

# *Who Do You Say That I Am?*

## Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expositional Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew** 13- Jesus' Preparation for Ministry through Temptation- Part 2

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### **Matthew 4:1-11**

**1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.**

**2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.**

**3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."**

**4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"**

**5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,**

**6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"**

**7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"**

**8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;**

**9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."**

**10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"**

**11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.**

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;  
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen*

Now we need to remember that Matthew wrote this Account of the Birth, Life, Ministry, Death, and Resurrection, of the Lord Jesus because he was determined to reach his fellow-Jews with the ONLY thing that could save them- the Gospel. And so, in these early Chapters, Matthew has been telling his Jewish readers, and us, just WHO Jesus is.

So, Matthew began this Record by saying,

**The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:**

... and then the Apostle gave a genealogy of Jesus from His foster Father, Joseph's side to prove that Jesus was both the "seed" of King David and the "seed" of Abraham.

Then in **1:21**, Matthew gave the Account of the angel speaking to Joseph in a dream and saying,

**... you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.**

Now as an Apostle, Matthew was given the ability to correctly interpret the Old Testament. And so, in **Matthew 1:23**, Levi tied in what the angel told Joseph with what the Prophet had foretold in **Isaiah 7:14**:

**BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,**

... and then Matthew added a Commentary to that Prophecy by saying,

**... which translated means, "GOD WITH US.**

In Chapter 2- Matthew wrote down the Account of the Gentile Magi- who came into Jerusalem saying,

**Matthew 2:2**

**Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.**

... and then in **2:11**- Matthew tells us that these men actually DID worship Jesus when he wrote,

**After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him...**

In Chapter 3- the greatest Man born of Woman- John the Baptist- proclaimed WHO Jesus was when he said,

**Matthew 3:11b&12**

**11 ...He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**

**12 His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."**

... and then, at His Baptism- God the Father spoke audibly out of Heaven- concerning His disposition toward Jesus and said,

**Matthew 3:17b**

**... This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.**

... and all of this will culminate when God the Father reveals to Peter- the fullness of WHO JESUS IS when he said this in **Matthew 16:16**:

**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God**

Now we need to remember that the Apostle Levi (Matthew) wrote this Gospel Record down around the year 50AD. But Peter actually spoke these words around the year 27-29AD. And Peter would have never used the term, "*Christ*" that early. Depending on which language Peter spoke- he actually used the word, "*Meshach or Masiah*" (Hebrew) or "*Messiah or Messias*" (Greek) or "*Mashiach*" (Aramaic).

But what Peter meant was, "*You are the 'Anointed One' (that the Old Testament predicted)- the One, Who is of the 'SAME ESSENCE' (Son of) as that of God.*

Now the reason Matthew dedicates this entire Gospel Record to the Issue of WHO Jesus is- is because *whoever* the Messiah is- MUST have total and complete Authority over every facet of our lives. So, Jesus has to have...

- Authority over this natural World
- Authority over the Divine Curse (Death)
- Authority over false Teachers
- Authority over Sin
- Authority over satan and demons

You see, if any of these things have Authority over Jesus; or if Jesus cannot claim absolute MASTERY over all of these- then He *cannot* forgive our Sins; He *cannot* save our souls; He is NOT the Messiah; and we are doomed.

So, now we come o Chapter 4 and Jesus' Temptation in the Wilderness. And the Issue here in this Conflict is: "*Can this Man- Jesus Christ- save sinners from Sin? Can He save sinners from the destroyer? Can He deliver our eternal souls from Death and Hell?*" That's the *real* Question- and the only Question that has *eternal* Ramifications. "*Can Jesus overturn the Curse? Can He acquire Paradise for us? Can Jesus not only walk this world in white Himself- but can He pardon our Guilt and purchase Eternal Life for us- even though we have not walked this world in white? Can this man undo what the destroyer did with the first Adam? Can Jesus conquer Satan as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam? Can He conquer Sin and therefore conquer Death and therefore conquer Hell- not only for Himself- but for all who trust in Him?*"

So, Jesus is being prepared; or tested; or tried to prepare Him for Ministry and whether He has total Authority over satan and the demons- by being subjected to amazing Temptation- directly from satan himself.

But if, in any way, Jesus sins here- then He is *proving* that He is NOT the Messiah. And that means we will all remain in our Sins- heading for an Eternity in Hell. So, only by going through this "*Time of Temptation*" completely sinless can Jesus *prove* that He is, in fact, the Son of God and the Lamb, Who takes away the Sins of the world.

And that is what is going on here. Now last time, we learned that from satan's perspective- this Time is a serious "Temptation" and an "Opportunity" for Jesus to sin and to fail God. But from God's Perspective- this is a serious "Proving" or "Testing" or "Trying" to *validate* Jesus as the sinless Son of God.

Now keep in mind that this "*Time of Temptation*" (from satan's view) and "*Time of Testing/Proving*" (from God's View) came on the heels of Jesus' Baptism and God the Father speaking audibly out of Heaven- right in front of all those wanting to be baptized by John- *including* the Pharisees and scribes- and saying,

### **Matthew 3:17b**

**... This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.**

In other words, God the Father was telling all those gathered there that day and us (by way of Scripture) that Jesus was the "*Beloved*" of the Father; and that He pleased God- *perfectly*!

So, this “Trial”- this “Proving”- this “Temptation”- this “Testing” with satan came *immediately* after one of Jesus’ greatest Triumphs! God had publicly confirmed His great Love for Jesus- which gave Jesus the Divine Credibility that He needed to enter into His Ministry.

But the first thing that God the Holy Spirit did- was to lead Jesus- to *leave* that Triumph and to begin a long, protracted Fast. Then God the Spirit led Jesus to go into the Wilderness to be tempted of the devil himself. And that is what satan is using against Jesus during this time. So, through these three Temptations- satan was telling Jesus:

1. *If God really loved You- wouldn’t He want You to eat?*
2. *If God really loved You- wouldn’t He catch You and not allow You to fall?*
3. *If God really loved You- wouldn’t He want the nations of the world to praise You?*

So, the real Issue here was this:

***Would Jesus fall into Sin by taking it upon Himself to act as God (which He was)- that would be to His Own best interest- but NOT in God the Father’s best interest?***

... another way of understanding this would be:

***Would Jesus fall into Sin by replacing God the Father’s Will with His Own?***

... and yet another way of understanding this would be:

***Does Jesus love the Father and the Father’s Will MORE than Himself and His Own Will?***

... which can be boiled down to one phrase. These three Temptations were:

***An attack against the perfect Love and Unity between God the Father and God the Son***

And the reason this is a “Temptation” (from satan’s perspective) and a “Test” (from God’s perspective) is that Jesus HAS the Ability to operate fully as God.

Now to see how important this is- we need to remember what kind of Relationship God the Father has had with God the Son- from “Eternity Past.”<sup>1</sup> You

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<sup>1</sup> “Eternity Past” is a term used to describe the Eternity that existed BEFORE God created the Heavens and the Earth.

see, before God made *anything*- God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit experienced *perfect* Unity; *perfect* Beauty; *perfect* Goodness; *perfect* Righteousness; *perfect* Harmony; *perfect* Wisdom; *perfect* Power; *perfect* Joy; all wrapped together in *perfect* Love through and through the “tri-unity” of their Persons. God the Father would gaze into the Face of God the Son and see His Own Perfections reflected back to Him- and He loved what He saw.

And one of the things that this means is that- before Time began- God had NO lack. He wanted for NOTHING. But if that was true- WHY did God create Man? And here, we MUST look to Scripture- because if we are not careful- we will come up with some unbiblical, Man-centered Answer such as: “*God was lonely and wanted a Family*”- which is blasphemy!

So, we need to read verses like **Ephesians 1:6a** that says that God created Salvation- for one single End:

**To the praise of the glory of His grace...**

... and that is WHY God created three things:

1. Mankind
2. Salvation
3. Damnation

You see, God is perfectly “Holy”. And that means that God is separate; different; and set aside. So, God is unique. No one is like God. He is truly a “one-of-a-kind” Being. And that is why God said this in **Isaiah 45:22b**:

**...For I am God, and there is no other.**

... and it is why He said this in **Isaiah 46:9b-11**:

**9 ...For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,**

**10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’;**

**11 Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.**

And what we need to try to comprehend is that God is All of these

things- *all by Himself*- without *any* Help from anything or anybody. In other words, unlike Man, who desperately needs other things- *outside of himself* to exist- God's Holiness is entirely "*Self-sufficient*". So, God has no need of anything outside of Himself. God Himself possess *everything* He needs to be perfectly Holy and Almighty.

So, we need to try to grasp that God's Holiness is the *summation* of all of the particularities of His Nature; Essence; or Substance. So, it is "*WHO GOD IS*" that allows God to be perfectly Holy.

And that should be enough. Simply to know that God is Holy ought to be enough. Yet God desires MORE than to simply "BE" Holy. God loves to *demonstrate* His Holiness. God desires to "show" or "display" or "manifest" the various Attributes of His holy Character and Nature. Why? So, that His Creation will see that demonstration of His Holiness and delight themselves in Him.

And so, periodically, God demonstrates or displays or shows one or more parts of His Own personal, holy Character. And He does this in such a way that we see it. And that causes us to marvel and wonder and be overwhelmed by that display of God's Holiness. And when that happens in Nature- our soul begins to sing, "*How great Thou art!*" But when that happens in Salvation- ALL Heaven rejoices!

So, that "*showing*"; or that "*displaying*"; or that "*demonstration*" of one or more parts of God's Own holy Character and Nature- is what the "*Glory of God*" IS. So, God's Glory- is the "*shining forth*" of one or more parts of God's Own holy Character or Nature- so that we can see it and marvel at it and praise God for it.

And the Bible teaches that EVERYTHING that God does- is to that one single End: *The Glory of God*. And there are three different ways that the 66 Books of the Holy Bible teaches about this. So, for example, when God says that He did something,

*"For My Glory"*

... that is the *same thing* as Him saying that He did that thing,

*"For My Name's Sake"* or *"For the Sake of My Name"*

... which is simply another way of saying that God did that thing,

*"So, they will know that there is NONE like Me in all the earth"*

... and this is true whether God is talking about Creation; or Providence; or Salvation; or even Damnation. God does ALL that He does- FOR MY GLORY!

And when nothing existed except God the Father; God the Son;

and God the Holy Spirit- all three Persons were in *perfect* Delight and *perfect* Happiness over ALL the particularities of God's Character and Nature- as they streamed forth from Him. And God was well pleased. Because NOTHING pleases God more than that His Glory is recognized for what it is- and marveled at; and praised; and enjoyed.

But before God created the Heavens and the earth- there were two parts of God's Character and Nature that God could NOT show or demonstrate or display:

1. God's Grace in Salvation
2. God's Judgment in Damnation

... because both Grace and Judgment *require* that there be sinful and unworthy people upon whom God can display or show or demonstrate either His Grace in Salvation or His Judgment in Damnation.

But why does God need sinful and unworthy people in order to show or display His Grace or His Judgment? Because the three Persons of the Trinity do NOT need either Grace or Judgment. As fully Deity- God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are already perfectly Pure and Sinless. Therefore, God the Father CANNOT demonstrate His Grace in Salvation nor His Judgment in Damnation on either one of the other two Persons of the Trinity.

And that is why God created the Heavens and the Earth: to house Mankind- who would fall; and upon whom God would then be able to show or display or demonstrate either His Grace in Salvation- on those chosen for Salvation; or His Judgment in Damnation on those who weren't.

And **Ephesians 1:6a** tells us that when God displays or shows or demonstrates His great Love to us by sending His Grace to save us- the *Glory* of that Grace; the *Importance* of that Grace; the *Value* of that Grace; the *Beauty* of that Grace would be seen; and it will be marveled at. And by sending Grace to unworthy rebels- that Grace will be admired and made much of and it will be praised- in both the Heavens and the Earth. And that tells us that NOTHING manifests the Glory of God like Salvation does. So, **Ephesians 1:3-6a** tells us that:

1. God *chose us* in Him (before the foundation of the world) for Salvation
2. God *predestined* us (to Adoption)

... to the praise of the Glory of His Grace!

So, when God's Grace is shown or displayed or demonstrated on



sinful human beings- there is a powerful Glory to that Grace. And when we see the Glory of God's Grace at work in redeeming sinful people- we praise it; we admire it; and we exalt it.

So, the way that God demonstrates His unique Holiness is through His Glory. And God's Glory is His Holiness that is seen and marveled at.

So, here in the Wilderness with satan, for Jesus to eat would absolutely be in His Own BEST interest. But it would bring DIVISION between God the Father and His Will and God the Son and His Will. For Jesus to try to *force* God's Hand- would bring DIVISION between God the Father and His Will and God the Son and His Will. And for the nations of the world to praise the Son (at this time) would bring DIVISION between God the Father and His Will and God the Son and His Will.

In other words, as far as the 1<sup>st</sup> Temptation/Testing goes- it was God's Will for Jesus to stop eating. And God had made His Will known to His Son. And Jesus knew the Will of the Father. And so, the Issue is this: *"Does the Will of God the Father supersede Jesus' desire to live?"* Does Jesus truly believe what David wrote in **Psalms 63:3**:

**... Your lovingkindness is better than life ...**

In other words, *"Does Jesus so value the Father and His Will; does Jesus so love the Father and His Will- that He is willing to starve to death rather than eat?"* And what makes this so tempting- is that Jesus actually has the Power to turn the stones into bread!

And, as far as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temptation/Testing goes- it was God's Will for Jesus to trust God and avoid *forcing* the Father's Hand- in any way. God the Father wanted God the Son to be in perfect submission to His Will. And God had made His Will known to His Son. And Jesus knew the Will of the Father. And so, the Issue is this: *"Does the Will of God the Father supersede Jesus' Desire to bring about an open show of Glory?"* In other words, *"Does Jesus so value the Father and His Will; does Jesus so love the Father and His Will- that He is willing to live on earth WITHOUT any demonstration of the Power of God?"* And what makes this so tempting- is that Jesus actually has the Power to bring about an open show of Glory.

Now let's look at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Temptation again together:

**8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;**

**9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."**

**10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"**

Now, if we hope to actually understand WHY this was a Temptation to Jesus- we need to read the sister Passage over in **Luke 4:5-8:**

**5 And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.**

**6 And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.**

**7 Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours."**

**8 Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"**

Now you might have noticed that the order of the Temptations differs between Luke's Account and Matthew's. Dr. Luke has it:

1. Turn stones into bread
2. Worship me and all will be Yours
3. Throw Yourself down

... while Matthew has it:

1. Turn stones into bread
2. Throw Yourself down
3. Worship me and all will be Yours

... so, why the difference? Is this a Contradiction in the Bible? Matthew and Dr. Luke differ in the way they wrote about the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Temptations. So, why is that?

First of all, there are NO Contradictions anywhere in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible. So, we can trust whichever English version of the Bible that we use.<sup>2</sup> So, the differences lie in the audience to which the two Gospel Records were written.

For example, Dr. Luke is reaching out, *primarily*, to the Gentiles, who have little or no knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures or the Old Covenant; while Matthew is reaching out, *primarily*, to the Jews, who have been schooled in the Old Testament Scriptures; and who have lived underneath the tenets of the Old

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<sup>2</sup> Whereas ALL English versions are somewhat reliable- there are some versions that are MORE reliable- such as The NASU95; the LSB; the ESV; the KJV; and the NKJ.

Covenant their entire lives. And the Jews, of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, would have been more interested in a precise chronology than were the Gentiles of that time frame.

Secondly, in his Gospel Record, it is obvious that Matthew is much more interested in chronology than is Dr. Luke. So, Luke merely says, “**AND**” in between the three Temptations. Luke reads... “*satan did this; AND then he did that; AND then he did the other thing.*” But Matthew says, “**THEN**”. So, Matthew reads: “*satan did this; THEN he did that; and THEN he did the other thing.*”

And then, thirdly, in Luke’s Account- the Temptations/Testing ends at the Temple in Jerusalem- which mirrors where his Gospel Record ends- in **Luke 24:53**. And in Matthew’s Account- the Temptations/Testing ends at the high Mountain- which mirrors where his Gospel Record ends- in **Matthew 28:16-20**.

Now as we examine the final Temptation/Test itself- there are several Issues here that we need to work through such as:

1. *Could* Jesus have sinned?
2. Did satan have the Authority to give Jesus the Kingdoms of the world and their Glory?

... and the Answer to the first Question is: NO! As fully God, Jesus’ sinless Nature would never allow Him to sin in any way.

But if that is true- then how do these three things with satan here qualify as a “*Temptation*”. Well, first of all, EVERYTHING about Jesus is unique and different. And so, NOTHING about Jesus fits in neatly with any other Human. But these three Issues here with satan have NOTHING to do with what **Hebrews 4:15** says,

**For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.**

You see, from the moment that Jesus was old enough to be cognizant of Sin to the moment He died on the Cross- He was *continually* bombarded with every Temptation imaginable. And those are the Temptations that have to do with fallen Humanity of which **Hebrews 4:15** speaks. Yet at each and every juncture of each and every Temptation- Jesus emerged victorious- NEVER yielding to a single one! Why? Because it was NOT within Jesus’ Ability to yield to a single Sin. And the verse that explains this dynamic is found in **Hebrews 6:18b** that says,

**... it is impossible for God to lie ...**

So, even though God is Sovereign- He CANNOT act or even think contrary to His Own sinless and pristine Character. And as God- neither could Jesus.

So, it was to those *ongoing* Temptations with Jesus that **Hebrews 4:15** refers. But this Time with satan here in the Wilderness was NOT likened to those other Temptations. This is strictly a “Time of Temptation/Testing” for ONLY God the Son to experience. And again, as fully God- Jesus did NOT have the Power or the Ability to sin against God.

But the next Issue is a lot more complex to answer because it involves more things. For example, it is a very common Teaching in the modern Church that when Adam sinned- he *gave* the Keys to satan; or he *surrendered* the Keys to satan; or he *abdicated* his Authority to satan. And then when Jesus died- He took the Keys away from satan and now Jesus has them.

Another common Teaching is that Jesus paid the Ransom for our souls to satan to “purchase” us from the devil because we were being held captive by the devil when we were Lost.

Now, in a nutshell- BOTH of these Teachings are very popular and BOTH of them make sense on a certain level. But BOTH Teachings are *categorically* false. Satan NEVER had the Keys or the Authority over the earth; and our Ransom was NOT paid to the devil.

Both the image of “Keys” and the image of a “Ransom” are Analogies. And with ALL Analogies- SOME real-life things apply while SOME don’t. So, the ability to correctly interpret any Analogy is to find out which real-life things apply; and which ones don’t.

For example, it would be a terrible Mistake to say that there would be a single second where God was not absolutely Sovereign over ALL of His Creation- including the whole earth. Likewise, it would be a terrible Mistake to think that the use of the word *Ransom*, which Jesus did use about His Own Death (**Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45**), meant that there’s going to be a “Negotiation” between Jesus and the devil for our souls; along with an exchange of money between *anybody* and God.

The Apostle Peter went out of his way in **1Peter 1:18** to say that we are NOT ransomed/redeemed/purchased by things like silver and gold. So, the best way to think about the image of Ransoming, is NOT to use our own natural understanding- but to allow the actual biblical Descriptions of the Death of Christ hammer out for us what the Analogy of a “Ransom” means.

But before I do that- I want to give you four words important about satan: “*No way; No how!*” No way is the Death of Jesus a Negotiation with satan and No how was this a Payment to him! When Jesus meets the demonic forces during His

earthly Ministry, they don't ever say, "*Did you bring the money?*" The Lord Christ simply speaks; and the demons *instantly* obey. And this was BEFORE His Death! There is ZERO Negotiation and ZERO Hesitation. The demons *instantly* recognize that Jesus has ABSOLUTE Authority over both Heaven and Earth!

And when the Apostle Paul described what happened to satan when Jesus was on the Cross in **Colossians 2:15** he infallibly wrote:

**When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.**

... this describes a total and complete Defeat of the devil and NOT a Negotiation.

The Ransom that was paid for the redemption of our souls (to whatever extent it was a Ransom in the normal way of thinking) was paid BY God and it was paid TO God. And we see that in **Romans 3:24-26** that says:

**24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption [the Ransom] which is in Christ Jesus;**  
**25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;**  
**26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**

So, we have been "**justified as a Gift by His Grace**"- which is what it means to be treated graciously— "**through the Redemption**"- which is the ransoming- "**which is in Christ Jesus, whom God displayed publicly as a Propitiation in His Blood through Faith**"- in other words, a sacrificial Offering was made on the Mercy Seat to God- to avert His Wrath and restore sinful people. Because what a Ransom does- is restore us to the rightful Parent or God or whomever we've been kidnapped from.

So, the correct Image is this: Man has fallen short- way short of the Glory of God because of our Sins. So, we have *offended* the Glory of God. We have *besmirched* and *dishonored* and *trivialized* and *ignored* the Glory of God (**Romans 3:23**). We have committed celestial Treason by *exchanging* the Glory of God for images (**Romans 1:23**).

So, God, in His Holiness- *upholds* the Glory of His Name (that was offended by our Sins) by sentencing us to eternal Death- suffering eternally in Hell. But He's also a God of great Mercy, and so, He prepared another way for His Glory to be upheld in Justice. That's what **Romans 3:25** is about — namely, by sacrificing His Son for those who believe instead of sending them to Hell.

And that Sacrifice, Paul says, *ransomed* or *redeemed* people from the Wrath of God. What a glorious Gospel! So, we are saved or redeemed; or healed or delivered or rescued from the Wrath of God! So, God saved us from God by what God alone did for us. And God did that so God would look magnificent! And that is why **Romans 5:9** says,

**Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.**

... and that is the biggest and most important Issue in the entire Universe- being saved from God's Wrath.

So, through the shedding of Jesus' Blood, we have *escaped* the Wrath of God! So, the Blood ransoms; or redeems us from the Wrath of God. And when anyone asks, "*How did Blood do that? How did this Payment actually work?*" We should say that what was paid was the *repair* of God's dishonored Glory. So, the Death of Jesus, in giving up so much Glory out of love and honor to the Father, has repaired all that has been dishonored by the Sins of God's people. That's what's been paid.

So, in that sense, the Ransom was paid BY God in Christ TO God the Father in sending God the Son to die. Jesus died to rescue us from God's Wrath because we could never pay the massive Debt of Glory that we owed to the Father which our Sins had insulted. So, the Payment was NOT silver or gold, but the precious Blood of Jesus Christ- which exalted and restored the Glory of God!

Now what about the Keys? For Adam to relinquish the Keys or the Authority over the earth to satan- he had to have them in the first place. And he DID NOT! God *has always* and *will always* be the sovereign Ruler over both the Heavens and the earth. God never gave Adam "blanket" Authority. Adam ONLY had a very *limited* Authority- while ALWAYS being underneath and subservient to God's TOTAL Authority. So, Adam could NOT give or relinquish the Keys or the Authority over the earth to satan when he sinned- because he never had them in the first place.

When we read the **Book of Job**- it is clear that satan has a degree of Power that human beings simply do not have. So, as a purely spiritual being- satan is *mightier* than human beings. But his strength is NOT in his invincibility or his immortality- but in his craftiness- his ability to deceive and lie and fool. So, it is also clear from **Job** that satan is completely *subservient* to God; and MUST ask Permission from God to accomplish whatever he desires.

The Concept that Adam had the Keys and when he fell- the Keys were transferred to satan- who later lost them to Jesus- was simply invented by people, who think that Man is the dominant Being in the Universe. And so, they

go on to teach that even though God desires to save everybody- He can only save those who will *allow* Him to do so. And, of course, this places God's Sovereignty at the Mercy of Man's so-called, "free-will".

So, this Teaching about the Keys or the Authority is simply another variation of the kind of "Man-centered" theology that *dominates* the modern church. At best, this is an example of the ancient Gnostic Heresy of "*Dualism*" which teaches that God (the Force for Good) and satan (the Force for Evil) are locked in an eternal "Life-and-Death" struggle for dominance in the earth- which is fought over the souls of human beings.

But that has NEVER been true. God ALONE is absolutely Sovereign over everything – all the time. And that includes both Man and satan. So, Man has never and will never be Sovereign. Man is either a "slave of Sin and Unrighteousness" or he is a bought-and-paid-for "bond-slave of the Lord Jesus Christ" and a "slave to Righteousness" (**Romans 6:16-22**). But Man has NEVER been "free" in the sense of *Autonomy* (Self-ruled). Man, as well as satan, live and operate under a *theonomous* (God-ruled) earth.

So, while it is true that satan is NOT bound by the law of Gravity and can fly through the air- it is also true that satan is NOT Omniscient- so he doesn't know everything. And it is true that satan is also NOT Omni-present- so he can ONLY be in one place at a time. And because he is neither Omniscient nor Omni-present- he is NOT Omnipotent. But God is.

So, satan is like an angel so he is "*super-natural*" meaning he is *beyond* the natural. But he has also been *forever* prohibited from ever entering into Heaven again (**The Revelation 12:8**); and is *forever* limited to the earth. But the most important aspect of satan that we need to know is that he CAN'T repent; so, he will NEVER be forgiven; and he will NEVER be saved.

So, yes, the devil can "**roam about on the earth and walk around on it**" (**Job 1:7**). Yes, he is the "**prince of the power of the air**" (meaning the atmosphere around the earth; and the world's *system* and the world's *course*); and yes, he is the "**spirit that works in the sons of disobedience**" (**Ephesians 2:2**). Satan is "**like a roaring lion- seeking someone to devour**" (**1Peter 5:8**). But he is forever prohibited from loving and enjoying God.

So, even though in **John 12:31** and **16:11**, Jesus called satan, the "**ruler of this world**"; and even though in **2Corinthians 4:4** the Apostle Paul called him, the "**god of this world**"<sup>3</sup>- the one, true, and living God has NEVER relinquished His absolute Authority and Sovereignty over planet earth! So, even though satan

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<sup>3</sup> These terms ONLY relate to the devil in comparison with fallen and unsaved Man. They do NOT indicate that satan has Authority over anything unless God allows it.

can “steal, kill, and destroy”(John 10:10)- he can only do so- with God’s Permission. And that is *why* in **Daniel 4:17** the infallible Word of God says,

**... the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, And bestows it on whom He wishes And sets over it the lowliest of men.**

So, when the devil tells Jesus in **Luke 4:6**:

**"I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish...**

... he was simply lying because the devil NEVER had that Authority.

So, what satan was offering to Jesus in this 3<sup>rd</sup> Temptation was great Recognition; great Acclaim; and great Praise from the Nations of the world. But it was God’s Will that Jesus live His entire Life down here as a Man, Who was rejected; and scorned; and unloved; and unappreciated. Around 600 years *before* Jesus was born the Prophet wrote this in **Isaiah 53: 2b&3**:

**2 ...He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.**

**3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**

Now this was the *opposite* of what the average Jew thought the Messiah would be. They were looking for a mighty, charismatic Warrior; who would sit high on his horse; and would be invincible in battle; as he would rid the Nation of Israel from the pagan Romans.

But this was also the opposite of what Jesus was *entitled* to receive as being fully God. Jesus *deserved* the praises of the Nations of the world. And Jesus was *entitled* to be praised and worshipped by everybody! And Jesus WILL receive praise and worship from every Nation on earth when He returns.

But for His first Advent- the Will of God was that Messiah would be what Isaiah wrote here. And the phrase, “**like one from whom men hide their face**”- means that the Messiah; Immanuel; God with us; the incarnate God; the Treasure of Heaven- would be a man, who so embarrassed the Jews; a man, who was so preposterous; so weak; so ridiculous; so shameful- that they would hide their face from even looking at him. And that is *why* Isaiah said they would “**despise**” him.



And the phrase that Isaiah used, “**we did not esteem Him**” has to do with someone, in whom there is NO intrinsic Value. In other words, from the perspective of those who were, supposedly the chosen people of God- there is NOTHING in this man that would be classified as important or valuable or useful.

THAT was God’s Will. And at some point- God had made His Will known to Jesus. So, Jesus knew that THIS was the Will of His Father. And so, Jesus humbled Himself to be *perfectly* submissive to the Will of His Father- rather than what He was *entitled* to receive and what satan might want to give Him.

In other words, Jesus loved His Father *perfectly*; and was willing to fit in completely with the 600 year-old Prophecy of Isaiah rather than be loved and praised and worshipped by the Nations of the world- which He *deserved* as God.

So, it was the exact opposite from us. When we cry out to God- we ask to be delivered *from* Hardships and Sufferings. But here, satan is the one, who wanted Jesus to *escape* Hardships and Sufferings. The devil wanted Jesus to eat; and to let God catch Him; and to get the Nations to worship Him. But it was God’s Will for Jesus to suffer; and to be neglected; and to hurt; and finally, to die.

Satan wanted Jesus to go directly from earth to Glory- without any Suffering and without Dying. But it was God’s Will that the Path to Glory was *through* Suffering and Death- all the way to Resurrection! And that is something we will get into next time, Lord willing.

Amen. Let’s pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.

