

Exod 04-01-11b

Let's resume our study this morning in Exodus chapter 20 by way of Matthew chapter 4. There is a conscious link made in scripture between the testing of the Lord Jesus at the outset of His ministry and the testing of the nation of Israel at the outset of their existence as a nation. The formal link here is the declaration of relationship to God. What is it that Moses is told from the burning bush to go and tell Pharaoh? What is it that Moses tells Pharaoh right before the 10th plague? Israel is my son.

If you don't let my son go, I'm going to make your son go. You either deliver my son or I'm going to take your son. And Israel is related to God in terms of sonship just as John the Baptist declares the Lord Jesus to be the Lamb of God and then God speaks from heaven and says this is my beloved son.

And beyond that we see these many other links. The 40 days in the wilderness where Jesus is taken by the Spirit to be tested and in Exodus 20, Moses declares to Israel God is testing you. And they are going to be tested for those 40 years.

We left off looking at the scripture Deuteronomy chapter 8 and verse 2 and following where the 40 year period of testing is described by Moses. Deuteronomy 8.2 You shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these 40 years in the wilderness to humble you and test you. To humble you and test you.

What are the people 20 years old and under going to do for those 40 years? Shepherd. It's a humble occupation. It is the occupation of servants and yet it is the occupation that David is the youngest son of Jesse.

Learned his skills. Learned to exercise his faith and apply the word of God as he understood it from his parental training. Led you all the way these 40 years in the wilderness to humble you and test you to know what was in your heart.

Whether you would keep his commandments or not. Why do we stay here on this planet after accepting Christ as our Savior? Why does God leave us here? We just sort of take it for granted that we are not going to have some sudden change of existence at the point that we accept Christ. People don't get saved and then vanish.

We don't get raptured at the point that we claim Christ as our Savior. We're still here. We face our same challenges and issues.

Why are we left here? To know what is in our heart. Whether we will keep his commandments or not. We do not need to fear this test if we understand the test and if we are those who love the Lord.

What does Jesus say over in John? You remember that great discourse John 14, 15, and 16? And

he says, the one who has my words and keeps them, he is the one who loves me. And I and my Father will come to him and make our home with him. If you have his words and keep them, then we have nothing to fear.

Paul remarks, God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control. Sound mind. To know what was in your heart, whether you will keep his commandments or not.

But we think when we face tests that it is about survival. Or it is about trying to avoid unpleasantness or trying to gain pleasantness. We look at situations.

We look at locations. We look at decisions. We look at the interactions with people.

And when we find challenges, when we find adversity, we find hardship. We think, well, this is just rain on my parade. This is stuff messing up my wonderful path that I would otherwise have through life.

This is people interfering with my great objective of sunshine. And all his ways are pleasantness and all his paths are peace. People are trying to mess up my pleasantness and mess up my peace.

Circumstances, unforeseen things. I was just driving down the road minding my own business. Somebody swerved across three lanes of traffic and broadsided me.

And bad things have occurred. I know people to whom this has happened who actually lost their wife and had their children severely injured and worse. How could they have known? How could they have seen it coming? How could it have been avoided? It is what the world would call fate that something like this would take place.

Do we need to live in fear of an event like this? Not if we have God's Word. Not if we are attempting. Not if we are seeking to live in its light.

Moses tells Israel, do not be afraid. God is testing you. It is testing for benefit.

It is testing for growth. It is something we need. It is something we want.

If God had allowed Israel to go directly into the land in the first generation, how many Canaanites do you think would have been wiped out? How long do you think the worship of the Lord would have prevailed in the land of Canaan? Not long. Not near as long as it did. Even with the second generation, it did not go like it should have.

You can imagine if that first bunch had gotten in. The golden calf worshippers going in amongst a whole civilization of idolaters and pagans. They would have fallen without a fight.

They were not ready. God needed to purify. God needed to test.

God needed to teach. This is what Moses is reminding them of in Deuteronomy chapter 8. Look

again at verse 1. Because his whole exhortation, he says, Every commandment which I command you today, this is when he is giving them their final review. This is after the 40 years.

This is the other end of the bracket that we are looking at in Exodus 20. Every commandment which I command you today, you must be careful to observe, so that you may live and multiply. This is not a burden.

It is not a cross. It is not a hair shirt. It is not a crown of thorns.

It is not a rock in their sandal. This is in order that they may live. In order that they may prosper.

Multiply. And go in and possess the land that the Lord God has promised them. You can have the right to something.

Have the authority to claim something. But if you do not have the ability to claim it. Remember this lady, the past few days, had the big lottery, 139 million or whatever it was.

And she said, Oh, I am supposed to get that, but I lost my ticket. Well, it turned out she was telling a big fairy story. But there are people who say, Oh, I had the winning ticket, but it got washed in my clothes, and now it is unreadable or whatever.

You might in fact have a legitimate claim to something. But if you do not have the ability to take possession of it, I think the nation of Israel probably has the right to the land that they gained by conquest. I am not talking about biblical authority.

I am talking about the right of conquest in war. You conquer something, you get it. If the Europeans come over to America and take the land away from the Indians, you can cry, you know, Chief Iron Horse Cody there with the tear going, the litter hitting the street and all.

Too bad. If you are going to hang on to something, you have to fight for it. You have to defend it.

If you lose, you forfeit. That is how the game is played. That is the way warfare works.

When the current state of all of the European countries and all of that, they did not just get together and have a big council and say, Well, let us see. Why do not you all have a country over there? It has been gained. The borders have been established by war.

By fighting for something and saying, I conquered it. It is mine. The British Empire, all of the stuff they had.

The sun never sets on the British Empire. How did they get that stuff? Well, go watch Zulu. You can see how they got their lands and their colonies and their colonial empire and also how they eventually lost it.

Well, the point here is you have to have the ability to lay claim to something. The Israelites are

going to go in and hold on to the promised land for many generations because they learn what they learn in the wilderness when God tests them. Every commandment which I command you today, you must be diligent to observe.

This is not sort of a reflex. It does not just kind of naturally happen because they are the people of God. Oh, I came through the Red Sea.

That is no problem for me. I do not feel like worshiping an idol. I do not feel like complaining against God.

I am not worried that we ran out of water yesterday. Oh, I came through the Red Sea. I am good to go.

It does not work that way, does it? They have to learn. Even the Lord Jesus Christ himself. What does the scripture say? He learned obedience through suffering.

Now this, you want to talk about writing a book of theology. How does a perfect person learn obedience through suffering? Why does Jesus need to learn it at all if he is perfect? Perfection does not imply experiential knowledge. The angels in heaven are perfect.

The unfallen angels have not sinned, but they learn by watching the human race. Just because you are perfected does not mean you know everything you need to know. We will be perfected when we get our resurrection bodies.

But do you think that we will know everything we need to know and go into eternity and never learn another new fact about God? We have an infinite God. Human history is going to serve as our eternal Bible. We have a Reader's Digest condensed version of 66 books here in two testaments.

But the word of God throughout human history is going to be our Bible. I do not know how many testaments there will be. I think there will be at least a third testament that covers the history of the millennial kingdom.

Do you think the Israelites thought, well, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, that is all there is ever going to be? And then here God added 39 more books? Well, we should not fool ourselves and think, well, he is finished with the Bible now. The actions of God, the character of God, it is infinite. And there is an infinite amount to be learned.

And even though we will be perfected, we will still learn. What does this tell me? Even if we look at ourselves and say, you know, I really have tried to be faithful. I have my occasional failures and things.

But I really do, I think honestly and objectively, I am doing my best to walk down the narrow road. That is great. That is a wonderful thing.

Paul says it is great if you can look at yourself and not have to judge yourself. But even if that is

the case, it does not mean that there is nothing else to learn. That, well, I am going to set the cruise control here and just, you know, sail right into glory.

We still need to learn. Being perfect does not mean you do not need to learn. The Lord Jesus was perfect and He still needed to learn.

And He did learn. He learned obedience. He learned the experiential nature of it.

He was tested in all points like as we are. He did not just conceptualize it. He did not theorize it.

He lived it. He went through it. That is what the Israelites are going through in the wilderness.

And a big part of that is knowing what is expected. How do you know what righteousness is if the Word of God does not communicate it? The Word of God is profitable for doctrine. The Word of God is profitable for instruction in righteousness.

These are the commandments. It is also profitable for rebuke and correction, the things not to do. And that is also in the commandments.

You have the thou shalts and you have the thou shalt nots. And the interesting thing about God's Word is that knowledge of it not only gives us information, this is righteousness, this is evil, but it also gives us power. Secular knowledge, book learning, college course learning does not give us power.

Carl Sagan was one of the most knowledgeable men on things astronomical and astrophysical and so on, but it did not give him any power. It did not get him into God's Book of Life. He has his plaque on a piece of space debris that is heading out into some unknown area of the universe, and it does nothing.

It does nothing. His little book and movie series, Cosmos, he is famous, he is world renowned, he is well known, does him no good whatsoever. All of his knowledge, all of his learning did him no good because it was not in the realm of spiritual things.

The world has a high regard for Carl Sagan. His profession has a fairly high regard. Some of them think he was sort of a pop physicist, and that may be true, but all of his knowledge did not do him any good.

It is the experiential knowledge that you and I gain in the light of God's Word as we travel our four years in the wilderness that prepares us to go into the promised land of the eternal future. God is testing you in the wilderness to humble you, to know what is in your heart, whether you will keep his commandments or not. It is really a pretty simple test.

Are you going to keep God's commandments or not? Are you going to keep no other God before him or not? So he humbled you. Look at verse 3 of Deuteronomy 8. He humbled you. Everybody that likes being humbled, raise your hand.

Everybody that likes being humiliated, everyone that likes having your flaws pointed out, everybody that loves constructive criticism, raise your hand. Sam, you know, I like what you have to say, but hey, let me tell you some things about your presentation. Let me tell you some things about your mannerisms.

Let me tell you some things about what you missed. It may be constructive and it may be needful, but it is painful. Criticism is painful.

Being humbled is painful. It is needful, but it is painful. God humbled you.

God allowed you to hunger. Everybody that likes... I am hungry right now. My tummy is growling right now.

I got busy talking and didn't eat my snack on the break, and I am hungry. Everybody that likes hunger, everybody that says, you know, each new diet that comes out, I try it because I just love being hungry. God says, I allowed you to hunger.

By the way, good things come from going hungry sometimes. And he fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know. It was a new kind of food that nobody had ever heard of.

And your fathers had never heard of it. Human society had never heard of manna. If you went and asked a Canaanite, hey, you know what those Israelites are eating out there? He says, I have no earthly idea.

Two million people out in the wilderness. They must be eating grass. They are probably eating everything.

I bet they go through like a plague of locusts and there is just nothing left. They didn't have to live off the land because they lived off manna. It was unheard of.

Nobody could figure it out. Modern archaeologists say we can find no trace of the passage of the two million people who lived for 40 years in the wilderness because we can't find any evidence. I mean, how could they sustain themselves? They couldn't have maintained flocks and herds and this, that and the other.

Well, duh, read the book. They were sustained by manna. They didn't need to leave a sherman marching through Georgia Trail through the wilderness.

God sustained them. He gave them manna. I wouldn't expect to find animal bones at huge campfires where they were roasting dozens and hundreds of animals every day.

They didn't need it. They had manna. They didn't have to eat their flocks and herds that they were husbanding and shepherding to take into the land where they would prosper.

And on the day that they approached the Jordan, the manna ceases after 40 years. And then

they go in and now they will live. And there is all kinds of evidence of their occupation of the land of Canaan.

But they say, well, where is the intermediate? And what phase are we in? Are we in the land yet? Probably not. We are in our wilderness wandering. What sustains us? People look and say, I don't see what gets you through.

I can't figure it out. It's God's manna. He allowed you to hunger.

And when we get hungry, we have to make a choice. Am I going to feed myself with the food of the world? Am I going to slaughter a cow? Or am I going to remember the promise and eat the manna? We choose every day. Fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know.

It's not like a tradition handed down and you can go by experience and you can go by history. It was a new thing. Look at the purpose here.

There is a purpose clause at the end of verse 3. So that he might make you know. What? What does Jesus say to Satan? Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. We have to make a decision.

It is not easy. It doesn't make sense from a human point of view to place our faith in the word of God. To make our decisions based on the word of God.

To set our priorities based on the word of God. To evaluate persons, places and things on the basis of God's word. Remember our three areas of thinking.

Goals, values, priorities. You can analyze any course of thought, any issue in the light of those three aspects. What is our goal? How do our priorities come into play? You can have three things that are all good.

They are not prohibited in the word of God. Which one should take priority? My job is a good thing. God said thou shalt do thy work in six days.

It's a positive command. One of the sort of unknown ten commandments. Six days thou shalt labor and do all thy work.

It's in the ten commandments. Six days shalt thou labor. Thou shalt do thy job.

It also says husbands love your wives. It says the man shall earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. And it says love your wife.

Well, what if those two come into conflict? What if in order to earn my bread and do my labor, I have to deny some aspect of comfort, security, and presence with my wife? I have a goal of pleasing the Lord. My priorities have to kick in. In this instance, at this time, which one takes priority? How do I figure that out? I have to apply my values, goals, values, priorities.

We've talked about this before. He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, fed you with manna, so that he might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. You have provision for this test.

Your garments did not wear out on you. Your foot did not swell these forty years. You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the Lord your God chastens you.

You should know that when you have some hardship, when you have some tribulation and trial, this is administered, it is under God's watch care, and like a man chastening his son. Why would we chasten our children? Are we just fiendish fly-wing pullers? We just enjoy inflicting our authority and lording it over others? Why does a man chasten his son? Because he loves him. He wants to teach him and prepare him for life, so that after he's gone, his son can live a fruitful, productive life and train up his own children.

This is the love that God has for us. As a man chastens his son, so the Lord your God chastens you. If there is adversity, if there is hardship, it is designed for our benefit.

If we trust God, if we love God, if we believe God, we will not be frightened by divine testing. Exodus 20.20 Do not fear. God is testing you to find out what is in your heart.

His word will come and instruct, rebuke, correct. Give us the doctrine that we need to live by. Verse 6, Deuteronomy 8 Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land. The three Christian virtues, faith, hope and love. What sustains our faith? What energizes our love for God and love for one another? It's hope.

Faith is the means of living our life as believers. Love is the outworking and the evidence that that process is taking place. Hope is the motivation.

Why do we bother? Why do we care? Why are we looking at the Israelites? Because God is bringing us into a good land. A land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs that flow out of valleys and hills. A land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates.

A land of olive oil and honey. A land in which you will eat bread without scarcity. Just be patient.

If it seems like bread is a little bit lacking now, just be patient. The promise of God says it's going to be super abundant. A land in which you will lack nothing.

A land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. We think, wow, stones of iron, that sounds like a tough place to plow. What's it talking about? How many weapons do the Israelites have? Hardly any, but they'll be able to make them out of... They just go in the backyard, get some iron ore, make what they need.

Whether it's a sword or a plowshare, whether it's a spear or a pruning hook, whatever they

need, the resources are going to be there, just like the poor in Israel. We've talked about charity in Israel. Did they bake bread and hand it out? No.

They left the corners of the field ungleaned. The poor could go and glean and thresh and grind and mix and bake. God says, I'm taking you to a place not only where there is great potential and great abundance, but where you can make for yourself what you need out of what is there.

Many times we have to take this step. This is the step of meditation. I think representative, when you look at the spiritual life that is pictured in the physical life of Israel, when God gives them all of these resources, how does that apply to us? We can walk into the land of plenty.

We can hear the teaching of the Word of God, but if we don't meditate on it, if we don't glean the corners of the field, if we don't get the ore out of the ground, if we don't dig the copper out of the hills and refine it and shape it and turn it to our use, this is not something God did for them. God didn't drop plows out of the sky. He didn't rain swords and spears on Israel.

He didn't give them copper plating and brass breastplates and coats of mail and that sort of thing, did he? He gave them the materials to work out their own salvation. And that's what God does for us. Spiritual life is not measured by intake of the Word of God.

Spiritual life is measured by application of the Word of God. You cannot apply if you do not meditate. You cannot apply if you do not remember.

You can't just nod your head and assent in Bible class and then go forth and straightway forget what you saw in the mirror of God's Word. James says if you're going to be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only, you have to remember the reflection. You have to do something about it.

We have to think on all of the times we're not in Bible class about what we learned. That is how we walk in His ways and fear Him. That's the great truth in 1 John 1. Some of us have heard 1 John 1.9 dozens and dozens of times.

The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanses us from all sin when we acknowledge our sin. But what is 1 John 1.7? If we keep on walking in the light, we have fellowship, and the blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing us. It is a walk.

What's the problem with Alzheimer's? People start out for a destination and then kind of wake up and forget where they were going. They just find themselves on a street or on a sidewalk and they can't remember why they're there, how they got there, where they're going, or how to get back. Well, we can have spiritual Alzheimer's if we come to Bible class and have a clear idea of what needs to be done.

Then we walk out there and we're in the midst of life, and then we just kind of lose it. We forget who we are and why we're here. This is what happens to Israel.

They're on the Mount. They see the miraculous works of God delivering them from Egypt,

getting them through the Red Sea, providing manna for them. They have a daily reminder.

Every time they walk out in the morning and pick up the manna, how did this stuff get here? Daddy and granddaddy never saw this kind of stuff. It's supernatural provision from God, and yet with that daily reminder, they couldn't keep the focus, and they're going to drop in the wilderness. We are not of those who shrink back unto perdition, but of those who by faith and patience inherit the promises.

Well, we're back to all of this is tied up with the 40 days, the 40 years. Now, looking back at Matthew 4 as it relates to Exodus 20, Satan speaks to the Lord Jesus after he's been out there for 40 days, 40 nights, led there by the Spirit. The tempter came to him in verse 3. If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.

Any first-year Greek student will tell you, or should be able to tell you, that this is a first-class condition in Greek. The interrogative idea here is not really present. He's not asking and saying, well, are you the Son of God or not? Basically, a good translation would be, since you are the Son of God, why is this the first thing out of the devil's mouth? Well, what's the last declarative statement that anybody has made in this narrative? This is my beloved Son, God says.

Satan says, well, since you're the Son of God, make an application from this Word of God that you have received. I think one of the most overlooked truths in Scripture is that believers get tested over their knowledge of God's Word. The Lord Jesus is being tested on the Word of God.

God said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I'm well pleased. Satan says, well, since you're the Son of God, let's take that and draw a conclusion from it. This is the prothesis.

Since you are the Son of God, what is the hypothesis? Turn these stones into bread. It's a test of application. Here's a piece of the Word of God.

Jesus is the Son of God, so let's make an application. This happens all the time, doesn't it? Send us your money, the windows of heaven will open. We have widespread, rampant misapplication of the Word of God.

I can't, you know, how do I love thee, let me count the ways. How is Scripture distorted? You can't count the ways. It is Satan's own attack, because when we misunderstand and misconstrue the Word of God, it is because we have not thought about it.

We haven't let God the Holy Spirit lead us into all truth. We take it, and we have an impulse. We take it, and we have a knee-jerk response.

We make inaccurate, improper, and wrong-headed application of Scripture. It isn't that we don't have the Scripture, it's that we don't know what to do with it. It's like these, I saw a guy on funny videos, trying to cast a, you know how you practice doing that fly casting? So he was doing that, and the hook came and hooked his ball cap, and pulled it off his head.

He was like that, you know, and his hair went with it. His hair and his cap went backwards, because he was flipping this thing. We do it to ourselves, to properly use our tools.

These NAMCHUC guys that flip the things around, you know, a lot of times you see somebody hurt themselves if they don't know how to use those properly. You have to know what you're doing before you wield that particular weapon. Many times we take the sword of the Spirit, and we drop it and stick it into our foot.

We jab ourselves in the thigh. We nick our ear. I don't know how many midshipmen I saw during my four years at Annapolis practicing with a sword, because they were platoon commander, whatever, and Marines at Quantico, same way.

The Mameluke sword, in my experience, is a little bit longer than the Navy sword, and several of us, including me, took chunks out of our ear trying to flip that thing up to the carry, present, and then come up to the carry. You flip it, and it's supposed to pop. It's supposed to make a noise when it hits your shoulder or your collarbone, depending on how skinny you are.

But if your sword's a little bit long, it comes up and just takes a nick right out of your ear. Well, you don't want to be hurting yourself with your own sword. You don't want to shoot yourself in your own foot.

But that's literally what we do. This is a test of the application of the Word of God. Satan quotes God.

Since you are the Son of God, he doesn't argue the point. He's not trying to argue him out of the truth. He's saying, what are you going to apply? Let's do some application.

Since you're the Son of God, turn the rocks into bread. You've had no food for 40 days. Well, we've looked at this when we went through the temptations in Luke, but the covenant people of God, out in the wilderness in Exodus, also faced a no-bread situation, didn't they? And there is a parallel.

God says, Israel is my son. Out of Egypt I have called my son. There's a parallel and a comparison there, into which we also enter.

We observe the Lord Jesus. We observe Israel. We interpret and apply, and that's us.

John 1.12, we have the authority to be called sons of God. Since we are sons of God, what are we going to do? Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8.3b, Man does not live by bread alone. Man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

What are the common elements here between Jesus and Israel? You have the number 40. You have the testing taking place in the wilderness, and you have the issue of bread. Moses brings it up in Deuteronomy 8. God's feeding you with manna.

You have a choice. The issue of sonship. So Jesus, in a way here, is recapitulating Israel and is

doing what they did not do.

He is succeeding where they failed. I think it's very interesting. If you go back to the very first satanic test, that was also about applying the word of God and partaking of something to eat, wasn't it? Israel is tested at Mount Sinai.

The devil is going to lead Jesus ever upward. He starts out there in the wilderness, then he takes him to the pinnacle of the temple, then he takes him to the exceeding high mountain and shows him the kingdoms of the earth in the sequence that you have here in Matthew. An interesting fact, by the way, is that the Garden of Eden also appears to have been an elevation, a mountain.

You have, of course, when you read Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, it talks about you were in Eden, the garden of God, and it talks about you were in the mountain walking on the stones of fire. But how do we know this? How do we know that Eden was elevated? I've always, until recently, I've always pictured it as kind of flat. How do we know that Eden was elevated? Go back and read the description, and the rivers flow out of Eden in four directions, don't they? Well, water doesn't flow uphill, so if the rivers are flowing out, Eden's got to be higher.

Also, the big search for identification, where is Mount Sinai? One often overlooked detail, if you're going to try to identify that mountain, is to remember what happens after the golden calf. When Moses comes down from the mountain and he grinds it into powder, what does he do with that powder? He sprinkles it into the brook that flows from the mountain. There is a brook, wherever Mount Sinai actually is, whether it's Jebel Musa or any of the other candidates they have over there in the Sinai Peninsula, at the time of Moses, it had a brook flowing down from it because that's where the golden calf goes, and that's what Israel drinks from during this long period of time, first 40 days, second 40 days, and all the rest of the time they spend at the foot of the mountain.

So, being led up, these high experiences, this is the place of testing, this is the place of opportunity to either draw closer to God or to shrink away, like Israel does. Jesus answered, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. How many different ways do we need to be told? Deuteronomy 13, verse 1, If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, Let us go after other gods which you have not known, and let us serve them.

You shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you. Who allows false teaching, false doctrine, false prophecy, lying signs and wonders? God allows it. God authorizes it.

Why? Deuteronomy 13, verse 3, The Lord your God is testing you to find out if you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Obedience is a measure of love. If we are not obedient, we do not love.

That is the equation of the Word of God. It is true in families. It is true in spiritual life.

Someone may say they love you. If they are not obedient, if you are in authority, they do not love you. Love results in obedience.

No obedience, no love. Obedience is the measure of love. The one who has my words and keeps them, Jesus says, he it is that loves me.

The false gospel comes out. The false prophecy comes out in Deuteronomy 13. The Lord your God is testing you to find out if you love the Lord.

If you do not love the Lord, you will fall for it. You will be deceived. Verse 4, Deuteronomy 13, You shall follow the Lord your God and fear Him, and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him and cling to Him.

Well, I can see we are not going to have enough time to finish looking at the three temptations of the Lord Jesus. But I think you can see the analogy. You can see the connection.

You can see the fulfillment. Everything that we are not, the Lord Jesus is. The power that we lack, the discernment that we lack.

Paul says, He has been made unto us righteousness and peace and sanctification. We don't have it in us. And the Israelites were not in Christ.

The Israelites, the people of God in the Old Testament, are not Christians, and they are not church, and they are not in Christ. They are not body of Christ. They are not bride of Christ.

Why? There is a distinction drawn. They'll catch up. They'll get their chance.

The Millennial Kingdom is coming. Emmanuel, God with us, is going to happen. All of God's promises will be fulfilled.

But they were not fulfilled. The Spirit was not yet given. Christ was not yet glorified.

He is glorified now. And the Spirit is present. And we have something that the Israelites did not.

We have so much given to us. And as a result of that, there is a lot expected of us. So, when we look at Exodus 20, verse 20, Moses says to the people, Do not fear.

God has come to test you so that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin. Where is power over sin? People say today it's in accountability. Get in a discipleship group.

Get a partner to whom you are accountable and confess your sins one to another and pray for one another and talk about that deep, dark, secret thing that's causing you to sin and so on. How many of Jesus' accountability group were with Him in the desert? Where was His support group? Where was His counsel and His friendship and fellowship? The Spirit led Him by Himself. We do not get a group grade.

God does not grade on the curve. Each of us individually has to face these tests. We can stand.

His fear can be before us and we will not sin. This is the gift of God in Christ. Christ is our righteousness.

He is our peace. He is our sanctification. But we've got to reach out and claim it.

We've got to dig the copper out of the hills. We've got to mine the iron out of the ground and equip ourselves with the full armor of God. I think it's fascinating in Ephesians 6, Paul didn't say, use the full armor of God that He has dropped on you.

He says, put on the armor of God. It's available, but you've got to pick it up and strap it on. Gird your loins.

Shoe your feet with the gospel of peace. Take into your hand the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. We have to act.

This takes initiative. It isn't automatic. It doesn't come by osmosis.

It comes by decisions that we make day by day by day. This is what Israel is not going to do. This is the example we want to learn from so that we can exploit the victory that was won by the Lord Jesus on the cross over Satan, over sin, and over death.

Well, let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the clear truth of your word. Thank you for the testing that you build into our experience here in this life.

We know that the trial of our faith works. Patience and endurance, and we know that it is faith and patience that qualifies us to receive our inheritance. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts, help us to remember, to meditate, and to see the applicability of the truth of your word in our individual situations and circumstances.

We pray that as a result, the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ will be reflected in us. We ask it in his name. Amen.