

Matthew 19-03-24b

We're getting ready to resume our study now, starting in Matthew chapter 4. If you look now at what immediately follows the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit, you will find that there is method and meaning in God's order. Look at the beginning of chapter 4. Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward he was hungry.

Now when the tempter came to him, he said, If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Then the devil took him up into the holy city, set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down.

For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over you, and in their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. Jesus said to him, It is written again, You shall not tempt the Lord your God. Again the devil took him up on an exceedingly high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

And he said to him, All these things I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me. Then Jesus said to him, Away with you, Satan! For it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve. Then the devil left him, and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.

One of the first things you notice here is that there was a really good reason why God did and said what he did at the end of chapter 3. The Lord Jesus is prepared in advance for this difficult challenge. How is it that Satan ends up with this opportunity to test-slash-tempt the Lord Jesus? Where does this opportunity come from? Remember, we had the two beholds at the end of the previous chapter. Behold, the heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit descended.

What's happening here? Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness. God the Holy Spirit, you think, what a wonderful thing. He's come down, he's imparting power and presence and comfort and all of his Holy Spirit benefits on the Lord Jesus.

That's certainly going to stand him in good stead when he is weary, when he's facing the crowds and the masses and having to preach and so on. But what's the first thing the Holy Spirit does for him? Leads him out into the wilderness and stars him for 40 days. Jesus didn't say, you know, notice my sash is getting a little tight here, I think I'll go on a diet.

Why does he eat no food for 40 days and 40 nights? Same reason he is in the wilderness.

He has been led there and has been prompted to do this by the Holy Spirit. Now, why would he do such a thing? How is the Holy Spirit guiding him? Remember what Luke said he was doing at the point that the Holy Spirit came? He was praying.

What is the Holy Spirit's function in terms of the will of God and the truth of God? He is the one that reveals it. He is the one that leads people into truth and then enables them to apply it, to perform it, to live in its light. We have guidance and we have enablement.

You think about those symbols of the Holy Spirit that we looked at in the first session? Water is enabling. It imparts life and strength. It cleanses and purifies, which is necessary for service.

You look at the purification rituals in the Old Testament. There is blood, there is water. Blood and water, water and blood.

I say again, blood and water, water and blood. You might think of an occasion where those things appear at the conclusion of this ministry. So, when it is time to be guided and when it is time to have enablement, that's God's Holy Spirit at work to accomplish the will of God.

If you're off on some other agenda, not so much. So, Jesus is led up by the Spirit into the wilderness. Led up.

Why is it up? Where was He when we last saw Him? At the Jordan, right? There's pretty well no place to go but up when you're basically at sea level or something close to it. So, He is up. It's a climb.

He goes up into the wilderness. And this is probably the mountainous wilderness. This could be the hill country of Judea.

It can be the rough and sparse habitations. Where has John been calling for the Lord's way to be prepared? The wilderness. Where is the glory of God supposed to traverse? The wilderness.

Prepare the way. So, somebody might look at the wilderness and say, well, this is hostile and inhospitable and uninviting and a place of bad things happening. And the Lord Jesus heads into that, led by the Spirit, to be tempted.

This word is perazzo. And it can mean to test, to try, to prove a thing. You know, the old gold rush people would go and try to prove a claim.

They'd go out there and establish it. And if a mine would prove out, you would start getting gold out of it or silver out of it or copper or platinum, whatever kind of mine it was. So, to try or test for the purpose of approval almost came to mean to inspect.

You inspect it and it passes inspection. It passes the test. And you want it to pass the

test.

And you think, well, maybe this ought to be translated test instead of tempt. One of the contextual clues we have here is that the word occurs in its noun form in verse 3. Now, when the tester came to him, when the trier came to him, well, you don't think that the devil has as his goal approval of the Lord Jesus and showing him to be everything that he is set up to be and is declared to be. So, even though the word is perazzo, context tells us that perhaps in God's mind he is going to be tested and shown to be who and what he is declared to be.

But the devil as the tester, you ask yourself, well, that's certainly not his goal. But what is God's goal in allowing Satan in? In allowing the devil to take these shots at the Lord Jesus in his greatly weakened condition? God allows this. The Holy Spirit impels him into this situation.

For ill or for good? It's for good, right? The Holy Spirit isn't sending him out there to be defeated, not sending him out there to be waylaid and destroyed. This is necessary to fulfill all righteousness. The baptism and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Lord Jesus is necessary to fulfill all righteousness.

This testing is necessary to fulfill all righteousness. What about my testing? What about your testing? What about the incursions that Satan is allowed to make in our lives, great or small? You can't help but think of the book of Job, very explicit allowing of the tempter, the tester, to come in and do his best to knock the legs out from under a righteous man and cause him to repudiate God. God permits that.

In fact, God actually sort of instigates that. Satan, where have you been? I've been walking up and down in the earth. Have you seen my servant Job? God's the one that brings up that subject.

Do you think we would ever be qualified for God to say, have you seen my servant Sam? Have you seen my servant fill in your name here? Go ahead and take a crack at him, because all you're going to do is reveal my glory and the wonderful faith of an individual who has committed their way to God. Well, so he's led up by the Spirit into the wilderness for the purpose of being tested, tempted, tried by the devil. But you notice that ahead of this, God provides two things.

The Holy Spirit, who is the comforter and the encourager and the strengthener, and God doesn't wait until after this test to say, this is my son in whom I'm well pleased. When does he say it? First. He says it first.

This is an encouragement. It is a reminder of a relationship. This is my son.

He doesn't say, this is my Messiah. This is my prospective Savior. This is my gift to the nation of Israel.

God could have said a lot of things, but he said, this is my son. And I am pleased in him. If you translate it literally, because it's an aorist active indicative, God says, this is my son, the beloved, in whom I was pleased.

Or in whom I've been pleased starting from back when. It's sort of a culminative aorist. It's something in past time that continues into the present.

It's not quite the force of the perfect completed action in past time with the results that go on. But God says, it's not just today I'm pleased. I'm not just pleased because he got baptized.

I'm not just pleased because he stood still while I sent the dove. I'm always pleased with him. It's more of a similar idea when you use a durative present or a nomic present, which means something that's sort of a truth that transcends the moment.

A stitch in time saves nine. It's just an axiom that can apply whenever it applies. But this aorist, this is my son, the beloved.

In him I take pleasure. The aorist isn't really a time tense. It's more of an aspect.

And there are certain verbs, especially in Greek, it's a technical term, but some of them are telic and some of them are atelic. Telos means end. We talked about telomeres on DNA and your shoelaces and that kind of a thing.

Telos means the end of a thing. So if you're talking about a verb that says an action, like if you go to Luke and he uses the aorist infinitive and he says the people, aorist, passive, infinitive, were baptized, well, baptism has an end. You can't just be constantly baptized.

You can't just walk around being baptized. The Bible doesn't say be constantly baptized. You can be filled, but baptism has an end.

It's a telic idea. And so atelic is something that can be dirtied. You can be saved, and there's no end to your salvation.

You can have faith, and it's not like, well, I trusted and I'm all done with that. I trusted that that rope would hold when I went over the cliff, and it did, but that trust is over with because that episode is over with. When we trust God, that's an atelic idea.

Pistuo, to believe, is atelic. It goes on with results. So here, when he says, in whom I am or I was pleased, this aorist means God has a continuous pleasure that began back when, and he's just referring to it.

This is my son, the beloved. I'm consistently pleased with him and have been for a long time. So now when you come to chapter 4, and you look at the sending into the wilderness to be tested, is God any less pleased with Jesus than he was a couple of verses ago? What is the purpose of this testing? Why would God the Holy Spirit put him

into the hands of Satan, basically, in a weakened condition? Here's my suggestion.

There is something that Jesus has, and there's something that he doesn't have. What does he have that we just saw in verses 16 and 17 of the last chapter? What does he have? What two beholds did we have in those verses? He has the presence of the Spirit, and he has the approval of the Father, manifestly expressed. He has that presence of the Holy Spirit, and he has the stated, supernaturally manifested approval of the Father.

That's what he's got, tangible or intangible. You get the idea that very soon after it landed, this dove probably disappeared from view. It had served its purpose as a symbol and as a visible manifestation.

But what remained with the Lord Jesus? The Holy Spirit. What else remains with the Lord Jesus? The knowledge of his Father's pleasure in him. Right? He's got those things.

Now that Holy Spirit has led him out into the wilderness, and he has fasted. He has been without food 40 days and 40 nights. So what does he lack at this point? Resources.

There's no food on hand. It isn't like he's got a big sack full of food and he just didn't eat it. There is no food.

Hence the stones to bread thing coming up, right? There is no food available. How about physical strength? Even in the wonderful humanity that the Lord Jesus possessed, almost a month and a half with no food? Month and a half, 40 days and 40 nights? What else is he going to be lacking at this point? It says afterward he was what? Hungry, right? He's hungry? Do you think this might be the understatement of the chapter? This word, epinasin, means to be needy, to desire earnestly. It means to be famished.

It means that because of the lack of a thing, you have an intense overpowering craving. It's not like, hey, it's 5.30, I'm hungry. This is one of the strongest impulses for survival that your human physique will impose on you.

People will eat almost anything when they reach this stage of hunger. They'll eat each other. They'll eat dirt.

They'll eat their clothing. It is an overpowering famished craving. So this is what he lacks.

He lacks food. He lacks strength and all of the concomitants. How difficult is it to concentrate, to focus, to be at peace and not cranky and not imbalanced, not overreactive, to have self-control, to have the other eight fruits of the spirit at this point? Basically a month and a half with no food.

So, when the tempter came to him, the tempter knows where he is. He says, If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. If you are the Son of God.

This is a first-class condition in Greek. Many of you, I think most of you, have heard about the conditional classes in Greek before. There's generally four.

First-class condition, if and it's true. Second-class, if and it's not true. Third, if and it's not true, but I wish it were, etc.

Well, this is a first-class condition, which the rule of thumb is, if and it's true. And many times you'll see people say, Well, if and it's true, then we should really translate it, Since. Since you are the Son of God.

I do not have time to go through this in detail, but there is a very excellent article by a Greek scholar that I respect. It was a former Bible teacher whose classes Patty attended in church, and this is Daniel B. Wallace. Dan Wallace has, I can call him Dan, I've met him and corresponded with him enough to know that he won't mind.

Dr. Daniel B. Wallace, professor at Dallas Seminary, has written a very wonderful article that is posted on Bible.org, and it's called, The Myth About the Meaning of First-Class Conditions in Greek. And I commit it to your attention because he illustrates very effectively what he calls the overly facile and naive assumption that the first-class condition means since. Since you are the Son of God.

And so then he says, Such a translation will wreak havoc with numerous passages. Note some of the following absurdities, and you'll recognize most of these as being if statements in your Bible. Matthew 12, 27.

Since I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, which is the accusation, Jesus responds with a first-class condition. It's a plus the indicative. El means if.

If plus a verb in the indicative mood is the classic first-class condition construction. So that would make Matthew 12, 27 read Jesus saying, Since I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Matthew 17, 4. Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration. Lord, it is good for us to be here.

Since you wish it, I will make three tents here. I will make three booths for you and Moses and Elijah. Matthew 26, 39.

In the Garden of Gethsemane. My Father, since it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Luke 11, 18.

Since Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Luke 22, 42. Father, since you are willing, remove this cup from me. John 10, 37.

Since I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. That's perhaps the most egregious example. John 10, 37.

It's a first-class condition if in Greek. But if you translate it, Since I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. Acts 25, 11.

Paul speaking. Now since I am wrong and have committed a deed worthy of death, I am not refusing to die. Romans 4, 2. Talking about Abraham.

For since Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting. You see the problem here? And you can deduce from this that the best way to translate the first-class condition such as we have it here is presuming this to be the case. So you go back to some of these.

Presuming that I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Lord, it is good for us to be here. Presuming that you wish it, I will make these booths. Or John 10, 37, the egregious case.

Presuming I am not doing the works of my Father, then don't believe me. But if I am doing his works, which is also a first-class condition, if you don't believe me, believe the works, right? And so on. Presuming Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting.

But he doesn't. So this is a more intelligent understanding of the first-class condition. And I belabor that because that's what we've got throughout these temptations.

So, when the tempter came to him, verse 3, he said, Now, why is this the presumption? What just got said at the end of chapter 3? This is my Son, the Beloved. So what does Satan do? Satan takes the Word of God, hear me now, Satan takes the explicit statement of God that God has just made 40 days earlier, and tries to turn it against the Lord. Well, presuming you are the Son of God, Satan's not admitting it.

He's just saying, if that's the case, then here's what should follow. Presuming you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. You don't know it, but this is actually an anti-Calvinist section of Scripture here.

Because if sovereignty is what it's all about, Jesus could say, you know, that's a good idea. I can turn stones into sons of Abraham. I can give a command and turn something with no choice into whatever I want it to be.

This would not only be, why is this a violation of the Word of God? Why can't Jesus speak? And notice the suggestion from Satan is not turn the stones into bread. Presuming you're the Son of God, make yourself some food out of these rocks. What is the actual challenge? Read it again.

What does it say? Presuming you are the Son of God, speak, command. He doesn't say pick them up and massage them, spit on them and form mud and turn it into flour and bake it. He says, presuming you're the Son of God, you can simply speak and rocks will

turn into bread.

Presuming you are God, you can speak and turn people into believers. Same, it's a parallel idea. But Jesus says, no can do.

But notice the challenge is no different than what you have back in Genesis chapter 3, verse 1. You do not get one verse into the third chapter of Genesis after the creation account. I was guessing based on my rather fuzzy memory that well, I'm probably going to be in verse 6 or verse 7 by the time the serpent and the tree and Satan gets around to tempting Eve. Verse 1, verse 1 of chapter 3. And what does he do? Hath God said, you can eat of every tree? Hasn't God said you can eat of every tree? First words recorded in Scripture out of Satan's mouth are taking the word of God and turning it into something to cause sin.

It's the word of God so much harder to deal with twisted truth than it is outright falsity. Satan doesn't just come out and say, you know if you eat this fruit you'll have wonderful knowledge. Look how beautiful it is.

What does he lead with? Hasn't God said X? First words out of his mouth. Hasn't God said, what does he do here? Presuming you're the son of God, because that's what, isn't that what the voice from heaven just got through saying? He's alluding to the word of God, using it as a test. Command that these speak, is what it says, speak, these stones into bread.

Why would Jesus identify this as something not to do? If this was us, how would we know, and we had the power to do it, how would we know not to do it? Is there anything wrong with eating food? It's been 40 days, the 40 of course alluding, out of Egypt I have called my son, Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness, Jesus spends 40 days in the wilderness, the day-year equivalence, and this speaks of his identification with the nation. He is going to bear the sins of the people, and so there is this identification of wilderness time, before entering into fulfillment of purpose and function. He hasn't done anything yet.

He's been, he's essentially passed through the Reed Sea, in being baptized, as Israel did with Moses, and what followed that? 40 years. Well Jesus isn't going to wait until he's 70 to start his earthly ministry, so it's 40 days and 40 nights. Where else did you remember 40 days and 40 nights from? What was Jesus standing in when the Holy Spirit came down? Water.

How long did the rain fall for Noah? 40 days and 40 nights. Jesus has the opposite experience. He's in the wilderness 40 days and 40 nights.

He's been in the water, now he's out. What's the first complaint that Israel has when they get a couple of days past the sea? We're out of water. We're out of water.

So, I don't mean to overlook the 40 here, but Jesus answers and says, it is written, man

shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. What do we know about Old Testament quotes in the New? When the New Testament quotes the Old Testament, what did all of those people know that we don't typically know? The context of the Old Testament quote. It's like a footnote.

It's like C note 1. So, where does this come from? You should have a note here in your New King James, and it says Deuteronomy chapter 8, verse 3. So, keep your finger here, flip back to Deuteronomy. Last book of the law, Deuteronomy chapter 8, beginning at verse 1. When the Lord your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you. And when the Lord your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer and utterly destroy them.

You shall make no covenant with them, nor show mercy to them. Whose territory has the Lord Jesus now entered by His baptism and the formal beginning of His ministry? Who's got demons scattered all over the area? Who has been operating in this land for a very long time? Satan. Who is occupying the land, spiritually speaking? Satan.

Why are there so many demoniacs, never as many before or since as there are around this time? Satan's hegemony is with the principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this age, and he's got them all concentrated strategically in this location. So, they are like these seven nations, greater and mightier. You shall not make a covenant with them.

Don't show mercy to them. Do not make marriages with them. Do not give your daughter to their son.

Take their daughter for your son. They will turn your sons away from following me. I'm in chapter seven, by the way.

They will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods. The anger of the Lord will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. This is the introduction.

Chapter seven of Deuteronomy. Look at verse six. You are a holy people to the Lord your God.

The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself. Think about the baptism. Think about the descent of the Holy Spirit.

A special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love on you or choose you because you were more numerous than any other people. You were the least of all.

But because the Lord loves you and because He would keep the oath He swore to your fathers. These are my people. Doesn't God want to be well-pleased with those people?

Doesn't He want to fulfill the new covenant, take out their heart of stone, give them a heart of flesh, put His Spirit upon them? Now look at chapter eight.

Every command which I command you today you must be careful to observe. I say again, every commandment, every word which I command you, you must be careful to observe so that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land of which the Lord swore your fathers. He doesn't say store up in the summer so that you can feed on it in the winter.

Bring your grain into the storehouse. Be a good manager. Be a careful steward.

If you want to live long, what do you do? Every commandment of God. Spiritual faithfulness and obedience leads to physical sustenance. You shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness.

The Lord your God led you. How did Jesus arrive in the wilderness forty days? Led by the Spirit. Do you think this passage would have come to His mind? And do you think He had to pay attention for a long time in synagogue to get all the way through Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and the first seven chapters of Deuteronomy before He got to this passage? You shall remember the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness to humble you and to test you.

Led you to humble you and test you to know what is in your heart. Whether you will keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you.

Allowed you to what? What does it say in verse three? Allowed you to hunger. Allowed you to hunger. And fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know that He might make you know.

Remember our Psalm 111? Remember wow, the seventh letter right in the middle of the third verse? Remember why God did His mighty works? Psalm 111, three. God does those mighty works, why? To be remembered. To be remembered.

That He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone but man lives by everything that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. Now, did He tell them as you scabble in the wilderness for these forty years, you've got to find a way to scratch a living out of the ground. You've got to earn your bread by the sweat of your brow.

Because that's what I told Adam when he left the garden. You're in the wilderness here, you've got to, every time you stop, plant a little garden. Quickly grow some fast-growing veg-eatables here.

And that's what we call them, veg-eatables. You've got to grow some stuff to eat it, right? What were they supposed to eat in the wilderness during the forty years? Not the fruit of their hands. What did they eat? What God provided.

And the manna that they gathered in the mornings, and twice as much on Friday, was symbolic of, representative of, like so many of these other physical ritual symbols at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, symbolized something intangible and spiritual, right? The manna symbolized the Word of God. It was supernatural. It came from above.

It appeared from heaven. He fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word, everything that proceeds from the mouth of God. Well, this is in Jesus' mind, and this is how He responds to this test.

In the same way that God did not command the Israelites to turn the soil around them into food, but to trust God for the manna, which He would provide at the right time and in the right quantities, Jesus understands this lesson. He's been in the wilderness 40 days, 40 nights. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Jesus knows that when it is time for Him to receive physical sustenance and physical food, God will provide it. God is the provider. God will speak the Word, and there will be provision.

But you don't get the provision without the necessary precursor step of it being God's will and God's Word. The Holy Spirit and the Word together. Not just the Spirit by Himself providing power to do things, not the Word alone, knowledge puffing up without love, but the two of them together.

Washing of water by the Word. Presence of the Spirit and living by the Word that proceeds from the mouth of God. So, the speaking is challenged.

You speak so that food appears. Who's supposed to speak so that food appears? Whose mouth is being spoken of here? The mouth of God. What is Jesus in His humanity going to do if He speaks stones into bread? Why is it speaking? Why does it say speak? Because the words that proceed from the mouth of God are the issue.

And if Jesus speaks food into existence from stones, He is setting aside God's timing, God's plan, God's purpose, God's power, God's words. If Jesus speaks food, God is not speaking food. And we live by what proceeds from the mouth of God.

If we live, Paul says, we live to the Lord. If we die, we die to the Lord. Whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's.

That's the perspective. Well, we've got two more temptations to go. I am tempted to continue, but I am going to stop at this point with a couple of final observations.

The earth, the stones, the ground is cursed, and often the ground is a picture of judgment. Do you remember what happened when the Lord Jesus was being judged for

our sins on the cross? Do you remember that there was a great earthquake? Did you notice what else accompanies that earthquake? It's an easily overlooked detail. It says there was a great earthquake and the rocks were split.

We think about the veil of the temple being rent in twain, but the rocks were judged. This is one of the last things that happens before Jesus departs this earth. What's the first thing that's going to happen when He comes back at the second coming? Not the rapture, but the second coming.

When His feet touch this earth, what happens? It's split. It is rent. For the Holy Spirit to come down, the heavens are opened.

And I love Mark's verb. It's schizo. It's torn apart for the Spirit to come from heaven.

What's going to happen when the Lord Jesus returns and plants His feet on the Mount of Olives? It is going to split. There is going to be a great earthquake. Micah talks about the mountains liquefying and running like water downhill.

It's like a picture of lava or something. There is this tremendous notion of the ground. Unless you take steps, it is near to a curse and fit for burning.

The rain, water, Holy Spirit symbol, comes from heaven. Rain, by the way, is also often used. Hebrews 6, 7, and 8. That ground that has the rain falling often upon it.

The former and latter rain seems to be a picture of the Holy Spirit as well. The former and latter rain is in three places in the Old Testament. You have the former and latter rain spoken of.

Joel 2.23, Hosea 6.3, and Jeremiah 5.24. Joel 2.23 talks about the former and the latter rain. Hosea 6.3 talks about the former and the latter rain. Jeremiah 5.24 talks about the former and latter rain.

This is the instance in the former case of the Holy Spirit coming here and there for endowment, for temporary enablement. The latter rain, this is why the Charismatics like to call themselves the latter rain movement, because they think this is the fulsome, heavy rain that just soaks everybody with the Spirit. But what it's really talking about is the rain as in Hebrews 6, 7, and 8. The ground, when the rain falls many times upon it, what's it supposed to do? Well, if the seed of the Word is planted in that soil, and if it's good soil, you get a hundredfold crop.

You remember Jesus' parable? We'll see it coming up here in Matthew, but when you look at the Luke version, it just says that it's going to come up a hundredfold. It says when the seed is in good ground, it produces a hundredfold crop. It doesn't talk about the 30 and 60.

So the ground with the rain and the seed, and once again, you've got the rain and you've got the seed of the Word. Jesus said the seed is the Word. The rain is the Spirit.

The Word and the Spirit combining in good ground produces this abundant crop. But in Hebrews 6, 7, and 8, if the rain hits that ground and the seed isn't there and it produces thorns and briars, it is fit for burning and near to a curse. It's going to get baptized with fire.

It's going to be unproductive. It's going to be a blackened cinder instead of a fruitful field. So what is our plan here having observed these things? We recognize that God has given us the gift of His Spirit just as He did the Lord Jesus, and it is in advance of our trials.

It is in advance of our testing and in advance of our challenges. What else has He given us? The Word. But we've got to be careful with the Word.

Satan knows the Bible backward and forward. Satan is listening when God talks. Satan heard what God said in the garden to Adam and repeated it back in a distorted form to Eve.

Satan heard what God said from heaven at the baptism and he repeats it back to the Lord Jesus in a partial form. Well, assuming you're the Son of God, then here's a faulty conclusion based on a valid premise. Can you have a valid starting place and draw a faulty conclusion? Of course.

It's one of the classic fallacies that you can state something that's true and come up with a false. I quoted this to somebody about a week ago. I read a study.

I was sitting in a waiting room reading one of these health deals, and they were remarking. They said, you know, it's really a strange thing. We haven't been able to quite find the link because it turns out that people who drink a glass of orange juice every day have got amazingly strong teeth, and we can't figure out what it is about orange juice that makes strong teeth.

Well, it's nothing about orange juice that makes strong teeth, and to conclude that, do people who drink a glass of orange juice every day on average have better teeth? Yes, they do. It correlates. But to draw the conclusion that if I want better teeth, I should drink orange juice is faulty.

Good premise, faulty conclusion. I would need to know is there something about orange juice. In fact, orange juice is so full of sugar that if you don't take steps, you'll have worse teeth.

Why do people who drink orange juice every day have good teeth? Because people who drink a glass of orange juice every day are typically health-conscious people who also do

a lot of other healthy things, like brush their teeth frequently and floss and make sure they get enough calcium and they're paying attention to their diet, and that is just one of the byproducts that they're trying to get that nutritious glass of juice every morning. But the correlation is not a causation. And the correlation here that, well, because Jesus is the Son of God and the Son of God would have unlimited power, then this is what he should do does not follow.

It's the Word that he's the Son of God, but the conclusion drawn from that Word is faulty to the point of sin. So we've got to be careful in applying what we learn and what we know of the Word of God and ensure that every step along the way is guided by the other half of that inseparable duo. If we've got the Word, what else must we have? The leading and guiding and enablement of the Holy Spirit to understand it and apply it aright.

To disqualify ourselves from the voice of the Holy Spirit, from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, we're going to take the Word and we're going to end up beating somebody over the head with it or we're going to take it and run in a direction that God never intended us to go. Well, but hath God not said? Both have to be present. Washing of water by the Word.

The rain falls and the seed sprouts. That's where the fruit of the Spirit comes from. The Spirit and the Word.

Jesus has not been led or guided by the Spirit to go out and start a bread factory in the wilderness. And He knows that. Do you think along about the 35th or 36th day Jesus would say, you know, I bet there's going to be a food test coming up here pretty soon.

I'm getting so hungry. This is probably designed to be a food test. And so when this thing says, speak these rocks into bread, do you think that Jesus had 39 and a half days to get ready for that test? I see what God is doing here with the no food thing.

So I should be especially watchful. I will pray. Do you think Jesus did any praying during these 40 days? Do you think that God would speak to His humanity through the Holy Spirit to encourage and strengthen and comfort Him, which are the roles of the Holy Spirit having been granted by God? It's the same for us.

When we see that there's a shortfall, we see that there's an area of increasing challenge, we can expect a test. We can expect that there may be temptation. There may be the opportunity to fail.

We pray the more earnestly and we know information. It's like when you see enemy movement, you figure there might be an attack coming from that direction. If we see things going bad in an area, that's a good place to prepare and say, I don't want to get caught short.

I don't want to fail in this particular area. And surprise, surprise, surprise. After 40 days of no food, what's the first temptation? Get food from an illegitimate source.

Could you see this coming a mile off if you've got your spiritual glasses on? Yes. And the Lord Jesus, as an example for us, passes this test because He saw it coming and He was ready. And what does He do? He quotes correctly the Word of God.

He interprets correctly Deuteronomy chapter 8. Having read Deuteronomy chapter 7 and He knows its purpose and its context. He listened in Bible class all through His childhood and youth and early adult life. And Satan may know the Scripture, but Jesus knows it better.

People who want to quote Scripture know it better and have the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to understand it and apply it rightly. Well, we'll pick up at this point next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank You for the wonderful example of the Lord Jesus who didn't simply invoke His own deity to pass tests and negotiate the obstacles and the hazards of His earthly ministry. He was in all points tested like as we are. But He succeeded in never falling into sin because He availed Himself perfectly of the same things that You supply to us, which is Your Word and Your Spirit, Your comforting assurance that we belong to You as Your children, that You are pleased with our faith, You are pleased with our steadiness in obedience, our desire to be pleasing in Your sight.

We pray that these things will serve in our lives just as they have here in the wonderful example of the Lord Jesus so that our lives can reflect Your glory so that You will continue to be well-pleased with us as You are with Him and as we represent Him in this life. We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.