

Matthew 4:1-11, "Jesus is Tempted"

Matthew 4:1-11 (Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13).

- ✓ I love a good shortcut. Laguna Blvd, the Austin Loop, the Microwave, Brownsville to HRL Loop 550, Windows D, Ctrl Z, Brain Games, and supplements. NPR says, "We live in an 'Impatient Nation'." In an article on NPR, it claims that we have become "the Impatient Nation." We want quick answers to complex problems. The article puts it this way: We: speed date. eat fast food. use the self-checkout lines in grocery stores. Try the "one weekend" diet. Pay extra for overnight shipping. Honk when the light turns green. Thrive or dive on quarterly earnings reports. Speak in half sentences. Start things but don't fin... We tweet stories in 140 characters or less, yet some tweets are too long. We cut corners, take shortcuts. We text. *Source: Linton Weeks, "Impatient Nation: I Can't Wait for You to Read This," NPR (12-6-10).* What do we do with all this saved time? Watch TV.
- ✓ After the Baptism of Jesus... "Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.", **Mark 1:12**. The word "Drove" is equivalent to thrown or thrust. "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.", **Luke 4:1-2**.
- ✓ This was 40 days' worth of time with just Satan and Jesus. Satan's preparation for this included lying to Eve and Adam in the garden. He impugned God's motives, character, and integrity. He twisted the truth by using "If-then" statements, twisting and perverting the interpretation and meaning of God's words.
- ✓ There are 2 words for the term "Devil." One, "Diablos," which means slanderer and false accuser used in Matthew 4:1 and the name "Satanos" means adversary as used in Luke 4:3.
- ✓ "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry." **Matthew 4:1-11**. When you're that hungry, it is harder to control your emotions and harder to think properly. In addition to this, Jesus was sleeping in the desert, not the Holiday Inn.

Temptation #1

- ✓ "The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" **Matthew 4:1-11**. The word "If" in the tempter's challenge, has the meaning of the word "since."
- ✓ Seemingly, this is the most benign temptation, to me, not to prove you're who you are, but to do it ahead of schedule. This eliminates the need for work, planning, faith, and the generosity of others.
- ✓ The most urgent "needs" at this time were food and shelter. Consider the lilies of the field, **Luke 12:27**, our Father knows your need and "the angels attended to Him" **Matthew 4:11**.
- ✓ Self-focused miracles will lead to super villains like Darth Vader and, in these verses, Satan. Villains only help themselves; they leave others out and harm others to benefit themselves.
- ✓ If your kids claim they are "starving" in the car, unless there is a medical condition, they will not die! It shall pass. A focus on self will entice you to dismiss every discomfort such as a super mattress, air conditioning or a \$3K massage/sermon preparation chair. Jehovah Adonai-jireh, God will provide what is needed, **Genesis 22:14**.
- ✓ **Psalms 81:16**, "But you would be fed with the finest of wheat; with honey from the rock, I would satisfy you."
- ✓ **Psalms 37:23-25**, "If the LORD delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand. I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread."
- ✓ Water from the rock, manna from heaven, and quail to eat during the Exodus.
- ✓ Does God provide through His adversary? No, all glory goes to God, He does not share His glory!
- ✓ Satan fans the flame of self and distracts our thinking from God, His plan and His timing.
- ✓ **Matthew 4:1-11**, "Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Every Word! We must be students of God's Word!

Temptation #2

- ✓ "Then the devil took Him to the holy city and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down." For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" **Matthew 4:1-11**.

Matthew 4:1-11, "Jesus is Tempted"

- ✓ **Spectacle**
 - People would instantly understand and know that Jesus is the Messiah. There would be no shadows and no doubt.
 - You could leverage it up to include Military & Political Global Dominion.
 - Temple, angels, crowds, a death-defying feat, providing adrenaline and excitement. Evil Kenival performed death-defying stunts to bring attention to himself. Elevating Self would have allowed Jesus to escape this long and difficult process. It would have reaped an unreproducible process, unlike discipling others in love, humility and service. Such elevation may produce submission to the Messiah without heart change. Obedience to the Messiah could be motivated by fear rather than love, respect and awe of the cross.
- ✓ **Satan Encourages Jesus to have a Reckless Reliance**
 - Ignoring the laws of nature would produce adrenaline, fun and excitement.
 - For the service of others, you may be called to suspend your own logic (at the bidding of Jesus, not Satan). You must not do so for service of self.
 - Mis-Quote: All things work together for my good, so I might as well do what I want and let God fix my mess and bless me. God has Called Me... God will rescue me. Will He?!?

Temptation #3

- ✓ "Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'" **Matthew 4:1-11.**
 - Temptation #2 might lead to fame and riches.
 - Temptation #3 was instant everything.
 - Complete ownership and complete dominion
- ✓ **Satan Promises Jesus ALL Power and Possessions**
 - For the low, low price of... Worship me "One Time."
 - Daniel in the Lion's Den.
 - Shadrack, Meshak and Abednego
 - Sex Drugs Rock & Roll - Material World – Madonna 1986
 - Panoramic View – Grand Canyon-ish, Mountains of Utah
 - Rags to quick riches
 - Have it ALL, except HUMANITY in heaven
 - Deal with the devil like many musicians and politicians?
 - Jesus will eventually rule over it all, but with a different timing, different cost to avoid the cross (which Jesus prayed, but only if God sanctioned it.)
- ✓ **Elderly Woman Refuses to Take Shortcuts**

While a college student, Heidi Neumark took a year off from prestigious Brown University to be part of a volunteer program sponsored by a group called Rural Mission. She was sent to Johns Island—off the Carolina coast—where she learned from the sons and daughters of plantation slaves who allowed her to listen in as they sat around telling stories. In her words:

"The most important lesson I learned on Johns Island was from Miss Ellie, who lived miles down a small dirt road in a one-room, wooden home. I loved to visit her. We'd sit in old rocking chairs on the front porch, drinking tall glasses of sweet tea, while she'd tell me stories punctuated with Gullah expressions that would leap from her river of thought like bright, silver fish: 'Girl, I be so happy I could jump the sky!' I never could find out Miss Ellie's precise age, but it was somewhere between 90 and 100. Maybe she didn't know herself. She still chopped her own firewood, stacked in neat little piles behind the house.

"Miss Ellie had a friend named Netta whom she'd known since they were small girls. In order to get to Netta's house, Miss Ellie had to walk for miles through fields of tall grass. This was the sweet grass that Sea Island women make famous baskets out of, but it was also home to numerous poisonous snakes: coral snakes, rattlesnakes, water moccasins, and copperheads.

Matthew 4:1-11, "Jesus is Tempted"

"Actually, Netta's home was not that far from Miss Ellie's place, but there was a stream that cut across the fields. You had to walk quite a distance to get to the place where it narrowed enough to pass. I admired Miss Ellie, who would set off to visit her friend full of bouncy enthusiasm, with no worry for the snakes or the long miles. I also felt sorry for her. Poor Miss Ellie, I thought, old and arthritic, having to walk all that way, pushing through the thick summer heat, not to mention the snakes.

"I felt sorry—until I hit upon the perfect plan. I arranged with some men to help build a simple plank bridge across the stream near Miss Ellie's house. I scouted out the ideal place—not too wide, but too deep to cross. I bought and helped carry the planks there myself. Our bridge was built in a day. I was so excited that I could hardly wait to see Miss Ellie's reaction. I went to her house, where she wanted to sit in her rocker and tell stories, but I was too impatient with my project. I practically dragged her off with me. 'Look!' I shouted, 'a shortcut for you to visit Netta!'

"Miss Ellie's face did not register the grateful, happy look I expected. There was no smile, no jumping the sky. Instead, for a long time, she looked puzzled, then she shook her head and looked at me as though I were the one who needed pity. 'Child, I don't need a shortcut.' And she told about all the friends she kept up with on her way to visit Netta. A shortcut would cut her off from Mr. Jenkins, with whom she always swapped gossip; from Miss Hunter, who so looked forward to the quilt scraps she'd bring by; from the raisin wine she'd taste at one place in exchange for her biscuits; and the chance to look in on the "old folks" who were sick.

"'Child,' she said again, 'can't take shortcuts if you want friends in this world. Shortcuts don't mix with love.'"

Source: Adapted from Heidi Neumark, Breathing Space (Beacon Press, 2003), p. 16-17.

✓ **Resist Like Jesus**

- **Matthew 4:1-11**, "Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! ..."
- **James 4:7**, "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
- **Psalms 119:11**, "I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You."
- Jesus resisted with the Word of God.

- ✓ Priesthood in the Old Testament, man on earth goes to a priest on earth who accesses God in heaven.
 - ✓ Priesthood of the believer is when a man can access God in heaven through Jesus, now in heaven, as our high priest. Jesus, our high priest, was tempted in the same manner we are.
 - ✓ **Hebrews 4:14-15**, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin."
 - ✓ Jesus was tempted so that He could personally experience what we go through and so be prepared to assist us (**Hebrews 2:16-18; 4:14-16**) and to show us how we can overcome the evil one by means of the Spirit of God, **Matthew 4:1**, and the Word of God, **Matthew 4:4**.
 - ✓ **Joy and Peace in the Victory**
 - ✓ **Matthew 4:1-11**, "Then the devil left Him, and angels came and attended Him." Then the angels attended him in private.
 - ✓ No parade, no grandstanding, no "look at me."
 - ✓ Jesus had victory through the Word.
 - ✓ His time in the Word.
 - ✓ The power of the living Word.
 - ✓ That same victory over temptation is available to us through the same Word, but you have to be in it. There is no substitute or shortcut.
-
-
-
-