

Matthew 4:1-11(Missed reading of scripture)

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[0 : 00] The sons of God came before God, and Satan is in that midst. The enemy of our souls is in that midst. Here's Job, and they're reporting to him. God says, have you considered my servant Job?

The thing that really has just confounded me, and just to be honest with you, at times bothered me more than anything else about the book of Job, is that God brings up Job. Before anything happens, God determines to bring his name up.

So it's almost like, God, I don't want you to bring my name up, right? Don't say, have you considered Billy Joe, or have you considered this person? Because it is God who initiates this. It is not that Satan says, well, I want to go.

God says, what about Job? Go look at Job. And here we read the same thing where it says that the Spirit led him to the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Because this is a determined, intentional event, so that the validation of the King can be put on display for all men.

[0 : 59] He is taking him to the place where, just to be honest, every one of us would fail. Taking him to the place where every one of us would stumble, so that he could show that he is who he says he is.

He is going to be able to do what he says he's going to be able to do. He is absolutely perfect, and his perfection can only be put on display in the most imperfect locations.

God is making every effort here. Both God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit is making every effort here to settle the issue for us, to show us beyond a shadow of a doubt.

He is sinless. He is perfect. And he is worthy to die for your sins and mine. He's going to do this so that all may know.

It is something that God determined. He didn't come in the flesh and dwell among men and determine to live a life of comfort and peace and a comfort of ease and then go, Oh yeah, by the way, I'm going to offer you forgiveness.

[2 : 03] No, he determined to come in the most unlikely of manners. He determined to come in the most unlikely place. He determined to come in some of the most unfit circumstances and he determined to do the hardest thing to show that he is able.

And this is something that did not take Jesus by surprise. This is not something that caught him off guard. This isn't something that he stumbled into. Friend, listen to me. This is something he went to. That he went to. The other gospel account of this time closes a little bit different than the book of Matthew. The second gospel accounting of this time found in the book of Luke says that when Satan left him, he left him until an opportune time.

Until an opportune time. And it's this little word phrase because there was... There's a theme that runs through the gospel of Luke that his time has not yet come, his time has not yet come, his time has not yet come.

But I'm just wanting you to see here the reality of these determined events. Because when Satan leaves Jesus in the gospel of Luke, Luke records for us that he left him until the opportune time.

[3 : 16] And then when we get near the end of... Now that's John, not Luke. So you're supposed to catch me in that. When we get to John 13, John records, And Jesus, knowing the time has come, looked at Judas Iscariot and said, What you do, do quickly.

Jesus set the opportune time for Satan to have his way again. What we understand is that every time Jesus faces the enemy of our souls, it is Jesus who's the initiator and it is he who sets the schedule.

Now that's big. Because we're caught off guard, he never is. It is a determined event. Number two, we see this is a deliberate attack.

It is a deliberate attack because look at what it says. And after he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights. By the way, we just need to understand the wording in 40 here. 40 is a number of completion or a number of fullness.

I don't think that 40 is used coincidentally here. It is a direct reflection of the 40 years of wilderness wandering. It is a reflection of the fullness of God's judgment. It's a reflection of the fullness of everything that happens.

[4 : 32] So literally what it's reading is until he came to the place where he was absolutely, completely, at the end, hungry. After he had fasted 40 days and 40 nights, he then became hungry.

So I would probably get a little hungry too after 40 days and 40 nights. But look at this. Because we're looking at this deliberate attack. And the tempter came. After 40 days and 40 nights of fasting and after 40 days and 40 nights of being in this desolate place, when he became hungry, then the tempter came and said to him, If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread. Now, again, it is not coincidental that the first temptation Satan brings against him at the end of this is one that would meet a physical need. Because when he became exceedingly hungry, then the tempter came in with a solution.

We need to understand this. Satan is an opportunistic individual. Which means that every time you think you have a need, he has something that he can promise may meet that need.

And he comes deliberately and again intentionally and he comes in the right way. Your temptations may not be my temptation, but I can promise you the tempter who comes to you knows where you're at just as much as he knows where I am.

[5 : 57] And he knows how to hit each and every one of us where it matters most. After Jesus became hungry, then he said, If you're the Son of God, turn these stones into bread.

Now, he could have because the Bible says that God could raise up descendants of Abraham from the stones, right? Jesus absolutely could have done this. He had every bit of authority to do this. But when Satan comes, he says, If God did declare you are his son, he begins to cast doubt as Satan always does.

This is something, one thing you need to understand about the enemy of our souls is he does not change his schematics any, right? He does not change his plans any. He does not change the way he does things very much anymore.

He does not change anything. Again, I like football. I never was really good at football. I never could really play football that good. I was a little too slow, a little too short, and not too athletic. So I did what all people like me do.

I chose baseball. Baseball is a game that was much slower, right? And I'm just joking. Some of you are going to get upset. I'm just joking. But anyway, I like the schematics of football. I like all those things. But, you know, there's some games that are not really exciting to watch, and usually it's like the Navy and Army games because they still play the game the way they've always played it.

[7 : 09] We're just going to line up and run the ball down the middle. They're not spreading it out. Now, I like watching it because I like you're seeing men who are men who are out there fighting, and many of them aren't fighting for a big payday. They're fighting because they're just there.

They're not efficient to go give their life, and they're going to go give their time. They're going to go serve their country. But it's just almost from a sport event, very boring because they haven't changed the way they do things.

We're just going to line up, run it down the middle. Many people today want to watch this spread offense. We're going to sling it all over the yard, and we're going to throw it everywhere, and we're going to have fun. One thing you need to understand about our enemy, he still plays the same game.

Right? The first thing he did with Adam and Eve is he caused them to doubt what God had said, and he chose to meet them at a physical need. The very same thing he does with Christ.

Are you really the Son of God? If you are the Son of God, then do this. He is one who takes a deliberate attack and always comes at what appears to be our greatest need.

[8 : 08] When Satan comes to you and tempts you, he's always going to bring what appears to be the fulfillment of what you think you need most. And after 40 days and 40 nights of fasting, the very thing we think we need most is food.

Jesus says, that's not what we need. But we need to understand that. We need to understand that the enemy who comes at us comes deliberately. Satan's not playing around when he comes to

tempt us.

And this is why we have to be so much careful where we're at. We have to be on so much more guard. We have to be so much more prepared. While he has not changed his plans, he runs it well. And he does exactly what he does every time to the best of his ability. He's limited, yes, but he knows what he's doing. He shows up at your life at the rat moment.

Do you think it's coincidental that things happen in your life? Do you think it's accidental the way that he comes to you and you find yourself stumbling and falling? No. He deliberately attacks you much as what we see here.

[9 : 12] It isn't a deliberate attack. He met Christ where he meets all of people with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. This is where he attacks each and every one of us.

The lust of the flesh. Is this something you think you want? You feel like you want it because your flesh is telling you you want it? It's the lust of the flesh. It's the lust of the eyes. Does it look good? If it looks good, right, this is the same way that Adam and Eve fell.

We don't have to say that Eve fell because it was Adam who fell. The lust of the flesh. There's fruit that looks good to eat. The lust of the eyes. It looks good on that tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the pride of life. You will become like God.

When Satan comes to you, he comes at you deliberately in one of those three categories. The lust of the flesh. You think you need it because you feel like you need it. And by the way, we need to be careful with feelings because our feelings, let's go ahead and admit this, just because we feel like it doesn't mean we should because feelings lie.

Don't base your faith upon feelings. Don't base your confidence on your feelings. Feelings are a great gift of God, but feelings are also used of the enemy. Feelings are quite often wrong.

[10 : 18] There are some things that feel good that in the end really aren't good. That's the lust of the flesh because it feels like it would meet a need. The lust of the eyes. It looks good. It's appealing. It's shiny. It's right there. You think you need it because it looks good to you.

Or the pride of life is going to make your life better. Live your best life now. All those things. The pride of life. I don't want to live my best life now because the Bible has told me my best life's still to come.

Why would I want to live the best life I could live right now in this world that's full of decay and breaking down and falling apart and spiraling downhill really quick? I'd rather live my best life in glory where the streets are made out of gold.

So we understand these things. Satan deliberately attacks us in any of those areas. We need to be prepared for that. The third thing we see from this text, this validation of the king, this is the very thing that validates him, is we see number three, the defeated enemy.

The defeated enemy. Because at the end, Satan has to leave because Jesus says, Go, Satan. He tells him to leave. By the way, only Jesus, he tells this great parable, Jesus tells this great parable, says that the only way that someone comes into the house is that if a stronger individual goes in and binds the strong man and casts him out, right?

[11 : 32] It says you have to have one stronger than the strong man to go in and bind him and tie him up and cast him out. Well, only Jesus is strong enough to bind the strong man of Satan, that is the enemy, and cast him out and tell him he has to leave.

So we need to be careful because we can't just look at Satan and tell him to leave us alone, but we can say that greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world. And we can say that Jesus says you have to leave me alone.

And we can say these realities. We see this defeated enemy, but we see the tactics that are used here. Jesus didn't defeat him with willpower. Jesus didn't defeat him with strength. Jesus didn't defeat him with I'm going to get my life straight.

Jesus didn't defeat him with I'm going to do this to the best of my ability. Jesus didn't say, well, I'm going to, and I'm going to, I'm going to. Jesus defeat him with one thing, the very word of God.

Because when Satan says if you are the son of God, turn these stones into bread, Jesus says it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.

See, the Bible tells us in Galatians to put on the full armor of God. And those offensive weapons, the only offensive weapon we have is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, Paul says.

[12 : 43] But the word sword that Paul uses there is not this big long sword that you swing around with two hands that many of us men would like to, oh, that's cool, I want me one of those big swords I can swing around.

That's not what he's talking about because the word that Paul uses is not the long sword, it's actually the little short daggers. And if you remember when Paul was writing this, all these imprisonment, he's got these Roman soldiers in front of him, so he's looking at him. And Roman soldiers, they were bad dudes, right? They were usually well-armed. And a good Roman soldier would normally have probably five or six of those short daggers upon his body somewhere.

And what Paul is giving the word imagery there is to take out the dagger that you need to kill that enemy. It's hand-to-hand combat.

It's short, close encounter. But it's this short sword that will slay that one. And then we kind of put that alongside what we find in the book of Revelations where it says that Jesus will slay the enemies with the sword of the Lord, which is the very word of God.

[13:51] So the picture we have in Scripture is that the sword which kills the enemy is the word of God. And it's a specific word for a specific temptation.

That means you don't stand up and say, Satan, if you're bothering me, I'm just going to wave the Bible at you. No, you find in the Bible where the dagger is that kills that enemy at that moment. You pull that sword out, which means you've got to know what you have in your armory. And Satan came and Jesus knew the exact Scripture.

Well, bread would be good, but that's not all I need because the Bible says it is written. And then Satan likes to try to turn that around because Satan comes at him the second time and says, well, if that's how we're going to play the game, then in verse 6, if you are the Son of God, throw yourself down.

He takes him to the pinnacle of the temple. He puts him in that high spot. There's all these worshipers down below him. And picture this here, Jesus standing on the pinnacle. We don't know if he gave him a vision or if he actually did it. We don't know if it's a reality or if it's just a vision, but he said, look at all those worshipers down there.

[14:54] Jump down there amidst them and you're going to levitate right above them. You're going to stop and everybody will know then there's something special about you. I mean, if you jump off the highest point of the temple and you don't hit the ground, everybody's going to know there's something special about you.

Or you could be John the Apostle that historically says they threw him off the highest part of the temple. He did hit the ground and he bounced and got up. And they said, well, that's weird. We couldn't kill him. So they put him in a pot of boiling oil and he sat there and praised God.

And they said, well, that's weird. So they put him with the, they threw him to the beast in front of the wild lions and the lions stopped short and they didn't eat him. And they said, that's weird. Let's just put him on the island of Patmos. And John said, thank you. And then on the day of the Lord, the Lord showed up and he wrote the book of Revelations.

And they eventually got tired of him being on the island of Patmos. So they brought him back so he began pastoring again. John says, I'm not the one who will never die. Jesus just said, I won't die until he's through with me. Right? That's just a totally side note there but it's pretty cool about this whole pinnacle of the temple thing.

But Satan brings Jesus there and he says, jump off because it is written. He says, he will command his angels concerning you and on their hands they will bury you up so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. What does he say?

[15:58] Jesus, it says in the book of Psalms you can do crazy things and that God gives his angels charge over you and he'll just stop you right above the ground and everybody will look up and go, wow, look at Jesus.

Now Satan used scripture but he left half of that verse out. Because be careful, your enemy comes to you with scripture but he doesn't give you the fullness of scripture.

Because it says in the garden, did he say, right? Did he say? Remember what Satan said to Eve? Did God say you should not touch the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

Now is that what God said? No. God said you shouldn't eat. Big difference. Satan always twists scripture which means if someone gives you a Bible verse to validate something you want to do because it feels good, be careful.

Be careful. Because Satan here has a verse to validate what he's asking Jesus to do. Now see, the part of the verse he left out is that the scripture says that he would give his angels charge of him as he walks in obedience to his leading.

[17:07] Hmm. Was it God the Father asking him to jump off the pinnacle of the temple? I don't think that's as he was walking in obedience to his leading. But Jesus didn't have an argument here because he came up with another verse or he said this, he said, it is also written you shall not tempt the Lord your God.

And Satan comes at him with one third time and he shows him all the kingdoms of the earth and all of their glory.

And he makes this astounding statement and says, all of these have been given to me and I'll give them to you if you'll just bow down and worship me. See, the temptation here is for Jesus to bypass the cross.

You've heard that before, right? I'll give you the kingdoms of the world and you won't even have to suffer. You don't even have to go to the cross because he gets the kingdoms on the other side of the cross.

The world will be his footstool. We sang that song this morning. We were saying that it's in one of those stanzas we sang this morning that the world would be his footstool, right? He didn't have to bow down to Satan to get that. He's going to put his feet upon it after he goes through Satan and he defeats him there.

[18:12] But Satan makes this great statement that all these have been given to me. You say, well, did he really belong to him? Well, yeah, because man had the keys to the kingdom of this earth and man forfeited those keys and gave them to Satan and Jesus here wasn't there to argue those things because he tells him to leave him alone.

Be careful. Don't try to reason with your enemy. Just defeat him. Don't try to reason with just defeat. This is something your pastors happen to learn. In a multitude of words, there is sin. It means the more we have to reason our way out of something, the more likely it is we're going to fall because of that something.

Jesus just says, go. Go. Because I'm not here to talk about what you can offer me. I'm not here to talk about what you have. I'm not here to talk about all the appeal that it comes.

Go, because you shall worship the Lord your God and serve him only. He defeats him. the defeated enemy because it says he left and the angels came and ministered to him.

[19:26] And then the next verse shows us Jesus walking out and beginning his public ministry. Why? Because now we know and all the world knows beyond a shadow of a doubt he is the king we need.

We don't need David as our king. As good as David was, David had problems. Right? We don't need wise king Solomon because as wise as he was, he still had problems.

We don't even need righteous king Hezekiah because as much good as Hezekiah did, he still had problems. We don't need a king like us. We need a king to come to us who is so much better than us.

And Matthew rightly declares, Jesus is that king. He's that king. The question we ask ourselves is this, which king are we serving?

Let's pray. Lord, I thank you so much for this day. God, I thank you for your glory. Lord, just your glory that's revealed to us through scripture.

[20:37] We pray that our lives would fall in humble submission to who you are. Lord, that we would walk in obedience to all you've called us to do. Lord, we thank you.

We ask that you would move in our midst. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.