

PM Matthew 3:13-4:11

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Date: 10 April 2022

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[0 : 00] Here's Moses speaking to the people. He was requesting you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Your clothing did not wear out on you, and your fruit did not swell these forty years. Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you.

So you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper.

And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. Take care, lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, lest when you have eaten and ate and are full, and have built good houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks multiply, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground, where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, who fled you in the desert, in the wilderness, with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you, and test you, to do you good in the end.

[3 : 03] Beware, lest you say in your heart, my power, and the might of my hand, have gained me this wealth. You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant, that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

And if you forget the Lord your God, and go after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I solemnly warn you today, that you shall surely perish, like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice, of the Lord your God.

May God bless to us this reading. For Matthew's Gospel, chapter 3, we're going to read from verse 13, and continue reading into chapter 4, to verse 11.

Matthew chapter 3, at verse 13, the baptism of Jesus, and then the temptation of Jesus. Then Jesus came from Galilee, to the Jordan, to John, to be baptized by him.

John would have prevented him, saying, I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me? But Jesus answered him, let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us, to fulfill all righteousness.

[4 : 42] Then he consented, and when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God, descending like a dove, and coming to rest in him.

And behold, a voice from heaven said, this is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Then Jesus was led up, by the Spirit, into the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil.

And after fasting 40 days, and 40 nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came, and said to him, if you are the Son of God, command these stones, to become loaves of bread.

But he answered, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word, that comes from the mouth of God. Then the devil took him, to the holy city, and set him, on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, if you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, he will

command his angels, concerning you, and on their hands, they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot, against the stone.

Jesus said to him, again it is written, you shall not put, the Lord your God, to the test. Again the devil took him, to a very high mountain, and showed him, all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory.

[6 : 18] And he said to him, all these I will give you, if you will fall down, and worship me. Then Jesus said to him, be gone Satan, for it is written, you shall worship the Lord, your God, and him only, shall you serve.

Then the devil left him, and behold angels came, and were ministering to him. Just to there, may God bless to us, this reading too.

Now, we are going to look at, Matthew chapter 4, and the story, of the temptation of Jesus. We are not going to look at it, in detail, but just in general outline.

So I'll just read, the first verse again, and we'll take other bits up, where relevant. Matthew chapter 4, verse 1. Then Jesus, was led up by the Spirit, into the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil. Now, what is the point, in Matthew, telling this story? Well, a common way, of dealing with it, and I've done it myself, before, although I don't agree, with it now.

[7 : 36] But a common way, of doing it, is to think of this, as, a worked example, of how to deal, with temptation. It's there, as a pattern, for us, to take note of, and to follow.

Thus, we could say, look at how, the devil, goes about his task. And we could identify, certain lines, that he follows, in trying to put, temptation, before Jesus.

And we can say, that's the devil, still. Beware, of his strategy. That's the way, he goes about things. And we can look at Jesus, and how he responds, to that.

And we can say, that's the way, that Jesus dealt, with the devil. That's the way, that we should do it too. And so, basically, we're taking this story, as an example, of how to cope, with temptation.

Now, I'm not denying, that there may be, at a practical level, something, fairly useful, in that. But what I'm suggesting, really is this.

[8 : 50] That if that's, the main way, of looking at it, we've really, missed the point, of the whole thing. And we're going to look, at the question, of the devil, and temptation, from the wrong, point of view.

And what I want, to try, and point out, here is this. Here is Jesus, the saviour. He's come, amongst us, to act for us. He's going, to deal with sin, because we can't, deal with it, ourselves.

That involves, various things, living a life, of righteousness, on our behalf. Dying a death, on the cross, on our behalf. But what I'm suggesting, is this.

It also involves, Jesus, fighting the devil, on our behalf. Taking him on, in conquest, and beating him, in our name.

And I think, that's the way, that we should try, and see this story. It's not, an example, to follow. Basically. It's a demonstration, of the victory, that we have in Christ, over the devil.

[9 : 58] Because, he delivered, a knockout blow, in round one, we might say. Something like that. That's maybe, a wee bit pushing it. But that sort of idea, is what we want, to try and get across.

Now, how are we going, to prove, how are we going, to go about, showing, that that's the right way, to deal with the matter? Well, I'm going to look, at three points.

First of all, the setting, in which this story, is placed. Secondly, the incidents, which this story, deals with. And thirdly, the circumstances, in which, these incidents, are set.

First of all, the setting, in which this story, is placed. What we're asking here, is, what is Matthew, trying to get over, in this part, of his book?

What is the flow, of his thought? And how does this story, of the temptation, of Jesus, fit in, to that flow, of thought? We're getting, the context, to see, how this story, fits in, to what Matthew, is trying to say.

[11 : 13] Now, basically, this is a summary, of this morning's sermon. And, those, that were here, this morning, might not need it. And those, that are here, only this evening, might find this, a wee bit brief.

But, I'll do my best. Also, I did say something, this morning, which I didn't intend to say, and intend to keep it, for this evening. And, I got it, mixed up, when I put it in, this morning, when I meant to keep it, for this evening.

So, I'm a wee bit, confused myself, about what I'm trying to do. But, basically, what we're doing, is saying, look at what he's been teaching, and you'll see, that this is Jesus, acting on our behalf, entering into the experience, of sinful people, and doing for them, what they couldn't do, for themselves.

Now, this morning, we looked at this story, of Jesus, and, he was taken as a refugee, to Egypt. And, Matthew sees that, as a fulfillment, of a prophecy.

And really, what came out from that, was this. As Israel, was the son of God, and, was in Egypt.

[12 : 21] So, Jesus, the son of God, was in Egypt. As, Israel, was a slave there, suffering as a slave there. Jesus, was suffering, as a refugee there.

As, Israel, was called out, of Egypt, by God, under the direction, of Moses, and through his providential, dealings with them. So, Jesus, was called out, of Egypt, by God.

The things, run parallel, to each other. Jesus, enters into the history, of the Old Testament, people of God, and, lives out their experience, we might even say, at a higher level.

But, he's identifying himself, with his people, in their, in their situation, in life. Then, there's this question, of the prophecy, from Jeremiah, about, Rachel, weeping for her children, and refusing, to be comforted.

And, in Matthew's Gospel, that has got to do, with the children, that were slaughtered, when Jesus, escaped to Egypt. Herod, the king, destroyed the babies, the baby boys, in Bethlehem, from two years old, and downwards.

[13 : 37] And, there was a terrible, slaughter. And, you can imagine, the mourning, and the sorrow, and the stress, over that. A village, afflicted with the grief.

And, Matthew takes, this Old Testament passage, and refers it to that. That Old Testament passage, had got to do, with the time, when, Israel were exiled, from their own land.

They were defeated, by the Babylonians. Their, countryside was destroyed. The city walls, were knocked down. The palaces, burnt with fire. And, some were gathered up, to go into, in chains, to go into exile.

A terrible suffering, that was, there was. And, Rachel is depicted, as mourning over, what is happening. And so, there's a parallel, you see once again.

Jesus is entering, into a similar experience, of the people then. Living out, the grief, that there was, in those days. He's identified, with them so fully, that he's, at some level, making their experience, his.

[14 : 43] And, that's the theme, that Matthew was following. Here is Jesus, and he's come to represent us. He's come to act for us. He's come to take our position, and act for us in it.

That's the theme, he's been following. And then, there's this chapter, that we read, Matthew 3. And, this is the bit, I mentioned this morning, which I didn't intend to, but I'll just mention it again.

The story of his baptism. Why was Jesus baptized? It was a baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins. But, Jesus was sinless.

So, how come, he took that baptism of repentance? Because, he was identifying himself, with his people. They were sinful people. He had come to act for them.

He acted in this way, as if he were a sinner. Because, in some sense, he was bearing the sin of his people. And so, he takes the baptism of repentance, although he doesn't need to repent.

[15 : 41] He takes this baptism, that is a picture, of the washing of sin, the remission of sins, even though he doesn't have to, have his own sins, washed away. What's up here? What's going on here?

He's there, as the representative of his people, acting for them. And that sort of thing, of course, came to its climax on the cross, where he took our sins upon himself, and acted for us, before the righteous demands of God, and so accomplished redemption.

That's the line, that Matthew is following here. Look at Jesus, that is an example for us. Look at Jesus, as a bearer of sin. Look at him, as the representative of his people.

Look at him, who has come amongst us, to act on our behalf, and to experience, what we experience. That's the line, that's being followed. And all I'm saying, is that, the setting in which, this is placed, suggests very much to me, that that's the way, we're meant to see, this time of temptation.

Here he is, and he's taking on our great adversary, and he's defeating him, and he's doing so in our name. Remember the story of David and Goliath.

[16 : 54] Here's David, and he defeats Goliath. Okay. But remember what happened after that. Immediately, the Philistines flee, because they've been defeated. And the Israelites chase them, because they've won.

How did they win? David won, on behalf of his people. David conquered, and so the Israelites, experienced victory. Goliath was defeated, and so the Philistines were defeated, through their representatives.

And that's the way, that it is here. Here is Jesus, and he's taking on the devil. And he's doing so in our name. And when he wins, the victory is ours.

That's the way, I think, the setting of the story, would lead us to think about it. So that's the first area. The setting in which this is placed.

The next thing, that I want to speak about, are the incidents, with which this story deals. And here we will refer, just briefly, to the body of the temptations themselves.

[18 : 00] But, just to show how, they fit in with this picture. Israel's time, in the desert, according to the Old Testament, the time when they traveled, from Egypt, to the promised land, taking 40 years over it, it can be described, in the Bible, indeed, in different ways.

It's sometimes described, in terms of, God's goodness, and care, and providence, whereby supplied for them, and kept them, and their feet, didn't grow tired, to grow sore, these 40 years, and so on.

It's a story, of wonderful care, and providence. Sometimes, it's recounted, as a story, of disobedience. They were quarreling, and disobedient, in the wilderness, and they were rebellious, against God.

And sometimes, it's depicted, in terms of testing. And that's what, we read about, in Deuteronomy chapter 8. You shall remember, the whole way, that the Lord, your God, has led you, these 40 years, in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you keep his commandments, or not.

And that's the way, that the Old Testament story, is described. It's a time, of testing. It's a time, of temptation, we might say, because, in the New Testament, especially, temptation, and testing, is virtually, the same word.

[19 : 31] Okay, so that's the way, we can look, at the story, of the Old Testament. And you see, what's happening here, Jesus, is reliving, that experience, of his people.

If he's representing us, in the battle, against sin, it's not too surprising, if we find him, reliving, Israel experience, in the desert. They were 40 years, tempted, or tested.

Jesus, was there, for 40 days, and 40 nights, tempted. That's the general situation. But if we look, at the incidents, that make up, the temptation story, we see this, all the more, clearly.

There are certain, things, that each of these, incidents, the three incidents, that were read, have in common. Jesus, takes a bit, from the Old Testament, and answers the devil, using these words. And he seems to be, referring in each case, to the time, to the book of Deuteronomy, and to the time, that Israel spent, in the desert. So, in his mind, he's in the desert, with Israel, as it were.

[20 : 45] He's thinking about, their experience, experiencing, experience, and he's seeing, that lived out, in his own experience. I think you see that, if you look, at the different, incidents, that are dealt with, in this particular case.

Israel in the desert, was hungry. Naturally. They wanted food to eat, and they got it. One night, one morning, there was this, material, on the ground.

And they didn't know, what it was. They hadn't seen it before. And they said, what is it? And that Hebrew, what is it, is the word, manna. That's a Hebrew word, which means, what is it?

And that's the name, that was given to this substance, manna. But we shouldn't forget, what the words, actually meant. They indicate, the surprise, and the mystery, associated with this.

And that's, brought out, in the scriptures. Namely, that it wasn't something, that people, had prepared for them.

[21 : 55] It wasn't, a crop, that they normally, cultivated. It wasn't some food, that was familiar to them. And that's why, it's sometimes called, the bread of heaven. The bread from heaven, the bread of angels, even when Sam, speaks about it.

It was, mystery. It wasn't, of human origin. It was something, special. And that's why, they were told, man shall not live, by bread only, but by every word, that comes from, the mouth of God.

This manna, hasn't come to you, by human endeavor. It isn't the result, of your own labors. It's come, by the word of God.

It came, by his command. And, it was sent, as a special providence, to feed you. So, you're not dependent, on bread only. There's something, beyond bread.

There's the voice of God, that brought this bread, to you. And that's the thing, that matters. Man shall not live, by bread only. That's what they were taught, when they were hungry, in the desert.

[23 : 02] And here is Jesus. And he's hungry, in the desert as well. As well he might be, after 40 days, and 40 nights, without eating. And you can imagine, his body is crying out, to be fed.

And that's not temptation, in itself, that's not temptation, because, or it's not sin, because it's quite natural, for us to have these desires.

And it's not a sinful desire, for Jesus, to want to be fed. But the devil, latches on to that, and says, look at these stones, command that they be made bread.

And it's said, you see, that the stones, in the desert, were round stones, that resembled, rolls of bread. And so, when Jesus is told, to look at the stones, it would be easy, to imagine, that these were bread.

And that makes them, therefore, puts them under, greater pressure, to do, what the devil, wants them to do. To turn these stones, into bread, to feed us hunger.

[24 : 09] A quite legitimate hunger. And Jesus says, no, I'm going to learn, the lesson, that the people, I'm going to take, to heart the lesson, that the people, in the desert, had to learn.

It isn't, that I can live, by bread only. What counts for me, is the word of God. I can't listen to you, to feed myself.

There's something, more important, than feeding myself. Not bread, but the word of God. Because man, does not live, by bread only, but by every word, that comes from his mouth.

I'm going to be, obedient to him, not to you. That's what he's saying. But you see, you know, he's really, lived, relived, the experience, of them, in the wilderness.

They were hungry, and they learned, this lesson. It isn't, by human initiative, that you're fed. You've got to, rest upon God, and obey his word. And Jesus, relives that experience, desperately hungry.

[25 : 14] Desperately hungry. But he takes, that word, that had been given, to them, and he applies it, to his own situation. He's reliving, their experience, taking the devil on, and defeating him, refusing to listen to him, taking to heart, or using, what the Israelites, in the desert, to take to heart, the precedence, of God's word, over everything else.

So, it's an incident, taken from the desert, to experience, that Jesus is, living out again. Then, there was another occasion, this is the second incident, we're dealing with here.

There was another thing, that happened, in the desert, to the people of Israel. Namely, they were thirsty. And, that was a problem, to them.

We're told, the people quarreled, with Moses, and said, give us water, to drink. Now, notice, the spirit, in which they're doing this. They're quarreling, with Moses. They're calling in question, his leadership, his wisdom.

They're complaining, that there's not been, enough water, for them to eat. There's a bad spirit, amongst them there, complaining, as would appear, not just against Moses, but against God.

[26 : 31] Because, Moses said to them, why do you quarrel, with me? Why do you, test the Lord? Now, what they're doing there, is putting God, to the test.

Later, earlier in this chapter, that we're referring to, in Exodus, Exodus, they tested the Lord, by saying, is the Lord, among us or not? So, when they're confronted, with the lack of water, they say, God's not with us.

If he were with us, he'd do this. He'd supply us with water, he'd do that. They were dictating, terms to God. They were laying down, the law, telling God, what he ought to be doing.

And that's, putting God, to the test. And doing so, in an appropriate way, in an inappropriate way.

People aren't allowed, to do that. Call in judgment, call in question, God's judgment, God's decision, to do things, this way or that way.

It's presumptuous, it's pride. It's just not on. But that's the situation, in which they were told, you shall not, put the Lord, your God, to the test.

[27 : 40] And their rebuke, therefore, for their quarrelling, and for their discontent, with the situation, and for their calling, in question, the goodness of God, or the wisdom of God. They're told, you shall not, put the Lord, your God, to the test.

Now, Jesus in the desert, is put, in a similar situation, not the same one, but in a similar situation. Because he also, is being asked, to put the Lord, his God, to the test.

The devil, takes him, up, to the topmost, turret of the temple, as some people have put it. And told himself, to throw himself from there. The temple's built, on the edge, of a ravine really.

So, to throw yourself, from the top of the temple, is not just to throw yourself, to the bottom of the temple, it's to throw yourself, right down, into the ravine below. And, the devil says, you do that, because God has said, he shall bear you up, lest you, strike your foot, against a stone.

So, the devil is saying, you do this, to prove God's promises, are right. You do this, trusting in God's promises, to keep you, to preserve you.

[28 : 50] And really, he's saying, you've got to put God, to the test, to see if he'll care for you, as he promised to do so, in Psalm 91, that we were singing.

And so, Jesus is in this same situation. They were in the desert, they put God, to the test, calling in question, his judgment, calling in question, his wisdom.

And Jesus asked, to put God, to the test, throwing himself down, when he hasn't been commanded, to throw himself down. Doing this, simply, to try and prove, whether God was true or not.

And, Jesus, therefore, has to say, you shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test. Now, in the Old Translation, this says, you shall not tempt, the Lord, your God.

And sometimes, people think, that what he's saying is, you, the devil, should not tempt me, because I am the Lord, your God. But, New Translation, rightly say, you shall not put, the Lord, your God, to the test.

[29 : 52] That's what he would be doing, if he were to do, what the devil asked him to do. Put himself into danger, just for the sake, of demonstrating something. It's not on. And, Jesus recognizes that.

And, he rebuts the temptation, by saying, you shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test. The same thing, that the people, had learned, in Egypt, or, in the way from Egypt, in the desert.

So, he's reliving their experience, not just in regard, to the manna, but in regard, to the kindness, and goodness of God. And, he uses, what they learned, in a situation, of quarrelsomeness, and discontent.

And, he uses that, to rebut, the temptation, that the devil, puts before him here. He's going through, their experience. He's going through, a similar experience.

He's reliving, what they lived out, in the desert. Then, there was a third, situation, that we can mention, where, the people, which the people, were to confront, not now, in the desert, but in virtue, of their desert, wanderings, and their experience, of coming into, the promised land.

[31 : 05] And, this was dealt with, actually, in some length, in Deuteronomy, chapter 8, in the passages, that we read. Now, Moses is envisaging, this situation, where, they come successfully, to their land, they take over, the towns, and the fields, and the vineyards, and they cultivate them, and they've got, their own houses, and their own cattle, and their own orchards, and vineyards, and olive groves, and so on.

And, they've got plenty. And so much so, that they're rich, and prosperous, and they've got silver, and gold as well. And, he realises, that's going to be, a temptation to them.

And, he says, look out, lest, when you're rich, and increased with goods, like that, you forget God. Unless you go after, other gods, and serve them.

And, although it doesn't say so, in as many words, the basic idea, that is there is, you shall worship the Lord, your God, and him only, shall you serve.

When you're confronted, with the experiences, of wealth, and riches, and prosperity, remember this, you've always got still, to be worshipping, and following God, only.

[32 : 25] That was the sort of thing, that was taught, in Deuteronomy chapter 8. They hadn't yet experienced it, but looking forward, that temptation, was going to be theirs. And, Jesus, is in a similar situation here.

Here's the devil, and he takes him up, into a high mountain. I take, that these temptations, these two temptations, are in the mind. I don't think, the devil has the capacity, to take Jesus, to a high mountain, and I don't think, there is a high mountain, where you can see, all the kingdoms, of the earth.

In his mind, he takes him, to a high mountain, he says, look at them all, look at everything, you can see. And he displays, before his eyes, all that could be imagined, of worldly wealth.

And he says, all these, I'll give you, if you'll only fall down, and worship me. And that's a temptation, to Jesus, that he rebuts, using the sort of ideas, that were conveyed, to Israel, in the Old Testament, when they were confronted, with a picture, of wealth, and prosperity, and riches. They are told, in effect, you shall worship, the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve. And that's what, the devil uses, to rebut, this temptation too.

[33 : 45] All the riches, of the world, are going to be his. All the authority, and glory, and splendor, of the nations, are going to be his. But they're not going to be his, by worshipping the devil.

God said, the father said, to the son, before the world, began, ask of me, and for heritage, the heathen I'll make thine, and for possession, I to thee, will give earth's utmost line.

Jesus, was told, by God, ask of me, and I'll give you all that. And now the devil, comes along and says, no, ask me, and I'll give it to you.

And in those circumstances, of temptation, he rejects, the easy path, to these things, as it would seem, the easy path. And he decides, to go, the father's way, and says in effect, I'm going to worship him, because I'm a human being, and by human nature, I'm going to worship him, and I'm going to serve him only.

And I'm going to get, the glory, and the splendor, of these nations, that you are promising me, in the way, that he's appointed. I'm going to be, obedient to death, even the death, of the cross.

[34 : 55] because I know, that in consequence, of that, I will be, highly exalted, and given the name, that is above, every name. And that's the way, that he deals, with this temptation.

Oops. And you see, once again, it's reliving, the experience, in the wilderness, or, a consequence of that, at least. He's entering, into the experience, of God's people, and he's fulfilling, the path of righteousness, that they, generally speaking, fail to follow.

So, that's why I can say, this isn't an example to us. This is Jesus, acting for us. Taking up the experiences, that we have in life, and living them out, at a higher level.

And the third thing, that makes us say that, I'm sorry, I'm taking longer, and I thought, this was going to be, a short sermon. The third thing, that we can think about here, is this. The circumstances, in which all this is placed.

We're not now dealing, with the setting of the story, in this book, which we've dealt with. We're dealing with, the actual physical setting, in which these temptations, took place.

[36 : 06] Where was he, and what circumstances? Notice, that Jesus was led, by the Spirit. The Spirit, who came on him, at baptism, directs him, in this event.

It's not a random event, a random event, that just happened. It's not even, that going about his business, that the devil, waylaid him, and subjected him, to these temptations.

He was given, an impulse, by the Holy Spirit, to go out, into the desert, and the specific purpose, and intention of that, was, that he might be tempted, by the devil.

It isn't, that the devil said, ah, now I'm going to, put into practice, my strategy, and I'm going to, deal with this fellow. It's that God said, we are going to, put into practice, our strategy, and we are going to, deal with this fellow.

That's what's happening here. It's God's agenda, that's being worked out, not the devil's agenda. He's led, by the Spirit, into the wilderness, to be tempted, by the devil.

[37 : 07] Now, what makes me, what, what, what, what, what makes me think of, this bit of it, it's not, the wilderness story, which, it does make me think of, but there's something else.

Here, is our great champion. Here, is our great representative, taking on the devil. When did that happen? Before. And of course, it happened in the Garden of Eden.

There, you see, was Adam and Eve, confronted by the devil. There was temptation, presented to them. And Adam was doing this, as the head and representative, of his people.

If he fell into sin, his whole race fell into sin. If he survived this temptation, and remained in the way of righteousness, it is generally thought, that he would have been confirmed, in that path, with his descendants.

Adam was the representative, of his people. He confronted the devil, and he fell into sin. But here's the last Adam, and what's he doing now?

[38 : 21] He's doing what Adam failed to do. He's confronting the devil, in the name of his people, and he's overcoming. And he's doing so, in the most unlikely of circumstances.

They had plenty. He has, he's hungry. They had companionship, each other. Jesus had no one, no human being to speak to.

They had beauty, and harmony around them. Jesus has ugliness, and discomfort around them. It's the same battle, but in the opposite of circumstances.

Everything was in the favor, of Adam, because his circumstances, were so good. Everything's against Jesus, because his circumstances, are so bad.

Forty days fasting, in a desert, without companionship. He's at the end, of his tether. And yet, Adam, who was in such good circumstances, fails.

[39 : 27] And Jesus, who was in such bad circumstances, wins the battle. And that, to my mind, is the big thing, about this event. Here is Jesus, doing, undoing, what Adam did.

Adam was confronted, by sin, in prosperous circumstances, and failed the test. And he failed it, in the name of all his people. Jesus, confronts the devil, and passes the test.

And he does so, in the name of all his people. Adam's defeat, was our defeat. Christ's victory, is our victory. And that's why I say, we can't, look at this basically, as a story, about, how to overcome temptation.

It's a story, about Christ, who took on the devil, on our behalf, and gained the victory. He's a defeated foe. He was a defeated foe, from the moment, of this temptation, of these temptations. Jesus says, go, and he goes. That's it. Round one over, a knockout, we might say. Now, you do, no doubt, have difficulties, over this, I suspect, I do, myself.

[40 : 40] you might say, for example, well, the Hebrews, talks about Jesus' victory, over the devil, but that's connected, with the cross. It speaks, of him, coming into the world, that through death, he might destroy, the one who has the power, of death, that is the devil.

So, there, the victory, over the devil, is connected, with the cross. Well, I think myself, I'm not denying, for a moment, that that's true. But, I think the particular, thing that's in mind there, is not so much, the devil itself, but death, with which the devil, is connected.

And that's true, that at the cross, he overcome death, because he was raised, to life again, on our behalf. And he overcame death, at the cross. But, I think something, happened at the temptations, where Jesus, gained the victory.

Remember, that when Jesus, was driving out demons, he was under criticism, for it. And he explains it, in this way, how can someone, enter a strong man's house, and plunder his goods, unless he first binds, the strong man?

Then indeed, he may plunder his house. So, Jesus is saying, I can plunder, the possessions, of the devil, by driving out demons, because, the strong man, has already been bound.

[42 : 08] How come he was bound? How come he was restricted? He was restricted, and bound, and defeated, because Jesus, overcame him, in our name, at the time, of the temptation.

Well, you might say, that's again, alright, but, I'm still being tempted, if the devil's broken, if his power's broken, why am I still being tempted? And the answer is, I think, that we've had, a very high opinion, of the devil's ability, to tempt.

And we've not realized, that in general, the scriptures, give another source, of temptation. Not saying that the devil, doesn't tempt, but, in the scriptures. But, there's another source, from which temptation comes.

Each person, says James, is tempted, when he is lured, and enticed, by his own desire.

Temptation, comes from within us. If we're tempted, we needn't necessarily, oh, it's the devil, which is what most people say.

It's our sinful heart. It's the residue of sin, still within us, according to James. And I've no difficulty, in accepting, the devil is defeated, but we're still tempted.

[43 : 20] And the problem, is not the devil. The problem, is indwelling sin. Well, I hope, that this will enable us, to see, the thing, that matters, is this.

The devil, is the defeated opponent. Again, you might say, but, doesn't it say, the devil goes around, like a roaring lion, seeking who may be devoured? Yes, and Peter says, resist him.

And James says, resist him, and he will free from you. Why can James say that? Resist him, and he'll free from you. Because, if you resist him, in the name of Jesus, it reminds him, of his defeat. He's been defeated already. That's why he turns, tail, and runs. That's the situation. Well, I hope you take that aboard. Now, I've got a quotation here, from John Knox.

Now, I'm not in the habit, of quoting anybody at length, and I'm not pretending, that I've read John Knox, but I read, a book, that spoke of him. And I came across, this, this, quotation, which I rather liked, and I'm going to finish off, by giving you this.

[44 : 30] Now, I'm a wee bit hesitant, to do so, because, John Knox is speaking, as if he was Jesus, and he's putting words, into the mouth, of Jesus, and speaking, as if he were Jesus.

I don't like that, I was warned against it, when I was a student, a professor told me, we shouldn't be doing, that sort of thing. But, I'm doing it here, because I think, it expresses, what I'm looking at, pretty clearly.

And I've put it, into modern English, instead of ancient Scots, for those, that are quite, perhaps not quite up, in ancient Scots. This is, Knox in his sermon, speaking as if he was Jesus.

I am a man, like my brothers, having flesh, and blood, and all properties, of man's nature, sin, which is your venom, excepted, that is, you speaking to the devil, tempt, try, and assault me.

I offer you here, a place most convenient, the wilderness. There should be no, mortal creature, to comfort me, against your assaults. You shall have time, sufficient, to do what you can.

[45 : 41] I shall not fly, the place of battle. If you become victor, you may still continue, in possession of your kingdom, in this wretched world. But if you cannot, prevail against me, then must your prey, and unjust spoil, be taken from you.

You must grant yourself, vanquished, and confounded, and must be compelled, to leave off, from all accusations, of the members, of my body.

For to them, appertains, the fruit of my battle. My victory, is theirs, as I am appointed, to take the punishment, of their sins, in my body.

He is saying, therefore, just as I died, on the cross, for sinners, so I took, the devil on, in their name, and on their behalf, and my victory, is your victory.

And that's what the story, of the temptations, is all about. Well, let's sing now, in conclusion. In Psalm number 18, at verse 46, to 50, that's on page 22.

[46 : 49] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.