



Matthew

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

Matthew 4:1-11

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Matthew presents Jesus as King from the very beginning of His Gospel account (Matthew 1:1, 6; 2:2). He will conclude his account with further references to Jesus as King (Matthew 27:11, 37, 28:18).

What kind of King will He be? What kind of kingdom will He establish? These questions are at the heart of the Temptation of Jesus.

THE TEMPTER

- Mentioned some 83 times in the Bible. In 74 of those, he is called either the Devil or Satan.
- “Satan” is the adversary.
- “Devil” is the slanderer or accuser.
- He is also called Adversary, Apollyon, Beelzebub, Belial, Deceiver, Dragon, Enemy, Evil One, Father of Lies, Murderer, Sinner, Prince of the power of the air, tempter, etc.
- The origin of Satan/Devil is a complex topic. Most orthodox scholars would contend he is a fallen angel who has declared war against all that God intends.

TEMPTATION

“Sin is an illegitimate expression of a legitimate desire.”
- W. Hersey Davis

James 1:14-15 offers us the best insight into how the devil tempts us. He plays upon our desires, sets the baited trap, and leads us to sinful choices that have disastrous results.

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit. He was to be “tempted” by the devil. The Greek word for “tempt” is *peirazo*, and it can also mean “test.” Context determines the translation.

First Temptation: What kind of king would Jesus be? What kind of kingdom would He establish? Would selfish indulgence reign? Would this kingdom cater to the lusts and desires of humanity? Would the devil have the ability to “command” King Jesus?

Second Temptation: Would this new kingdom be established by spectacular displays of power? Would this new kingdom demand miracles from God?

Third Temptation: Would this new kingdom be established by the sovereignty of God or the sovereignty of Satan?

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

1. Resist the devil!
2. Depend upon the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit.
3. Draw strength and insight from the Word of God.
4. Seek the will of God.