** from Satan, or **can you wait to receive them from God?**”
 - b. From whose hand will we receive what God promised—from the devil’s hand or from God’s hand?
- J. The Lord shows us here how we need to stand firm in our resolve to refuse to receive from the devil’s hand now what will be given to us later from God’s hand.