

Matthew 19-03-31b

Let's continue in our study in Matthew chapter 4. We're also taking a look at Mark, Luke, and John. I haven't really looked at John yet, but he's going to tell us something very interesting here in the next session. We're noticing that the Lord Jesus is doing what Israel did not, and that is He is availing Himself of God's provision of power.

Israel could have done beautifully in the wilderness if they had turned outside their own strength and relied on God's strength. How does Jesus know not to turn the rocks into food? It seems to me that there is no law against providing yourself with food. There's no law against eating bread.

You know, when you see Jesus heal a withered hand or do other miraculous things on the Sabbath, and they tried to hang that around His neck as being a Sabbath breaker and a law violator, there is no law against such things. And it was the perception that was in the minds of people that, well, He's doing something wrong. We've got to find a way to make it against the law.

Well, what law would Jesus be breaking? Suppose our story continued here and you know, the Lord Jesus at the end of His ministry, one of the last things He says is, I thirst. Well here He says, basically, I'm hungry. He's not eaten in nearly six weeks.

Six weeks. And He is still human. We know that He can get tired.

We know that He can become weary. We know that He felt what we feel. He's built like we are built.

When He falls asleep right before He stills the storm on the Sea of Galilee, He sleeps through the storm because He was bone-tired. We know that in His humanity He was not Superman. He was capable of being injured and bruised.

We know this from the arrest and the trials and the crucifixion that His body was susceptible to all of the same insults that ours are. So you can only imagine it requires water for a human body to survive, but you can get by for many weeks without food. And that's what He did.

But you can also imagine that at the end of two days shy of six weeks, what shape you would be in. And people eat their clothing. There's all kinds of things that happen when you reach a starvation level like this.

And it has driven people out of their mind. People can literally be driven out of their mind with hunger. And yet the Lord Jesus sustains Himself not with human strength, not with human solutions, but with the power of the Spirit and the power of the Word.

And this is a demonstration of what it can do. But how does He know not to draw the

conclusion that God has given Him power? He can't die of hunger and fulfill His mission. So He needs to eat.

So if God's given Him the power and here's an opportunity, why doesn't He just make Himself some food and be good to go? Well, you remember when we turned back to Deuteronomy chapter 8, there was a particular response. There was a particular thing that God wanted to teach Israel that is specifically stated in that passage. Do you remember it? Verse 3, He humbled you and 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 that man shall not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.

Did the Israelites do anything to cultivate, produce, or otherwise manufacture manna? Where did the manna come from? More specifically, how did the manna come? Who ordained it? Who spoke it into existence? God did. For a variety of reasons, both practical and spiritual, God said, I'm not going to give you supernatural wheat seeds that will grow and sprout in a couple of days. I'm giving you magical, they're the equivalent of the beanstalk beans that Jack of Beanstalk fame had.

You plant them and you watch the cartoon and the thing sprouts in no time. Could God have not given them supernatural seeds that would sprout, bloom, and bear seeds within a week, plant it on Monday, harvest it on Friday, eat through the weekend? Why manna? Why not super crops? Because God spoke it into existence and it came from heaven, like dew. It's alluded to metaphorically as angel food, angel's bread.

They ate the food of angels. But it's heavenly food and God declared that it would be there and God specified how to access it. Everything, every part of that.

Do you ever have instructions on how to plant wheat in Scripture? No. There's no gardening guide in the law. Wouldn't this have been handy to tell the Israelites the apocryphal stories of the pilgrims coming and well, here's how you plant corn and put the fish in and make the mounds and that's been largely discounted by further research.

That wasn't the way the Indians grew their food. But the idea that it would be handy to know how to farm once you enter the land after you've been slaves and then wanderers in the wilderness, how much farming do they know? How are they going to pick up the skills for planting and harvesting and threshing and storing and what works and what doesn't work and when do you do it and all the rest? That's not in Scripture. And their food for the 40 years in the wilderness comes by what means? God's Word.

It's not just I'm going to live on spiritual truth, but I'm going to live by the provision that God has ordained for me. Did you catch that? There may be a lot of possibilities and as the Lord Jesus looks, sure, that would be one way to bring bread into existence, but A, I've got a deep concern about the source of this idea because it's not Scripture. There's

not an Old Testament example of Elijah or Elisha or any other Old Testament party being hungry and God says, well, I've given you the power.

What are you waiting on? Turn a rock into bread. You've got no scriptural precedent for this. What is the scriptural precedent? He's in the desert 40 days.

Israel was in the wilderness 40 years. Who declared where the food would come from and when and how it would come? God did and Jesus in his humanity under the ministry of the Holy Spirit makes that connection. I'm not just any old person with any old hunger here.

This is a special case Spiritual truth is on the line and in the scriptural guidance that I've got, the parallel that most closely matches God calling out of Egypt his son and commissioning for a special purpose, where does the provision come? It comes by the Word of God at God's behest with God's timing and God's guidance and this ain't it. So the test goes to source. What are you relying on? God has given a lot of us gifts and talents that we're aware of.

Some people are musically inclined. Some people are logically inclined. Some people are mechanically inclined.

You have skills that are sort of innate. They might be hereditary. They might be a combination hereditary and environment and training and such, but we've got things that we can turn to we can do for ourselves.

We can do for others. We've got a knack. Some people are really great with plants.

Some people can kill a cactus. Some people are good with machines. Some people are good with computers.

Some people are good with food and food preparation and hospitality and looking out for the well-being and comfort of others. They're people that are really good caregivers and that's great. It is a power and ability that God has granted much as God has given the Lord Jesus the ability with the presence of the Holy Spirit to do the miraculous, right? But what if I use my talent or my skill or my gift from God in a self-serving way, in a short-sighted way, in a way that doesn't really reflect the reason God gave it to me? Well, but it's not a sin.

I want to go start a band and be a Christian rock group. I want to go start a hospice because there's a need here and I think I can make a lot of money and it'll help people. But it would be very profitable.

I've got a skill here and I can leverage this into something that I want. The use of that that is not prompted by and informed by and limited by the Word of God would take a good thing and misuse it, right? You see the picture there? God has given Jesus the

ability to do the miraculous and the question is well, assuming you're the Son of God, this should be a no-brainer. It is the why, it is the how, it is what is your goal here? Is this a way to glorify the Father? Is this a way to further the mission and to accomplish the goal? Or is it the meeting of a short-term need because I can? So it's a subtle test and Jesus is desperately hungry.

There's a lot of pressure here, almost unreasoning pressure. This is instinctive survival pressure. Every cell in his body is screaming for nourishment.

But the soul and the spirit within his body are saying, wait for God's provision. God withholds. God has created this need and he's got a purpose in it and it's his Word that will end it.

It's his Word that will end it. You remember in Mark the two-verse summary of this period where he doesn't go into the specific temptations? What's the last phrase? He was in the wilderness 40 days tested and he was with the wild beasts and what? The angels came and ministered to him. Why did the angels come? Why didn't they come sooner? Who determined the timing? Who determined the means and who determined the nature of the support for the Lord Jesus in his humanity? Angels come from God.

Angels are God's servants. God spoke a word. Angels came and brought miraculous sustenance and I suspect if Jesus had turned stones into regular bread and eaten it, it would have been weeks before he could recover.

But you remember in the Old Testament, you have a prophet that eats food that God provides and what does he do? Remember Elijah? Gets that meal. And in the strength of that meat, he was powered for 40 days. Remember that over in Kings? He gets a heavenly meal and that's 40 days worth of sustenance.

Here, and that was in prospect. Here, I think it it filled in what had been lacking for 40 days. But you know if a thousand years to the Lord is as a day and the day is as a thousand years, I think when it comes to meals, one meal is 40 days worth and 40 days can get fixed with one meal.

The angels came. God spoke. That's what Jesus was waiting for.

That's what we need to wait for. Are we confident that this is in the will of God? How do you know? If you've got rational arguments and there's part of your brain saying, well, but you know, God did provide the strength and there are the rocks here. God made the rocks.

God gave the power. God made the rocks. I'm hungry.

I can't die. I've got a mission here. Make a kind of sense at several different levels.

But what enables the Lord Jesus to pass the test? Where is the provision coming from? Am I feeding myself or am I looking to the Lord to feed me? And if I'm not sure, how would I check my answer? If I parse the problem and say, well, I've got an answer here, I think I can do X, Y, and Z. Do you notice, by the way, that up to this point, almost everything with the Lord Jesus has been of a passive nature. Jesus came down to the Jordan, but who performed the baptism? John baptizes him, right? And Jesus says, John says, you need to be in the active mode. You need to be baptizing me.

And Jesus says, no, to fulfill all righteousness, part of that is you performing the ritual on me. So Jesus is baptized by John, right? Now, did Jesus reach up into the sky and grab the next passing dove and stick it on his shoulder to have the Holy Spirit? Because he is the Son. And if you study church doctrine and creeds and such, you know, it's the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

And Jesus issues forth the Spirit, I will send you a comforter. So if Jesus is the boss of the Holy Spirit, why didn't the Jesus say, hey, Holy Spirit, come on down? Jesus comes up out of the water. He's being raised up out of the water by John.

The Spirit comes on Jesus. Jesus is passive in that picture. He's passive in the baptism, waiting for the time.

John baptizes him. The Holy Spirit descends on him. Who takes him into the wilderness? Does any gospel say Jesus decided to go to the wilderness to be tested? All of them that address the question of how he got to the wilderness say the Spirit led and or drove him, right? Passive.

He is being tested. All of the initiative is coming from it. Jesus didn't call Satan's name and say, hey devil, I got a bone to pick with you.

Come here. Remember that Job thing? I'm going to turn the tables there, buddy. It's your turn.

Satan tests him. He is being tested. That's passive, right? So Jesus has discerned that at this point it is God's initiative.

It is God's allowing of Satan to come. Do you think the Father could have said, Satan, not now? All of this is at the Father's behest. And Jesus is even passive in not eating.

He doesn't get locusts and wild honey. He doesn't say, hey John, how do you do that locust and wild honey thing? You got a recipe for me here? I can take. He is passive in the sense that he does not feed himself.

He knows to wait for something along the lines of manna. That's the biblical example. So you get the idea here that one of the clues to test your answer is what does scripture suggest that I should be looking to? Cursed is the man who trusts in man who makes

flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord.

Would my heart be departing from the Lord if I'm looking to him? And what else do you think Jesus has been doing? It's not explicitly stated, but we know this from the pattern that is revealed in the Gospels. Was Jesus a man of prayer? Would it be a smart thing to be praying? If you know that you're going to the wilderness for testing, would you pray? Lord, call to my mind what I know. Let me hear clearly the voice of the Holy Spirit.

For us, keep short accounts, confess our known sins, so that there's nothing drowning out, impeding, or otherwise deflecting us from the guidance of the Holy Spirit and memory and recall of the Word of God. Prayer. Jesus is constantly communing with his Father.

One of the most frequent activities you see Jesus engaged in in the Gospels is prayer. If we're testing out a potential solution to a problem, it sounds obvious, but we don't always pray and wait for that confirmation. Now, is confirmation going to be two doves flying over in formation or well, you know, if somebody says the word sparkle in the next hour, I'll know that that's a sign from heaven.

If somebody suggests to me the same solution that I've just come up with in my mind, that'll be a sign. What is your confirmation? Is it going to be a sign in this day and age? What is the confirmation? If you're looking at a solution or two, you're looking at some options and you say, well, I'm not real sure which way I should go. Lord, shine a light on my path here.

Help me. I want to do whatever it is you want me to do. I'm willing to stick it out.

I'm willing to move. I'm willing to hold the ground. I'm willing to advance.

I'm willing to fall back. Show me what I should do. Then what? Is there going to be a still small voice? Probably not.

Is there going to be a sign in the observable world? Probably not. What is the common way that God confirms his word? Ask and it shall be given. Seek and you shall find.

Knock and the door will be opened. You do the knocking. That's the asking and seeking.

That's wrapping on the door and the door will open. Watch for a door. And when you look at that door, you say, you know, this really is consistent with scripture.

This is what I would expect. This is a God thing. God is going to be glorified because this isn't something I could do on my own.

This isn't something that a secular unbeliever would see or rely on. When I talk about this with my believing friends, my family, those who are close to me who share my enthusiasm for God, they're going to see God's hand in this. This is a God thing.

This matches everything I understand of scripture. This is the answer to my prayer. God, the Holy Spirit, is going to confirm it with the word in the same way that he suggests it with the word.

And we pray in the word. The answer is going to be consistent with what we know of scripture. It is probably going to be unexpected.

It is probably going to be like the least becoming the greatest. It is probably like the last becoming first. It is going to be something that God sends in the way that he sent the manna, in the way that he sends the angels to minister to the Lord.

It isn't going to be something that I have to manufacture out of my own strength. Now, it doesn't mean that we aren't always going to have to invest some work and labor in a task. Jesus traveled.

Jesus rode boats. Jesus walked great distances. Jesus set up venues so that his teaching could be done.

He sat all day and healed when the occasion arose, and it wearied him. It was physical work. There is a time for labor.

I'm not saying that we just sit back and everything is passive. Jesus knows when to be passive and when to be active, doesn't he? He knows when to be baptized, when to receive the Spirit, when to be led and to be driven into the wilderness. He knows on what he is relying, and it is the word of God.

That is where he is looking. Everything he does, and he is about to go into active mode here. After this, when we leave this section of Matthew 4, Jesus is going to start doing things.

He is going to be taking initiative. But it is after the testing. By the way, the Lord Jesus is also communing with and getting used to this extra presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

This 40 days of testing is just like anything else. You get a new car, and the hood is shorter or longer, or the seat is higher or lower, or it's got different controls on the dash. It's good to spend a little time driving the neighborhood before you go out into Dallas traffic, right, so that you're familiar.

And this testing also accomplishes God's purpose of familiarization with a new situation, a new and different way of operating. Jesus is going to need this recognition of God's word and communion with the Spirit for the whole rest of his ministry. And he gets, as it were, a baptism of fire here in the confrontation with Satan.

And God will do the same with us. We're going to be tested as we enter into new

circumstances and new challenges. We learn things that will serve both now and in ages to come in terms of how to interpret and apply scripture.

So back to Matthew chapter 4, verse 5, Then the devil took him up into the holy city, set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, on the assumption that you are the Son of God, assuming that to be true for the sake of argument, throw yourself down. For it is written, he shall give his angels charge over you. Okay, I get it.

You want scripture to justify your course of action here. Well, I'll give you some scripture. And this is out of Psalm 91.

Now those of you that have memorized that entire psalm recognize this portion. We in church together memorize the first four or five verses of this. He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty, and so on.

Well, this is from that same psalm that Satan quotes. Now, interestingly, Satan knows the Bible. I've had to just sit and think about that for a bit.

It's one thing for him to know the Ten Commandments or to know Genesis 3 because he was there. But in the collection of psalms, in the psalms scroll, these things that were written by David and others over a period of time and collected in the hymnal of Israel, they would be sung to tunes in the ancient day. But Satan knows by heart Psalm 91.

He knows this psalm. You memorized it. He memorized it.

I just find that very interesting that even though he's opposed to God, is rebelling against God, he knows God's Word. And why does he know it? Well, have you ever read any part of Mein Kampf or the Communist Manifesto or the Koran or the the Mormon Bible and the rest of it? When you're in opposition to a thing, you know, know your enemy. What is it that you're opposed to? Why does Satan, of all of the things in the Bible, why does he pick this particular thing? I think there's two.

I think he feels like this might succeed and the question is why does he think this would succeed? I mean, everybody's got a natural fear of hurtling to their death over a height. Most everybody, except maybe some of those Indians that work on skyscrapers, most everybody has a healthy fear of heights. I do not want to fall to injury or death.

And you would think, well, this isn't going to be a very good temptation because nobody wants to gamble on not dying when you jump off a height. And the height of the temple is substantial here. It's a death leap.

You're not just going to get a broken leg. You will be dead. So why does he think this is going to succeed in the first place? And of all of the scriptures that he could have Jesus rely on and put to the test, why this one? Well, it's fascinating, and some of this is sort of speculation, and it's a conclusion you can reasonably draw.

But he takes him into the holy city, set him on the pinnacle of the temple. He's been in the wilderness and there are cliffs and gorges and plenty of places that you could jump off of and apply this same rationale. Well, you know, I'm going to be protected so that I don't die, but I'm not going to die.

I'm not going to die from being crushed on the stones. But the devil takes him out of the wilderness and sits him on the pinnacle of the temple. Now you will notice the devil took him into the holy city.

It doesn't say metaphorically or in vision. I mean, this is only a test if you're actually there. The Holy Spirit took Jesus to the wilderness.

Satan takes him to town. I'm just saying, this is all you town dwellers. Holy Spirit will take you to the wilderness.

Satan brings you to the city. Just saying. But this is a real transportation.

We know the Holy Spirit moves Philip and takes Ezekiel by the hair of the head. And you know, there's been other times when people were transported. Sometimes you get the idea that it might be in vision.

Other times it's real. This one? Real. Physical, bodily transportation by Satan from the wilderness to Jerusalem.

Not just to Jerusalem. Can you imagine Satan trying to get through the courtyards and uh, excuse me, excuse me, pardon me. Pardon me if I need to take you to the stairway.

Priest, can you move out of the way? You know, I'm Satan. I'm going to get, I got to get to the top. They arrive instantly, it seems, on top of the temple with no no walking involved.

Satan is a powerful adversary and he's got power to move people and things in this world. If he can move the humanity of the Lord Jesus a couple of miles and up 40 odd feet, whatever the height of that pinnacle is. I should have looked it up.

I used to know it's high. You don't think he can slap a teacup into a wall or do some of these other poltergeist type of things that people read about when there's demonic presence. There is a real physical manifestation of dark forces in this world.

Don't kid yourself. It's real. Satan has demonstrated it with and we'll see it in upcoming demonic episodes.

People and things can get moved by dark forces. Belonging to Satan and here the humanity of the Lord Jesus is moved by Satan himself. God the Father allowed it.

Application? What do you think? Are there times when God will not only allow us to suffer

a loss of provision temporarily for the purpose of testing? But we can actually be manipulated by dark forces if and when God knows that we are equipped and able to meet, survive, and be victorious in that situation. Now when Jesus suddenly looks around and finds himself on the pinnacle of the temple, what did he not do? Did he have the power with the Holy Spirit to snap himself back to the wilderness? He did, but did he do it? No. So he didn't.

Well, greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Back to the wilderness he goes. You have to think about these things.

Why is it the way it is? It could have been so different. Devil takes him to the pinnacle of the temple. Cast yourself off.

Sorry, I'm back in the wilderness. No pinnacle. Get the hints.

It's not my time. I'm not ready to be in the city yet. Greater is he that is in me than you.

He doesn't do that. B, he does not panic. He did not run to the center of the roof and say, whoa, that was a near thing.

I nearly fell off or I'm scared of heights or why have you brought me here? Let's have a dialogue. Let's have a verbal contest of some nature. The devil took him there and Jesus permits it even though he has the power and a rationale to end this test before it begins.

He just stands there and he listens to the challenge. He could have preempted any of these tests. This one, especially.

The devil is violating my person, putting me up. Holy Spirit took me to the wilderness. Devil takes me to the temple.

Now there's another lesson if you want to think about it. Holy Spirit takes you to the wilderness to learn. Devil takes you to the temple to fail.

And the temple was a spectacular place of failure. Jesus himself is going to do some cleansing at that temple in the not too distant future. But he takes him, sits him on the pinnacle of the temple.

Notice the devil is the actor and the Lord Jesus is passive. The devil took him and the devil set him. I cannot emphasize to you the importance of these facts.

God the Father allowed it. The Lord Jesus allowed it. God the Holy Spirit did not intervene or interfere.

Angels did not come and grabbed the Lord Jesus away from the temple. And by the way, if God were going to use angels to intervene, when do you think it would have happened? Before he got taken from the wilderness and put on the temple. Jesus figures

out, my Father is allowing this, otherwise I wouldn't be here.

Right? The time for angelic intervention would have been taking him out of the Holy Spirit's destination of the wilderness. If God has allowed him to stand on the temple, then deliverance is not coming by Holy Spirit or angelic intervention. Do you see it? Timing.

God has allowed his physical body to be moved. So the answer to this test is not going to be physical resistance. Now with that in mind, what verse does Satan quote? He shall give his angels charge over you, in their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Even in his vociferous, overwhelming hunger, Jesus is able to think this through. Is it true that God's angels can potentially deliver the Lord Jesus? I've mentioned many times, and it's based on a comment the Lord Jesus made, do you not know he could have called 10,000 angels to destroy the world and set him free? Is the chorus to that song, he died alone? But Jesus has angels at his command. God the Father certainly has angels at his command, but he's at the pinnacle of the temple for a reason.

Now I said there's two parts of this. One is, why does Satan think that it would succeed? Well, think about it. Jesus is sent with the gospel, prepare, the kingdom is at hand.

John is the forerunner with the same message. There's one coming after me, mightier than I, and Jesus is going to preach the advent, the nearness of the kingdom. Change your mind, God's kingdom is imminent.

It's here, it's potentially available to enter and to set up and function. Where is a better place to draw attention to the messenger and get a hearing for the message than at the temple? Could have been a feast time, we don't know the exact timing of this, but there are no doubt hordes of people, one of the most crowded places in Jerusalem has ever been the temple. So instead of a cliff in the wilderness, he takes him to the temple.

This gives it an air of holiness. Look at the spot. What part of the temple might they be standing on? How about the Holy of Holies? Pinnacle of the temple, he's in the precincts of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

That's the building, is the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, right? He's standing on top of that. It could be a sign to the people. He leaps off and is caught by angels and delivered gently to the ground.

Everybody says, surely this man is the son of God. What does he have to say? What should we do? What a great Hollywood introduction to the ministry. Hey, not a bad idea.

PR. Media coverage. This thing will be tweeted all over Judea and Samaria and the outermost parts of the world.

Couldn't ask for a better audience, couldn't ask for a more spectacular, supernatural introduction. Hey, I really am the son of God. Advertise it.

Assuming you are the son of God, advertise it. Assuming you are the son of God, demonstrate it. And demonstrate it by supernatural intervention.

Does Jesus ever deliver himself from anything in his humanity? Did he deliver himself from the arrest? Did he deliver himself from the trial? From the cruelty and the beatings? Being blindfolded, who smote you? All of the insults and egregious disrespect, to put it mildly, that was done to him. Did he ever deliver himself from anything? Up to and including the cross. Up to and including death.

Did Jesus deliver himself from death? What power raised the Lord Jesus from the dead? God, the Holy Spirit. Look it up. It's in Romans.

Declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, raised by the Spirit. God, the Holy Spirit enabled him for everything. So, is there ever a time when he is delivered out of temptation? Is anybody in the Bible ever delivered out of temptation by an angel? Angels do a lot of things.

They deliver messages. They can strike people blind. But here, the Psalm, if you go back and remembering that these are always footnotes for the entire message, flip back to Psalm 91 right quick.

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. How does the Psalm begin? Or let me put it this way. How secret is the pinnacle of the Temple? It's a landmark in Jerusalem.

How many shadows are there when you're standing on the roof? Does Jesus know context? Yes, he does. Did Satan snip out the context? Have you ever had your words taken out of context? I have. Online, you know, you make a point and somebody snips it and makes a straw man out of one little part of what you said.

Then they set fire to the straw man and they say, see, haha, you were wrong. And I say, well, what was my context? Put the rest of what I said back in there and your thing falls apart. He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in him I will trust. He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with his feathers and under his wings you shall take refuge.

Notice that all of the context in Psalm 91 is refuge inside a thing, sheltered under, in the shadow of, protected inside a thing. Not going to the outside of the highest structure in Jerusalem and jumping off. You shall not be afraid of terror by night, nor the arrow that

flies by day, nor of pestilence that walks in darkness, nor destruction that lays waste at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look and see the reward of the wicked. What do you think Jesus sees when he looks down on the swarming masses in Jerusalem, knowing what's going to happen over the next few years? Because you have made the Lord my refuge, the Most High, your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.

Because God is your refuge, because you are dwelling in his shadow and under his wing, and he is your dwelling place. Now what is the dwelling place Jesus has spent the last 40 days in? The wilderness, right? The devil takes him and puts him somewhere else. He didn't choose this dwelling place.

Jesus' dwelling place is not on top of the temple. If there were any place he were going to dwell in that vicinity, where would it be? The mercy seat? Not on top, inside where no one sees, where it's shrouded in darkness. You know the Holy of Holies was pitch dark, unless the glory of God shone within.

But the candlestick is in the holy place. There's no source of light in the Holy of Holies other than the presence of God itself. It's dark in there.

No evil shall befall you, nor any plague come near your dwelling. Near your dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.

In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent. You shall trample underfoot.

Who's he talking to? What's his foot supposed to land on here, going all the way back to Genesis chapter 3? The seed of the woman. So, should Jesus be thinking about if his foot's going to land safely down at the base of the temple, or is he looking at the serpent? He says, the only thing the angels are going to do is bear me up just high enough to smash you under my sandal. Right? But he's thinking.

He knows the context. Look at the context. What did Satan snip off? It's just fantastic.

The serpent you shall trample underfoot. Why didn't he quote that part? Bow down and worship me. Well, it's pretty hard to trample him underfoot if you're bowed down in a prostrate position, right? Know your scriptures in their context.

I say again, know your scriptures in their context. Context is everything. Well, three avenues of testing are recorded here.

There were innumerable tests in the wilderness across these 40 days, and Jesus did not speak of them all. He spoke of these three, and he spoke of them more than once. How do I know that? They're in a different order in Luke than they are in Matthew.

In Luke, this one we just looked at is the last test. The first one is always not live by bread alone. Every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Stones are not going to turn to bread. But in Luke, the second test is the nations of the world and the kingdoms in all their glory from a mountaintop. And then the temple is the final one.

And you can see sort of a progression from the wilderness to the mountain to the temple. Here, you have the kingdoms of the world and their glory. Well, you have first of all a test that is designed to cause failure by personal need.

Personal need, hunger here, is put for a personal need. Something is wrong for me. Something is lacking for me.

And finally, God's promise, God's provision, or God's plan. So, personal need was the hunger stones to bread. The second one is interpreting the word of God.

Out of the three tests, this is the one where Satan quotes Scripture and encourages Jesus to draw a faulty conclusion based on faulty use of Scripture. And it's abundantly clear if you just keep reading. Is Jesus going to fall for this when he thinks about the next verse? No way! All of this goes back to the garden, goes back to the seed of the woman.

Jesus' head will be bruised, but the serpent is going to be crushed under his heel. He will crush your head, you will bruise his heel. Well, you know how you bruise your heel? By stomping really, really hard on something.

So, next time we're going to see the third test in Matthew or the second test in Luke, which is the nations of the world offered. And it's a legitimate offer. They are Satan's to give.

And if you were talking to Dr. Criswell, he would say, this is the crown without the cross. Actually, crowns plural. Crown without cross.

Reward without sacrifice. Result without God's means and God's way. So we'll see that next time.

We didn't get to the gospel of John because we've got to finish the third temptation to get there, but keep your marker there because next time when we finish the third temptation, we're going to see a fascinating dimension that John casts on these temptations by not mentioning them. It is the silence that speaks from the gospel of John. So we'll see that next time.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the wonderful and meaningful example of the Lord Jesus in these earliest depictions of the days of His flesh in being led by Your Spirit, in being sustained by Your Spirit and by Your Word and setting for us a wonderful example, an example which He Himself communicated to His own disciples who then communicated to us. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will minister these truths to our hearts, help us to see their pertinence, what they mean in terms of our own application, the challenges that we face and the means by which we can live our lives to reflect Your glory, to be pleasing in Your sight, to prepare ourselves for service and function both in this life and in the next.

We thank You for our fellowship. We thank You for the encouragement we have of believers of like mind whether near or far, traveling the road together, endeavoring to enter through the straight gate that leads to life. And we pray for each one that our fellowship will be an encouragement, our study of the Word will be an encouragement, and that all of us together can be lights shining in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation to reflect the ongoing testimony of the Lord Jesus to a dark and needy world.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.