



27th September 2026

The Temptations of Jesus Christ

Reading Luke 4:1-14

And Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. These few words say little, but tell us much. Jesus the Son of God. But Jesus the Son of Adam. The first point we must take note of as we follow these experiences of the Lord Jesus in the wilderness, is that what he went through proves categorically that the Lord and Savior was not God the Son, as we repeatedly demonstrate from hundreds of Bible passages of this apostate and pagan teaching. James 1:13 *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts he any man:* thus it was impossible for God the Creator of all things, and from whom all power is derived to be put into this position of challenge and uncertainty. Instead, these experiences which befell the Son of God, the Son of Man prove decisively his humanity, and exactly why he is so suitable and solely qualified to be elevated the right hand of the Father, to be the Saviour for mankind, in that he understands perfectly the decision making process and struggle each man and woman endures Hebrews 4:15 *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

Jesus made it his mission, his grave undertaking, his priority, to be about his Fathers business. Do you remember when he said that? At the age of

12, when his parents were worried sick looking for him, and found him in the temple where he was in deep conversation with the religious experts of the law of Moses – his response to their parental concern – why are you looking for me, do you not realise that I must be about my Fathers business? Nothing changed as he grew older, but rather it became his cause, and way of life. In all things this was the case, but the first time it was public, was to submit to the waters of baptism to fulfil all righteousness. He also needed to be covered by the blood of the Lamb. As a son of Adam, as a possessor, and inheritor of the nature of Adam, he too inherited the curse laid upon all men, in dying thou shalt die, and he inherited the same propensity to sin. The human nature which seeks only to serve itself, and twists and turns from what is right and true, instead to what suits self best. Jesus though the Son of God in being about his Fathers business set about with zeal to fulfil that business and provide that covering. In every way, he knew it was to undo what the Son of Adam did wrong. When Adam disobeyed, Christ Jesus obeyed. This was not automatic. Hebrews 5:8 *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered*; How would he react when that obedience would become costly? He was the Son of God. He knew it, but did he trust the Father? He knew the word. It was a mirror of his life past present and future. He knew every twist and turn of the narrow path to life everlasting long before he arrived at them. But would he use the Scripture as a call to obedience when it really counted? He knew the glory that would await him. To sit with His Father, and work with him. Yet, such heady and exhilarating thoughts, which would have sent such a thrill through him, were easily balanced by the earthy struggles of life on the streets of Judea and Galilee. Would he refuse shortcuts, and take an easy path? Now was the time of the beginning of his public mission, no longer a private tradesman, but to be declared to the world.

His first act in public was to submit to the waters of baptism, the acknowledgement that his eternal life was dependent upon the victory - his victory, but one made possible by the gift of his Father. Only if he

obeyed in all things. As his cousin proclaimed: Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. Emerging from the water, symbolic of the grave and rising again, he was on the path to Calvary - the true baptism, the voice from heaven. *This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* The Holy Spirit like a dove alighted upon him. The pleasure of the LORD God. Oh imagine how we would feel, if the Father says this to us? Indescribable joy. Do you think it possible? But the Lord Jesus, behold he hath done all things well. He fully deserved such Divine acclaim. We are not worthy, to receive such words. Is God well pleased with sin? God cannot look upon it, it is abhorrent, he cannot abide it. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil. Jesus rewarded by the confidence of His Father was gifted the tools for His new trade as Shepherd, Bishop, Guide, Teacher, Apostle and High Priest, The Holy Spirit. Full of it. He knew what that power was capable of. It drove asunder the seas for his nation to cross, it guided them across the waste howling wilderness for forty years, it gave them the manna in the desert, it drove out the nations before them, and lifted them, elevated them above all nations to become the Kingdom of God. That same power, in its same force was in Him. He was full of it. But he refused to be about His own business. He knew the Holy Spirit was there to strengthen him in the work he had to do for His father. Yet, perhaps, coming to terms with these extraordinary abilities entrusted to him was not as easy as we might think. The same Holy Spirit led him we read into the wilderness. We would expect nothing less from the Lord Jesus, again being led, submitting to the will of the Father. Yet as we know Mark records it slightly differently. He was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness. *Ekbollo..* to throw out, to be cast out, to be expelled. That is what the word driven means in the original tongue. Jesus being led of the Spirit is *anage*, to bring out, to lead up. So we see here two forces, a leading, and a thrusting, pulling, pushing. Let us consider this a moment. We have a man, an exemplar of self-control, suppressed at the carpenters bench, though a child prodigy, a genius in the temple courts confounding the doctors of the law, now aged thirty, at the peak of his life, held back

for so long, all the time yearning to get on with the job, and do what was asked of him, now was the time to begin. The world was before him. The poor of the flock, the lost sheep of the house of Israel were without a shepherd, He was their Saviour. What, do I really have to go into the wilderness? Surely, you and I would balk at such a distraction. I have had enough time waiting around, come on let's go! Do I really need to be by myself?

We do not read of such a turmoil. Are we wrong to imagine it? No. Because he was tempted in all points. He was. He was driven, but he allowed himself to be led. It was this submission. Submission cannot be counted if there is no tendency for resistance. The Lord Jesus would not be worthy of praise if his submission was a robotic mechanical action pre-programmed. No, he is worthy, because obeying was not his natural will. But the Word triumphed. He was to taste death for every man. How many of his countrymen had perished in the self-same wilderness because of disobedience? They who were under the law, who had been under probation for forty years. His nation had spiritually never escaped the wilderness. The land of Promise was yet before them, they were awaiting their Joshua. Their Saviour. But to lead them, he had to understand them, feel their pain, understand their struggles, to be their representative, to be their brother. He also himself likewise took part of the same. So he went into the wilderness. Looking down and around. There was nothing uplifting. Dusty, desolate, dry, scrubby thorn bushes, rock strewn landscape. Not a great start to his mission. We can surely sympathise with that. Mark in his gospel record uses a favourite word immediately, he says that immediately he was baptised he was driven into the wilderness. When are baptised into the saving Name of Jesus Christ. We become a new creation, a new beginning. Full of promise hope, potential. But who are we really? Do we know? God is not interested in the old man we left behind. We know he/she was a character all right! But what of the character of the new man? When Adam was created, yes, behold he was very good. So too the second

Adam, in whom God was well pleased. But the first Adam, he was tempted, why? To form his character. God began his work immediately. So too with the Lord Jesus, true, his character was without blemish already, without spot, he had never allowed the old man to triumph, and the new man was already there, but for our sakes, for our sakes, he had to go through the process of refining by the fire of trial, so it is we can follow. When we emerge from the waters of baptism the weight and baggage of past mistakes, reputation and sin are left behind, dead in the water. But sadly, immediately we can find ourselves driven into situations we do not like, most unsavoury. Dry, desolate moments, nothing it seems is particularly uplifting at times, as we are faced with the grim reality that life goes on as before. Still Jesus was buoyed with the elation of the praises heaped upon him by the Father, by the deep respect of cousin John the Baptist. The impressed faces of the disciples of John, and the crowd silently watching.. He knew he was The Truth. In these situations, human nature is at its most vulnerable.. 1 Corinthians 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. Complacency and self-satisfaction. But the Lord Jesus endured. We read, he ate no bread for forty days, he ate nothing. He must have drunk water, as the records do not deny it, and his survival in the wilderness was not a miracle. What was perhaps a miracle is that water was provided. But as Elijah and Moses would have no doubt have pointed out to the Lord Jesus in the mount of transfiguration, they too endured in the wilderness, both of them Elijah in Mount Horeb, and Moses in Mount Sinai, both without eating anything, both for forty days and nights. So, Jesus now in the wilderness, not only fulfilling the law and prophets, but like his people, and like Elijah and Moses, underwent a probation. The bare minimum for the spiritual man to survive is the water of the word. We MUST have it. 7 days apparently is the most we can survive without water. Food, well, hunger-strikers in the Irish troubles reached 66 days, The record for a hunger strike is ten years. But water, not possible. If we think we can traverse the desert, this time of probation and stay

spiritually alive without the Water of Life we must have another think coming. We will surely perish. Can we feel that thirst? The Messianic Psalm, shows even the Lord Jesus knew this Psalm 42:2 *My soul thirsts for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?* Psalm 63:1 *O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;* It is difficult enough to resist the devil, why make it harder for ourselves? Make it a habit we must, to read a little every day, drink a little every day. So the Lord he kept focussed, fasting for forty days. We are not required to fast today. It can be a good thing to do for health reasons, - but as far as a religious necessity. Not at all. It is a mistake to think that it is a mark of holiness. Instead, it is a distraction, making it something we can achieve, do in our own strength. God does not require it of us. It is not becoming for the flesh to glory in our own will. What does it achieve? Isaiah 58:5-8, *Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? No what does God require? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?...Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, ...and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.*

The Lord Jesus spent the time in deep meditation contemplating the road ahead of him, of the journey his own nation took through the wilderness, till they would come to the birth, the trials and temptations of all who have gone before, all those who lived and died in expectation and hope of the Saviour. Now it was his turn, to bear all of their burdens, and generations to come. Alone, he came to himself, famished. Maybe he felt rejected a little, all had been before him, all were expecting him, expecting so much of him, where was he now, far way on his own, a small man in a massive landscape. That is all of us before God. Insignificant. Unless the Spirit resides within us. And Christ Jesus was full of the Spirit.

And the devil said unto him *If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread*. The slanderer. What is this devil? The churches tell us that Jesus was tempted by an external supernatural personal devil.

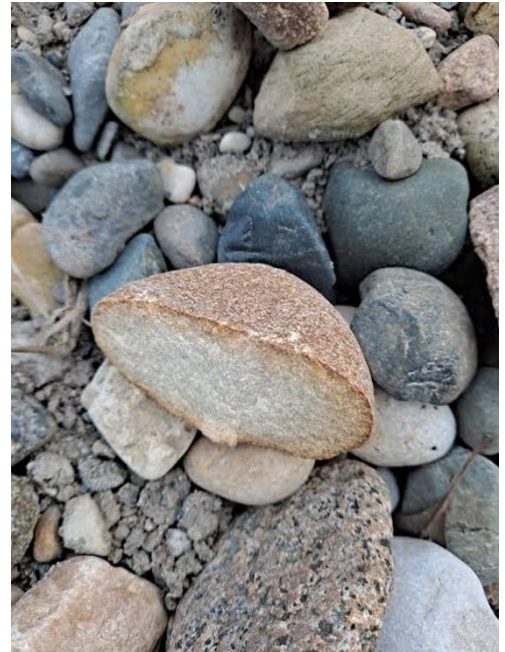


Just a quick google search shows this: But we recall what the Apostle Paul said *he was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin*. His temptation in the wilderness must, therefore, come into the category of our experiences. This at once excludes the popular idea that it was the supernatural personal devil of popular theology that tempted Jesus. No man is ever tempted in this way, but always by the incitements of the flesh, either operating spontaneously within, or outside influence.

But the word devil or diabolos in Greek is made of two words Dia - balos, dia across, balos, to hurl, to obstruct, or cut across, traduce, malign. It was an opposite voice to the voice of obedience. It rudely interrupted the reverie of submission. A voice of rebellion. Contrary reasoning to the normal way Jesus thought. If thou be the son of God... an element of doubt creeping in... been here left alone all this time, not being told what to do next. "Well, if you are, you can prove it". There is no need for there to be a second person next to Jesus asking these questions. It is important to realise that all these thoughts would have come to him by himself. They are what we can call today intrusive thoughts. Unwelcome, but they come to mind, and are distracting.

"Look at those round loaf like rocks there, use some of that Spirit to convert into bread, there you are problem solved, and you will surely

know you are the son of God... we can almost hear the echoes of the diaboalos ringing through the centuries, it is not so different to the temptation placed before the first human pair, Adam and Eve – you shall not surely die... doubts creep in...temptations when we are most often alone, when no one else can see, or when we are tired, or when we are hungry, or irritable, or worried. Vulnerable, temptations, trials, some are plausible, the flesh argues most convincingly, subtly, self-justified, you are the Son of God right? The Son. You are entitled to this, you have been given everything, it is yours. But the sense of entitlement did not belong to Jesus, he did not believe in cheating, or taking something which he had not earned. His Father would be pleased to help him in miraculous ways, but not unconditionally, and certainly not to appease the ungrateful, and lustful urges within. And Jesus answered him, saying, *It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.* This is not some random passage, Jesus plucked from the law. Even if it was, it would have been a good answer, and shown a deft memory, and good use of the scripture to counter the temptation. But the Lord knew that in the wilderness he was mirroring the experiences of his own people. How they too fell a-lusting.



Jesus brought to mind the very passage that Moses described to the people Deut 8:3 the giving of the manna, *And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou would keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which you knew not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out*

of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. God gave them this miraculous bread from heaven, they gave in to their temptations and murmured against God because they had no bread in the wilderness, not trusting God, they threatened to stone Moses, *have you brought us into this wilderness to kill us, let us go back to Egypt.* That is how man responds to the lust. We are reminded of the words of the Apostle John how he summarises that which pertains to the world and not God, the work of the diabolos: 1 John 2:14 *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.* Christ Jesus experienced the power of the lust of the flesh, like his fellow brethren. But unlike them, and unlike you and me, he didn't give in. He was clearly aligned with their experiences and learnt from them, and knew what had to be done, what was the remedy... IT IS WRITTEN.. The Father expects me, and has commanded me a different way. Jesus did not sin, because he thought this way. As the Apostle James points out in 1:14,15 *14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Jesus refused to let the thought engender into action, he would not even indulge the thought, and turn around and savour it in his mind. He cut it dead. That is what we must do. If not, like Israel we will die in the wilderness. The Lord Jesus turned away from the visual reminders of food. *Resist the diabolos* says James the Apostle, *and he will flee from you.*

The two gospel records which inform of us of these intimate moments in the struggle of the Lord Jesus, record the next temptation sin a different order, this is rarely mentioned, but the order is not important. Matthew tells us he went to the holy city, but Luke says it was the high mountain. We are using Luke's record as an historian who recorded things more as they happened who narrates how the next temptation took place *in a moment of time...* it cannot be a literal experience then as many people try to insist, but suddenly in an instant, being transported to a high

mountain from where he could view all the Kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, in reality not possible, but in the imagination most certainly, And the diabolos said unto him, *All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.* Again,



the Lord Jesus demonstrating that he was partaking of the same flesh and blood as his brethren, he had been given extraordinary power, as John 17:2 reveals, *he had been given power over all flesh*, and now in fact the whole world lay before him, he could do with it as he saw fit, to elevate himself, he could become higher than Caesar, but to what end, what would it achieve, the greatest enemy, the one inside him prompting him to think such things, would not be destroyed, and that was his mission right now, that was the will of the Father, and that is what he must do first. True, Jesus was given attributes and advantages we might think, but such power only increased the degree of temptation, it is all relative, so we can't think, oh it was alright for him, it was in fact exactly the same. As Jesus said himself in Luke 12:48: *For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required:*

How do we deal with power, authority, it is a common temptation, do we wield it for our own convenience or for the greater good? Worshipping

self, is giving way to what as John describes as the *pride of life*. We think we deserve, or are worthy of more than we receive, whether it be recognition from others, we want to be liked, we want to be in the centre of things, we want everything our own way basically, that is the flesh. Worshipping self, putting ourselves as number one. The Lord Jesus **was** in fact number one. The first born of son of God, he had the ultimate test, he has shown us that it is possible to kill these thoughts, to destroy the devil, the diabolos of our own will, and again he turned to the Deuteronomy, the word of God: *It is written Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*. Not only was the passage suitable, but it had shock power, it invoked the name of God, in contrast to his own daydreaming, his thoughts were challenging his very faith, it would not do, in a moment he had crushed the thought, but also in this passage it showed that again he was aligned with the experience of his own people in the wilderness, as he quoted Deuteronomy 6:13. They were tempted in the same way, to serve their own whims, and the imaginations of their own hearts. They singularly failed as they pranced around the golden calf oblivious of their own fickle stupidity. That is what we do. We don't have to give in to number one. Jesus described worshipping self, as Satan. Satan we recall simply means enemy, and how true is it that we become our own worst enemy? We are not that important. Jesus shows us the way out.



Still the way of escape is not always easy, still the time of probation continued. Whilst in the wilderness we read the diabolos brought him to Jerusalem and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence*: After all, if he was truly the Son of God, - no matter what he did His Father would protect him, he was deserving of special treatment. As if to reinforce this subtle but

twisted reasoning this temptation came with a Bible passage all of its own. *For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Jewish historians suggested the pinnacle of the temple was in fact the roof of the temple porch where the priest was stationed to watch for the first signs of dawn of the sunrise of the hills of Judea, Jesus imagined the glory, and exhilaration as the protection of God would be demonstrated before all, - he could not fail, so God would save him. Again, the subtlety of human reasoning is exposed for us to see. It is to justify ourselves and even with hand-picked specially chosen Bible passages, is this not what false religion has done for thousands of years used the word of God and twisted it for its own purpose, and changed the truth of God into a lie? We recall the way the serpent took the words of God in the beginning and altered them. "Thou shalt not surely die". It is typical of human nature. Jesus had human nature, so he was typical. His mind operated in the same way, which is why he understands us. But unlike us, Jesus would not allow himself to be distracted. He knew that the Father loved him, and would protect him, just as he promised his children, the nation of Israel, but such protection was conditional. And once again, Jesus countered the thought, as he quoted again from the very same portion of scripture he had been considering all along, Deuteronomy 6, *Thou shalt not tempt (or test) the Lord thy God.*

The struggles in the wilderness of life are common to us all, and like Israel of old who presumed that God would always protect and care for them even in their disobedience learnt the bitter lesson, when they presumed to go up the hill against the Amalekites and were sorely beaten. In all of Jesus temptations, where Israel failed in identical situations, he succeeded, by controlling his mind, by using the word and will of God to great effect, and keeping his mind focussed on the future.

Jesus remains faithful to Israel's history

	ISRAEL	JESUS
TIME	40 years	40 days
PLACE	wilderness	wilderness
PRESSURE	hunger, testing, worship	hunger, testing, worship
RESPONSE	repeated mistrust	faithful obedience
SCRIPTURE	lesson recorded in Deuteronomy	lesson embodied and cited

Jesus does not escape the test; he is faithful within it.

What did that bring, not just to turn one stone into one loaf, but why he was able to turn one loaf of bread enough to feed four thousand, five thousand, and all to the glory of God, he would survive more than the pinnacle of the temple, why when he was nearly thrown off the cliff at Nazareth he just walked unnoticed past his puzzled accusers, untouched, and his angels having charge over him, they sat on the stone as it was rolled away as he was raised from the dead, what could better that? as far as the high mountain, well now he sits on the right hand of the Father, all principalities and powers being made subject unto him.

Such rigorous devotion to God, such loyalty to the will of God, such selflessness and such faith enabled the Lord Jesus to use his spiritual strength and trust to withstand in this time of trial and temptation. He showed all men the way to do it. That such resistance is possible. We don't have to give in. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. With the temptation God will give a way of escape. 1 Corinthians 10:13 *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

Jesus did not pick and choose Bible references which suited him for his convenience, but was disciplined in sticking to the whole scripture. The temptations did not end here for Jesus – as we now how he prayed earnestly, if it were possible if the cup of suffering should pass from him – at even at that terrible time just before his crucifixion, his response was Not my will but thine be done. This is the standard that has been set. We know the devil which is within each one of us. The Lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of Life. Lust says, “I want it.” Entitlement says, “I deserve it.” And pride says, “I can handle it.”

If time does continue friends, brothers and sisters, then we can try much harder to overcome, and destroy the devil within. Let us resolve to be more like the Lord Jesus this week, and rejoice that we do have a advocate in Jesus Christ Hebrews 2:17-18 . *For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*

TH Dartford 26/09/26