

A Study of the book of Matthew: Chapter Four v. 1-11

- **After Jesus's baptism by John the Baptist, Jesus is led into the Wilderness where after forty days of fasting he is tempted by the devil (Matthew 4: 1-2).**
 - Who/what caused Jesus to go into the wilderness? What does this mean?
 - By Jesus being led into the Wilderness by the Spirit, it shows that his temptation was part of God's plan.
 - It is important to note, is it God that tempts Him? By no means. God allows Jesus to be tempted, much like which Old Testament man?
 - Satan comes to tempt Jesus after he has fasted for forty days and forty nights and has become hungry.
 - Why is Jesus able to go so long fasting before becoming hungry?
 - Fasting was common practice in Jewish culture and was a method for not only physical cleansing, but also a time for someone to devote time to their spiritual life as well as development of self-discipline.
- **Satan's First Temptation: turning the stones to bread (Matthew 4:3-4).**
 - Satan's first attack against Jesus specifically targets his physical needs. Do you know what happens to the human body after an extensive period of fasting?
 - This attack is double edged though. What word does the devil start his temptation with?
 - This use of the word "if" is more accurately used as a means of the word "since". Not only does Satan attack Jesus most physical need, but he almost gloats about the fact that Jesus possesses the means to fix his current affliction.
 - Jesus responds to this physical temptation with a spiritual defense (v.4).
 - This scripture that Jesus quotes is found in Deuteronomy 8:3, and is originally spoken to the people of Israel. In both instances a common theme stands; God's will is more important than food (or more specifically our physical needs).
- **Satan's Second Temptation: angels will protect your fall (Matthew 4:5-7).**
 - After failing his first tactic, the devil changes his strategy. Not only does he challenge Jesus to work for his physical body again, but he also attempts to use scripture against Him. Note; he presents the same initial challenge of "If" Jesus is the Son of God.
 - The scripture the devil uses here can be found in Psalms 91:11-12. What is dangerous about this?
 - Jesus responds with scripture as well, quoting Deuteronomy 6:16. The origin of this passage comes from the Israelite people calling on Moses to produce water in the wilderness to prove God was still with them (Numbers 20)
 - Despite being human, Jesus does not tempt God for his own selfish gain. Not only that, but He instead uses the scripture as an offensive against Satan, much like it is purposed in Ephesians 6:17.

- **Satan’s Final Temptation: all this is yours if you worship me (Matthew 4:8-11).**
 - Satan brings Jesus to a mountain with a view of all the kingdoms of the world. After failing to get Jesus to crumble at his physical needs, what part of Jesus does he attack?
 - The concept of Kingdoms is prevalent throughout scripture. As believers we are promised a part of what Kingdom?
 - Why would being offered all the kingdoms of the world be a tempting idea for Jesus?
 - Satan is not offering this prize freely though. What condition does he attempt to make Jesus follow through with?
 - What is one of the first things that happens to Jesus following his birth? (Matthew 2:11)
 - Satan attempts to offer all of what he “controls” in exchange for Jesus worshipping him.
 - Jesus does not give in to this final temptation, but instead rebukes him and sends him away, once again using scripture as part of his defense (Deuteronomy 6:13).
 - Jesus withstands Satan’s temptation because he doesn’t care about the kingdoms of the world, but instead has his focus on the everlasting kingdom that God promises us.

- **What can we learn?**
 - Just as Satan waited until Jesus was at his “weakest” to tempt him, so he also waits to attack us.
 - When are we weak? When we move away from God and follow our own desires (James 1:13-14, James 5:19-20).
 - Just as Satan attempted to use scripture against Jesus, we can also allow ourselves to be led astray by listening to and misusing the word of God.
 - God is the one who determines the meaning of his word, and we cannot allow ourselves to be led astray by false teaching (2 Timothy 4:3-4).
 - We can protect ourselves from temptation by keeping our focus on our spiritual Kingdom and things that are of God, and not things of the Earth.
 - God does not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can stand, but it is up to us to allow it to still stand as temptation and not give in to it and commit sin (1 Corinthians 10:12-13).
 - If Jesus was able to withstand against the temptations of the devil being fully human, then we also have the opportunity and choice to choose God over the temptations that befall us as well.