

A Study of Matthew 4

I. Outline.

1. First Temptation (Matthew 4.1-4; cf., Mark 1.12-13; Luke 4.1-4).
 2. Second Temptation (Matthew 4.5-7; cf., Luke 4.9-12).
 3. Third Temptation (Matthew 4.8-11; cf., Mark 1.13; Luke 4.5-8, 13).
 4. Jesus Begins His Ministry (Matthew 4.12-17; cf., Mark 1.14-15; Luke 4.14, 31).
 5. Jesus Calls His First Disciples (Matthew 4.18-22; cf., Mark 1.16-20).
 6. Jesus Ministers in Galilee (Matthew 4.23-25; cf., Mark 1.39; Luke 4.44).
- From: NKJV Headings.

II. Summary.

In this chapter we read about Christ being tempted. The very fact that we can read in the New Testament about Jesus being tempted ought to be a cause of rejoicing to you and me. Were it *not so*, this comforting passage would not be in our Bibles—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.** As can be seen from the notes below, there is value in observing Satan's *modus operandi* as he sought to defeat Jesus, in that he is just as determined to tempt you and me. The last part of this chapter (12-25) tells us about Jesus selecting certain ones for a special opportunity—to be with Him continually for a period of time and then to be given the awesome responsibility of spreading the saving message throughout the world (Matthew 28.18-20). Some of these specially selected men were fishermen; Jesus is about to turn them into fishers of men.

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Christ.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

IV. Words/Phrases to Study

1. Matthew 4.1-11... “The reason for this showdown is not stated by Matthew, but several possibilities seem likely. First, if Jesus is to ‘**destroy the works of the devil**’ (1 John 3.8), He must prove Himself stronger than the devil (Matthew 12.29). If He is to be man’s champion He must be tested thoroughly to see whether He is equal to the task set before Him. Second, temptation helped qualify Christ to be our High Priest (Hebrews 2.16-18; Hebrews 4.15-16). Because He knows the strength of the foe, He can sympathize with our situation (Hebrews 5.1-9). Third, Christ’s example teaches us how to resist the devil (James 4.7). If we do what He did, we too can put the devil to flight. Fourth, the temptation provides strategic insight into the devil’s methods (2 Corinthians 2.11)—‘*The greater the knowledge of the enemy, the greater the potential for victory*’ (Douglas MacArthur). In tempting Christ, Satan revealed information about his tactics; information we can use to our advantage (Ephesians 6.11)” [Kenneth L. Chumbley, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 65].
2. Matthew 4.1... **LED UP OF THE SPIRIT**—“Luke says (Luke 4:1) that Jesus was “**full of the Holy Spirit**,” and it was by His influence, therefore, that He went into the desert to be tempted. It was not done by presumption on the part of Jesus, nor was it for a mere display of his power in resisting temptation; but it was evidently that it might be seen that his holiness was such that he could not be seduced from allegiance to God” [Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament*, An e-Sword Module]. |||| “The passive verb in no way expresses a human shrinking from the

ordeal that lay ahead of Jesus. The popular translation of Mark 1:12 seem to suggest that Jesus was somehow “thrown out” into the desert against His own will, according to the most obvious etymological meaning of *ekballo* (“to throw out”). Yet, there is evidence that *ekballo* can also be used without the connotation of force (Cf. Matthew 9:38; Luke 10:2; John 10:4; James 2:25; Acts 16:37). Matthew and Luke use words (*ago* and *anago*) which signify simply ‘to lead, bring.’ Thus, rather than being reluctant to face the coming trials, Jesus willingly followed the Spirit’s direction. The will of God is clearly seen in the fact that this mighty battle shall be waged at this time and not later in Jesus’ ministry. Human wisdom might have postponed this encounter, because it was to be so decisive. But Jesus did not either shrink from the battle nor rashly seek to be tempted. Rather, He sought to be led by God’s Spirit” [Harold Fowler, Bible Study Textbook Series, College Press, 1968, *The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1*, An e-Sword Module].

3. Matthew 4.2... **FASTED FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS**—“While Mark states that Jesus was tempted forty days, Matthew represents that at the end of the forty days ‘the tempter came to him.’ Luke’s statement is like Mark’s (Luke 4.2). I think the best explanation of this is that Mark and Luke regarded the forty days’ fast as a part of the temptation; and rightly so, because it was a necessary preparation for the trial in regard to bread. Had it not been for the hunger super-induced by the fast, the suggestion, ‘Turn these stones into bread,’ would have had no force” [J.W. McGarvey, *The New Testament Commentary, Volume 1—Matthew & Mark*, pp., 266-67].
4. Matthew 4.4... **IT IS WRITTEN**—“Unqualified reliance upon God’s word is critical when fighting the devil. **‘It is written’** (*gegraptai*) is in the perfect tense and means, ‘It stands written’ (Matthew 4.7, Matthew 4.10). The passage Christ quoted was then fifteen hundred years old, but He considered it as reliable and relevant as the day it was written. Instead of taking the situation into His own hands, He esteemed ‘the words of [God’s] mouth more than [His] necessary food’ (Job 23.12). ‘A life sustained by food only is a very poor life’ (Morris, 74). Real living is rooted in obedience to God, not in satisfying temporal desires” [Chumbley, p. 69].
5. Matthew 4.5... **A PINNACLE OF THE TEMPLE**—“Several places fit this description. In Herod’s Temple, for instance, the southeast corner of Solomon’s Porch offered a drop of over five hundred feet (Josephus, Ant. XV,11.5)” [Chumbley, p. 70].
6. Matthew 4.8... **SHEWETH HIM ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD**—“There is no difficulty in assuming that Jesus had supernatural vision to see all that Satan offered or in assuming that Satan drew word pictures of all the world’s kingdoms and their glories, because, as a matter of fact, the Evangelists do not tell how “He showed Him all the kingdoms of the world” [Fowler].
7. Matthew 4.11... **ANGELS CAME AND MINISTERED UNTO HIM**—“Angels do not appear again visibly ministering unto Jesus until we find Him in Gethsemane (Luke 22.43). When Satan finally departs from us, we, too, shall find ourselves in the presence of the angels (Luke 26.22). Satan and suffering first, then angels, refreshment and rest. God had indeed given His angels charge, and they came to Him who refused to put the Father to the test. But they did not succor Jesus during His temptation, for that was to be resisted by Himself—alone (Isaiah 53.3)” [Eddie Whitten, in *A Homiletic Commentary on the Book of Matthew*, p. 177].
8. Matthew 4.13... **CAPERNAUM**—“Nahum’s town, a Galilean city frequently mentioned in the history of our Lord. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament. After our Lord’s expulsion from Nazareth (Matthew 4:13 -16; Luke 4:16-31), Capernaum became his ‘own city.’ It was the scene of many acts and incidents of his life (Matthew 8:5 14, 15; Matthew 8:5 6,10-17; Matthew 8:5 20; Mark 1:32 -34, etc.). The impenitence and unbelief of its inhabitants after the many evidences our Lord gave among them of the truth of his mission, brought down upon them a heavy denunciation of judgement (Matthew 11:23)” [*Easton’s Bible Dictionary*].
9. Matthew 4.16... **THE PEOPLE WHICH SAT IN DARKNESS SAW GREAT LIGHT**—“A great light springing up in a dark place might fitly represent any great teacher or reformer; but the light here predicted by

the prophet is located in the very land which witnessed the chief part of the ministry of Jesus, and here no great light but Jesus ever appeared. The enemies of Jesus themselves declared that ‘**out of Galilee ariseth no prophet**’ (John 7:52). It is certain, then, that Isaiah’s prediction was fulfilled, as Matthew affirms, in Jesus” [J.W. McGarvey, *The New Testament Commentary, Volume 1—Matthew & Mark*, p. 47].

10. **Matthew 4.17... JESUS BEGAN TO PREACH, AND TO SAY, REPENT: FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND**—“...Jesus now begins the thorough evangelization of Galilee, Matthew cannot mean that He is beginning for the first time to preach anywhere, for Jesus is just returning from Judea where He taught and wrought miracles (John 2:13 to John 4:3). Likewise, He passed through Samaria (John 4:4-45) where He openly declared Himself to be the Messiah as well as where He accepted the open appraisal of His teaching as those of ‘**the Savior of the world**’ (John 4:42). Rather, Matthew intends only what he states: that when Jesus withdrew into Galilee, from that time He began to preach in Galilee. Prior to this time Jesus had not evangelized there; now He launches His “Great Galilean Campaign,” Jesus’ fame as a preacher dates from this campaign (Acts 10:37), and His complete identification with Galilee from this move (cf. Luke 23:5-7; John 7:41; John 7:52)” [Fowler].
11. **Matthew 4.19... I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN**—“Jesus was inviting Peter and Andrew to a new vocation, but one that bore similarities to their old work. They would continue to be fishers, but now they would cast their nets for men. Jesus wanted them in close association with Himself that He might impact them before He turned them loose to continue His work (Matthew 28.19-20; Mark 3.13)” [Chumbley, p. 77].
12. **Matthew 4.22... AND THEY IMMEDIATELY LEFT THE SHIP AND THEIR FATHER, AND FOLLOWED HIM**—“They showed us what we ought to do. If necessary, we should leave father, and mother, and every friend, Luke 14:26. If they will go with us, and be Christians, it is well; if not, yet they should not hinder us. We should be the followers of Jesus. And, while in doing it we should treat our friends kindly and tenderly, yet we ought at all hazards to obey God, and do our duty to him” [Barnes].
13. **Matthew 4.23... AND JESUS WENT ABOUT ALL GALILEE**—“This paragraph contains a general statement of the journeying and labors of Jesus in Galilee, the details of which are given in subsequent chapters. It shows that in the course of these journeyings. He visited every part of Galilee” [McGarvey, *New Testament Commentary*, p. 48].
14. **Matthew 4.23... TEACHING IN THEIR SYNAGOGUES**—“Behold the glorious, surpassing wisdom of Jesus. He chose fishermen to change the world! He ever chooses the foolish to confound the wise. (1 Corinthians 1:18-31, esp. 1 Corinthians 1:26-28) If Jesus can make such everlasting good use of such humble instruments as these four fishermen, dear friend, what can He do with your life when surrendered to Him?” [Fowler].
15. **Matthew 4.24... HIS FAME WENT THROUGHOUT ALL SYRIA**—“It is not easy to fix the exact bounds of Syria in the time of our Saviour. It was, perhaps, the general name for the country lying between the Euphrates on the east, and the Mediterranean on the west; and between Mount Taurus on the north, and Arabia on the south. Through all this region his celebrity was spread by his power of working miracles; and, as might be expected, the sick from every quarter were brought to him, in the hope that he would give relief” [Barnes].

V. Lessons & Applications.

1. **Matthew 4.1... THEN JESUS WAS LED UP OF THE SPIRIT INTO THE WILDERNESS TO BE TEMPTED**—“The two expressions **DRIVETH** (Mark 1.12) and **LED UP** (Matthew 4.1; Luke 4.1) show that Jesus was drawn to the wilderness by an irresistible impulse, and did not go thither of His own volition (Ezekiel 40.2) [quoted from *Fourfold Gospel*, DRL]. He was brought into temptation, but did not seek it.

He was led of God into temptation, but was not tempted of God. God may bring us into temptation (Matthew 6.13; Matthew 26.31; Job 1.12; Job 2.6), and may make temptation a blessing unto us, tempering it to our strength, and making us stronger by the victory over it (1 Corinthians 10.13; James 1.2, James 1.12) but God Himself never tempts us (James 1.13)” [Eddie Whitten, in *A Homiletic Commentary on the Book of Matthew*, pp., 165-66].

2. **Matthew 4.8... AGAIN, THE DEVIL TAKETH HIM INTO AN EXCEEDINGLY HIGH MOUNTAIN**—“Between the two records [Matthew’s and Luke’s, DRL], Jesus is taken up into a mountain high enough that He could see all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them and this was done in a moment of time. Such circumstances would seem to demand the conclusion that the temptation involves a vision designed to offer Jesus a quick and easy way to become the king of the world. Where would be His throne? Not on the earth! Peter tells us it will melt with fervent heat (2 Peter 3.10). Those who teach and believe that the Lord will set up a literal, material kingdom will be just as disappointed in Jesus as were the Jews of His day” [Whitten, p. 174].
3. **Matthew 4.9... ALL THESE THINGS I WILL GIVE THEE, IF THOU WILT FALL DOWN AND WORSHIP ME**—“The spirit of Satan’s temptation of Jesus in this respect is alive in every generation. Human vanity is a vulnerable access to the heart. Satan is aware of every failing of man, and he appeals to the weakest moment and the weakest flaw in one’s character. Even though he could not succeed with the mighty Son of God, Satan is not dismayed. He still offers to the spiritual novice or weakling the succulent morsel of ‘compromise’ to create in the mind the illusions of grandeur such as he placed before Jesus. It is only by the commitment and spiritual maturity of those who can discern the ultimate plight of Satan and his followers that the faithful child of God can resist the temptation Satan places before him. In the church of our Lord, there are untold thousands who stand in jeopardy of losing their souls to the call of materialism” [Whitten, p. 175].
4. **Matthew 4.18... FOR THEY WERE FISHERS**—“...these men were fishermen. It has been pointed out by many scholars that the good fisherman must possess these very qualities which will turn him into the good fisher of men. (1) **He must have patience.** He must learn to wait patiently until the fish will take the bait. It is but rarely in preaching or in teaching that we will see quick results. We must learn to wait. (2) **He must have perseverance.** He must learn never to be discouraged, but always to try again. The good preacher and teacher must not be discouraged when nothing seems to happen. (3) **He must have courage.** The good preacher and teacher must be well aware that there is always a danger in telling men the truth. The man who tells the truth more often than not takes his reputation and his life into his hands. (4) **He must have an eye for the right moment.** The wise fisherman knows well that there are times when it is hopeless to fish. The good preacher and teacher chooses his moment. There are times when men will welcome the truth, and times when they will resent the truth. The wise preacher and teacher knows that there is a time to speak and a time to be silent. (5) **The wise fisherman must keep himself out of sight.** The wise preacher and teacher will always seek to present men, not with himself, but with Jesus Christ. His aim is to fix men’s eyes, not on himself, but on that figure beyond” [Whitten, p. 183].

VI. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Isaiah prophesied about the LIGHT of truth coming to Galilee.
02. _____ Satan quoted Scripture to Jesus.
03. _____ Matthew indicates that Jesus *wanted* to be tempted by the devil.
04. _____ After the temptation, the devil ministered to Jesus.
05. _____ James and John were busy when Jesus found them.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. ____ The number of days Jesus fasted was: (a) 3; (b) 40; (c) 7.
07. ____ Which of these is mentioned in Matthew 4: (a) Zebulun; (b) Naphtali; (c) Judaea.
08. ____ The number of times Jesus said—**IT IS WRITTEN**: (a) 7; (b) 12; (c) 3.
09. ____ That which Peter and Andrew left was their: (a) nets; (b) pride; (c) knowledge.
10. ____ NOT mentioned as making up the multitudes who followed Jesus was people from: (a) Galilee; (b) Jerusalem; (c) Egypt.

Short Answer

11. The first temptation, as recorded by Matthew, involved turning _____ to _____.
12. One word Satan used in all three temptations was: _____.
13. Jesus heard something about John. Wat was it? He had been _____ into _____.
14. _____ a _____ into the _____ is the activity Jesus saw when walking by the sea.
15. _____, _____, and _____ is what Jesus went about doing in Galilee.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Matthew 3 Questions... **01**—False (7); **02**—True (17); **03**—True (3); **04**—True (10); **05**—True (13); **06**—God (17); **07**—John (1); **08**—Pharisees & Sadducees (7-8); **09**—John (7); **10**—Jesus (11); **11**—wilderness, Judea (1); **12**—Wrath (7); **13**—gathered, burned up (12); **14**—cut/hewn down, thrown/cast, fire (10); **15**—fulfill, righteousness (15).

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL

W P N E H T T H D P H
 O D E I O L W I I R V
 K A T O A D E L A E H
 C E T I P G S F S A A
 I R I M L L A U T C N
 S B R O T H E R S H D
 V T W D C G S S R E F
 H P O G A L I L E E J
 N M L N M O D E V I L
 E E L I E R E G I O N
 H T O K O D G N G S B
 W H F O R T Y A L S W

AGAIN	ANGELS	BREAD	BROTHER	CAME
DEVIL	DISEASE	FOLLOW	FORTY	GALILEE
GIVE	HAND	HEALED	JESUS	KINGDOM
LEFT	LORD	PEOPLE	PREACH	REGION
SAID	SICK	STONE	TEMPT	THEN
WHEN	WRITTEN			

VIII. Crossword Puzzle.

Matthew 4 (KJV)	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>ACROSS</u></p> <p>03) James & John were doing it when Jesus called them.</p> <p>04) Jesus did His teaching in ____.</p> <p>07) Place Jesus left to dwell in Capernaum.</p> <p>09) What Jesus was preaching.</p> <p>13) Told Jesus to command stones.</p> <p>14) "It is ____" appears 4 times in chapter 4.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DOWN</u></p> <p>01) Jesus fasted ____ days and nights.</p> <p>02) Where the Spirit led Jesus.</p> <p>05) Angels came and did this to Jesus.</p> <p>06) Zebedee's son & John's brother.</p> <p>08) Man shall not live by bread ____.</p> <p>10) Fame of Jesus went throughout all ____.</p> <p>11) Jesus told Satan: " ____ thee hence."</p> <p>12) Peter & Andrew left these to follow Jesus.</p>

IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...

Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!

W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?

W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...

W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...