

The King Tested & Victorious

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Text: Matthew 4:1-11

Series: King of Kings

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Living Hope Bible Church of Roselle, IL

Introduction: I invite you to turn in your Bibles to **Matthew 4:1-11**. We are in a series through the book of Matthew entitled: “King of kings!” Today’s we are looking at: “The King Tested & Victorious”.

We are considering the testing of the true Son of God. Is this one who was just announced by the Father at His baptism *truly* the Son of God? Those who were in attendance heard the great voice from heaven: “This is my beloved Son in whom I delight!”

If Jesus truly is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, He must be victorious over the evil one. Jesus is about to begin a ministry where He sweeps the countryside of satanic activity. Demons flee from Him. We are going to see why in Matthew 4. This is:

- The Son of David
- The Seed of Abraham
- The Promised Seed of the Woman (Gen. 3:15)
- The Son of God with power!!

But is He really? This passage is important because of the light it sheds light on.

Temptation

All of us face temptation. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if all our trials and sinful tendencies went away? I want to give you hope today that there is always a way out of temptation. Paul tells us in **1 Corinthians 10:13** (ESV), “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

Christ is the one who shows us what that way of escape is in Matthew 4. We are going to see that it is always through running to Christ as our refuge. He is the only human being that has victoriously overcome the wicked one.

Reading of Scripture

Matthew 4:1-11, “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.’ 4 But he answered, ‘It is written, ‘ ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 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, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” 7 Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written, ‘ ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, ‘All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.’ 10 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.’” 11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.”

Before Christ begins His ministry He takes 40 days to draw near to His Father and prepare for the most important 3 and a half years of human history. He’s going to clean out the Judean and Galilean countryside from the influence of the wicked one. But before He does that, He must bind the devil. He must tie up the “strong man” so that He can “spoil his goods”.

The Spirit Led Jesus

Before Christ begins His ministry He is led “by the Spirit” to be tested. Of course God does not tempt anyone – he does not lead anyone into sin. But He allows Christ to be tested in order to demonstrate Christ’s dominion over Satan. In this chapter we see Christ, for the first time since Adam plunged the human race into sin, a human being who is actually stronger and victorious over the wicked one.

It is important to note that “the Spirit” led Jesus into the wilderness to be tested. No sooner had God declared Jesus to be the Son of God than the evil one casts doubt. “If you are the Son of God” is the evil one’s theme. The Spirit gives Jesus strength as he faces Satan not in His divine nature, but in His human nature. Jesus faces the wicked one for a battle royal.

There are three things that ought to hold our attention in this passage:

- The King’s **Enemy** (4:1).
- The King’s **Scrutiny** [test] (4:2-10).
- The King’s **Victory** (4:11).

I. The King’s Enemy (4:1).

Matthew 4:1-2, “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.”

Satan means our trials for evil. God means them for good. The Spirit led Jesus to the wilderness to be tested. Yet, just as God allowed Satan to test Job to prove that he was faithful, so God allows our Lord to be tested. Indeed, notice, after His baptism we read in **verse 1**: “Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.”

My friends, if you begin to serve God in an unrelenting way – if you begin that pathway of total surrender, you must expect satanic attack.

You must also realize that the Spirit of God is going to allow you to be tested in difficult and trying ways.

But one thing is for sure. If you serve God with all your heart and soul, you are going to go against the current of evil. You are going to face real evil against your soul. You are going to be assaulted like our Savior with an onslaught of evil. So that brings us to an obvious question.

What is Evil?

Today it is fashionable to think of evil in terms that are biological, psychological, or sociological. People sometimes will say that evil is not spiritual at all – it’s just a perspective. According to popular thinking, what’s immoral for you might be just fine for another person.

This view that evil is not really evil is not really hard to disprove at all. These people believe evil is simply a biological process until that evil touches them or their family. You have educated, intelligent people who say they do not believe in depravity and evil. This perspective mainly stems out of the teaching of evolution.

The theory of evolution teaches that the world is the way it is in all its brokenness because it is simply underdeveloped due to the youthfulness of the human race. There is no true evil in this perspective because all things are just a biological process.

It's just that we haven't had enough time to fully evolve. We started in an ocean somewhere, and we are making progress. We're not monkeys anymore, but we are not yet in the place where we have it all together. But we will. We just need more time.

Eventually we are going to get to a place where we've conquered disease and death and there's going to be no more war. One day people will be mature enough where we can all share the resources of the world and we'll be able to get along. There is a natural process in life where things are just getting better and better. This is the current thinking among those who have a hard bent toward the theory of evolution.

Evil is Personal

This passage in Matthew 4 is vital in the way it denies this kind of thinking. The battle that takes place in Matthew 4 absolutely denies that evil is some biological process or evolutionary brokenness. Evil is personal. Those that choose to do evil are rebelling against the Almighty God, just like Lucifer did in the beginning.

This passage in Matthew knocks down the idea of evolution and causes it to wither away. It reveals the lie that evolution is. When we read the Word of God we see that *evil is not the biological immaturity of a human race destined for greatness.*

Evil is personal. Or better yet – evil is birthed out of a person. Satan, Lucifer, the old serpent is the father and promoter of lies. He is the author of all evil. He coerced Adam and Eve to forsake God, and he and all his cohorts work hard at this business of confusing you and tempting you every single day. He is at war with God and at war with the Lamb of God, and he has been from the beginning. He wants to rob you of the redemption that has been provided for you through Christ. He wants to rob Christ and God of all their glory. It's not going to happen. Christ is our Victor today!

You see evil is not biological, physiological, or social. It is personal. The world is the way it is in all its brokenness because of the rebellion of a specific person. One of the things you want to see is that the one who tests the Son of God in this passage is referred to six times in this passage in a personal way. Three terms are used. He's called

- The devil
- The tempter – he tempts us and accuses God's people day and night
- Satan, which means enemy or adversary
- The Bible in other places calls him a “murderer”, a “liar”, and a “roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour”. He hates your soul.

Satan Possesses Conscious Self-Awareness

Satan is presented here in Matthew 4 as possessing self-conscious existence. He emerges from this event where we know he has the attributes of a person – he has cognition and intention.

It is clear that Christ's enemy and our enemy observes the things that happen in the sphere that we live in.

Satan is Aware of What Happened at the Baptism

Satan was aware of what happened at baptism of Christ. Christ accepted his role as Mediator and Defender of the New Covenant.

And there is a sense in which you could say no sooner did Heaven open and you heard the glorious majestic voice of God the Father saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." As soon as HEAVEN opened, HELL opened. We shouldn't be surprised. This is how it always is. From the beginning of the world, we see a warfare between two kingdoms. Granted, they are not equal kingdoms. Satan is nothing compared to our Almighty Savior.

Hell Responds to Heaven

But as soon as we see the highpoint of the heavenly kingdom, with our Lord being anointed at His baptism as the Christ, the Son of the Living God – it is then that we see the strongest counter from the bowels of hell.

Yet our Savior has never been seen this way before. He's never appeared in such weakness. Forty days of fasting. He's weak. He's famished. He's of no reputation. Is this *really* the Son of God? Satan is so self-deceived he thinks he can take the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Satan is an imitation pipsqueak lion. The True Lion of the Tribe of Judah is about to show His prowess, but not in any kind of a worldly way. His prowess is veiled in humility!

Satan is Eager to Destroy Christ

Satan was eager to destroy Christ right out of the womb by King Herod. But now that Christ is back on the scene, back from Egypt, out of the obscurity of Nazareth – the wicked one wants to take our Lord down, just as he did our first father Adam in the Garden of Eden. So as soon as Heaven opens, hell opens up to tempt our Savior.

Satan Knows God and Christ

The thing that we remember in this passage is that Satan knows God. He knows Christ. Our Lord would later testify in **Luke 10:18**: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." Satan also knows God's people.

Satan is a Familiar Figure

We also see in Matthew 4, that this tempter, this devil, this one called Satan has a prior history. He is a familiar figure. **Matthew 4:1**, "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil." This devil needs no introduction. He's mentioned in the Old Testament.

- **He Beguiled Adam & Eve**: This is the old serpent that tempted Adam and Eve and miscarried the human race at its inception.
- **He Vexed Job**: This is the one who harassed Job – went from walking to and fro in the earth, keeping tabs on his dominion and his prisoners – his own dark kingdom – and he relishes the opportunity to mock God by bringing Job down.
- **He Tempted David** to the Pride of Numbering Israel instead of trusting not in numbers but in God alone.

- **Isaiah Describes him as God's Enemy who would Usurp the Throne of the Most High if he could:** This is the one who said in **Isaiah 14:14**: “I will ascend to heaven; above the stars [angels] of God I will set my throne on high”.
- Satan exercises a kind of dark dominion in this world. In fact the Bible refers to him as “the god of this world” (**2 Cor. 4:4**).

He needs no introduction in Matthew 4. We know who he is. He is the enemy of your soul and my soul.

Satan is Organized

Let me also say that Matthew presents our enemy as one who is organized. He knows the Word. He knows all the ways to deceive. He is subtle. He “masquerades as an angel of light – disguising himself” (**2 Cor. 11:14**). He is a wolf in sheep's clothing. He wants to tear you to pieces. He is cold blooded, cruel and merciless, and yet he comes across as warm and inviting. His plans always seem plausible and even righteous. But they are not. Satan's plans for you are always tempting, but infinitely dangerous, like 99% sweetness, and 1% arsenic. You may enjoy the first taste, but you're gonna die.

YHWH's Weakness

Does it shock you that Satan has no problem at all confronting Jesus? This is YHWH, Creator God, but He doesn't look powerful. He's cast off His glory for you. He's become weak for you. He is of no reputation, even in the presence of the devil himself. YHWH doesn't look all powerful.

In fact, He's famished. He's starving. He's brought as low and as weak as a human being can possibly get. And Satan's own pride has blinded him. I believe Satan is so self deceived at this point, that he actually thinks he can win. Satan had been at his trade a long time. YHWH is now walking on two legs. He looked like a man. He was weak like a man. Satan has never not brought a human being to sin up to this point.

Now let's apply this before we move on.

Application –

We Wrestle Against Spiritual Forces of Evil

Can I ask you – are you distracted with people problems? Don't be. Your problem is not your family member. It's not your spouse. It's not a church member. Paul said it this way.

Ephesians 6:12, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against ... the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

Consider Three Truths

1. You will be TESTED. As soon as you become a child of God, you are going to be nailed to a cross of testing just like our Savior. Paul said in **Philippians 1:29-30**, “it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict” – the conflict that Paul went through, that our Lord went through – the same enemy. Be ready. Don't be taken off guard!

2. You will be TEMPTED. You will be tempted by the wicked one. Remember the words of Jesus in **John 13:16** (ESV), "Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master..." If He was tempted, you will also be tempted. Our Lord told Peter in Luke 22:31 "Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat". Christ goes on to say: "but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail." And Satan has demanded to have each of you if you are a child of God. He already has the lost. But he wants to vex you like he vexed Job. He mocks your faith and demands to prove it to see if Christ has truly begun a good work in you.

3. You must RESIST. Satan is to be resisted. James tells us in **James 4:7**, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." You can and you must resist the evil one. You give place and opportunity and dominion to him by sinning. If you do not sin, he has no dominion over you. Paul warns us twice of the evil one in Ephesians.

- **Eph 4:27**, "Give no opportunity to the devil".
- **Eph 6:11**, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."

Transition

Now what we are going to see in this Judean wilderness is the ultimate test for a human being. Satan knows if he can take down the Son of God, there is no hope for humanity. If Satan can make our Lord fail, then God is a liar and our Lord is condemned and unable to save anyone in the human race. So let's consider the ways in which our Lord was tempted. We'll call this...

II. The King's Scrutiny (Test) (4:2-10).

Our Lord shows us how to resist the devil. He is tested regarding:

- God's *provision & pleasure*
- God's *presence*, and
- God's *plan*

We can say that no sooner as He is anointed as our Messiah and the Mediator of the new Covenant all hell literally breaks loose.

Matthew 4:2, "And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry...and the tempter came" to where Jesus was to tempt Him.

Christ's Tests are Rooted in the Old Testament

When we read our Savior fasted for "forty days" – we realize this is the number of testing. In the Bible, the number 40 always represents God testing man. For example:

- It rained 40 days and 40 nights in the days of **Noah**.
- **Moses** was up on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights.
- **Jonah** preached to the people of Nineveh: "Yet 40 days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4).
- The **children of Israel** have their faith tested in the wilderness for 40 years.
- Our **Lord** is tested in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights.
- After **Christ** rises from the dead, He shows Himself alive to His disciples for 40 days.

Israel, God's Failed Son

As we look at the text of Matthew and the verses that Jesus quotes, this is a test that mirrors the testing of the children of Israel in the wilderness.

Israel is called God's son. Remember what Moses said to Pharaoh in **Exodus 4:22-23**, "you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son, 23 and I say to you, 'Let my son go that he may serve me.'"

Matthew 2:15 quotes **Hosea 11:1**, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." But does God's son Israel serve Him? Does Israel serve YHWH? No! Israel gets out of Egypt and serves a golden calf!

Now we have our anointed Messiah, the Monarch of the New Kingdom, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and He is preparing for His short ministry. Heaven has declared Him to be the Beloved Son of God.

Now Christ takes up where Adam and Israel failed. Israel failed the test and died in the wilderness. Israel tested the Lord and sinned as a whole TEN times in the wilderness.

Jesus our Lord is going to be tested, and He is going to reign victorious.

Adam and Israel's Failures

This is the same setting Adam endured. Adam was isolated. So is Christ. Adam failed. Christ is victorious.

In the same way under Moses, the children of Israel are tested forty years in the wilderness. They refuse to serve God. They would rather serve other gods. Even in the wilderness, when Moses is hearing from God on Mount Sinai, receiving the Ten Commandments, what are the children of Israel doing? Are they serving YHWH as God's "firstborn son"? No!

Enter Christ

Christ enters the scene as the one who will be victorious over Satan. This is God's Son that is faithful in all things, not like Adam, not like Israel. Let's see how He passes the test.

The King Has Come to Subdue

(Paraphrased from G Campbell Morgan):

The King has come, not merely to reign, but to subdue. Christ comes to a Kingdom characterized by anarchy and rebellion. Christ has come to be personally victorious over all those who have rebelled against God, and He has come to defeat and silence the master foe. The King has been proclaimed as being in perfect harmony with God's plan, when God spoke at His baptism, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." But now Christ must face the disorder and the ugliness of the abyss. Christ is goodness at its highest. Now He has come to face and conquer evil at its lowest. And He will overcome!

So let us see how Christ passes the test!

A. A Test of God's Provision & Pleasure

Matthew 4:3-10, "And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.'" 4 But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Are You REALLY the Son of God?

“If you are the Son of God”. The divine voice just echoed from heaven, and already the deceiver is questioning, “Yea, hath God really said...” Are you really the Son of God? You don’t look like YHWH. If you are truly my Creator, the one who made me to be a great angel in heaven... if you made all things from nothing, then turn these stones to bread.

What would be wrong with feeding one’s self? Certainly YHWH should not die in the wilderness. Ah, but Christ was willing to die in the wilderness. He had no pride. He was tempted but He overcame Satan at this crucial point. He would later say, “My food is to do the will of Him that sent me.” Pride is the underlying motive in all sin. Jesus was tempted to put his own physical needs above the plan of God.

Temptation of Human Appetite

This first temptation represents our temptation to commit sins that have to do with *appetite* – the kinds of sin associated with lust. These sins are essentially physical and biological. Bodily drives are not wrong. They are necessary for the preservation of life. But they must never be allowed to get out of control or *take control* of our lives. That place of addiction and domination is reserved *for God alone*.

The Setting of the Temptations

The setting of all three temptations is the book of Deuteronomy, Moses reminding the children of Israel what they’ve come through. Each one of the temptations is going to bring us to a temptation where Israel failed miserably.

And the first temptation is about BREAD, **food** – and human appetites. Israel had barely gotten out of eyesight of Egypt, after they had crossed the mighty Red Sea, and what did they begin to do? They lost sight of their great God and King. They lost sight of the mighty hand that had delivered them. They lost sight of the great Glory Cloud that had led them out of Egypt and fought against the Egyptians. Remember, Moses didn’t deliver these former slaves with a great army. He had no weapons. All He had was the presence of God.

And remember, they had not hardly lost eyesight of Egypt, but that they began grumbling about food!

The Answer of God’s Victorious Son

The answer of Christ comes from Deut. 8. Consider **Deuteronomy 8:2-6**, “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. 3 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. 4 Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. 5 Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. 6 So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him.”

Of course Israel failed miserably. They were not grateful for God’s miraculous provisions. But Christ put’s spiritual nourishment above physical nourishment.

Application

- How often are we tempted in the realm of our physical desires?
- Do you have appetites that are out of control: pride, anger, lust, self-pity?
- Notice Satan can be resisted in these areas. How?

Through the living and abiding Word of God. Say it with me, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

A Temptation to Use His Divine Power Selfishly

Notice the temptation for Christ. It is to utilize His divine power for His own gain. Verse 3, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”

- He will later use His divine attributes to **multiply bread to FEED five thousand** men and then again for four thousand men.
- His first miracle is to turn **water into wine**.

But He will not utilize His attributes for Himself. He is the perfect man. As He says later, “The Son of Man came not to be served, but to give His life a ransom for many.”

Christ’s Food

Christ’s food – His pleasure was to do the will of the Father.

John 4:34 Jesus said: “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.”

That is the true food! As **Psalm 16:11**, “in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

B. A Test of God’s Presence & Protection

Matthew 4:5-7, “Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 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, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” 7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

The Pinnacle of the Temple

The second temptation is a temptation not of **God’s provision**, but of **God’s presence**. So “Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple” (vs 5). The devil now take Christ to the “pinnacle” or literally the “small wing” of Herod’s Temple. This wing of the Temple would have stood 180 feet in the air. This portico was the greatest height around the Temple and overlooked the Kidron Valley, some 450 feet below. So you have the highest place over looking the lowest place.

Throw Yourself Down!

So the devil “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.’” (vs 6).

Psalm 91- A Tremendous Encouragement

Satan is quoting **Psalm 91:11-12**. As the Messiah, Christ could surely claim with absolute confidence that God would protect Him. Psalm 91 is a promise to all of us. Look at Psalm 91:9-12, “Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place— the Most High, who is my refuge— 10 no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. 11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. 12 On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.” It is a tremendous encouragement to all of us!

But Satan twists God’s Word. The Word is meant as a reminder to TRUST in God, not to TEMPT Him and TEST His faithfulness.

Demonstrate Your Messiahship

It was as if Satan was saying, “Prove that You are the Christ! Throw yourself down before all the people down below. You aren’t getting anywhere. You’ll be famous overnight. I’ve brought you up to the pinnacle of the Temple, now throw yourself down!

Why Should the Son of God Have to Suffer?

Satan was urging Christ to be presumptuous, to doubt the timing of God’s plan. Certainly if He is the Son of God He should have special privileges. Why should the Son of God have to suffer?

Christ Learned Obedience Through Suffering

Aren’t we all tempted at times to test God? Why am I in this storm? Take me out of it! We read of our Lord in **Hebrews 5:8** (ESV), “Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.” Christ submitted to the grueling task of being human. It was tedious and tasteless and tiring. He was harassed and harangued by the devil. Could he get out of it? Even at the end of His life he would say, “Not my will but yours be done”.

IT IS WRITTEN: The Testing at Massah

The Savior quotes from Exodus 17:2–7 where Moses asks: “Why do you test the LORD?” and where Moses records, “they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

So Christ quotes Scripture! “It is written: You shall not put the Lord your God to the test” (vs 7).

Obedience in the Storm

God asks us to trust Him in the storm. You are going to suffer. Just as Christ learned obedience through suffering, so must we. We can ask God to remove the suffering, but we must continue to trust God if He leaves us in the storm! In fact we should rejoice in the storm.

Joyful in the Storm

James 1:2–3 (ESV), “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.” Are you able to trust God in the Storm? Do you get bitter? Christ could have used His divine position to alleviate His suffering during His temptation by Satan in the wilderness, but He chose not to! He would not put God to the test. That would be sinful. He came to serve His Father and to do His will. So we are called to do the same. Are you able to trust God in the storm?

So we saw Christ trusting concerning a test for:

- God's **provision** and **pleasure**
- God's **Presence, protection** and **providence**

Now we see...

C. A Test of God's Plan

Jesus was born to rule and serve in league with God. Jesus is going to take back the dominion that Adam lost. God said to Adam, "Be fruitful and multiply and ... have **dominion** ... over the earth" (Gen. 1:28).

Matthew 4:8-10, "Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.' 10 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.'"

Christ was made to rule!

Satan first tempted Christ to make instant food, then with instant fame, and now with instant fortune.

Satan's Dominion

I believe this was literally a high mountain. This is a physical temptation. This is not some vision. It says "the devil took him to a very high mountain". Satan has a very great dominion. He is the prince of the power of the air. He has the whole world under his slavery. He promises Christ that dominion.

Now this dominion is why Christ came. He came to "destroy the works of the devil". He came to "bind the strong man and spoil his goods". Satan says in essence, "you don't have to spoil me. You can have the world and all the people. Just worship me."

There are no shortcuts to the will of God. If we want to share in the glory, we must also share in the suffering (1 Peter 5:10). As the prince of this world, Satan could offer these kingdoms to Christ (John 12:31; 14:30).¹

Jesus Already Promised a Kingdom

But Jesus did not need Satan's offer. The Father had already promised Jesus the kingdom! "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen [nations] for Thine inheritance" (Ps. 2:8). You find the same promise in Psalm 22:22–31, and this is the psalm of the cross.²

It is Written

Jesus quotes **Deuteronomy 6:13**: "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."

III. The King's Victory (4:11).

Matthew 4:11, "Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him."

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Mt 4:1). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

² Ibid.

We have victory in Christ alone! Satan crawled away, a defeated foe; but he did not cease to tempt Jesus. We could translate **Luke 4:13**, “And when the devil had ended every possible kind of temptation, he stood off from Him until a suitable season.”³

When Jesus said, “Be gone,” the devil left Him, because he had no choice. The Lord gives all of His children the power to resist Satan. “Resist the devil,” James assures us, “and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). As he did with Jesus, Satan will not long stay away from us; but with every temptation God “will provide a way of escape” (1 Cor. 10:13). For every temptation Satan leads us into, a way out is provided by the Father. In Christ we have a refuge in the storm!

Satan’s temptations failed, but God’s testings succeeded. Jesus’ responses to the tempter were, in essence, “I will trust the Father; I will not presume on His Word; and I will not circumvent His will. I will take the Father’s good gifts from the Father’s own hand, in the Father’s own way, and in the Father’s own time.” Thus the King was accredited by the severest test.⁴

Conclusion: After Jesus Christ had defeated Satan, He was ready to begin His ministry. No man has a right to call others to obey who has not obeyed himself. Our Lord proved Himself to be the perfect King whose sovereignty is worthy of our respect and obedience. But, true to his purpose, Matthew had one more witness to call to prove the kingship of Jesus Christ.⁵

³ Ibid.

⁴ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (98). Chicago: Moody Press.

⁵ Wiersbe, *ibid.*