

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 3 & 4

MATTHEW 3:13-17 - JESUS' BAPTISM

JESUS IS BAPTIZED BY JOHN NOT BECAUSE HE NEEDED TO REPENT OF HIS SINS BUT TO SERVE AS A TRANSITORY MOMENT IN THEIR OVERLAPPING MINISTRIES, TO SIGNAL THE START OF JESUS' OWN MINISTRY AND TO PROVIDE AN EXAMPLE FOR JESUS' OWN FOLLOWERS. JESUS' BAPTISM INITIATES THE OVERLAP/TRANSITION OF JOHN'S MINISTRY TO JESUS'.

IT IS ALSO A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN THAT GOD PRONOUNCES HIS FAVOR AND LOVE FOR JESUS IN THIS MOMENT, ALLUDING TO ISAIAH 42:1:

ISAIAH 42:1 - "BEHOLD, MY SERVANT, WHOM I UPHOLD; MY CHOSEN ONE IN WHOM MY SOUL DELIGHTS. I HAVE PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM; HE WILL BRING FORTH JUSTICE TO THE NATIONS.

THE LORD HAD NOT SPOKEN DIRECTLY IN 400 YEARS AND NOW SPEAKS ONCE AGAIN TO SPOTLIGHT HIS SON JESUS - WHO WILL SPEAK AND EMBODY THE WORD OF THE GOD (HEBREWS 1:1-2, JOHN 1:14).

NOTE THAT GOD'S LOVING DECLARATION OVER HIS SON IS BECAUSE OF HIS LOVE FOR AND GRACE TOWARDS HIM AND NOT TIED TO SOME GREAT MIRACLE OR TEACHING MOMENT FROM JESUS. THIS PRONOUNCEMENT IS DECLARING AND AFFIRMING THE CORE OF WHO JESUS IS - THE BELOVED SON OF GOD - A CRITICAL REMINDER FOR JESUS (AND US) IN LIGHT OF THE VERY NEXT ACCOUNT.

MATTHEW 4:1-11 - JESUS TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL

JESUS' FIRST EXTENSIVE RECORDED EXPERIENCE IS HIS TEMPTATION IN THE WILDERNESS. HE IS "LED BY THE SPIRIT" INTO THE WILDERNESS AFTER 40 DAYS OF FASTING HE IS TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL. THE PHASE "40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS" IS A HEBREW IDIOM MEANING 40 DAYS AND IS OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH TESTING OR TRIALS. HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

- DURING THE GREAT FLOOD, IT RAINED FOR "40 DAYS/NIGHTS" (GENESIS 7).
- MOSES MET WITH GOD ON THE MOUNTAIN FOR THE COMMANDMENTS FOR "40 DAYS/NIGHTS" (EXODUS 24:18)
- GOLIATH TAUNTED THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL "MORNING AND EVENING FOR 40 DAYS" (1 SAMUEL 17:16)
- ELIJAH FLED FROM JEZEBEL & ENCOUNTERED THE LORD ON MT. HOREB AFTER "40 DAYS/NIGHTS" (1 KINGS 19)

TEMPTATION 1: "IF YOU ARE THE SON OF GOD, COMMAND THESE STONE TO BECOME BREAD" (4:3)

JESUS' RESPONSE: "IT IS WRITTEN" AND QUOTE OF DEUTERONOMY 8:3:

DEUTERONOMY 8:2-3 - "YOU SHALL REMEMBER ALL THE WAY WHICH THE LORD YOUR GOD HAS LED YOU IN THE WILDERNESS THESE FORTY YEARS, THAT HE MIGHT HUMBLE YOU, TESTING YOU, TO KNOW WHAT WAS IN YOUR HEART, WHETHER YOU WOULD KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS OR NOT. 3 "HE HUMBLLED YOU AND LET YOU BE HUNGRY, AND FED YOU WITH MANNA WHICH YOU DID NOT KNOW, NOR DID YOUR FATHERS KNOW, THAT HE MIGHT MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT MAN LIVES BY EVERYTHING THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE LORD.

TEMPTATION 2: "IF YOU ARE THE SON OF GOD, THROW YOURSELF DOWN (FROM THE PINNACLE OF THE TEMPLE)...FOR IT IS WRITTEN, (THE LORD) WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS (TO PROTECT YOU)." (4:5-6, QUOTING PSALM 91:1-2)

JESUS' RESPONSE: "IT IS WRITTEN" AND QUOTE OF DEUTERONOMY 6:16:

DEUTERONOMY 6:16 - "YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST, AS YOU TESTED HIM AT MASSAH.

TEMPTATION 3: (AFTER SHOWING ALL OF THE GLORIES OF THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD) "ALL THESE THINGS I WILL GIVE YOU, IF YOU FALL DOWN AND WORSHIP ME." (V. 8-9)

JESUS' RESPONSE: "IT IS WRITTEN" AND QUOTE OF DEUTERONOMY 6:13 AND 10:20:

DEUTERONOMY 6:13 - "YOU SHALL FEAR ONLY THE LORD YOUR GOD; AND YOU SHALL WORSHIP HIM AND SWEAR BY HIS NAME.

DEUTERONOMY 10:20 - "YOU SHALL FEAR THE LORD YOUR GOD; YOU SHALL SERVE HIM AND CLING TO HIM, AND YOU SHALL SWEAR BY HIS NAME.

Q - WHY DO YOU THINK THE DEVIL CHOSE THESE SPECIFIC TEMPTATIONS? WHAT MIGHT HE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?

Q - IS IT SIGNIFICANT THAT THIS TEMPTATION CAME AFTER JESUS' BAPTISM OR FASTING? IF SO, WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS?

Q - WHAT ARE SOME OF THE LESSONS WE CAN LEARN FROM THIS RECORD FOR OUR OWN DISCIPLESHIP TO JESUS?

WE SEE A CONTRAST TO ADAM IN THIS RECORD. ADAM WAS CREATED AND MADE ALIVE BY GOD'S OWN BREATH. HE WAS BELOVED BY GOD AND AS HIS FIRSTBORN HEIR, GIVEN RULERSHIP OVER THE CREATION. BUT WE KNOW THE GENESIS STORY AND ADAM EVENTUALLY CHOOSES THE OFFER OF THE SERPENT RATHER THAN REMAINING LOYAL TO HIS GOD AND FATHER. JESUS REPLAYS THIS SCENE WITH A MUCH DIFFERENT OUTCOME, CHOOSING FIDELITY TO THE FATHER WHO LOVED HIM OVER THE TEMPTATION OF THE DEVIL OR THE APPARENT SHORTCUT TO GLORY.

AND JESUS REPLAYS THE STORY OF ISRAEL AS WELL. WHEN GOD'S BELOVED SONS WERE FREED FROM EGYPT, THEY TOO WERE TESTED IN THE WILDERNESS AND FAILED - CHOOSING TO IGNORE BOTH GOD'S PROVISION AND MORE IMPORTANTLY GOD'S COMMANDS. AS A RESULT THEY WILL WANDER IN THE WILDERNESS FOR 40 YEARS. IN CONTRAST, JESUS ENDURES HIS WILDERNESS TRAIL AND AFTER 40 DAYS OVERCOMES HIS TRIAL, QUOTING FROM THE SAME WORDS ISRAEL HEARD IN DEUTERONOMY.

HE'S THE BETTER ADAM AND THE BETTER ISRAEL.