

SCRIPTURE

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 4

Fr Jn 1:34. **MATTHEW 4:1.** Then was Jesus **led up of the Spirit** into the wilderness (or desert) to be tempted of the devil.

Mt 4:2. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

COMMENTARY

CHAPTER 4

Mt 4:1. There are three key items in this verse. One is the words *Led up of the Spirit*. Two is *Into the wilderness*, and third is to be *tempted (or tested) of the devil*. Heb 4:15 reveals to us that Jesus was tempted (or tested) in all ways as we are, yet without sin.

The **devil** tempts us to do contrary to God's Word which is sin. Why was Satan created? It was to do exactly what he is doing.

Our life on this earth is a test. Few ministers of this last church age understand this. Thus many of their congregations easily fall away.

All true Christians are to be **led of the Spirit**. That means we will be led according to God's Word. That means all Christians should devour God's Word so they can understand the testings that lie ahead and what the will of the Lord is.

Satan fills our minds and hearts with do this, go there, buy that. He fills our minds with thoughts of mistrust, anger, hate, accusations, and all manner of sins. He fills our hearts and minds with the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, the lusts of other things, and the pleasures of this life.

With the churches teaching little on sin or repentance, or with the temptations we go through, it is no wonder most fall and go astray.

No one that is lukewarm in their walk with Christ shall inherit eternal life. Nearly all underestimate their enemy which is the devil.

Life is a test, but we believe that less than one percent of the churches teaches on this subject anymore.

To make sure you understand—when a person decides to follow Christ, or we may say when a person repents, gets baptized, and receives Christ by faith they also can expect to be led into the wilderness in all sorts of ways to be tempted of the devil.

Mt 4:2. (Fasting)

Dating: Jesus was about 30 years old when baptized. Now about 1 month and 10 days had also passed.

Regarding the subject of **fasting**-this latter

day, Laodicean church seldom fasts. Neither do most teach on this subject. Yet both the New Testament and old testament teaches on fasting.

Doing a fast, or fasting is mentioned in the New Testament at least 16 times, yet your church may never teach on this.

Jesus taught clearly that after His departure, that **those that were saved** (the children of the bridechamber) would indeed fast-Mt 9:15. Do you?

A fast means no food. Only water is to be drank.

Some fast for a half day. Some for one day. Some fast twice in the week-Lk 18:12. When fasting, do not let it be known. Do not disfigure your face-ref Mt 6:16-18. Wash your face and anoint thine head. Fast secretly so that your heavenly Father which sees in secret, shall reward thee openly.

A 7 day fast will break those uptight knots all of us have that follow Christ.

Fasting should always include immersing oneself in **God's Word, especially** a 7 day fast. For a 7 day fast it is best if a person is alone, **away from all other people**, disturbances, and responsibilities. Their purpose should be to draw closer to God. Some go on and fast for 10, 21, or in a few rare cases: 40 days.

A certain preacher suggested to his congregation to fast for just one meal. It was not received by the congregation well at all. Such is today's church that will soon learn it shall perish.

Jesus fasted 40 days and nights. God's servants are called to fast-ref Mt 9:15. There are one day fasts, and up to a 40 day fast. Only water is to be drunk. As already said, a fast of 7 days will free a person from those knots in their stomach. This inner calm lasts for a period of time afterwards. Those that wish to draw closer to God may fast for 7 days each year. The Scriptures come more alive to those that do this if their heart is right.

Again, when doing a fast such as 7 days, it is good to be by yourself, with no one to bother you. Use that time to be in the Scriptures

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

Mt 4:4. 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.**

continually, except when sleeping. A small cassette or CD player playing the bible whenever you are not reading is also helpful.

Unless you **get away** from people during this time, you may expect the deceiver will try to interrupt your fast over and over and fill your mind with thoughts from situations and other people.

It is needful for a person that does such a fast as 40 days, to have someone to help them at the end. Note the link on [fasting](#).

At the end of the 40 day fast, Jesus was hungry. He was at his weakest physically.

Mt 4:3. Satan used the fact that Jesus is the Son of God, and that he was hungry as the basis for his temptation. Food is a need a person has.

Satan is called by many names. One includes the tempter. Satan tempted Jesus. What a logical temptation it was to tempt Jesus to make himself some food. This temptation came not from the Spirit of God, but from the devil. Very few people there are in this last, lukewarm biblical generation, that can recognize the temptations of the devil when they come. Does your church teach on this? How many of the thoughts that are in your mind do you recognize are from the devil? Probably none, or very, very few, even though your thoughts are filled with wrong thinking from the adversary. The more you spend time in God's Word, the more you should be able to identify that many, many thoughts that pop up in your mind which are from Satan.

This was the **first temptation**.

Mt 4:4. When Jesus answered the devil, **he used only the Word of God**. He did not use man's words of logic or philosophy. He said "It is written". We cannot fight against Satan's deceptions in our thoughts by using man's logic. We need to use God's Word. Those that study God's Word sparingly leave themselves wide open to Satan's attacks in their minds and through situations he creates. Life is a test.

Jesus responded to the temptation of commanding the stones to be made bread with the Word of God. So what was wrong with what

Mt 4:5. Then the **devil taketh him** up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle (or the highest point) of the temple,

Satan had told him to do? It would have meant that Jesus would have been led by the word's of Satan rather than by the words of God.

Regretfully nearly everyone is led by Satan but they are so biblically illiterate that they are unaware of this. Jesus responded that man shall not live by bread alone, but **by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God**. Note how each person that follows Jesus is to live. He is to **live by the words of the entire Bible**. How can a person live by God's word, if they make excuses for not immersing themselves in his word? It comes down to two choices. Which is more important to "you"? Is it this world or is it Jesus? Which do you love the most? Which do you follow the most?

Ezek 3:10-Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, **all my words that I shall speak unto thee** receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.

It is needful for a person to have a correct understanding of God's Word. This can come, but a person must spend time in God's Word. They must also obey God's Word. Also a person has need of patience.

Also understand, Satan tries to stir up a person's emotions, as an emotional person will think less clearly than a person with a calm mind. When your emotions are elevated, put a huge lock on your mouth, lest you speak things that are wrong and you sin.

You are not to be led by your emotions, but rather you are to be led by God's still small voice-the Spirit of God which is also God's word..

Mt 4:5. Satan failed in his first attempt to successfully tempt Jesus to do something that was Satan's will, and was contrary to God's will. Now he tries again with the **second temptation**. Let it be remember that it is written that Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin-ref Heb 4:15.

Satan is allowed by God to take Jesus to Jerusalem and to set him on a pinnacle of the temple. Satan can do the same with you.

The highest part of the temple mount itself is the southeast corner.

Mt 4:6. 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 (or strike) thy foot against a stone.

Mt 4:7. Jesus said unto him, **It is written** again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God (or do not put the Lord your God to the test).

Mt 4:8. Again, the **devil taketh him up** into an exceeding (or very) high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory (or splendor) of them;

Mt 4:6. Then he challenged Jesus again using the words “If thou be the Son of God”. This was followed with the words “Cast thyself down” Then **Satan used scripture** regarding the angels to protect him. Never underestimate your enemy the devil to be able to deceive you-1 Pe 5:8. As has been said: Satan which deceiveth the whole world-Rev 12:9.

Satan knows God’s word. However, he uses it incorrectly to deceive.

Beware Satan is a master at knowing the things that people like, or that people want to do.

Then he puts into a person’s mind to do them and also gives them a good reason to do so._

Mt 4:7. Again Jesus used the Word of God to defeat Satan’s temptation.

In saying this, Jesus was saying that He is **THE LORD THY GOD**.

He was also saying to not test or tempt God.

Mt 4:8. Twice, the temptations Satan used failed against Jesus. The third temptation is the same as he will offer to his son “the antichrist” during the tribulation. That temptation is to give him the complete and total rule over all the kingdoms of the world. The kingdoms of the world have glory. What more could a man want than to be the supreme leader of the earth. First Satan shows Jesus all the kingdoms.

Consider how all sorts of **thoughts come into your head** of things your unrepentant heart desires to have or do. This is followed by thoughts how you might get them. They are not thoughts of drawing you closer to Jesus, but thoughts that can pull you away from being in God’s Word and away from God.

Man seems to continually seek after worldly things. He buys a house, but then wants a bigger and better one. He buys a new car, but then wants a better one. There is no bounds to a man’s greed and desire for the finer things of this world. God’s word says to sell. The answer to Satan’s temptations for more worldly things is to **desire none of it**, but rather desire to be more like Christ and then to inherit eternal life. What profit is there if a person gain the whole world, but lose their own soul and ultimately perish to the lake of fire.

Mt 4:9. And saith unto him, All these **things will I give thee**, if thou wilt fall down and **worship me**.

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

Mt 4:9. Then Satan offers this to Jesus. The only catch is that Jesus would fall down and worship Satan. The antichrist, during the tribulation will accept this offer.

Mankind does not understand the following. To not follow or worship Jesus, is to follow Satan. To follow the ways of the world, rather than the Bible **is to follow Satan**. How much time do you spend in God's Word so you might understand these things?

One of many examples is this. Perhaps a person craves fellowship with other people because of a lack of it in their childhood. Satan uses this desire or craving some have, to keep a person away from being in God's Word.

Never underestimate the power of the devil to understand the things that you desire deep

inside, and then to offer them to you if you will simply not follow Christ and not dwell in God's word.

The thoughts you have in your mind are Satan's playing field to deceive you. Your worldly, personal desires and dreams are Satan's invitation to tempt you. He knows how to tempt you regarding on how to get what you want. The Bible warns us:

1 Jn 2:15-17-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. 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 the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Every chance you have to be in God's word, but you do not do it, are you following Jesus?

Mt 4:10. Jesus responded with the Word of God. He told the devil to get hence or depart. Then he told the devil **THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE**.

Have you not read Mal 3:18-Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not?

Few understand the significance of what Jesus

Mt 4:11. Then the **devil leaveth him**, and, behold, angels came and ministered (or attended) unto him. **To Mk 1:12.**

said. It applies to every born again Christian. Jesus is to be the Lord thy God. In addition every born again Christian is to serve only Him. Few, a very, very few will do this. Many call on Jesus to save them, but they do not repent, and follow Jesus. They do not follow and obey God's Word and serve Jesus. They find little time to dwell in God's Word. How can a person follow God's Word, when they only sparingly read or obey it?

Most churches in these latter days sparingly teach God's Word, and if they do, they seldom preach the narrow way, and a total uncompromising commitment of love and obedience to Christ.

Does your church emphasize over and over to **those that attend**, to dwell in the Bible, to devour it, to read it, to hear it, to desire it, and to obey it? Few do yet they claim they are a bible believing church.

Mt 4:11. This was approximately 40 days after Jesus had been baptized.

Jesus had commanded the devil to "get thee hence" or get away from me, or begone. The devil left.

This all took place at the end of the 40 day fast Jesus had accomplished. Jesus would have been very weak. He should have been able to walk a little, but not much. He would have needed assistance. He received assistance as the angels came and ministered to him.

Anyone attempting to do such a fast, will need someone to be present at the end to help them. For more on fasting, see the subject of fasting in the table of contents.

These same temptations, or variations of them are used by Satan over and over against you and the people of the world. With today's church being so biblically illiterate regarding what Satan does, most Christians do not have a clue what is happening as they are tempted by the devil. These temptations Jesus went through are for our learning.

Satan knows how to use the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, the pleasures of this life, and the lusts of all sorts of things to lead people astray. The devil tempted Jesus by

offering him all the kingdoms of the world if he would follow him. Jesus countered by using God's word. It is written: SATAN WHICH DECEIVETH THE WHOLE WORLD. The bible teaches much about Satan, how he works, and what he does, yet the misled churches are usually silent on this subject. They do not recognize it is Satan that has deceived them to not teach about him and the many schemes he uses to deceive you and the whole world-Rev 12:9.

As has been said: Understand, Satan was given the power to deceive everyone. He was given the power to make people believe he does not even exist. He has the power to deceive you to insure you will let your Bible collect dust. And if you decide to read it, to read only things that are not needful for you to read at that exact time. Commentaries about the Bible are nice, but pure Bible reading is much better.

Fr Lk 3:20. **Mt 4:12.** Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed (or returned) into Galilee; To Jn 4:1.

Mt 4:12. There is a time gap between verse 11 and verse 12. **This verse takes place about 6 months into His ministry.**

Jesus goes into Galilee.

Fr Lk 4:30. **Mt 4:13.** And **leaving Nazareth**, he came and dwelt (or lived) in **Capernaum**, which is upon the sea coast (or lake), in the borders (or area) of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

Mt 4:13. **Again, there is a time gap between verse 12 and 13 of about 4 months. These verses should be about 10 months into His ministry.**

Jesus came and dwelt in Capernaum. This seems to become His home, yet Jesus said that He had not where to lay His head. This is located on the northwest coast of the Sea of Galilee. The excavated remains of Capernaum is a stop that Israeli tours make. There is also a restored synagogue there that had been built perhaps 100 years after the time of Jesus.

Mt 4:14. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias (or Isaiah) the prophet, saying,

Mt 4:14. Isaiah wrote the book of Isaiah around 700 to 745 B.C.

Mt 4:15. The land of **Zabulon** (or Zebulun), and the land of **Nephthalim** (or Naphtali), by the way of (or to) the sea, beyond (or along) Jordan, **Galilee of the Gentiles;**

Mt 4:15. This and Mt 9:16 is a reference to Isaiah 9:1,2.

Mt 4:16. The **people** which **sat** (or are **living**) **in darkness** saw **great light**; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death (a) light is sprung up. To Mt 4:18.

Fr Jn 4:42. **Mt 4:17.** From that time (on) Jesus began to preach, and to say, **Repent**: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (or is near). To Mk 1:14.

Fr Mt 4:16. **Mt 4:18.** And (as) Jesus, (was) walking by (or beside) the sea of Galilee, (he) saw two brethren (or brothers), Simon called **Peter**, and **Andrew** his brother, (they were) casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers (or fishermen).

Mt 4:19. And he (Jesus) saith unto them, (Come), **Follow me**, and **I will make you fishers of men**.

Mt 4:16. The people that were living in darkness refers to spiritual darkness they were in. They were unsaved. They had no knowledge of what it means to trust in Christ, even as it is today. They saw a great light which is Jesus. The people were dead while they lived as they sat in the shadow of death. But when Jesus came, the Light of the world, the Savior, the only begotten Son of God sprung up and was revealed to them.

Mt 4:17. From this time and on Jesus began to command the people to **repent**, because Jesus (which is the kingdom of God) was present. This was approximately 8 months into his ministry, or we may say 8 months after he had been baptized by John the Baptist.

Mt 4:18. This verse skips ahead from V.17 approximately 2 months to about 10 months. Jesus saw (1) **Peter** and (2) **Andrew**. They were brothers. They were busy fishing.

Simon Peter was the son of Jonas. Simon is the NT Greek form of the Hebrew name Shim'on, meaning He (God) has heard. Peter is Greek, meaning a stone or rock. Peter and Andrew were brothers and lived in Bethsaida and Capernaum. Peter was married. We know little more about his wife. He wrote first and second Peter.

Andrew was the brother of Peter and son of Jonas. He lived in Capernaum and Bethsaida. He and Peter owned the house together. They were fishermen. He had been born in Bethsaida. He preached mainly in Macedonia. He was martyred at Achaia in Greece in a town called Patra.

Mt 4:19. Jesus said to them to **follow Him**. The reason He gave was they would begin fishing for men. Seeking to save souls was far more important than seeking to catch fish.

The purpose for Jesus coming was to save souls, that is, to seek and to save that which was lost.

That same message is extended to all. If a person repents of their sins, the next step is to follow Jesus. That next step begins with

Mt 4:20. And they **straightway** (or at once) **left** their nets, and followed him.

Mt 4:21. And going on from thence (or from there), he saw other two brethren (or brothers), **James** the son of Zebedee, and **John** his brother, in a ship (or boat) with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

devouring God's Word, because Jesus is the Word. God's Word should become more important to you than the daily food you put in your mouth. If it isn't, then it is likely you are not following Jesus.

Mt 4:20. Without hesitation, both Peter and Andrew obeyed and forsook their family, their job, and everything and began to follow Jesus. Have you done this?

Trusting in Jesus, trusting in God's Word, faith is what enables a person to pick up his cross and follow Jesus.

You may say, "Well, my church does not teach this." You must make a choice. That choice is to obey God's Word, or your misguided beliefs that are contrary to God's Word.

This is the church age when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Rather, they gather around themselves teachers to say what they want to hear, not what they need to hear. They turn their ears away from the truth. They turn their ears away from the Bible when it reveals to them they need to repent, change, and forsake things.

Mt 4:21. Next Jesus saw **James** and John his brother. They were working in a boat with their father, when Jesus called them.

James was a son of Zebedee and Salome. He was a fisherman. Jesus called them both Boanerges, meaning the sons of thunder-ref Mk 3:17.

He was executed by King Herod Agrippa about 44 AD, by being beheaded-ref Acts 12:1,2. He was the first of the twelve to die a martyr. Reportedly, he lived in Bethsaida, Capernaum, and Jerusalem. He preached in Jerusalem and Judea. James was always mentioned first.

John was the brother of James. He was a son of Zebedee and Salome, and was also a fisherman. Jesus called them both Boanerges, meaning the sons of thunder. He reportedly lived in Jerusalem, Capernaum, and Bethsaida. He was the only disciple that dared to stand at the foot of the cross, yet he allowed Peter to enter the tomb first. He cared for the mother of Jesus. Some believed he died on Patmos. It is not confirmed where he died. He wrote John,

Mt 4:22. And they **immediately** left the ship (or boat) and their father, and **followed him**. To Mk 1:16.

Fr Lk 4:41. **Mt 4:23.** And Jesus went about all Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues, and **preaching** the gospel (or Good News) of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

and 1, 2, and 3 John, and also the Revelation. He taught in Asia Minor and Ephesus.

Mt 4:22. Without any hesitation, they forsook all, including their job and their father, and began to follow Jesus. They took nothing. They trusted Jesus to provide for them. This is also the same kind of trust that followers of Jesus today should have, but few do.

Some hear God's Word. Immediately, they want more. Others hesitate. Most people just walk away, as God's Word has no effect on them.

They have no understanding that Jesus is offering them eternal life. Their only interest is what is happening now. They might say, "I'll take my chances." Billions in hell probably said the same thing. Oh, how they wish they could have a second chance. In case you don't know it, your second and last chance may be right now.

Mt 4:23. **This time period is believed to have been about 12 months into His ministry.**

Note the key words: Jesus, **teaching**, **preaching**, the gospel, and **healing**.

It has been said that "preaching" alerts people to the truth which is the Gospel, however the word "teaching" explains it in detail.

The number of places Jesus went to preach is not given, other than "all" Galilee. He taught in their synagogues. The message He preached was the Gospel of the kingdom (which is, the thousand year reign of Christ).

He also healed all kinds of sickness and disease, which was evidence that He was the Messiah. The works He did were those that no man had ever done.

Some claim that miracles and healings passed away when the last apostle died. There is no scriptural evidence to support this claim. Quite the opposite, the scriptures tell us: HE THAT BELIEVETH ON ME, THE WORKS THAT I DO SHALL HE DO ALSO, AND GREATER WORKS THAN THESE SHALL HE DO; BECAUSE I GO TO MY FATHER.

Mt 4:24. And his **fame went throughout all Syria**: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers (or various) diseases and torments (or severe pain), and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy (or paralytics); and he healed them.

Mt 4:25. And there **followed him** great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond (or across) Jordan. To Mk 1:35.

Mt 4:24. As a result of the miracles and healings He did, Jesus became famous throughout all Syria, that is, the area northeast of Galilee. The people brought to Him those that had diseases, and anything that tormented them, and those that had devils, and those that were crazy or insane. All were healed. There were no diseases Jesus could not heal. There were no demons or devils that Jesus could not cast out.

Where demons or devils originally came from is not known, however Genesis may give us a clue.

Mt 4:25. Huge numbers of people from the Galilee, also Decapolis (or 10 cities south and east of the Sea of Galilee), and even from far away areas like Jerusalem, Judea, and areas beyond the Jordan River came and followed Him. Five areas were mentioned. In other words, many followed Jesus from distances that may have exceeded 75 miles away. How sad it is, that today, few follow Jesus. Few follow God's Word, as if it were more important to them than their daily food.

No prophet had arisen in Israel for over 400 years, until John the Baptist came. Jesus followed him after about 6 months.

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