

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

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PART 8: TEMPTING JESUS

THE TRANSITION

Jesus arrives at the height of John's ministry and asks to be baptized. John felt inferior but Jesus insisted that it be done so that the messianic prophecy could be fulfilled.

Matthew 3:13-15

It is important to note that Jesus was submerged under the water – not sprinkled on the head – by his second cousin.

The Godhead was present as God the Father spoke from heaven and the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus standing in the water in the form of a dove. **verses 16-17**

John the Baptist had prepared the way for Jesus, the anointing of the Holy Spirit shifted, and in the next chapter, we are going to examine the birth of Jesus' ministry.

TEMPTING JESUS

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke record the temptation Jesus experienced in the wilderness. Mark's account does not contain as many details as Matthew and Luke.

The Holy Spirit gave the Gospel writers freedom to record what they felt was important for future generations. Jesus told the disciples there were things He could not tell them at that time and the Holy Spirit would reveal it to them later, and refresh their memories of what He had spoken to make sure their different accounts were accurate. **John 16:7-15**

It is interesting to note that both Matthew and Luke state Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit to walk out into the wilderness on the east side of the Jordan River while Mark says the Holy Spirit drove Him out into the wilderness. **Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1**

Jesus was alone when He left the Jordan River area and walked into an uninhabited area. The reason for the fasting could have been because He had no supplies or it may have been to strengthen Himself spiritually. **Matthew 4:2**

Mark reported there were wild animals around Jesus. Lions roamed the wilderness areas on both sides of the Jordan River until they became extinct around 1000 A.D. It is obvious that holy angels must have protected Jesus from the animals that would harm Him. In order for Jesus to replicate how a human being lives, the angels did not show themselves to Jesus, who by faith had to believe that they were present just like we do. **Hebrews 1:13-14**

Mark also reported that Jesus was tempted continually by Satan during the 40 days in the wilderness. **Mark 1:13; Hebrews 4:14-16**

Lucifer and his fallen angels were sentenced to the Lake of Fire for organizing a rebellion and trying to dethrone God. When Lucifer appealed his sentence and accused



God of being unrighteous, mankind was created to show that God is righteous and Satan was given the legal right to challenge the human race in the Garden of Eden. **Genesis 3:1-7**

Adam and Eve had no knowledge of what had taken place before they were created. Thus, for a master deceiver and liar like Lucifer, it was an easy pick when he approached Eve.

Matching up against his Creator some 4,000 years later would prove to be much more difficult. Jesus had been softened up through the fasting and the constant harassment from the Devil, and then came the final movement when the body of Jesus was weakest. **Matthew 4:2**

FIRST TEMPTATION

Since Jesus had to be tempted in the flesh, my understanding is that Satan was able to produce a humanoid body to approach Jesus. Unlike Eve, Jesus was well aware that this was Lucifer appearing in a form of a man.

It is important to note that Jesus was passive. He did not reveal that He knew who Lucifer was or remind him of the trial and his subsequent sentencing to the Lake of Fire. Jesus simply waited to see what Satan would do.

The Devil started the confrontation by challenging whether Jesus was actually the Son of God and appealing to His physical hunger. **verse 3**

Jesus did not respond to the challenge of His divinity, but quoted an Old Testament passage that man is not to live by bread alone. **verse 4; Deuteronomy 8:3**

SECOND TEMPTATION

In the second temptation, Satan transported Jesus to a pinnacle, the highest point on the wall of the temple in Jerusalem, an estimated height of 300 feet. Satan displayed his ability to fly, a feat that Jesus was unable to perform in His incarnated physical body.

The temptation was that if Jesus jumped from such a height, holy angels would be forced to catch Him, the people below would see this event and declare that Jesus was the Messiah. Lucifer backed up this temptation with Scriptures to prove his case.

Matthew 4:5-6; Psalm 91:11-12

However, this was not the way God the Father had instructed Jesus to conduct His ministry. There would be no stunts and Jesus responded to the Devil by quoting Scripture a second time. **Matthew 4:7; Deuteronomy 6:16**

THIRD TEMPTATION

Up to this point Lucifer did not know that Jesus was going to pay for the sins of the human race on the cross. This redemption of mankind would be carried out solely by the Son of God and God the Father. **1 Corinthians 2:7-8; 2 Corinthians 5:18**

Satan knew that Jesus had come to seize the earth from him and put out a subtle temptation in which he was willing to give up control of the earth in return for Jesus bowing His knees and worshiping His fallen angel.

Lucifer flew Jesus to a high mountain peak. The Son of God again did not resist being transported in such a manner.¹ **Matthew 4:8**

Jesus revealed that He knew who Satan was and rejected the offer by quoting a combination of Old Testament Scriptures. **verses 9-10; Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:20; 1 Samuel 7:3**

The Devil left immediately after Jesus rejected this third and final temptation. In case you overlooked this fact, Jesus was stuck on a mountaintop. As a result, holy angels returned Jesus to Galilee and made sure He received food and water. **Matthew 4:11; Luke 4:14**

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?

¹ This gives credibility to people who have told me they were picked up and taken to a UFO.