

Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness facing the temptations of Satan before returning to Galilee where He had grown up. He taught in the synagogues of the various towns until He returned to the one in Nazareth, where He read from Isa. 61:1-3, a passage that speaks of the coming of the Messiah. Jesus announced Himself to be the fulfillment of this passage but this claim was rejected by the people of Nazareth.

1 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.

“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness” – This was immediately after the Holy Spirit had descended on Jesus in the form of a dove at His baptism (Luke 3:22). Not only was Jesus full of the Holy Ghost but we should take note that it was the Holy Spirit that led Him into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Mark 1:12 uses the word “driveth” (the Greek word carries the idea of forcefulness) to indicate that Jesus was compelled by the Holy Ghost to face Satan’s temptation.

“Being forty days tempted of the devil” – Why was Jesus forced to face Satanic temptation? Likely for multiple reasons. One reason may be so that Jesus could serve as an example of how to face our own temptations to sin. However, the primary reason may have been to prove that Jesus was indeed worthy to be called the Son of God by being able to resist the temptations of Satan. It may also be possible that resisting these temptations made Jesus stronger and a more complete Savior than He would have been had He not undergone them (**Heb. 5:7-9** “*Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him*”).

“And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered” – Jesus was spiritually strong, being full of the Holy Ghost, but He had the physical weakness of being in a body that needed nourishment to survive. Satan therefore attempted to use Jesus’ hunger against Him in the final round of temptations.

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.

“And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread” – Knowing the magnitude of Jesus’ physical hunger, he challenges Jesus to take matters into His own hands and use His power as the Son of God to transform stones into bread so that He can end His hunger. This was the first of three worldly temptations that Satan often uses against us: the lust of the flesh (**1 John 2:16** “*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*”).

“And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God” – Jesus quotes from Deut. 8:3, a passage where Moses is reminding Israel that it was God who fed Israel 40 years in the wilderness with manna so that they would learn to depend on God alone for their sustenance. Jesus was pointing out that scripture teaches that we should depend on God instead of ourselves for our sustenance.

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.

Satan apparently took Jesus in a vision to a high mountain and showed Him the kingdoms of the world. Which mountain Satan used is immaterial since it seems that it was the altitude from which to see all the kingdoms of the world that was the point. Jesus, as the Messiah, will one day rule the world in His millennial kingdom but Satan was offering a shortcut that would bypass the cross and shorten the time that Jesus would have to wait for His Father to give Him these kingdoms. Satan would only give Him these kingdoms if Jesus worshipped him.

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.

Satan used the “lust of the eyes” of 1 John 2:16 to tempt Jesus by showing Him the kingdoms of the world and their glory, but Jesus immediately rejects the temptation, quoting Deut. 6:13. Scripture teaches that God alone is worthy of worship.

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.

Satan again offers Jesus a shortcut to being accepted by the people of Israel with an appeal to the “pride of life” (1 John 2:16). He takes Jesus in a vision to Jerusalem and places Him atop the highest part of the roof of the temple. There was a traditional Jewish belief that the Messiah would show Himself to Israel by standing on the roof of the temple. Satan was challenging Jesus to fulfill this Messianic expectation by jumping from the pinnacle with the trust that His Father would protect Him by sending angels to catch and lower Him gently to the ground. Such a public display would convince the people that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Jesus resists Satan’s temptation and quotes from Deut. 6:16, a passage where Moses is rebuking Israel for tempting the LORD at Massah in the wilderness. Israel had complained about the lack of water and tried to force the LORD to act and provide it. The Greek word for “tempt” means “to test.” Like Israel did at Massah, Jesus would be forcing His Father to act if He jumped off the pinnacle of the temple. We do not force God to do anything because He is not our cosmic genie that does what we want. He is not our servant - we serve Him.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Satan had to leave because Jesus had defeated every temptation thrown at Him. Notice that Satan only departed from Him “for a season.” Satan would later tempt Jesus many more times before He died on the cross.

14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.
15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee” – Jesus was not spiritually weakened at all during His 40 days of temptation. In fact, He may have become even stronger, which may have been one of the reasons the Spirit compelled Him to go (v. 1).

“and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about” – Apparently Jesus was already teaching, preaching and performing miracles (v. 23). People were so impressed by what they were hearing that Jesus was quickly becoming famous.

“And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all” – Notice that Jesus was being glorified by the people of Galilee for the things He was doing and teaching. This would not be true in His home town of Nazareth, however (v. 22, 28-29).

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. 17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up” – Mary and Joseph had raised Jesus in Nazareth and many of the townspeople had watched Jesus grow up.

“and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read” – Jesus’ custom was to attend the synagogue on the Sabbath, and when He was growing up in Nazareth, He likely was in the habit of volunteering to do the reading of scripture, which was a part of the service each Sabbath.

“And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written” – Either by God’s providence they “happened” to bring Him the book of Isaiah or else He had asked for it. Once He had been given the book, He opened it to a very specific passage that pertained to the coming of the Messiah (the Christ).

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

The passage that Jesus reads is Isa. 61:1-2 and it describes the ministry of the coming Messiah. It describes how the Messiah will preach the gospel, heal those who are brokenhearted over their sin by delivering them from the captivity of their sin. It also speaks of giving sight to the blind (physical and/or spiritual blindness) and the granting of freedom to the oppressed. Preaching the “acceptable year of the Lord” refers to the time when God’s good will and acceptance will be bestowed upon the earth. These are all features of Christ’s millennial kingdom. It’s worth noting that Jesus stopped reading in the middle of Isa. 61:2, omitting the reference to God’s vengeance against sinners. He didn’t read this portion because it pertained to His second advent, which had not yet been fulfilled (Rev. 19:11-21).

20 And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

It was customary for a teacher to stand while reading the scripture and then to humbly sit down to teach. Apparently everyone in the synagogue was looking and waiting for Him to begin teaching from the scripture that He had read. He began by stating “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (v. 21). This statement was a declaration that He was the Messiah Who was fulfilling the scripture.

Verses 22-37: The people were surprised that Jesus would declare Himself to be the Messiah since they had seen Him grow up and couldn’t believe that He was the One promised by God. They became offended and tried to kill Him by tossing Him off a cliff. He miraculously escaped from their hands and went to the city of Capernaum, where He cast a devil out of a man who was in the synagogue there.

38 And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. 39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

Simon Peter lived in Capernaum and his mother-in-law was extremely sick with a high fever. Jesus obviously was already known to be able to heal people and so the family asked Jesus to heal Simon’s mother-in-law. When Jesus healed her, she immediately felt well enough to get up and begin serving Jesus and the others guests in her house (perhaps cooking for them).

40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. 41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

When word quickly got around town that Jesus was healing people, other people who needed healing began coming to Him. Notice that He healed everyone that came – no one was overlooked or denied. Many of these people were possessed by demonic spirits, which were cast out by Jesus. These devils knew that Jesus was the Christ but He didn’t allow them to speak because He didn’t need the testimony of demonic spirits for people to know Who He was. He wanted people to believe by faith.

42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. 43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. 44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

The next morning Jesus resorted to a secluded place, most likely to pray. However, the people of Capernaum searched for and found Him, asking Him to remain in Capernaum so He could continue to teach them and heal the sick. Jesus stressed that He had been sent by God to preach in other cities as well as in Capernaum, and so He had to continue traveling throughout Galilee and preaching in the various synagogues.