

## It Is Written; Matthew 4:3-4

### I. Snares

- A. From the very beginning of our time Satan has set up snares to entrap and deceive God's people
  - 1. Eve in the Garden, "you will not surely die"
  - 2. David, "he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful"
  - 3. Ananias and Sapphira, "he kept back for himself some of the proceeds"
- B. You know for a fact that we are on Satan's list of targets
- C. 1 Peter 5:8 (ESV); Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
- D. "To be tempted" — to entrap, to entice to improper behavior <sup>1</sup>
- E. We can learn a lot about combating Satan through Jesus' temptations

### II. Bread Alone

- A. Matthew 4:3-4 (ESV); <sup>3</sup> And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup> But he answered, "It is written, " 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "
- B. I think it is interesting that Matthew uses a different name for Satan — in verse 1 he uses devil, in verse 3 he uses tempter
- C. The devil is trying to entice Jesus to improper behavior — which is exactly what he does to us
- D. "If you are the Son of God," does not imply any doubt on the devil's part. Rather, what is in doubt is what type of Son Jesus will be. If stones can become children of Abraham (Matthew 3:9) or provide water for the Israelites (Exodus 17:1-7), then they can surely satisfy Jesus' hunger. <sup>2</sup>
- E. On the outside this test about hunger and bread would seem to be pretty straight forward
  - 1. Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy
  - 2. Deuteronomy 8:2-3 (ESV); <sup>2</sup> And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. <sup>3</sup> And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.
  - 3. The Israelites had to gather the manna everyday, and only enough to last the day (two days on the day of preparation before the Sabbath)
  - 4. I find this temptation very interesting considering that God provided Manna — considering that Jesus is the Spiritual Rock from which the Israelites drank (1 Corinthians 10:3-4)
  - 5. John 6:48-51 (ESV); <sup>48</sup> I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup> Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. <sup>50</sup> This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. <sup>51</sup> I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."
- F. So what is the lesson for us here?

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<sup>1</sup> William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 793.

<sup>2</sup> Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 84.

1. Do not let the desires of the flesh overcome your desire for God — do not give physical needs priority over spiritual needs
  2. It is not just hunger I am talking about — there are many desires of the flesh (physical needs)
  3. None of them are worth exchanging our soul for
  4. Our “tents” are temporary — we are waiting for our resurrection body
- G. We live by “every word that comes from the mouth of God”
- III. To The Test
- A. Matthew 4:5–7 (ESV); <sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple <sup>6</sup> and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ” <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”
  - B. This is a deliberate misapplication of God’s word — the idea of “striking” your foot against a stone is stumbling, not a deliberate jumping off of the highest point of the temple
  - C. The devil was appealing to Jesus’ pride (promoting rebellion) — “Surely God will not let you get hurt since you are the Christ — Jump and you will see”
    1. Jesus (again) quotes from Deuteronomy
    2. Deuteronomy 6:10–17 (ESV); <sup>10</sup> “And when the Lord your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you —with great and good cities that you did not build, <sup>11</sup> and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full, <sup>12</sup> then take care lest you forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. <sup>13</sup> It is the Lord your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear. <sup>14</sup> You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you— <sup>15</sup> for the Lord your God in your midst is a jealous God—lest the anger of the Lord your God be kindled against you, and he destroy you from off the face of the earth. <sup>16</sup> “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah. <sup>17</sup> You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies and his statutes, which he has commanded you.
    3. God provided for all their needs, yet they still “tested” God
    4. “To subject to test or proof” <sup>3</sup>
    5. God had already proven Himself to the Israelites (and to us) over and over again
    6. But they were rebellious at heart, stiff-necked
    7. Deuteronomy 9:7 (ESV); Remember and do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord.
  - D. Our lesson is rebellion (pride)
    1. To think so much of ourselves and our abilities as to discount God
    2. “We must not test God’s faithfulness to his word by manufacturing situations in which we try to force him to act in certain ways. We dare not deliberately put our lives in danger as some kind of fleece.” <sup>4</sup> (Fleece is a reference to Gideon’s testing God”
  - E. God has already shown us His faithfulness — and we can read about it whenever we are feeling tested

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<sup>3</sup> William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 307.

<sup>4</sup> Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 85.

#### IV. Worship God Only

- A. Matthew 4:8–10 (ESV); <sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. <sup>9</sup> And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’ ”
  - B. There is a key issue with the devil’s offer
    - 1. Jesus would receive these kingdoms upon His resurrection and ascension
    - 2. If Jesus was going to receive them, then they did not belong to the devil in the first place (God gave the devil permission to test Job)
    - 3. “The devil offered Jesus a crossless path of messiahship, and Luke assumed that the devil had in fact the authority to offer the world’s kingdoms to Jesus.” <sup>5</sup>
    - 4. So the idea here is immediate gratification — Instead of Jesus having to wait (and endure) the arrest, trial, and crucifixion He could receive it immediately
    - 5. Veruca Salt from *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*
  - C. Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy
    - 1. Deuteronomy 6:13 (ESV); It is the Lord your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear.
    - 2. Deuteronomy 8:4 (ESV); Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years.
  - D. Jesus keeps returning to the Israelites’ wilderness wonderings because God continually provided for them
    - 1. God had provided everything for the Israelites — the devil had provided nothing!
    - 2. God provided the Israelites with things they could see — the devil only tempts us with things we can see
    - 3. The fast food lifestyle we now live in is a breeding ground for the devil
    - 4. This is a recent development in our history
    - 5. Genesis 27:9–10 (ESV); <sup>9</sup> Go to the flock and bring me two good young goats, so that I may prepare from them delicious food for your father, such as he loves. <sup>10</sup> And you shall bring it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you before he dies.”
  - E. We cannot let our eyes dictate our service to God
    - 1. We place our faith in a God we cannot see
    - 2. We know God has given us a reward that we cannot see
    - 3. Our eyes will deceive us — God will not
- #### V. It Is Written
- A. To combat the desire of the flesh we read God’s word, the Bread of Life
  - B. To combat pride we read God’s word, worshipping Him in spirit and in truth
  - C. To combat the desire of the eyes we read God’s word, trusting that this marathon called Christianity continues into everlasting life

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<sup>5</sup> Robert H. Stein, Luke, vol. 24, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 147.