



10/28/25

The account of Jesus' temptation is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Mark briefly mentions it. Matthew and Luke give the details, but not in the same order. This is interesting to me... some people would call this a contradiction... so I looked it up. The Jewish way of thinking is so different than mine or western civilization thinking. Jewish culture is less concerned about the order of things and more concerned about context of the message.

Throughout the Gospel of Matthew, I see tons of prophecy fulfilled in Jesus. Luke was a doctor and tried to keep things in order. In this particular story, it is believed that Matthew's account is told in the order that it happened, while Luke ended his account with Jesus on the top of the temple in Jerusalem... because his goal was to point everything to Jerusalem.

Matthew says something to point to the order of things in his account that Luke doesn't say in his. At the end of the temptation of Matthew's account, Jesus said, "Be gone, Satan!" And then Satan left. I think Luke didn't include that statement because he was putting the three temptations in a different order... a very common thing for Jewish culture... and not at all considered contradictory. Truly, every so called contradiction people raise about the scriptures has a legitimate explanation that refutes the argument. The question is... will we first, look at the principle of what God is teaching us rather than looking for reasons to doubt, and second, will we trust that the Lord is exactly who He says He is? If you and I genuinely trust Him, it will change how we treat Him and how we live.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Matthew 4:1-11 ~

Vs. 1 starts with the word "then." So... this is coming after some event. What? This is right after Jesus was baptized and the Holy Spirit descended on Him from heaven and came to rest on Him. This is really important for me to know... because Philippians 2 tells me that Jesus "emptied Himself." John 17 tells me that He emptied Himself of His glory and majesty. Jesus laid down His glory and majesty and lived among us to be an example to us. How did He live? He lived with the Holy Spirit resting on Him. I need to do the same.

Okay... so what happened after Jesus was baptized? The Spirit LED Him into the wilderness where He was put to the test. Jesus went 40 days and 40 nights without food. During that whole time, the devil was there tempting Him. I don't know what He was saying. Whatever it was, it was a lie.

Maybe the devil was using the same strategy he used with Eve. Maybe he kept whispering, "Did the Holy Spirit REALLY lead You here to starve you?" "Surely, God would not tell You to go without food!" "He didn't send You here to save the world. He sent You to die! He doesn't care about You!"

Why would the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into the wilderness when He KNEW Jesus would be harassed by the devil??? Every part of Jesus' life on earth was going to be an example to me. This was preparation for a three year ministry riddled with accusation and suffering. It would seemingly culminate in His death... but truly culminate with His resurrection. Throughout His ministry, Jesus continued to thwart every attempt of Satan to bring Him down... and when Satan thought he had finally conquered Jesus three years after this temptation, he quickly learned that Jesus had conquered him... As the prophecy was made thousands of years earlier right after Adam and Eve fell, the serpent bruised His heel, but Jesus CRUSHED his head.

Because I belong to Jesus through His death and resurrection, my life here on earth is filled with the devil dangling temptation in front of me... trying to distract me, seeking to devour me. As I learn from Jesus' example, I will, like Jesus, be able to "stand strong in the Lord and in the power of HIS might" (Ephesians 6:10).

So... after fasting 40 days and 40 nights, Jesus was hungry. Thankfully, no scripture tells me to fast for 40 days and nights. 🙄 But I do need to know that I WILL be tempted even on a full stomach, and I need to "Submit to the Lord. Resist the devil, and he will flee" (James 4:7).

The tempter, the devil, came to Jesus and started with accusation... "IF You are the Son of God." The devil knew EXACTLY who Jesus was (and is). He likes to use that strategy with God's kids, too. "IF you are God's child." Sadly, it's easy to fall into that trap and question my identity in Christ. O Lord, help me to submit to You AND YOUR WORD rather than the lies I'm told.

"IF You are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread." I love Jesus' confidence. He didn't feel that He needed to prove Himself. His only goal was to please His Father and He knew He was secure in His Father's love.

It really bugs me that the world, through Lionel Richie, who wrote "We are the World" believes that "as God has shown us by turning stone to bread..." NOPE. He COULD have turned stone to bread but absolutely didn't!!! The world and the devil can deny the truth, but they cannot change the truth.

Jesus quoted scripture... that's the example He gave me. Stand on the word of God!!! Jesus

could have done anything else, but He chose to give me an example to follow. Stand on His word! He quoted Deuteronomy 8:3, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." Jesus pointed to the spiritual need for nourishment over the physical. Truly, if I am not being spiritually nourished, no amount of physical nourishment will be enough. The spiritual is the eternal. The physical is just temporary.

Well... that one didn't work. The devil tried again. He took Jesus to the top of the temple and said, "IF You are the Son of God, throw yourself down..." And then he did what he loves to do... he twisted scripture out of context to try to get Jesus to make God the Father prove His love for Jesus. The devil quoted from Psalm 91, taking it completely out of context.

The devil was not genuine. He KNOWS the word very well, but he doesn't use it to help anyone. This is why it's so important that I know God's word... and read it IN CONTEXT! The devil was doing the same thing with Jesus that he did with Eve. He was questioning God's goodness and His motives. "Surely God doesn't love you enough to take care of you. Look at your circumstances. If He really loved you, He would command His angels to bear you up so that your life would be comfortable."

Jesus was not fooled. How often am I? O Lord, please forgive me!!!

Jesus said, "Again IT IS WRITTEN, 'You shall not put the LORD your GOD to the test.'" He quoted from Deuteronomy 6:16 and Isaiah 7:12. God calls me to KNOW His word because it is my only offensive weapon (along with prayer) against "the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12). If JESUS fought against the devil's lies with His word, let me never use any other strategy. Let me never minimize how cunning and crafty the devil is. But praise God... My God is GREATER! "Little children, you are from God and have overcome them (the antichrists), for He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Finally, the devil did something disgusting. He took Jesus "to a very high mountain and showed Him ALL the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.'" DISGUSTING! And yet, isn't that what I get caught up in when I want glory for myself?

The devil was offering Jesus a way out of the suffering He came to endure... that had been prophesied for thousands of years. He not only offered Him a way out of suffering, but also a quick way to glory. If Jesus had fallen for that temptation, redemption and salvation for mankind would be hopeless. Jesus HAD to suffer for me.

How often do I equate my suffering with Jesus' suffering or even declare that mine is worse!!! I have no clue how much Jesus suffered... and He was absolutely INNOCENT. O Lord, before I ever needed healing for my suffering, I needed redemption for the debt I owed because of my sin. If You healed me from my suffering on this earth, but didn't save me from my sin, I would spend this temporary time on earth with a healthy body, but an eternity apart from You. If

You chose not to heal me on this earth, but You saved me from my sin (which, praise God, You did), my eternity will now be forever with You in perfect health. I get both!

How did Jesus respond to the devil with this last temptation? He said, "BE GONE, Satan! For IT IS WRITTEN, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve!'"

And then the devil left Jesus. Who was REALLY in charge? Jesus is! "The LORD has established HIS throne in the heavens, and HIS kingdom rules over all" (Psalm 103:19).

JESUS IS LORD!

O Lord. I pray that I will not only speak Your word to my heart and stand on Your truth when I am being tempted... but I also pray that I will take to heart the scripture Jesus quoted. Please help ME to live and be nourished by Your word and understand that I NEED spiritual nourishment far more than physical... though I will see in a minute that You provide for my physical needs as well. Help me NOT to put You to the test... but instead, help me to see that any testing You allow me to go through is always for my good and it grows my faith. And finally, please help me to WORSHIP ONLY YOU and SERVE ONLY YOU! You are the one true God.

Let me not forget this... You sent angels to minister to Jesus... physically and spiritually. He had the Holy Spirit with Him and He had an army of angels ministering to Him. He was never alone. Let me remember that You do the same for me. I have the Holy Spirit who fills me and leads me. And You send Your angels to minister to me. The only thing I need to bring is the faith that You've given me. I grow in faith with each battle won... and I win each battle as I trust You and Your word. O Lord, please help me to train for the battle by knowing and wielding Your word... not just for information, but for transformation. Praise Your name!