

Jesus in the wilderness

[Matthew 4:1-11](#) or [Luke 4:1-13](#)



Jesus encountered Satan and these temptations after 40 days of fasting (possible references to Noah's journey and Israel's initial time in the wilderness before the punishments). The difference between the two versions is that Luke switched the order of the second and third temptations. We see here how Jesus used the Word against the Enemy to not only fight back, but also to reiterate the orders God gave the Israelites in the Old Testament.

First Temptation - Hunger

- Satan knew Jesus had all power (in this case, could turn stones into food), but Jesus countered with the Word.

- Here, Jesus quotes Deut 8:3, showing that spirit nourishment from the Word is more important to man than physical food.
- Moses to the Israelites, NET “So He humbled you by making you hungry and then feeding you with unfamiliar manna. He did this to teach you that humankind cannot live by bread alone, but also by everything that comes from the Lord’s mouth.”

Second Temptation - Testing God

- Jesus was then brought up to the top of the temple in Israel and Satan told him to go over the edge to test if God would send angels.
- Satan referenced Ps 91:11 but is using it in an *incorrect context*
- Ps 91 addresses one who has sought shelter in the Lord and assures him that God will protect him from danger.
- Jesus responded with Deuteronomy 6:16 “You must not put the Lord your God to the test (as you did at Massah).” (referencing Exodus 17:1-2 when Moses struck the rock for the complaining/testing Israelites).
- As Jesus points out in his reply, however, this protection does not extend to cases where the intent is to put the Lord to the test.

Third Temptation - Worldly gain

- Satan then brought Him to the top of a mountain and showed Him all the world’s kingdoms, promising them if Jesus bowed.
- Obviously, Jesus refused and quoted [Deut 6:13](#) (NET You must revere the Lord your God, serve him, and take oaths using only his name.)
- Satan then left and angels came to minister.

Notice how the enemy tempted not once but three times? You can take from this passage that when you turn away from one temptation, the enemy will try to tempt you with a different angle. Jesus was first tempted in the flesh(hunger), then seeking God's power during a self induced circumstance (Satan wanted Jesus to fall whether to test God or harm Jesus in the physical) and then fame\worldly gain. The last two were more related to lust of the eyes(having all earthly kingdoms) and a selfish demand towards God to show His power instead of having faith. It's here we have our main tactic to counter temptation, the Word. It's not a coincidence either that each response came from Deuteronomy. Moses received direct downloads from God that he then gave to the Israelites as directions to follow. We know what happened when Israel disobeyed the laws (Israel teaching).

Each time was an order from God Moses told the Israelites to follow. Jesus spoke these as responses to Satan's temptations to follow the flesh. Jesus commanded Satan to leave during the 3rd temptation and he left. The verses could also be seen as Jesus stating the orders from God to show the enemy that the orders were more important to Him rather than the desires of the flesh.

Jesus trusted God's timing when Satan tried to tempt Him with things God *already was planning* on giving Him. When we give in to God's plan instead of trying to figure out life ourselves, that gives us peace to be covered and used by God wherever he leads us.

Philippians 2:9, NIV "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father."

Jesus knew what was at stake if He fell into temptation instead of remaining dedicated to God and His purpose. He trusted the Father in every trial, and chose to endure betrayal and suffering for us.

Hebrews 12:1, NIV "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

We must remain trusting in the Father when these trials come, knowing Jesus experienced them during His time walking the earth.

References

- <https://seminary.bju.edu/theology-in-3d/how-to-face-temptation-as-jesus-did/>
- <https://www.libertychurchnewyorkcity.com/blog/how-to-overcome-3-lessons-from-jesus-temptations-in-the-wilderness>