

# Strengthened in Temptation

***Key Verse: “Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”***

—Matthew 4:10

***Selected Scripture:***  
***Matthew 4:1-11***

as to the ministry and work that lay before him.

At the end of the forty days, Satan perhaps thought Jesus might be in a physically or mentally weakened condition, and so he immediately sought to take advantage of the situation by tempting him. If he could get Jesus to sin, even in some small way, Satan would be able to thwart God's arrangements for man's salvation through his only begotten Son.

The first temptation is stated thus, "When the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (vss. 3,4) Satan's temptation was subtle. First, he

**TODAY'S LESSON** concerns the three temptations of Jesus which took place shortly after his baptism by John the Baptist. The account states that God's Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness, and there he remained for "forty days and forty nights." (Matt. 4:2) We can well imagine that Jesus spent this time in meditation, study, and in direct communion with God, receiving instruction

tried to plant a seed of doubt in Jesus' mind by saying 'if thou be the Son of God.' He also tried to prey upon Jesus' physical hunger—he had been fasting for forty days. However, Jesus saw beyond these subtleties and immediately responded that true life does not come by appropriating natural food—bread—to our bodies, but by taking in and digesting the words of God. In fact, Jesus' response was a direct quote from the Old Testament—Deuteronomy 8:3, God's words to Moses.

Satan's second temptation of Jesus is recorded in Matthew 4:5-7, "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Here again we see the subtlety of Satan, for in the temptation he quoted scripture—Psalm 91:11,12. Jesus knew that, although he had his Father's protection as described by the psalmist, such would not be the case if he tempted God by foolishly throwing himself off the pinnacle of the Temple. In this response also, Jesus quoted from the Old Testament.—Deut. 6:16

The third temptation recorded in our lesson is as follows: "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." (Matt. 4:8,9) In this temptation, Satan sought a compromise with Jesus by suggesting they could share the rulership of the world if Jesus would only bow down to him. Jesus' response to this temptation, given in the Key Verse, was again a quote from scripture—Deuteronomy 6:13. Having turned away Satan decisively and swiftly in all three temptations, the account concludes by saying, "Then the devil leaveth him."—Matt. 4:11 ■