

TEMPTATION

Matthew 3:1-17; 4: 1-25

Jesus grew from a young child to a man in the village of Nazareth. In all things he was obedient to his heavenly Father. Since his earthly father Joseph was a carpenter, Jesus learned to be a carpenter also. He helped his father to support their family by working with his hands.

When Jesus was thirty years of age, he began his work of teaching about God's kingdom. But before he began his teaching ministry, Jesus went to the Jordan River to be baptized by John.

At the Jordan, John preached to the people of Israel, calling them to repentance. He said, "Turn away from your sin, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

After John had baptized Jesus, as he was coming up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove, and a voice from heaven proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Immediately after this, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. While he was in the wilderness, Jesus did not have anything to eat. After forty days and forty nights with nothing to eat, Jesus was very hungry. Then the devil came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to turn to bread so that you can eat."

You can imagine that the temptation was very real, for Jesus had not eaten all those days, and his stomach must have hurt terribly. It would have been very difficult for you or I to resist such an opportunity, but Jesus never sinned in any thing, and he would never obey the command of Satan. Satan was not only tempting Jesus with food, but he was also taunting Jesus, saying, prove that you are God. But Jesus did not need to prove anything to Satan. He said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Then the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple. He said, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

This time Satan even quoted God's word, trying to get Jesus to sin. It is a sin to put ourselves in a dangerous place deliberately in order to test God. Satan knows God's word. He is well able to quote it if it will serve his purpose. In this case, Satan used the very words of God to taunt Jesus again, saying, Prove that you are God's Son.

Again, Jesus quoted scripture right back at Satan. He said, "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Now the devil took Jesus up to an exceeding high mountain. There he showed Christ all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory. He said to Jesus, "I will give all this to you, if you will fall down and worship me." Here we see the true nature of Satan, for he has always wanted to be worshipped as God. It really was foolish of him to say that he had the power to give all the kingdoms of the world to Jesus in exchange for worship. For in truth all things belong to Christ. It is only that God allows Satan power at this time in history.

Jesus' answer was, "Get thee hence Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

With this final rebuke from Jesus, the devil left him, and the angels came and cared for him.

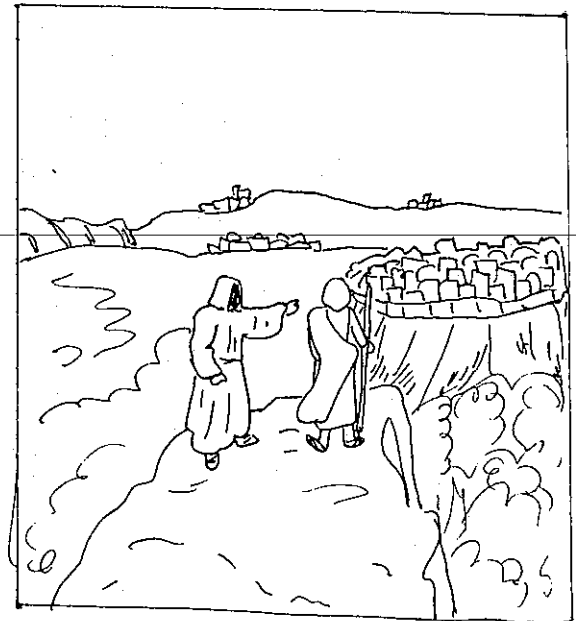
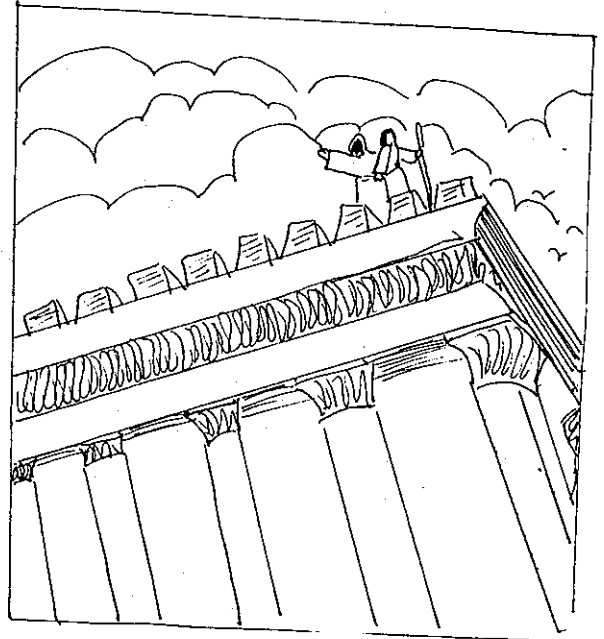
Jesus gave us a very powerful lesson in these verses. He showed us that our weapon against Satan is the Word of God. If Jesus himself being God, quoted scripture to defeat Satan, how could any of us believe that our own thoughts and words are weapon enough to fight the devil. It is important for all of us to know scripture and to use it in our defense against temptation, as well as our witness for the Lord. For the scripture itself tells us, that the word of God is powerful.

LEARN: For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

1. Color the pictures.
2. Cut out the boxes
3. Cut out the verses.
4. Paste pictures in order on strip of construction paper.
5. Paste correct verse below each picture.
6. Fold strip to make triangle.
7. Staple ends together.

fold fold



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 Man shall not live by bread alone,
 but by every word that
 procedeth out of the mouth of God.

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 the Lord thy God.

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