

Session 23 – Matthew Chapter 4 and the Victory of the Kingdom of God

I. THE KINGDOM IN MATTHEW 4 – THE TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS

- A. Following the anointing of God's Holy Spirit on Jesus at His baptism, He is then led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. We see again the backdrop of Israel's exodus from Egypt played out. The Jordan baptism is both a picture of that exodus and the entrance into the Land of Promise. This is a point to note: the Old Testament motifs we see are played out in full in Jesus and His incarnation. Soon on the Mountain He will declare He did not come to *abolish the Torah and Prophets*, rather He came to show us what it looks like fully lived from the inside out, thus *fulfilling them*.
- B. He can then live out the exodus and the crossing of the Jordan at the same time as the representative Servant Israel. We would then expect a *crossing of the sea*, a *baptism* representing death and resurrection and an entrance into the new life. But first, there is the wilderness wandering before the restoration of the New Eden. Matthew moves this narrative from the Jordan to the Wilderness. Where Israel failed by grumbling and complaining and evoked the anger of Moses that led to his *disqualification* to enter the promised land, Jesus, Yahweh's Servant Israel, will succeed.
- C. The newly anointed King Priest and Prophet *like Moses* is led by the Spirit of God into the wilderness. Going into that time of testing is the backdrop of the Song of Moses in Exodus 15 and the great deliverance at the crossing of the Red Sea. In particular Exodus 15:11

¹¹Who is like you, O Yahweh, among the *elim* (gods)? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? (Ex. 15:11)

Yeshua is the visible, incarnate Yahweh and is about to demonstrate again victory over one particular *elohim*, the *disinherited, fallen Cherub Throne Guardian, Hallel ben Sahar, the Satan*.

- D. Dr. Heiser writes,

As Moses led Israel through the watery chaos and the unholy ground of other gods, so Jesus, "the prophet like Moses" (Acts 3:22; 7:37), first came through the waters (his baptism) before launching the kingdom.

This mission was not only about the single land and people of Israel, whom Yahweh had created after consigning the existing nations to the dominion of lesser gods at Babel. The coming of the incarnate Yahweh was the beginning of reclaiming those nations as well. But the gods of darkness were not going to surrender their domains without a fight—and the battle began so quickly that Jesus barely had time to dry off.

The gospel writers tell us the event that immediately followed Jesus' baptism was his journey into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil at the direction of the Holy Spirit (Matt 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1–13). Think about the location: the wilderness. The term obviously refers to a literal place, most likely the wilderness of Judea (Matt 3:1), but it's also a metaphor for unholy ground.

We've seen this in one particular instance. Conceptually, the wilderness was where Israelites believed "desert demons," including Azazel, lived. The Azazel material is especially telling, since, as I noted in

our earlier discussion, Jewish practice of the Day of Atonement ritual in Jesus' day included driving the goat "for Azazel" into the desert outside Jerusalem and pushing it over a cliff so it could not return.¹ The wilderness was a place associated with the demonic, so it's no surprise that this is where Jesus meets the devil.

But why would the Spirit compel Jesus to go into the desert to face the devil? The answer takes us back to the previous chapter and the Gospels' presentation of Jesus' baptism and revival of God's kingdom as a new exodus event. In the Old Testament, Israel, the son of God (Exod 4:23), passed through the sea (Exod 14–15) and then ventured out into the wilderness on the way to Canaan to re-establish Yahweh's kingdom. But Israel's faith and loyalty to Yahweh faltered (Judg 2:11–15). They were eventually seduced by the hostile divine powers ("demons") whose domain was the wilderness (Deut 32:15–20). Jesus, the messianic son of God and royal representative of the nation, would succeed where Israel failed. As R. T. France notes:

The most significant key to the understanding of this story is to be found in Jesus' three scriptural quotations. All come from Deut 6–8, the part of Moses' address to the Israelites before their entry into Canaan in which he reminds them of their forty years of wilderness experiences. It has been a time of preparation and of proving the faithfulness of their God. He has deliberately put them through a time of privation as an educative process. They have been learning, or should have been learning, what it means to live in trusting obedience to God... Now another "Son of God" is in the wilderness, this time for forty days rather than forty years, as a preparation for entering into his divine calling. There in the wilderness he too faces those same tests, and he has learned the lessons which Israel had so imperfectly grasped. His Father is testing him in the school of privation, and his triumphant rebuttal of the devil's suggestions will ensure that the filial bond can survive in spite of the conflict that lies ahead. Israel's occupation of the promised land was at best a flawed fulfillment of the hopes with which they came to the Jordan, but this new "Son of God" will not fail and the new Exodus (to which we have seen a number of allusions in ch. 2) will succeed. "Where Israel of old stumbled and fell, Christ the new Israel stood firm.... The story of the testing in the wilderness is thus an elaborate typological presentation of Jesus as himself the true Israel, the 'Son of God' through whom God's redemptive purpose for his people is now at last to reach its fulfillment."¹

- E. Jesus in demonstrating His Kingdom authority (and permission to use the power of His Father through His Spirit and anointing to rule and reign) shows us *how* that rule and reign is exercised over this enemy in the place of wilderness testing.

1. Temptation Defined

The word *temptation* (*tempter*) is from the Greek *peirazo* meaning: to obtain information to be used against a person by trying to cause someone to make a mistake—"to try to trap, to attempt to

¹ Heiser, Michael S.. *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (pp. 311-313). Lexham Press. Kindle Edition.

catch in a mistake.’² We’ll see the Pharisees and Sadducees, as children of the devil, try to *trap* Jesus employing the same tactics as their father Satan (Matt. 16:1).

This is also the *same* method or *schemes* (Gr. *methodeias*) the displaced sons of God use to entrap believers. Ephesians 6 tells us that we put on God’s armor in order to stand against the *methodeias* of the devil. Paul then tells us who and where they are. The regional powers of darkness: rulers (*archas*), authorities (*exousias*), cosmic powers of this present darkness (*kosmokratoras*), spiritual forces of evil in heavenly places (*pneumatika tes ponerias*). These beings obtain information from their spiritual geographic areas of influence. They observe believers, obtain information and use against us and cause us to stumble through entrapment and catch us in the net of that mistake. Jesus didn’t fall for it.

2. ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life (*aionios zoe*) (John 6:68 ESV)

Recall the phrase *eternal life* is not primarily unending life or living forever. The two Greek words show us it is first *zoe* or life as God has and gives it. It is the life of God. *Aionios* is literally *ages*. We see this in terms of the power of the age to come (*aion*) as life in that age, the age of unending time in God’s kingdom and reality.

Louw-Nida’s Greek-English Lexicon defines this phrase pointing out the following:

In combination with ζωή (*zoe*) there is evidently not only a temporal element, but also a qualitative distinction. In such contexts, αἰώνιος (*aionios*) evidently carries certain implications associated with αἰώνιος in relationship to divine and supernatural attributes. If one translates ‘eternal life’ as simply ‘never dying,’ there may be serious misunderstandings, since persons may assume that ‘never dying’ refers only to physical existence rather than to ‘spiritual death.’ Accordingly, some translators have rendered ‘eternal life’ as ‘unending real life,’ so as to introduce a qualitative distinction.³ Even the use of *real life* misses the mark, but is in the right direction. That *real life* is the Life of God.

To say Jesus’ words are the *words of eternal life* is to say His words contain within them *aionion zoe* or the power of the age to come that is resident in His resurrected life and power. They are the words of the Age to Come and bring with them into this present evil age the life and power of the coming ages of God’s dwelling on earth with man. This is the impact of Jesus saying words.

3. Temptation 1: Hunger and Appetite

² Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 329.

³ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 641.

After fasting 40 days and nights Jesus was hungry. He was no doubt hungry a couple of days in so He was in that state of domination over His flesh with an empowered Spirit, but was physically weak. And at that time *Helel ben Sahar*⁴ came to tempt Him.

“If you are *the* Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” Satan made a direct appeal to the hunger of Jesus and attempted to put the natural appetite for food in conflict with His identity as *a* Son of God. The word *the* is not in the Greek manuscript. It literally reads, “If you are Son of God” or “a Son of God.” The article is added by the translators. Why? To try to give a distinction of *this* Son. And it is *this* Son who has the words of the life and power of the age to come. And the former anointed cherub is soon to find out, again.

Moses faced complaints and murmuring from the children of Israel in the wilderness crying for water and food. Recall Exodus 15 when they grumbled against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?” What did Moses do? He threw a piece of wood in the bitter waters at Marah and they became sweet to drink. From there Yahweh led them to *Elim* (the place of the gods) and 12 springs of water and 70 palms. (Exodus 15:22-27) Obviously Yahweh was intent on showing them and us His plan for them and the nations: He would make the bitter water sweet and bring Israel and Nations back into His family and fellowship.

Exodus 16 shows again their grumbling. This time for food and they added they should have died in Egypt with food to eat as slaves, then being free following Yahweh and Moses out in the wilderness to starve to death. Yahweh rained down manna (what is it!) from heaven, or the *bread from heaven* for them to eat.

We see then behind the children of Israel a weakness in the flesh to grumble and complain over food and water when they were hungry and thirsty and to forget how Yahweh had delivered them from Egypt. And apparently, in the Wilderness the transitional place from where they were to where they were going (Sinai and then the Land of Promise, the New Eden). And in the Wilderness, where Azazel (and his demons) dwelt they fell into the trap of complaining. But Yahweh provided for them living water and bread from heaven. Jesus knew this event.

Jesus would say to the Samaritan woman in John 4, ¹⁰“If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living (zao) water... ¹³Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life (anioion zoen).”

³² Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁴ They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

⁴ The name found in Isaiah 14:12 *son of the dawn*, the anointed cherub, the satan

³⁵ Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. (John 6:32-35)

These are the words of eternal life. They are the words of the King, the words of His Kingdom.

The tempter sought to confuse Jesus in the wilderness. A confusion that would end in a grumble and complaint against His Father. A confusion that would also lead to pride and a move away from His purpose and that would mirror the sin of *this fallen* cherub – pride. Why would His Spirit lead Him out here only to starve to death? That was the original test and result for the children of Israel. He would later feed 5,000 by doing a miracle of multiplying food for the poor and hungry that followed Him into the wilderness. What about *himself*? Will He use His power to satisfy His own hunger?

Satan’s words are not a question of *who* Jesus is, it is an affirmation. The Greek *ei* in this context is best understood as *expressing a general assumption*⁵. It would best be translated as “*since* you are the Son of God, feed your appetites with your power and turn these stones into bread.”

Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3, but verse 2 was also in His mind. How do we know? Matthew looks at the LXX and pulls it forward to Jesus being *led into the wilderness by the Spirit*.

² And you shall remember all the way that the Lord your God led you in the wilderness that he might distress you and test you and to discern in your heart whether you will keep his commands or not. (Deut. 8:2 LXX)⁶

Jesus then *remembered* Deuteronomy 8:2 before quoting 8:3:

³ And he distressed you and weakened you by hunger and fed you manna, which your fathers did not see, in order to declare to you that man shall not live on only bread, but on every word going out through the mouth of God man shall live. (Deut. 8:3 LXX)

The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible uses the found DSS manuscripts from Qumran and translates the oldest Hebrew text as,

² And you shall remember the entire way which] the LORD your God has led you these forty years [in the wilderness, in order to humble you], to prove you, and to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments. ³ And he [humbled you], and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna—which you had not known, neither had your ancestors known—so that he might make you realize that people do not live by bread alone, but people live by everything that pr[oceeds from the mouth of the] LORD.⁷

⁵ G. Abbott-Smith, A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1922), 130.

⁶ Rick Brannan et al., eds., The Lexham English Septuagint (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Dt 8:2.

⁷ Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English (New York: HarperOne, 1999), Dt 8:2–3.

One of the keys then to Jesus being led into the wilderness was to *learn* humility. The New King was here to submit to His Father's will. His Spirit led Him here. He must trust Him, just as He was trustworthy to not let Israel starve and gave them the *bread of heaven*, manna, even so now the Father would provide for Him.

4. The Devil Satan then *took* Him to the *holy city* (Jerusalem – Luke 4:9) and *set* Him on the pinnacle of the temple. He again affirms that Jesus is the Son of God by saying, "Since you are the Son of God, throw yourself down." Then using Jesus' own words against Him prefaces "It is written." He then quotes from Psalm 91:11-12 and says that God would command His angels to bear Him up lest He strikes His foot against a stone.

Satan, having failed at his first test of the Messiah, now turns to another angle of temptation. The highest point of the Temple refers to the corner of the Second Temple where the priests would sound the trumpet to call the crowd to worship.

An amazing archaeological discovery amid the broken stones of the Temple Mount confirms the location of this spot. In 1969, archaeologists uncovered a stone that had been at the top of the Temple with the Hebrew inscription reading, "To the place of the trumpeting for..." Presumably the end of the phrase would have read "for the Priest" or contained equivalent wording. Such a place, with its commanding view for the multitude of worshippers, would have been the ideal location for a dramatic, messianic miracle.

A midrash puts particular emphasis on this exact place, as it states:

Our teachers taught, at the time when the King Messiah will appear, he will come and stand upon the roof of the Temple. He will proclaim to Israel and will say to the humble, "The time of your redemption has arrived" (Peshikta Rabbati 36).

To add to the weight of this temptation, the Adversary even quotes part of Psalm 91:11, stating that he will order his angels to be responsible for you. It is a sobering thought to realize that Satan knows the Scripture and will even quote it out of context for his own evil purposes. The whole context of the Psalm is trusting God (v. 1-2). To test the Father would imply that Yeshua had a lack of trust in him.⁸ This would harken back to how the Father God had led His Son into the wilderness *to learn to trust Him in humility*.

⁸ *Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. ⁹ And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him (Heb. 5:8-9)*

Psalm 91, while either attributed to Moses or David, is textually anonymous. It is arranged between Psalm 90's plea of Israel in exile and Psalm 92's praise of deliverance from exile. Whoever wrote 91 the psalmist draws on the experience of the ancestors in Egypt and in the wilderness to encourage them in their faith now (which is why the psalm was placed next to Psalm 90). God was fully able to protect his people from oppression, plagues and military attacks; but if Israel did not trust him and obey his word, they would not be protected. Since the

⁸ Kasdan, Barney. Matthew: Presents Yeshua, King Messiah . Messianic Jewish Communications. Kindle Edition.

psalmist is speaking to and about faithful believers, his composition celebrates God's watchful and loving care for his people, who can therefore anticipate a peaceful and secure life. The psalm could come from almost any time when Israel was in need of God's protection and provision.⁹

Psalm 91:5-6 reveals the demonic threat.

Normally read as, "*terror by night/arrow that flies by day/pestilence in darkness/destruction at noon*" these four calamities and their time designations (night/day, darkness/noon) point to four powers of darkness and their outcomes.

- a) Terror of the Night – *pahad layla* (see also Song 3:8; Prov. 3:25) – a demonic power that would assail newly married couples and the time of the birth of their children. Also referred to as Resheph *the arrow that flies*. Phehser backwards – Pronounced *pf-eh-zir*
- b) Pestilence – *deber*; Deber is one of the three proverbial causes of death on a wide scale. It is attested some 50 times in the Bible along with war (sword, blood) and famine (mainly in Jer and Ez). Besides this empirical meaning, it seems to be used a number of times in a personified sense as a demon or evil deity (Hab 3:5; Ps 91:3, 6; cf. Hos 13:14).¹⁰
- c) Destruction – *qeteb*; in connection with the others the "term has overtones of a divine name." *Qzb* occurs once in Ugaritic and may be a kinsman of Mot (god of death and the underworld).

The most useful information comes from Deut 32:24, where the following tricolon occurs in Yahweh's curse of apostate Jacob: *mēzê rā'āb* 'sucked dry by Hunger*', *ûlēhumê rešep* 'and devoured* by Pestilence*' *wēqeteb mērîrî* 'and bitter* Destruction*'. ... Thus 'Hunger' is probably an epithet of Mot (Heb *Māwet*), god of death; *lēhumê*, 'devoured', can also be construed as 'fought against', cf. the arrow metaphor of v 23; 'Pestilence' is personified as Resheph, the plague-god, who in Ugaritic is represented as an archer (KTU 1.82:3); *Qeteb* appears to be a divine name, in accordance with the other two, while *mērîrî*, 'bitter', may also have the sense of 'strong' ... we arrive at the following equation: the Terror is Deber, while the arrow (of Resheph) is Qeteb, the personification of the destruction the god wreaks. This seems to corroborate our findings in Deut 32:24 above.¹¹

- d) Destruction – *Sept. drakon* may be the translation of several Hebrew nouns which are connected with existing animals or monsters living in the sea. The use in the LXX is found in Psalm 90:6 - ⁵*The one will not be afraid...* ⁶*from mishap and demon at midday*. Here the word *demon* is the classic Greek word *daimonion* and can mean a supernatural deity of any sort, but has been further defined in the NT as a force of evil and is a directly associated term with the disembodied Nephilim.

⁹ Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms (90–150): Commentary*, vol. 3, Kregel Exegetical Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2016), 47.

¹⁰ del Olmo G. Lete, "Deber," ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 231–232.

¹¹ N. Wyatt, "Qeteb," ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 673.

The noon-day heat and the critical time at the sun's zenith was a common concern in the ancient Near East, and spirits of calamity were held responsible for sunstroke (GASTER 1969:770), feverish diseases, and other maladies (CAILLOIS 1937). The Latin of Jerome renders the verse as *morsus insanientis meridie*, "the bite of insanity at midday".¹²

The backdrop then of Satan's line of questioning and tempting has a force of demonic power that is aimed at removing Jesus from His High Priestly position in and as the Temple. This leads him to bear down on Jesus by saying, "Since you are the Son of God, throw yourself down" and then tips his hand at what he is doing, "for it is written (in Psalm 91:11, 12), 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'on their hand they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" But this *only* applies to those who are dwelling in the shelter of the Most High and abiding in His shadow; those who have made Yahweh their dwelling place.

"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty...He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his pinions, and under His wings you will find refuge."

The language used here can point to being covered by the wings of the Cherubim over the Ark of the Covenant. Therein is God's safety and protection.

Psalm 91:13-16 are key to Jesus' answer to this test. The end of verse 13 declares *and the serpent you will trample underfoot*. A direct reference to Genesis 3:15. How does this happen? Verse 14, *Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him*.

This is the bridge to Deuteronomy 6 and the answer to the accusation and test of the devil. The love of Jesus for the Father.

Jesus again shows us the kingdom-key to overcoming the mind-games of the devil: "*Again it is written*" and quotes from the Torah, Deuteronomy 6:16. The connecting point is Psalm 91:14-15 and Deuteronomy 6:4-5. "Because He (Jesus) has loved Me (Yahweh, the Most High), therefore I will deliver Him; I will set Him securely on high, because He has known My Name. He (Jesus) will call upon Me, and I will answer Him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue Him and honor Him. With long life I will satisfy Him and let Him see My *Yeshua* (Heb. lit. yesuah)." That leads Jesus to Deuteronomy's great Commandment.

"Hear, O Israel! The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (Deut. 6:4-5)"

Deuteronomy 6:14 picks up the issue before Yeshua, "¹⁴You shall not go after other gods (Heb. *elohim*), the gods of the people who are around you – ¹⁵for the LORD your God in your midst is a

¹² G. J. Riley, "Midday Demon," ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 572–573.

jealous God – lest the anger of the LORD your God be kindled against you, and he destroy you from off the face of the earth. ¹⁶ “You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah (or Meribah – the rock Moses struck at Kadesh).

The testing is compared to the test of Israel for *another* sign at Masah – a complaint for water. The renewed temple in the restoration would have water flowing from it (Ezek 47). And from the peak of the temple Jesus is tempted as Israel was – to make the water flow in the same way He was tempted to make bread. Throwing Himself down would bring the angels and they would lift Him up or exalt Him, preventing the plan. They would catch Him up. This would only happen after the crucifixion and resurrection (Acts 1:9-11). Jesus is experiencing the test at Masah as the New Israel. They grumbled and complained leading to Moses anger and the striking of the rock. Here the Greater Moses humbles Himself before the Father and becomes the source of living water Himself.

The ordeal then was introduced as an assault on the Priesthood of Jesus and His position in the Highest Place of the Temple Complex. It moved then to a temptation to cast Himself down and receive unto Himself the ministry of angels and in essence “strike the rock” and make water flow from the Temple.

The answer is, “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.” Do not strike the rock in your own power and make water flow. Speak to the Rock.

5. The devil took him to a *very high mountain* and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. Luke adds, *and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.*

As with the temple temptation, again Satan took him in a vision experience to a high mountain. To which mountain did Satan take Jesus? We are not told, only that it was a *high mountain*. The description points us to the *cosmic mountain*. A high place of power for Satan on the earth. The backdrop to this is Ezekiel 28:13-19 when, as the Anointed Cherub, he was on the Holy Mountain of God and was from there cast down.

In an unholy effort to gain dominion over the earth Satan re-created or profaned a mountain to set up his own cosmic mountain. Could this be Mount Hermon? Possibly. We’ll see later in Matthew 16:13 that Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi and asked His disciples who people say the Son of Man is. Peter received the revelation that He, the Son of Man, Jesus, was the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. The next chapter shows that after six days Jesus, the Son of Man, took Peter, James, and John and led them up a *high mountain*. There is only one mountain in the district of Caesarea Philippi: *Mount Hermon*.



It would seem the only high mountain in the wilderness outside of Israel is Mount Hermon in the north. This again would be in cosmic geography the high place Satan would use.

“¹³You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ (Isa. 14:13-14)”

We see that Mount Hermon was the point where the two hundred watchers descended and swore a curse-oath to rebel against Yahweh and sin against Him and the creation.

⁵Then they all swore together and bound one another with a curse. ⁶And they were, all of them, two hundred, who descended in the days of Jared onto the peak of Mount Hermon. And they

called the mountain “Hermon” because they swore and bound one another with a curse on it. (1 Enoch 6:5-6)¹³

The Hebrew for Hermon are the letters *h-r-m* which also form the same use for the giant clans and their possessions that were under the ban, devoted to destruction (**charam**) when Joshua led the children of Israel into the Land of Promise.

If this is Mount Hermon, it would give more impact to the temptation or test thrown at Jesus by Satan. He would have been part of that rebellion in some way because he assumed authority over these watchers/angels. (see Matthew 25:41 – *the devil and his angels*). That being the case, the *bene elohim*, sons of God, were given authority over the nations after the Tower of Babel to rule them justly.

⁸When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. ⁹But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage. (Deut. 32:8-9)

Satan shows Jesus all of the kingdoms of the world (*kosmos*) and their glory in a moment of time (*chronos*). Luke’s use of time language indicates chronological time – from start to finish. Satan shows Jesus the kingdoms of the world from start to finish (in other words, the image seen in Daniel 2 and the Beast Empires of Daniel 7). Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and the Last Beast Empire at the end of days.

He says to Jesus, “To you I will give all this *exousia* (authority, or right to exercise power over these world empires) and their glory (the worship of humans and their homage or worship to Him), for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.” He made the same offer to Nebuchadnezzar, Xerxes, Alexander the Great, the Caesars, and now to Jesus. He wanted to bring Him into the fold. To cause Him to assume authority that would only come after His death and resurrection.

Matthew 4:9, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” And here is Satan’s long desired aim – the worship due only the Most High. He sought to set himself on high and receive worship. The temptation here was a circumvention of God the Father’s plan for Jesus to receive all authority in heaven and earth. No cross, no suffering, no rejection, just an assuming of power given to Him by the one who had authority over Babylon. The only requirement: worship Satan.

Jesus, Yahweh in Flesh, was there the day iniquity and violence was found in this dethroned Cherub, Hallel ben Sahar, the Satan. And once again, Jesus humbles Himself to His Father’s will and plan and returns to Deuteronomy 6 with some added flare:

¹³ Nickelsburg, George W.E.; VanderKam, James C.. 1 Enoch (p. 24). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

“Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship Yahweh your God and him only shall you serve.” In the judgment of this Cherub, no doubt he heard something similar when he was cast to the earth.

Matthew quotes Jesus as using, “worship (proskyneo) Kyriōn” instead of the Deuteronomy 6:13 “fear (phobeo) the Lord your God and serve him (LXX).” What we know then, is that Jesus knew the *fear of Yahweh* was the path to worshipping Him. It is the awe and majesty of the Fear of the LORD that leads to wisdom and understanding. It is also a play on the Satanic test “worship me (ego)”

¹³The **fear of the LORD is hatred of evil**. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate. (Prov. 8:13)

¹³The end of the matter; all has been heard. **Fear God and keep his commandments**, for this is **the whole duty of man**. (Ecc. 12:13)

⁸ Let all the earth **fear the LORD**; let all the inhabitants of the world **stand in awe of him!** (Ps. 33:8)

And just as the devil was cast out from before God’s presence, here Matthew writes, “Then the devil left him (until a *Kairos* time), and then *angels* came and ministered to Him. This is similar to Elijah receiving food from the angel in 1 Kings 19.

- F. After Israel passed through the waters of the Red Sea, the Spirit of God led Israel, the son of God, into the wilderness. In a similar fashion, after passing through the waters of baptism in the Jordan, the Spirit leads Jesus, the Son of God, into the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). But unlike Adam, who failed in the garden, and Israel, who failed in the wilderness when tempted by Satan, Jesus obeys. Whereas Israel’s hunger and thirst in the wilderness led them to grumble against the Lord and distrust him, Jesus’ hunger and thirst led him to obey. In response to Satan’s temptations, Jesus quotes three passages of Scripture from Deuteronomy 6–8. These chapters recount Israel’s wilderness wanderings, highlighting their failures. By contrast, Jesus resists the temptations of Satan, showing that he is not only the obedient son of God but also the promised seed of Adam and Eve who would crush the serpent’s head (Genesis 3:15). The new exodus that would lead to restoration from exile is under way!¹⁴
- G. After a time of ministry and apparent tending to by His messengers, Jesus returns to learn that during those 40 days John the Baptist had been arrested. Now, with Satan under His feet, the head crushing had begun. Jesus, the Anointed One, the Messiah, returns from this time of testing “in the power (dynamis – pronounced: doo-nah-meess) of the Spirit to Galilee where He began His teaching ministry in the synagogues.
- H. When He comes to Nazareth, His home town, He went to the synagogue on Shabbat and stood to read. The incarnate Word reading the written word from Isaiah. There He declared Isaiah 61.

¹⁴ Harmon, Matthew S.. *Rebels and Exiles* (Essential Studies in Biblical Theology) (pp. 85-86). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.