

Angelic Conflict & Jesus' Testing

Part 3

Matthew Chapter 4

Examination and Evaluation

Robby Dean gives a good overview of the testing of Jesus. It also meshes with the theme I am presenting that the first four chapters of Matthew present the qualifications of Jesus to be the Messiah King.

“What Jesus is showing in the testing is that He handles the test from His humanity with the same resources that God has given to you and me. 2 Corinthians 5:21 also states this principle, that "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us ..." again stressing the point that Jesus was not a sinner. That is part of the purpose of the virgin birth, that He never received a sin nature. Some might say, well wait a minute, if He didn't have a sin nature of course He didn't sin. But Adam was not created with a sin nature and yet Adam sinned. The first Adam failed the test. He entered into temptation, to testing, and he responded through disobedience. He didn't rely on the provision of God, he tried to handle things from his own resources. He failed, disobeyed, and yielded to the temptation. What Jesus is going to show is that He is qualified to be the Messiah because He passes the test that Adam failed. So, as the second Adam demonstrates His qualifications to be the Messiah and to go to the cross to die for our sins. As such, this initial episode emphasizes giving evidence at the beginning of His ministry that He is qualified to enter into that ministry of presenting the kingdom to Israel.¹”

1 <https://deanbible.org/new-testament-menuitem/matthew-menuitem/message/12-the-inauguration-and-authentication-of-the-messiah-b/read>

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Robby Dean makes an important point. Jesus is starting His mission as the last Adam. He will “repair” what Adam broke.

Let us begin. This line of reasoning will be tied to the Matthew passage bringing in information from Mark and Luke as needed.

The Bible is coherent throughout. This means that every word is needed and is exactly where it needs to be. It is like a jigsaw puzzle. Every word (piece of the puzzle) fits into the text.

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

In chapter 3, Jesus had been baptized by John. It had been a unique baptism. John was baptizing in the Jordan River. It was probably just east of Jericho. So now, Jesus moves from the Jordan River inland to a deserted area not far from Jericho.

Was led by the Spirit. Jesus was led by the Spirit. It was God the Holy Spirit that orchestrated this. Mark says it emphatically.

Mark 1:12 Immediately the Spirit *impelled Him to go out into the wilderness.

The word “was led” in Matthew is more emphatic in Mark. The Spirit “impelled” Him. The Greek word can mean thrown or impelled or send. From Biblehub.com:

“Usage: The Greek verb "ekballo" primarily means to cast out or drive out. It is used in various contexts in the New Testament, often referring to the expulsion of demons, the sending out of laborers into the harvest, or the

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removal of individuals from a place. The term conveys a forceful action, often implying authority and power over the object being cast out.²

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Jesus was led up. The word is in the passive. Jesus followed the leading of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus quotes Scripture, that is something Christians can do. When Jesus depends upon the leading of the Holy Spirit, that is something Christians can do. I do not go around asking “What would Jesus do?” (WWJD). No. But I do consider the principles of Scripture and how they can be applied to my current situation. That is something Jesus did. That is something we can do to solve everyday problems. What does Scripture say and how can we apply that to our situations now. Application of Bible Doctrine. You can do that.

There are three tests. Each involves movement. Jesus is led up. Passive. Mark says it more forcefully. He was impelled into the deserted place. He is like a witness in a trial. But in this trial, he is not on a witness stand. He is instead taken to specific places to be examined.

Wilderness. A place without people. It may have been a desert but more than that it was a deserted place. According to Robby Dean, it was likely just east of Jericho.

To be tempted. This is an infinitive to show purpose. The purpose and plan of God is for Jesus to be “tempted.”

There are so many doctrines that connect to this event that we need to slow down and review some of them.

² <https://biblehub.com/greek/1544.htm>

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Tempted. When taught, a pastor might emphasize that the Devil was trying to get Jesus to sin. While there is truth in that, if we translate the word “tempted” instead as “examine” in the context of the Angelic Conflict, these verses take on a more impactful meaning. The Devil examined Jesus. Is He the One? Is He qualified. If not, then Jesus’ ministry never starts. If He is qualified, then He continues. Obviously, He passed the test, the examination.

The Devil was not testing just a human being. He was examining the Hypostatic Union. Jesus was unique in his Hypostatic Union. This is important to understand. It was...is unique. Jesus continues in the Hypostatic Union.

Hypostatic Union. First, consider the doctrine of the hypostatic union. Rather than give you some points for further study, let us look at what this means.

For part 3 we will skip over the definitions. I left them in as a reference.

GotQuestions.org has a decent definition:

“The hypostatic union is the term used to describe how God the Son, Jesus Christ, took on a human nature, yet remained fully God at the same time. Jesus always had been God (John 8:58, 10:30), but at the incarnation Jesus became a human being (John 1:14). The addition of the human nature to the divine nature is Jesus, the God-man. This is the hypostatic union, Jesus Christ, one Person, fully God and fully man.”

“Jesus’ two natures, human and divine, are inseparable. Jesus will forever be the God-man, fully God and fully human, two distinct natures in one Person. Jesus’ humanity and divinity are not mixed, but are united without loss of separate identity. Jesus sometimes operated with the limitations of humanity (John 4:6, 19:28) and other times in the power of His deity (John

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11:43; Matthew 14:18-21). In both, Jesus' actions were from His one Person. Jesus had two natures, but only one personality.”

“The doctrine of the hypostatic union is an attempt to explain how Jesus could be both God and man at the same time. It is ultimately, though, a doctrine we are incapable of fully understanding. It is impossible for us to fully understand how God works. We, as human beings with finite minds, should not expect to totally comprehend an infinite God. Jesus is God's Son in that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). But that does not mean Jesus did not exist before He was conceived. Jesus has always existed (John 8:58, 10:30). When Jesus was conceived, He became a human being in addition to being God (John 1:1, 14).³”

Secondly, in addition to the hypostatic union, there is “kenosis.”

Here are two points on Kenosis from Robby Dean which apply to the Hypostatic Union⁴:

1. “The Son of God willingly veiled His preincarnate glory by restricting the outer appearance and privileges of God in order take on the form and function of a finite human body.”
2. “Christ willingly submitted to the Father's will to restrict the use of His divine attributes in relationship to the tests, temptations, and struggles He faced in His incarnation.”

More on this from Robby Dean below.

The important point to remember is that the two natures are integrated into a single being. This is perhaps something beyond what our human minds can fully comprehend. God has given us Jesus' interactions with others such that we can point that Jesus is fully God:

3 <https://www.gotquestions.org/hypostatic-union.html>

4 <https://www.deanbible.org/dbmfiles/slides/2022-Philippians-042c.pdf>

John 8: 58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”
(Expression of deity)

John 11:35 Jesus wept. (Expression of humanity)

Even the Devil likely had difficulty with this. You see, the Devil was familiar with demon possession. It is probable that Satan indwelt the king of Tyre in Ezekiel 28:11-19. Scripture says that Judas Ischariot was possessed by Satan. After Jesus had given Judas “the morsel” at the end of the supper, Judas could no longer turn back.

John 13:27 After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus *said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”

As such, Satan would be familiar with the domination of the demon over the human soul in those cases. The Devil was no doubt familiar with the Angel of the Lord in which the second person of the Trinity took on human form. But in the hypostatic union, the two natures are integrated into a harmonious unity. This comes into play in the first challenge from Satan to Jesus.

Associated with the hypostatic union is the doctrine of Kenosis.

Doctrine of Kenosis. Again from Robby Dean:

“The second doctrine, also very complex, is what is called the kenosis. The word is used in Philippians chapter two to describe what happened when the eternal second person of the Trinity entered into human history. It says He took on humanity. It doesn't drop His deity; He doesn't leave out His deity; it doesn't diminish His deity in terms of its essence, but He adds true humanity to that. So the definition is that during the period of His incarnation Jesus Christ willingly restricted the use of His divine attributes

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so as not to use them to solve problems related to His humanity. Although Jesus is fully God He is not relying upon His deity to solve the problems in His humanity, because as the Messiah He is supposed to be fully human and the ideal King setting the standard of perfection as a man, not as God. God can easily do these things but He must do them as a man.⁵

Somewhere I said that the solution to Adam's problem required God to provide the solution. But God could not accomplish this apart from a man. God could not judge Himself for mankind's sins. But a man with a sin nature cannot provide the solution. So the God man provides the solution. God provides the solution in the person of Jesus Christ.

Adam's testing and sin. Remember now that Jesus is the "last" Adam. The first Adam was tested and failed. As a result the human race acquired a sin nature through genetics, imputed with Adam's sin and produces his own sins. But he started out sinless.

The last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45) also starts out sinless without a sin nature. That is the purpose of the Virgin Birth (Conception). The last Adam must pass a test similar to the First Adam. It is interesting to note that both tests had something to do with eating.

Jesus prepares for the examination by fasting. He becomes hungry and likely weak physically as a result of not eating food for forty days. It is like someone saying, "I'll fight you with one hand tied behind my back."

Matthew 4:2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

Fasted. Robby Dean explains that a human cannot go very long without water. So Jesus' fast probably included sips of water, possibly from the Jordan River. But no food. Someone with only water but no food can last

5 <https://deanbible.org/new-testament-menuitem/matthew-menuitem/message/13-testing-demonstrating-the-character-of-the-messianic-servant-b/read>

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somewhere in the neighborhood of 40 days, perhaps a few more. Although intense hunger disappears after approximately three days, it comes roaring back after about 40 days. So Jesus knows hunger more than we could imagine. That is unless you have tried to fast for 40 days.

Matthew 4:3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

If. A first class condition. We learned a few weeks ago, that this doesn't say the statement is true, only that it is assumed to be true for the sake of this argument. We know this is actually true but the first class condition is couched within the argument. "Let us assume for this argument that...". Jesus knew this to be true. So did the Devil. But Satan is couching this challenge in the form of an argument. "Assume for the sake of this argument that you are the Son of God." It is said almost like, "OK, prove you are the Son of God." But the problem before Jesus, hunger, is a human problem that Jesus, based upon the doctrine of Kenosis, must solve from His humanity, not His deity.

Son of God. 2nd person of the Trinity. In other words, deity.

"During His trial before the Jewish leaders, the High Priest demanded of Jesus, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God" (Matthew 26:63). "'Yes, it is as you say,' Jesus replied. 'But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven'" (Matthew 26:64). The Jewish leaders responded by accusing Jesus of blasphemy (Matthew 26:65-66). Later, before Pontius Pilate, "The Jews insisted, 'We have a law, and according to that law He must die, because He claimed to be the Son of God'" (John 19:7). Why would His claiming to be the Son of God be considered blasphemy and be worthy of a death sentence? The Jewish leaders understood exactly what Jesus meant

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by the phrase “Son of God.” To be the Son of God is to be of the same nature as God. The Son of God is “of God.” The claim to be of the same nature as God—to in fact be God—was blasphemy to the Jewish leaders; therefore, they demanded Jesus’ death, in keeping with Leviticus 24:15-16. Hebrews 1:3 expresses this very clearly, “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His being.”⁶

Leviticus 24:15 You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘If anyone curses his God, then he will bear his sin.

Leviticus 24:16 Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

Let us look at the challenge from the Devil’s perspective, keeping in mind what was just presented. What drove me to study this, in part, was why did Satan pick these questions. Where did they come from?

First, Satan caused Adam to fail his test. Now, Jesus, the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45) is being tested. Jesus’ first task is to go to the cross to be judged for the sins of the world. The focus from Jesus’ perspective and Biblical prophecy was to solve the sin problem. By doing that He solves the dominion problem, the rulership over the earth.

Matthew 1:2 She (Mary) will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

6 <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-Son-of-God.html>

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There is an interesting parallel between Adam (1st Adam) and Jesus (2nd Adam). Adam was tempted to eat of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. Here Jesus is tempted to create bread and eat. Both situations involved eating. Adam failed. Jesus did not.

Command. This is an imperative mood—a command. But the word is from the vocabulary word that means “to speak.” So a better translation might be “Speak.” Interesting that the Devil is giving Jesus a command to speak.

Let us go behind the scene. The LXX translates the description of what God did in Genesis chapter 1, as “God spoke” with the same verb used here in Matthew chapter 4. So the Devil is tempting Jesus to engage in a divine act of creation. The Devil purposely points Jesus back to creation and then the Garden of Eden. Jesus is here to redeem the human race by going back to the same type of situation as in the Garden and succeeding where Adam had failed.

Did the Devil consider that he himself was created? The word “arrogance” comes to mind. Just a thought.

Jesus is taking His place as the 2nd or last Adam. He is being tempted/challenged by the Devil. The expectation from the Devil’s perspective is that the deity will claim control over the hypostatic union.

Additionally, where does the Devil come up with “these stones?” Look a few verses back at John the Baptist’s response to the Pharisee’s and Sadducee’s desire to be baptized by John.

Matthew 3:9 and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father’; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.

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These stones. God can raise up children out from “these stones.” Then assuming for the sake of the argument that Jesus is the Son of God, God Himself, then it would be easier to create bread out of stones than living human beings. Argument from the major to the minor. The Devil has been observant and heard what John said.

When I first read Matthew 3:9, the phrase “these stones” intrigued me. If John is pointing to “these” stones what are they? It is as if they already know what John means by this.

Let us speculate a little. If these stones are in the Jordan east of Jericho, it is possible that they are stones placed there by Joshua's chosen men as a memorial.

Joshua 4:1 Now when all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying,

Joshua 4:2 “Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe,

Joshua 4:3 and command them, saying, ‘Take up for yourselves twelve stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you and lay them down in the lodging place where you will lodge tonight.’”

Joshua 4:4 So Joshua called the twelve men whom he had appointed from the sons of Israel, one man from each tribe;

Joshua 4:5 and Joshua said to them, “Cross again to the ark of the Lord your God into the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel.

Joshua 4:6 Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, ‘What do these stones mean to you?’

Joshua 4:7 then you shall say to them, ‘Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.’ So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever.”

Matthew never specifically identifies what “these stones are.” Yet, they are in the right place and it certainly sounds like Matthew is assuming the reader knows what “these stones” are. The memorial points to the fact that God did this.

From the Devil’s perspective if the hypostatic union is like demon possession, then the divine being would take control and engage in an act of creation to provide bread for Jesus’ humanity to keep him from dying. But that didn’t happen. Jesus uses Bible answers to respond. Jesus did what you and I can and should be doing on a daily basis. Using Bible answers to answer the challenges of everyday life.

Loaves of bread. The Greek has a single word, “bread,” in the plural. In other words, “breads.” So loaves of bread is not a bad translation.

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Now, if the Devil is pulling up words from the Old Testament that are full of meaning, then “bread” is important. In Exodus 16, God provides “bread” for the children of Israel.

Exodus 16:4 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction.

Here is a table where each word is full of meaning from the Scriptures.

Devil’s Challenge (Matthew 4:3)	Possible Reference (Divine Action)	Scripture
Speak	Creation	Genesis chapter 1
Stones	Crossing the Jordan	Joshua 4:1-7/Matthew 3:9
Become		
Breads	Mana	Exodus 16:4

Each of the events was accomplished by divine intervention. Jesus is not fooled by the Devil. Jesus responds by applying a Biblical principle to the situation.

Matthew 4:4 But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

Jesus does not respond from His deity. Instead He quotes from Deuteronomy. God has already provided food. There is no need for further action from God here.

Deuteronomy 8:2 You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the

wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

Deuteronomy 8:3 He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 8:4 Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years.

Deuteronomy 8:5 Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.

Deuteronomy 8:6 Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.

By quoting this, Jesus acknowledges God's provision for man. The mana was provided to the children of Israel in response to their complaints and cries. Jesus' humanity operated in the realm of humility. Notice the vocabulary similarities: desert, testing and bread. Jesus is not using His deity to solve the problem. From Jesus' humility He depends on God the Father to provide for Him just like He provided for the children of Israel in the desert. This is something we can do. In humility we can claim a

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promise to orient our minds, to stabilize our thinking to solve problems. God provides. This concept also shows up in the New Testament for us.

Philippians 4:19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Jesus says this again

John 4:34 Jesus *said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.

Summary:

The Devil is not addressed by name until Jesus sends him away in verse 10. Matthew uses the term "devil" which from the Greek means accuser, slanderer. The Devil's function here is to examine Jesus in the context of the Angelic Conflict. Specifically, this is the last step in Jesus' qualification to enter into His ministry. The Devil found no fault. Satan is one of the names of the Devil.

The tactic of the Devil is to accuse God of not providing for Jesus. Here he is very hungry and there is no food for Him. All Jesus has to do is invoke His deity and make bread out of stones. Later on Jesus will make wine out of water. So it is within His capabilities. Yet here, Jesus is not going to obey the Devil's command. It is a question of God's provision for His Son. So Jesus responds that God has indeed provided for Him. Jesus is expert on the Scripture and identifies that the world is not just physical, but spiritual. For future reference, remember the concept: Provision.

Matthew 4:5 Then the devil *took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,

Jesus used Scripture to counter the Devil's challenge. Jesus' use of a principle that God provides from the spiritual world which has effect in the material world demands the use of faith. So the Devil now pushes Jesus' faith to see how far it will go.

Devil. The basic Greek verb associated with this noun means to slander or to accuse. Rather than use one of the Devil's names, Matthew identifies how he is functioning in this passage. He is an attorney for himself attempting to trip up Jesus.

Remember that Jesus is a man and as such He is lower than angels. I know that is a difficult concept. But Jesus had to be a man to go to the cross. Although He had no sin nature, His body still must function as a human body. That includes His brain. Although the Devil may have more apparent resources available to him, Jesus has Scripture backed by His faithfulness. That is much more powerful than what the Devil has.

Keep in mind that the Devil has never encountered the hypostatic union. It is unique. The Devil has the next three years or so to challenge Jesus in various ways. How he does that depends on how Jesus responds to the Devil's challenges.

Hebrews 2:9 But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

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The Devil is an angel, although a fallen one. Hence, the Devil probably thinks that he is smarter than the humanity of Jesus. So he might have thought that if Jesus responded from His humanity, the Devil could beat Him. But, if He responded from His deity, he fails again. The Devil is thinking, I am going to win. But Jesus knows the Bible like no one ever did. He is also either indwelt by the Holy Spirit or endued with the Holy Spirit. We even know this from our passage in Matthew 3:16. Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit. So Jesus responds with Bible answers which we also call Bible Doctrine.

Holy City. Interesting that Matthew does not call it “Jerusalem.” He instead identifies the city as “holy.” Remember, this word means “set apart to.” In this case, it contains the Temple which is set apart to God.

Temple. The Holy City, Jerusalem, is set apart to God. That is why it is holy. It is the “house of God.” The pinnacle is the top. It is high. Previously in the first test, Jesus was on the ground. Now the Devil moved Him up high.

Took. Some would say that the Devil may have provided a vision for Jesus rather than actually put Him on the top of the temple. Let us go with the literal interpretation. The Devil apparently had control over placing Jesus' body in different places. Reminds the reader that a similar situation was imposed on Job.

Job 1:12 Then the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.”

Had him stand. What happened to Jesus is definitely “passive” on Jesus' part. But the subject of the verb is the Devil and it is active voice. The Devil did this to Jesus. He did not make Him sit. He made Him stand. The

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point being is that Jesus must now respond. Perhaps a better translation might be “he stood Him...”

Matthew 4:6 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, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.’”

Again, the Devil challenges Jesus, Assume it is true for the sake of this argument, you are the Son of God, God and the Messiah, prove it by fulfilling oral tradition. The people expect it. According to this tradition, the Messiah would arrive and stand on the top of the temple. Here is Robby Dean’s explanation:

“Again Satan recognizes that He is the Son of God and that this was a title for the Messiah. He is also appealing to a rabbinic tradition here that there would be a particular kind of sign that would indicate the Messiah. It was not in the Old Testament Scripture, it had become a rabbinic tradition. This is perhaps what is being described in John 6:30 when the Pharisees said to Jesus: "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?" According to rabbinic tradition there was the view that when the Messiah came He would stand upon the roof of the temple and this would then indicate that He was the Messiah. Jesus is not going to yield to this testing because He is going to demonstrate that He is the Messiah the way God has planned for Him and not for such a sign where He would be on the pinnacle of the temple.⁷”

⁷ <https://deanbible.org/new-testament-menuitem/matthew-menuitem/message/13-testing-demonstrating-the-character-of-the-messianic-servant-b/read>

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There may be a nuanced threat to Jesus. The Devil is not allowed to harm Jesus in these tests. But, the Devil is very much aware of Genesis 3:15

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

The seed of the woman will "bruise" the Devil on the head. But the Devil will bruise the seed of the woman on the "heel."

Bruise. The Hebrew word is more forceful than a mere "bruise." It means to crush, break in pieces. From Biblehub.com

"Usage: The term is used in the Hebrew Bible to describe actions that involve a sudden or forceful impact, often in a hostile or destructive context. It appears in contexts that suggest a violent encounter or an overwhelming force."

"Context: • The verb שׁוּף (shuph) is notably used in Genesis 3:15, where it describes the enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between their respective offspring. The passage reads: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (BSB). In this context, שׁוּף is translated as "crush" and "strike," indicating a mutual, aggressive confrontation.⁸"

Multiple sources would indicated the "crushing" would be fatal for both. So the Devil is looking forward with confident expectation that he will kill the Messiah. The question remained as to how and when.

The Devil might not have been prepared for the hypostatic union. So the virgin birth, although prophesied in the Scriptures was something unique.

8 <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7779.htm>

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In the future, the Devil may not have understood that Jesus would rule His future kingdom from His resurrection body. So killing Jesus would only guarantee the resurrection not just of Jesus but of all believers.

The predicament is “How will Jesus deal with being up high on the temple?” He can’t easily climb down. He could follow the Devil’s suggestion and “throw” Himself down. But that would be forcing God to intervene. So, Jesus goes back to Scripture, again.

Matthew 4:7 Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

On the other hand. That is not what the Greek says. It is a single word. “Again.” Jesus said to him again. Jesus is using the Scripture as authoritative rebuttal to what the Devil is saying.

Jesus again answers from the book of Deuteronomy (6:16). But look at the context. That section of Deuteronomy includes the “Shema” (Listen).

Deuteronomy 6:4 “Hear (Shema), O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!

This is a verse that Jews are to repeat daily in their prayers. All Jews should be familiar with this passage in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 6:5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (Sound familiar? Matthew 22:37)

Deuteronomy 6:6 These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.

...

Deuteronomy 6:16 “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah.

Jesus is being tested and so He goes to the documentation of the tests of Israel in Deuteronomy. In this single verse, the word for test is found three times. I know, you only count two in the English. The third one is the basis of the placename “Massah.” This is a noun from the verb for testing. Literally, it is the “place of testing.”

Deuteronomy 6:17 You should diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and His testimonies and His statutes which He has commanded you.

Deuteronomy 6:18 You shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may be well with you and that you may go in and possess the good land which the Lord swore to give your fathers,

Deuteronomy 6:19 by driving out all your enemies from before you, as the Lord has spoken.

These last verses speak of the mission of Israel. Now Jesus has a mission in front of Him. Again remember that Jesus has been associated with Israel earlier in the gospel of Matthew. By responding from this chapter of Deuteronomy, both here and in the next challenge, Jesus has aligned His mission with the people of Israel.

I suspect that many of the words in the Devil's challenge point to different verses in the Old Testament. One in particular that stuck out to me is

Angelic Conflict & Jesus' Testing Part 3
Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13

“foot.” In Genesis 3:15, the Devil was told that he would wound the seed of the woman. Here is Jesus, the seed of the woman. Is this a veiled threat from the Devil that he is going to have Jesus killed? One way for the Devil to win is to prevent Jesus from bringing in the kingdom. Once Jesus is dead, He is dead. Except God does something new: Resurrection. As such, Jesus is the “first fruits” to bring victory over death. Yet this was indicated by Job that he would see his redeemer even after he died.

Summary: We know that the Devil is sometimes given control over a person, even a believer. We saw this with Job. We saw this with Paul. Now the Devil is given permission to have limited control over putting Jesus in different places for the purpose of the examination. The Devil's tactic here is to challenge God's protection of His Son. Were He to fall from the pinnacle of the Temple, God would ensure that he was protected.

These three challenges touch on 1) God's provision 2) God's protection 3) God's power.

Matthew 4:8 Again, the devil *took Him to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;

Matthew 4:9 and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.”

For some reason, Luke and Matthew have the order of these events switched. It may be that one of them is presenting this in chronological order (probably Matthew) and the other in topical order (probably Luke). I don't have a conclusive answer for you. We are studying Matthew, so that is the order presented here.

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Here we have confirmation that the Devil is the ruler of this world. He provides Jesus with a possible shortcut to regaining dominion over the earth that the 1st Adam lost. But that is not the plan of God. Let us go back to Matthew chapter 1 to find the real purpose for Jesus' mission.

Matthew 1:19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly.

Matthew 1:20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 1:21 She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

Jesus came to be judged for the sins of the world. Messiah's people will be those that believe. Yes, the sins of unbelievers are judged. But in the end, it doesn't keep them from the Lake of Fire. Their unbelief does. Their lack of life and righteousness disqualifies them.

But Satan cannot offer judgment for sin. He is the reason for sin existing. All he can offer is to relinquish his control over the world. That is the most he can offer. What he asks Jesus to do is to engage in idol worship, the worship not of just demons but of Satan himself.

Matthew 4:10 Then Jesus *said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"

Angelic Conflict & Jesus' Testing Part 3
Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13

Again Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy. The same area of the last question.

Deuteronomy 6:13 You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name.

Deuteronomy 6:14 You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you,

Deuteronomy 6:15 for the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.

Matthew 4:11 Then the devil *left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

Jesus passed the test/examination. He is qualified to start His public ministry as the Messiah.

The Devil is permitted to test Jesus, including moving His body around. The Devil does not want Jesus to complete His mission and bring in the kingdom. That is from the Devil's perspective. Yet, we know from the Biblical perspective, Jesus' mission is to take care of sin.

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Devil's Perspective (The Material World)	Jesus/Biblical Perspective (The Spiritual World)
<p>First Test Immediate Need: Food Time: Immediate Command to Jesus: Speak Offer: physical food - Challenge with Adam's test - Challenge God's provision</p>	<p>First Test Response: Faith/Trust God Jesus Response: It is written/Faith Precursor: God provided/Israel failed; Jesus did not Offer refused: God already provided spiritual food</p> <p>God's Word "Spoken" already documented Historical Precedent: Mana John chapter 2: Water to Wine</p>
<p>Second Test: Intermediate Need: Protection Time: Intermediate Offer: Identify Messiah via human viewpoint "Hidden" word: foot (Gen 3:15) Command to Jesus: Throw Yourself Offer: Protection (& identify as Messiah)</p>	<p>Second Test: Intermediate Need:</p> <p>Jesus Response: It is written/Faith Precursor: Israel failed (at Massah); Jesus did not fail</p>
<p>Third Test: Prevent Jesus from bringing in the Kingdom Time: Future Command: Fall down/worship Offer: Short-circuit Jesus' mission: present kingdom to Jesus; make him king; But then Devil assumes position of God as being worshiped.</p>	<p>Third Test: Highest Commandment Mission is to have sin judged; dominion will follow that mission. Jesus Response: It is written/Faith Precursor: Commands of God</p>