

# Satan

## The Temptations of Satan on The Lord - Part 2

### An Overview of the Temptations

Temptation No. 1	Temptation No. 2	Temptation No. 3
Make the stones bread Matt 4: 3-4	Cast thyself down Matt 4:5-7	Fall down and worship me Matt 4:8-10
Independence manifested by self ability acting	Independence manifested by self presumption	Independence manifested by self usurpation
Rebellion against the provision of God	Rebellion against the providence of God	Rebellion against the purposes of God
If possible, help yourself and get immediate satisfaction	Seeking to make God act as we want. God cannot be made to suit me. The “name it and claim it” is blasphemous.	Get immediate gratification, egotistic boost
Disapprove of God’s providential dealings  Israel murmured, but could do nothing  Defy God and take matters into ones own hands	Dare God, put Him on the spot where He comes under your control, He loses His sovereignty	Displace God in loyalty

### When did the temptations come?

To understand the truths of the scriptures there must be the acceptance that nothing can be isolated from context. Therefore, when considering the Lord and the temptations, there must be a consideration of the background. Each of the gospel writers makes a very deliberate connection of the temptation with that which has gone before. Matthew emphasizes the connection with the word “Then” (Matt. 4:1); Mark by the word “straightway” (Mk. 1:10), and Luke by the word “And” (Lk. 4:1). Satan wasted no time in seeking to undermine the commendation of God.

The Lord had spent about 30 years away from His public manifestation at His baptism. One can be sure that Satan had watched every moment of that earthly sojourn. Apart from the fragments of His life as a baby, as a child of approximately two years of age, and at twelve, all the happenings of the intervening years were solely for God’s delight. We do know He was a carpenter (Mk. 6:3); He stood while John preached (Jn. 1:26); that his immediate family did not believe in Him (Jn. 7:5). John did learn who He was by revelation and at His baptism (Jn. 1:31-33).

As already said, the three temptations (Matt. 4:1-11; Mk. 1:12-13; Lk. 5) focused on the temptations of the Lord and came after two major happenings:

- a) The baptism of the Lord was not just that He was baptized, for nothing in the person or activities of the Lord are without significance. When He was baptized it had at least a fourfold significance:
  - i) The Lord identified with those who were repenting but His was for a different reason.
  - ii) He was indicating in type that which He would yet do, His baptism at the cross (Lk. 12:50).
  - iii) His fulfilling the pre-priestly ordinance of being washed and having oil put on him (Lev. 8:6, 10). The Lord was baptized in water and the Spirit descending filled Him with the Holy Spirit. In this, He was fulfilling all righteousness.
  - iv) His commendation from God.

## Satan

### The Temptations of Satan on The Lord - Part 2

- b) God had publicly borne witness as to His delight in Him and acknowledgement that He was His Son. Satan came and said, "If thou be the Son of God" (Matt. 4:6; Matt. 27:40), the first when He was in the wilderness and the latter when He was on the cross. It was a brilliant tactic, trying to make the Lord question who He was and the truthfulness of God's words. Christ did not fail.

A faint likeness to this is found when Melchisedec came to meet Abraham before the King of Sodom (Gen. 14:18-20). There was strengthening before the battle for Abraham was soon offered all the goods, something he had gathered much of, and the temptation which was most precious to him, goods or people. God spoke: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased", (Matt. 3:17) and then the temptations came.

- a) How glorious this is. God does not say, "Through" whom I am well pleased, or "by" whom I am well pleased, but "in" whom I am well pleased. This was more than God looking at his outward behaviour, listening to His talk and observing His attitudes and reactions. It is God's commentary after looking into the depths of His very being. This was a man in whom every response was right, every word was right, never had an action to be apologized for, wrong attitude confessed to and never the slightest iota of pride or indifference to God. Praying with Him was never a mere formality. Thirty years had passed and not the slightest shadow of sin or defilement because He would not sin, and that because He could not sin.
- b) God said, "I am well pleased". Robertson, in his "New Testament Word Pictures", writes, "The good pleasure of the Father is expressed by a tense that indicates timeless". This was not just a momentary pleasure but was that which God found constantly in Him. Could this have been so, had He always been susceptible to sin? Continually, every moment of every day, God was perpetually delighted in Christ. He was the fulfilment of Isaiah 42:1, "In whom my soul delighteth". With those eyes of fire which could tolerate no evil, Christ was looked upon and there was nothing in His life that was objectionable to God and needed burning up.

#### Auxiliary Notes

When the Lord was coming out of the Jordan after His baptism, the heavens were opened (Matt. 3:16), and all the attention of Heaven was on Earth. It is a reality that one always looks from the lesser to the greater, yet here, Heaven is occupied with a man on Earth. It is wonderful to observe that we never read of the heavens ever being closed upon Him. When He was transfigured it does not say the heavens were opened, nor when He ascended. The Lord lived in the consciousness of an open heaven and His was a life lived in unbroken fellowship with God. The next time we read of Heaven opened and the Lord as the central focus of attention is when He comes in judgment, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness, he doth judge and make war" (Rev. 19:11).

At His baptism, not only were the heavens opened to reveal the thoughts of God, but the Holy Spirit came upon Him. Christ was about to begin priestly ministry but not a priest officially, for He could not be a priest on earth (Heb. 8:4). What a glorious experience and now He is led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

When God spoke honouring Him there is no pride-filled smirk waiting for man's congratulations or waiting for man's approval, but immediately went into the wilderness. When Satan speaks there is nothing but rebuff. Furthermore, Satan knew that when He said "No", He meant no! This is where His glory shone out. The evil one knew there was no value in pressing the matter, it was a dead issue.

It is to be observed that in each case there is a definite connection with the baptism of the Lord. This is not to be surprised at since the evil one is viewed as a serpent that not only is more subtle but in that subtlety bites the horse's heels so that the rider falls backwards and is damaged. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (Gen. 3:1). "Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backwards" (Gen. 49:17). Thus the first and last references to the serpent in

## Satan

### The Temptations of Satan on The Lord - Part 2

Genesis tell of his character. There can be no doubt as to who this is for in Revelation 20:2 we read, “And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan.”

*. . . To be continued*

---

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.  
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia