

The Gospel of Matthew

"The Testing of the Son of God"
(Matthew 4:1-11)

Testing of Jesus

Overview

1. Tested or Tempted?

- *peirazo* – can mean either "test" or "tempt" depending on the purpose involved
- God's purpose is to "test" Jesus by means of Satan's "temptations"

Testing of Jesus

Overview

2. Jesus as the True Israel

- Like Israel, God led His Son into the wilderness to be tested (40 days parallels 40 years)
- Like Israel, Jesus experienced real hunger and deprivation as part of His testing
- Unlike Israel (and Adam), Jesus trusted God's Word and was victorious

Testing of Jesus

1. First Test

A. Satan's temptation

- he enticed Jesus to provide miraculous bread (like manna) to satisfy His hunger
- he tempted Jesus to use His Sonship to serve His own needs and avoid suffering

Testing of Jesus

1. First Test

B. Jesus' Response (Deut. 8:3)

- more necessary for Jesus than satisfying physical appetites was obeying the word of God
- Jesus refused to use His Sonship in a manner inconsistent with His God-ordained mission

Testing of Jesus

2. Second Test

A. Satan's temptation

- he employed a scriptural promise (Psalm 91:11-12) to tempt Jesus to test God's care for Him
- he enticed Jesus to demand from God, on the basis of His privileged status as the Son, release from the vulnerability of the threat to life

Testing of Jesus

2. Second Test

B. Jesus' Response (Deut. 6:16)

- He will not put God to the test by demanding a superfluous miracle
- He is confident of the Father's care for Him in His messianic mission of suffering

Testing of Jesus

3. Third Test

A. Satan's Temptation

- he offered possession of the "kingdom" that bypassed the cross
- he enticed Jesus to abandon His allegiance to God and His calling as the Son

Testing of Jesus

3. Third Test

B. Jesus' Response (Deut. 6:13)

- He asserted God's exclusive claim to worship – the most fundamental tenet of Scripture
- He affirmed His undivided allegiance to God and God's mission for Him

Testing of Jesus

Implications

1. Jesus "learned obedience" through his testing/suffering (Heb. 5:7-9)
2. As our representative, Jesus obeyed and triumphed on our behalf