

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Sunday Sermon

Date: September 6, 2020

Text: Matthew 4:1-11

Scripture Reading: Matthew 4:1-11

Subject: Jesus' temptation in the wilderness

In the preceding message from Matthew 3, verses 13-17, we studied the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. We also studied a bit of Jesus' childhood from the Luke, chapter 2. The chapter ended as Jesus, being baptized went up straightway out of the water. The heavens were opened unto him and the Spirit of God descending like a dove, lighted upon him and remained on him. This proved to John the Baptist that this person was the Christ, the son of the Living God – the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. As we come to Chapter 4, verses 1-11, we will study Jesus' temptation in the wilderness by the devil.

Both Mark and Luke also recorded the temptation. Let us read those accounts from Mark 1:12-13 and from Luke 4:1-13.

Mark 1:12-13 (KJV) *And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. 13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.*

Luke 4:1-13 (KJV) *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. 3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. 4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. 5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the*

world in a moment of time. **6** And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. **7** If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. **8** And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. **9** And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: **10** For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: **11** And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. **12** And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. **13** And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Matthew 4:1 (KJV) Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Mark 1:12 (KJV) And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

Luke 4:1 (KJV) And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

Then, that is, after Jesus received the Holy Spirit who was to remain on him for his public work. The Holy Spirit would empower the work of Jesus as he went about performing miracles, healing the sick, cleansing lepers, casting out demons, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

Was Jesus led up of the Spirit – You undoubtedly noticed that Mark's account of this says "immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness." By "the Spirit" means the same spirit of God, which had descended and lighted on him in a bodily shape, with the gifts and graces of which he was anointed. His anointing of the

Holy Spirit was extraordinary because he received the Holy Spirit without measure from his Father. In other words, Jesus possessed the fulness of the Holy Spirit.

John 3:34 (KJV) *For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.*

Into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. – The text says Jesus was “lead up” into the wilderness. John was baptizing in the River Jordan which was on a much lower plane than the wilderness into which Jesus was led to be tempted of the devil. Thus the text shows us by the phrase “led up.” He went up higher into the more desolate wilderness for his temptation.

Matthew 4:2 (KJV) *And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.*

This means, of course, that the temptation took place at least forty days and nights after the Lord’s baptism and the Holy Ghost coming on him. Because he had fasted for so long a time, he was an hungred (he was hungry). Our Lord was man, very man. He was human and had human needs. One of those needs was food.

Matthew 4:3 (KJV) *And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.*

And when the tempter came to him, -- This tempter is the devil. He is that old serpent, Satan, the enemy. It is very interesting to me that the LORD was tempted of the devil immediately after his baptism and the Holy Ghost having come on him. Notice the devil’s words.

If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. – Of course Jesus was and is the Son of God. This is

a suggestion that he is not. The devil hit him first with that in which he would have been humanly speaking vulnerable – Jesus was hungry.

Matthew 4:4 (KJV) *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

What a blessing to see how the LORD answered the tempter! But he answered and said, ***It is written***, -- Jesus answered the temptation of Satan by scripture! The scripture met the temptation head on. ***Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*** Notice this. Every word! Brother Ken Carter came to me one day many, many years ago (in the 1980's) and asked me, "Brother King, do we have every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." I think he believed we have every word, but wanted to see and hear my response. "Of course, we have every word," I replied to him. Almost instantly, I began think, "Do we have every word? How can we know for sure?"

I began a search about things, which, up to that point in time, I had never considered in a real searching way. Inspiration of the Bible! Verbal inspiration – the very words? Textual criticism! Higher criticism! These two terms I had only heard briefly. My search made me buy a host of books written by a variety of men concerning the preservation of the Holy Scriptures.

So our Lord answered the insinuation by Satan with scripture! What an example for us when we are tempted of the devil – and He will surely tempt us. Our Lord was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Think of this a bit. There are three ways the tempter temps us and he tempted the LORD using those three things.

1 John 2:15-17 (KJV) *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, **the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Three things: (1) the lust of the flesh; (2) the lust of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life.

Unlike you and I, our Lord Jesus Christ was without sin and did no sin. He could not be tempted with evil. You and I have evil in us and the temptation brings that evil to the front. The devil cannot "make us do it," but stirs up that which is already in us. Consider:

James 1:13-16 (KJV) *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. 16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.*

Our Lord's words from scripture stopped the devil immediately. But he continued -

Matthew 4:5-6 (KJV) *Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple -- To the pinnacle of the temple in the holy city, Jerusalem – that is, the top of the temple which was a very high place.

And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down -- Again, the devil insinuates that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God. He said to Jesus, “**If thou be the son of God...**” which is the same thing he said in the temptation about the bread. It is no wonder that the enemies of the cross hit you and I with this same scheming question. “Is Jesus really the Son of God?” But, we know and are assured that he is indeed the only begotten Son of the Living God, else, he could not be our savior. Then the devil tries another method of temptation by misquoting scripture. O, beloved, the devil has many tricks with this kind of thing. You and I both know that, without exception, the modern versions of the Bible misquote scripture, leave out words and phrases, and insert notes which cast doubt on the word of God. We have a solid version of the Bible, why would we want to read something that casts doubt on the word of God? Let’s stay with authorized version – the King James Version of the Bible. Watch this:

The devil said, “***for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.***” – but alas, alas, he left out part of the word of God. Seems like such a little thing, right? But a phrase which is most important to the meaning of this passage. The devil misquoted Psalms 91:11-12. Let’s read it:

Psalm 91:11-12 (KJV) *For he shall give his angels charge over thee, **to keep thee in all thy ways.** 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

Did you see it? The devil left out "to keep thee in all thy ways."
The way of the LORD and his people is the way of righteousness.

(John Gill's commentary): "The passage cited is [Ps 91:11](#) which expresses God's tender care and concern for his people, in charging the angels with the guardianship and preservation of them, in all their ways, that they might be secured from sin and danger. It does not appear that Satan was wrong in the application of this passage to Christ; for since it respects all the righteous in general, why not Christ as man? the head, as well as the members? And certain it is, that angels had the charge of him, did watch over him, and were a guard about him; the angels of God ascended, and descended on him; they were employed in preserving him from Herod's malice in his infancy; they ministered to him here in the wilderness, and attended him in his agony in the garden: but what Satan failed in, and that wilfully, and wickedly, was, in omitting that part of it,

to keep thee in all thy ways; which he saw was contrary to his purpose, and would have spoiled his design at once; and also in urging this passage, which only regards godly persons, in the way of their duty, to countenance actions which are out of the way of a man's calling, or which he is not called unto; and which are contrary to religion, and a tempting God. Satan before tempted Christ to distrust the providence of God, and now he tempts him to presume upon it: in like manner he deals with men, when he argues from the doctrines of predestination and providence to the disuse of means."

In other words, the promise of this passage is to keep God's people in the path of obedience.

Matthew 4:7 (KJV) *Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

Praise God for Jesus' answer again by scripture! "It is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:16.

Deuteronomy 6:16 (KJV) *Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.*

By using this passage, Jesus emphatically asserted that He was the LORD thy God, which He is. As such, he came into the world to always do the will of the Father. The devil with his three temptations tried to keep Him back from doing the will of God. He wanted Christ to act independently from His Father. If He had acted thus for Himself He would have proven His unfitness to suffer and to die. If He had been disobedient in the smallest matter, He could not have been obedient unto death. The two first temptations were a challenge to prove Himself the Son of God.

Matthew 4:8-9 (KJV) *Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.*

From the pinnacle of the temple after Jesus stopped his insinuation by using God's word, ***Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;*** -- We are not told to what mountain the devil took our Lord, but it is said to be an exceeding high mountain. From that mountain, the devil shewed the Lord all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. We all understand that there are many magnificent kingdoms on earth and there is in them much to lust after for their splendor and beauty. The devil undoubtedly set forth, in proper and lively colors, the

glories and the splendid appearances of princes; their robes and crowns, their retinue, equipage, and lifeguards; the pomp of thrones, and courts, and stately palaces, the sumptuous buildings in cities, the gardens and fields about the country-seats, with the various instances of their wealth, pleasure, and gaiety; so as might be most likely to strike the fancy, and excite the admiration and affection. But, we know – as our Lord did that all these things are temporary and will soon pass away. Everything on the earth tainted by the sin of Adam and his descendants is in a state of entropy – that is, it is crumbling and will soon decay.

And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. -- With which words the devil sets up himself to be the God of this world, and the sovereign disposer of all that is in it. He pretends God gave it to him, who had left it to his arbitrary disposal. This is an out and out lie! What would we expect from the father is liars? It is true that he is called in scripture the god of this world and the prince of the power of the air. It was according to this malignant spirit that all of us had our conversation before our God quickened together with the Lord Jesus Christ. But Satan's offer is a blatant one presuming that he could give to Christ the power and government of the world, and put him in possession of all its glory.

Never was such monstrous arrogance expressed as this. The devil - this poor, proud, wretched creature, has not the power or prerogative to dispose of a single thing in the whole universe. Satan could not touch Job's person nor any of his possessions without God's permission. The devil and his demons could not enter into an herd of swine without Christ's permission. Yet, this arch enemy of God and us had the gall to make an offer of the whole world, as if he had absolute power over it. What pride and presumption! Yet, you and I know that PRIDE is the condemnation of the devil. He is

pompous, proud, and presumptuous – and was so toward our LORD.

Matthew 4:10 (KJV) *Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: -- Luke says, "Get thee behind me, Satan." (Luke 4:8). Here is a higher attempt, a more decided and deadly thrust at the godliness of the Saviour. It was a proposition that the Son of God should *worship* the devil, instead of honoring and adoring Him who made heaven and earth. It was a proposal that Jesus should bow down before the prince of wickedness and give him homage.

For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. – Blessed words written! This is a quote from Deuteronomy 6:13.

Deuteronomy 6:13 (KJV) *Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.*

To fear the Lord, and to worship him, is the same thing. Worship includes both an internal and external reverence of God. God only is worthy of our worship – certainly not Satan. It is a very sad day in our land when it seems there are synagogues and images to Satan in our Land. Horrible it is!

Matthew 4:11 (KJV) *Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*

(CF) Luke 4:13 (KJV) *And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.*

The devil had tempted him with all sorts of temptations. He had tried Jesus every way but did not gain his purpose. He had gone through his whole scheme and course of temptations he had

devised without success.

Finally, having orders from Christ to depart, which he was obliged to obey, leaves him for a season, till another opportunity of tempting him in some other way should come to him. Or till the time came, when he should be so far able to get the advantage of him, as to bruise his heel, or bring him to death. When the devil was gone, better company came in his place.

behold, angels came and ministered to him. -- When they were come, they "ministered to him". Doubtless, they brought him food to satisfy his hunger, as they formerly did to Elijah while he was under the Juniper tree, [1Ki 19:5](#). Jesus had undergone a very great trial in this time in which he fasted and was tempted by Satan. In the very same way the angels are now ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, both in a temporal and in a spiritual sense, [Heb 1:14](#) so they were to Christ.

This section is a wonderful narrative of our Savior's being without sin – and the fact that he could not be tempted with sin.

Hebrews 4:15 (KJV) *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

1 John 3:5 (KJV) *And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*

May I ask you, dear brothers and sisters: Are you suffering great temptations from Satan? Is he appealing to your lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life? If you do not repel him by being steadfast in the faith, you may falter. We all know that he goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (KJV) *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*

Our precious Lord has provided us with a marvelous example of resisting the temptation of Satan. Immerse yourselves with scripture – and the Holy Ghost will give it to you at the time you need it in order to answer the tempter. Read the Bible over and over and over! It is food for your soul.

Job 23:11-12 (KJV) *My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. 12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.*