

RELEARNING ANCIENT BIBLE STORIES IN A BRAND-NEW WAY

**EPIC TALES**

**TOO**



# ***Baptism of Jesus***

***Matthew 3***

***Mark 1***



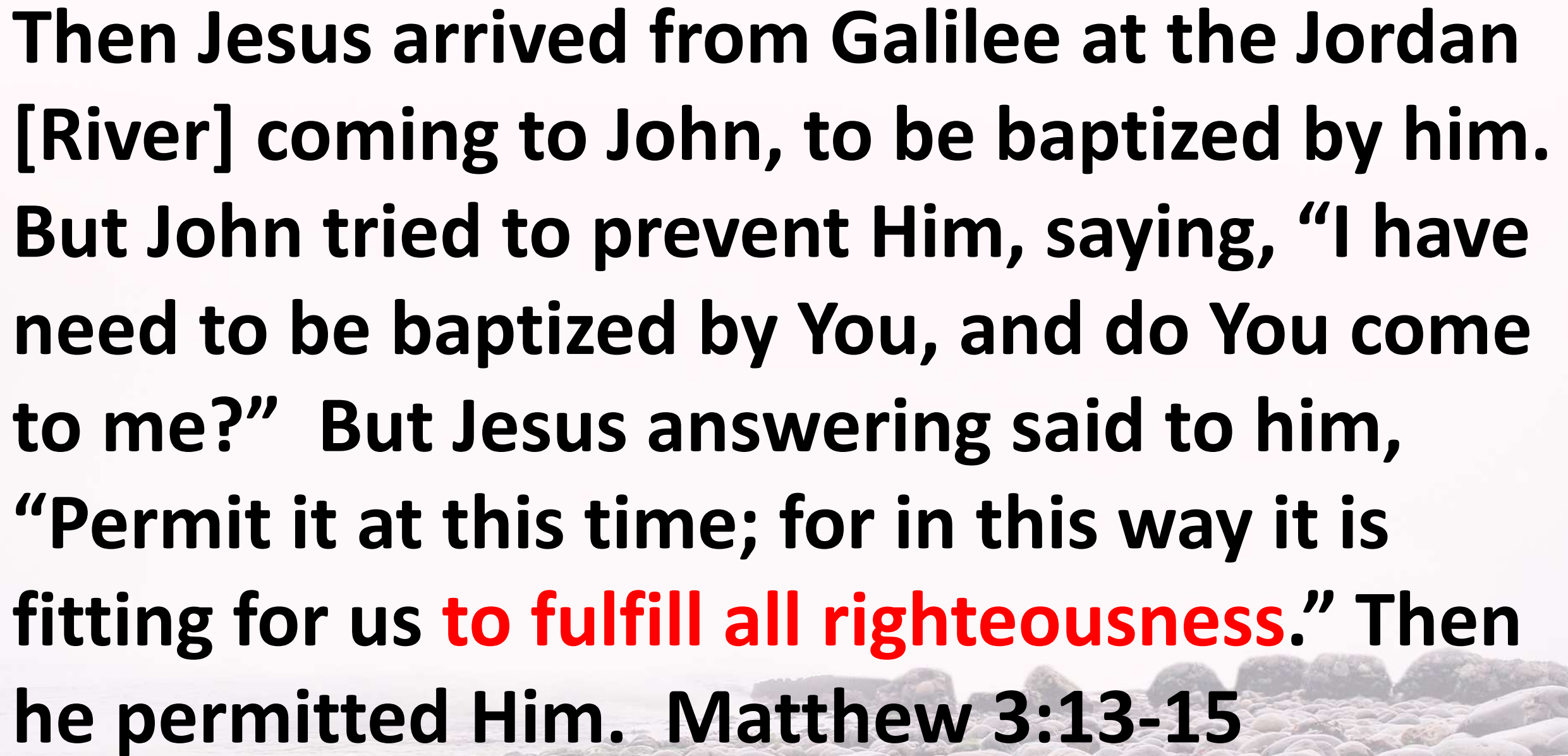
**Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight!’ ” [see Isaiah 40:3] Now John himself had a garment of camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea and all the district around the Jordan; and **they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.** Matthew 3:1-6**

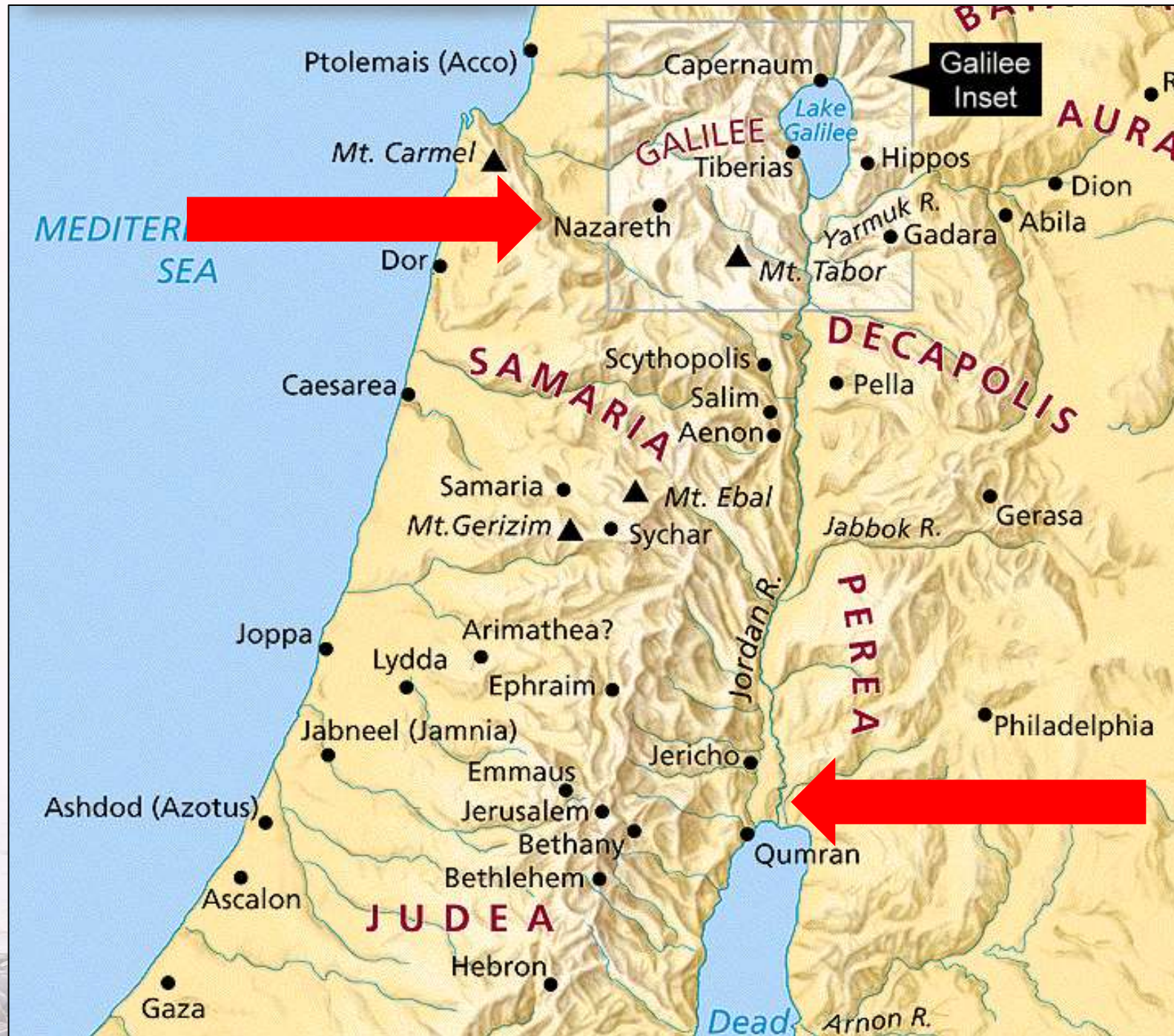
**But when he [John the Baptist] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance; and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father’; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” Matthew 3:7-10**

**“As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but **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.** 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.”**

**Matthew 3:11-12**

**Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan [River] coming to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” But Jesus answering said to him, “Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us **to fulfill all righteousness.**” Then he permitted Him. Matthew 3:13-15**





**In those days  
Jesus came from  
Nazareth in  
Galilee and was  
baptized by John  
in the Jordan.  
Mark 1:9**

**After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”**

**Matthew 3:16-17**





**Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."**

**Mark 1:10-11**

# ***Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled***

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. Isaiah 42:1

But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain. I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, **“You are My Son, today I have begotten You.”** Psalm 2:6-7

***Why was a sinless Jesus  
in need of baptism?***



# ***Why would Jesus seek to be baptized by John?***

- **A baptism of humility.** Jesus humbles Himself to do what God asks. Jesus does this because God requires it. He lived a life of complete obedience to God; He was sinless.
  - who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Philippians 2:6-8
- **A baptism of commitment.** This launched Jesus' ministry that would eventually lead to the cross. This inauguration began that process. It was a commitment to God's plan and you and me.
- **A baptism of identification.** He affirmed John's ministry and identity with the people He'd come to save. Jesus took this step of obedience to show us the way - to identify with those of us who do need to repent and turn back. - Joseph Vest

# ***Temptation of Jesus***

***Matthew 4***

***Luke 4***





Then Jesus  
was led up by  
the Spirit into  
the  
wilderness to  
be **tempted**  
by the devil.  
Matthew 4:1

# ***Jesus is tempted in the wilderness***

**Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being **tempted** by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. Luke 4:1–2**

# ***What is Temptation?***

- **The biblical writers are careful to make it clear that God does not ‘tempt’ humans to do evil (James 1:12–15) and in fact makes available the resources necessary to resist temptation (1 Cor. 10:13).** - Harper’s Bible Dictionary
- **Temptation is common to all (Dan. 12:10; Zech. 13:9; Ps. 66:10; Luke 22:31, 40; Heb. 11:17; James 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:7; 4:12). We read of the temptation of Joseph (Gen. 39), of David (2 Sam. 24; 1 Chr. 21), of Hezekiah (2 Chr. 32:31), of Daniel (Dan. 6), etc.** - Easton’s Bible Dictionary



# ***What is Temptation?***

- **Matthew 4:1 and 4:3; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2**
- **πειράζω *peirazo* verb**
- **Definition: to try whether a thing can be done; to attempt, endeavor; to try, make trial of, test: for the purpose of ascertaining his quantity, or what he thinks, or how he will behave himself.**
- **πειρασμός *peirasmos* noun**
- **Definition: an experiment, attempt, trial, proving**

# ***What is Temptation?***

- **An enticement to do evil, the term is used in the Bible to convey two somewhat different ideas. The first is that of ‘testing’ or ‘proving by testing,’ to determine the depth and integrity of one’s commitment to God (see God’s command to Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice in Gen. 22:1–19; also the testing of Job in Job 1–2). In the New Testament, some of the writers thought of persecution as a ‘testing’ in this manner (1 Pet. 1:3–9). The intent of this testing is ultimately to strengthen the person’s faith and devotion to God.**
- **The temptation is not for Jesus to prove His divine Sonship to Himself. Such Sonship is never questioned in the New Testament. Rather, the temptation or ‘testing’ is implicitly presented as Jesus’ struggle over whether to obey God’s call to be a servant-messiah or to interpret messiahship in the traditional terms of power, strength, and conquest. Such a struggle can be detected throughout the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ ministry, where it is made clear that the disciples never really understood Jesus’ commitment to a servant ministry.**

# ***Who is Satan?***

- **The English transliteration of a Hebrew word whose literal meaning is ‘adversary.’ The figure of Satan is found in only three places in the Old Testament, and all of these are postexilic in date (i.e., after 538 BC): Job 1–2; Zech. 3:1–2; and 1 Chron. 21:1. In the first two instances (Job 1–2; Zech. 3:1–2), Satan is depicted as a member of God’s court whose basic duty it was to ‘accuse’ human beings before God. He is clearly not at this point an enemy of God and the leader of the demonic forces of evil, as he becomes later.**
- **It is during the late postexilic period (after ca. 200 BC) and in the intertestamental literature that the figure of the devil or Satan came to be identified with ‘the serpent’ of Genesis 3.**
- **Satan and his cohorts then came to represent the powers of evil in the universe and were even known in Jesus’ time as the Kingdom of Satan, against which Jesus had come to fight and to establish the Kingdom of God (e.g., Mark 3:23–26). The demons were considered to be the cause of sickness, both physical and mental, and of many calamities of nature (e.g., storms, earthquakes); in general, they were the forces responsible for much of human sin (and therefore misery), and they were always opposed to God’s purposes and God’s people.**

# ***Who is Satan?***

- In the New Testament writings, Satan appears frequently, especially in the Gospels. The figure is also known by numerous other designations, among which are the devil (Matt. 4:1), the tempter (Matt. 4:3), the accuser (Rev. 12:10), the prince of demons (Luke 11:15), the ruler of this world (John 12:31). One of the most interesting designations is 'the evil one.' In fact, it is quite possible that, in the Lord's Prayer, the original meaning of the petition, 'deliver us from evil,' may have been, 'deliver us from the evil one' (Matt. 6:13b).
- In apocalyptic writings, it is clearly affirmed that, no matter how powerful Satan may appear to be, his final overthrow by the power of God is certain (Rev. 20:1–10, where 'the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan' is to be 'thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone ... and tormented day and night for ever and ever').
- Much modern thought about the figure of Satan, particularly at the popular level, owes its origin to John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), not to the biblical writings (the application of Isaiah 14:12–15 to Satan and his 'fall' from heaven).

## ***Why was Jesus led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil?***

**“All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to give to your forefathers. **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.** He humbled 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. Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.” Deuteronomy 8:1-6**

# ***What are categories of Temptations?***

For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh** and the **lust of the eyes** and the boastful **pride of life**, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

**1 John 2:16**

**\*Let's use this verse as a study paradigm**

# ***First Temptation - DO NOT TRUST GOD***

## **Lust of the flesh**

**And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” 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.’ ” Matthew 4:2-4 (quoting Deuteronomy 8:3)**

# ***Jesus is tempted in the wilderness***

**And the devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’ ” Luke 4:3-4 (quoting Deuteronomy 8:3)**







**Some stones  
are coated  
in soft lime  
and  
curiously  
resemble  
loaves of  
bread –  
making the  
temptation  
doubly  
painful.**

**The Judean Desert near Masada**

# ***Lust of the Flesh*** (1<sup>st</sup> ***Temptation***)

Jesus knew that God wanted Him to:

- Fast and pray
- Believe He would provide for Him
- Trust in God the Father for everything
- Replicate the wilderness experience of Israelites
- Understand God's discipline
- Keep God's commandments

# ***Lust of the Flesh*** (1<sup>st</sup> ***Temptation***)

**Satan tempted Jesus to:**

- **Use His power as the Son of God**
- **To provide His own food**
- **Act in His own ability**

**Jesus quotes the very verse (Deut. 8:3) given to the Israelites when instructed to follow God's commands.**

# ***Second Temptation - PUT GOD TO THE TEST***

## **Lust of the eyes**

**Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 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.’ ” (quoting Psalm 91:11-12) Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” Matthew 4:5-7 (quoting Deuteronomy 6:16)**



***Model  
of  
Temple  
in the  
days of  
Jesus***

***Top was  
150 feet  
high***

# ***Jesus is tempted in the wilderness***

**And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; for it is written, ‘He will command His angels concerning You to guard You,’ and, ‘On their hands they will bear You up, so that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.’ ” And Jesus answered and said to him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” Luke 4:9-12**

**“You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah.” Deuteronomy 6:16**

# ***Lust of the Eyes*** (2<sup>nd</sup> ***Temptation***)

## **SATAN'S STRATEGY**

**Satan attempted to use Scripture (Psalm 91:11-12) to:**

- **Fool Jesus into a false sense of security**
- **Get instant power and recognition**

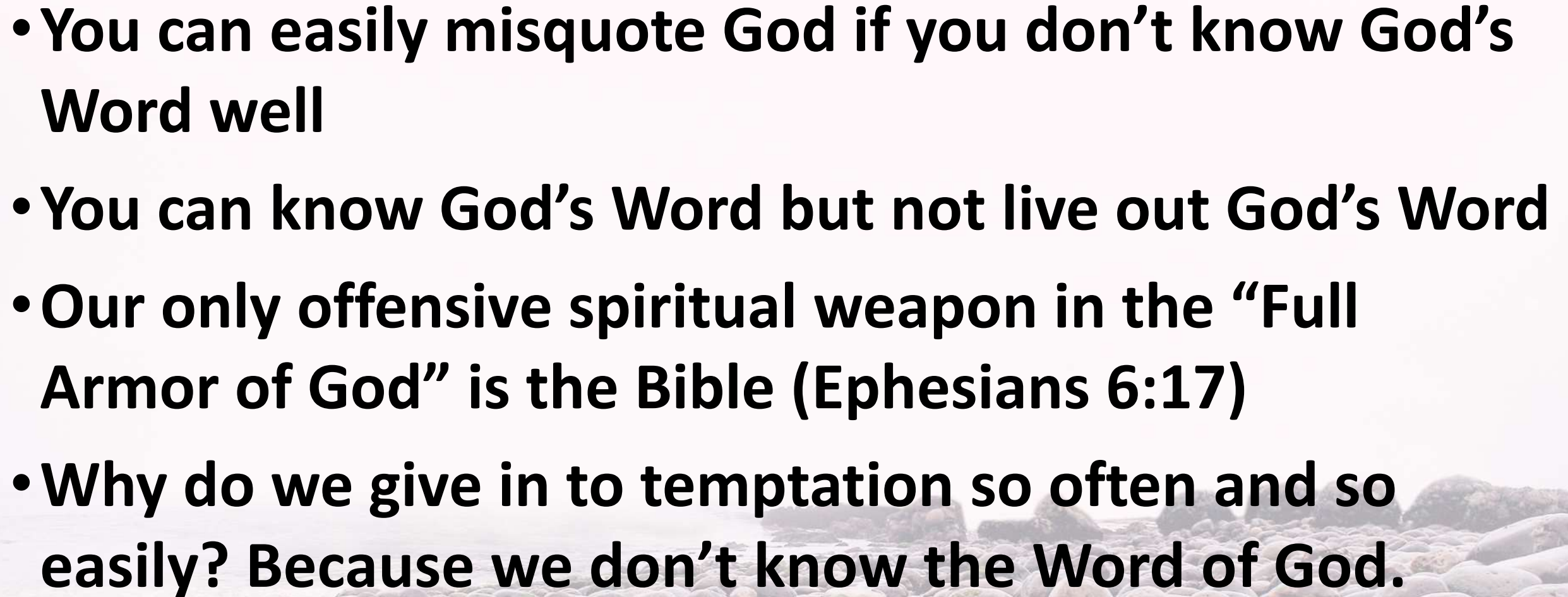
**Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" "Testing God" never draws people to God. Neither do miraculous signs. Genuine understanding and love ignites a genuine relationship with God.**

# ***Testing God***

- In Matthew 4:4 and Luke 4:4, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:16 where people are commanded to not test God
- There is only **one** occasion in the Bible where the people of God are commanded to test God
- “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, ‘How have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and **test Me now in this,**” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.” Malachi 3:8-10



# ***Quoting and Misquoting Scripture***

- **You can easily misquote God if you don't know God's Word well**
  - **You can know God's Word but not live out God's Word**
  - **Our only offensive spiritual weapon in the "Full Armor of God" is the Bible (Ephesians 6:17)**
  - **Why do we give in to temptation so often and so easily? Because we don't know the Word of God.**
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# Why Did Satan Cite the Psalms? by Dr. Nicholas J. Schaser

- In Matthew 4:1-11 (Luke 4:1-13), the devil tempts Jesus in the wilderness. The Messiah responds to the devil's temptations with three references to Deuteronomy (cf. Deut. 6:13, 16; 8:3; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10), but Satan chooses to cite from Psalm 91:11-12. That Satan, the ruler of demons, refers to this particular text is ironic, since **Psalm 91 was almost universally understood in the ancient Jewish world as a prayer against demonic forces!**
- In the original Hebrew, Psalm 91 reminds the reader not to fear violent enemies or agricultural disasters: “You shall not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence (דֶּבֶר *dever*) that stalks in the darkness, or of the destruction (יָשׁוּד *yashud*) that wastes at noon” (Ps. 91:5-6). **Hundreds of years after this Hebrew psalm was first penned—but also hundreds of years before Jesus—the Jews who translated these verses into Greek saw a reference to the demonic:** “You shall not be afraid of the terror by night nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the thing (πράγματος; *pragmatos*) that walks in darkness... and the **demon** (δαιμονίον; *daimonion*) at noon.” (Ps. 91:5-6 LXX).

# Why Did Satan Cite the Psalms? By Dr. Nicholas J. Schaser

- The Septuagint in Greek reflects a valid way of reading the original language. Depending on which vowel points are appended to the Hebrew letters, the words could read “pestilence” (דֶּבֶר *dever*) and “destruction” (שׁוּד *shud*) or “thing” (דָּבָר *davar*) and “demon” (שֵׁד *shed*) – **the Greek translator decided on the latter meanings, “thing” and “demon.”**
- Then, hundreds of years after the Septuagint, the Aramaic translators of the Hebrew Bible (around the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD) followed Greek-speaking Jews and found references to demons all over Psalm 91: “You will not be afraid of the terror of the demon (מַזִּיק *maziq*) that goes about in the night... nor of the company of demons (שֵׁדִין *shedin*) that destroy at noon.... No evil shall befall you, and no plague or demons (מַזִּיקָא *maziqaya*) shall come near your tent, for he will command his angels concerning you.” (Psalms Targum 91:5-6, 10-11).
- Thus, the devil’s decision to cite Psalm 91 during Jesus’ temptation is the worst possible choice to make, since **first-century Jews would have known that Psalm 91 was a prayer that guarded against demons; of all the scriptural possibilities, Satan chooses a passage that was meant to drive him away!** This comedy of satanic errors would have elicited a hearty laugh from Matthew’s original readers!

## ***Third Temptation - RULE THE WORLD AND BOW TO SATAN***

### **Pride of life**

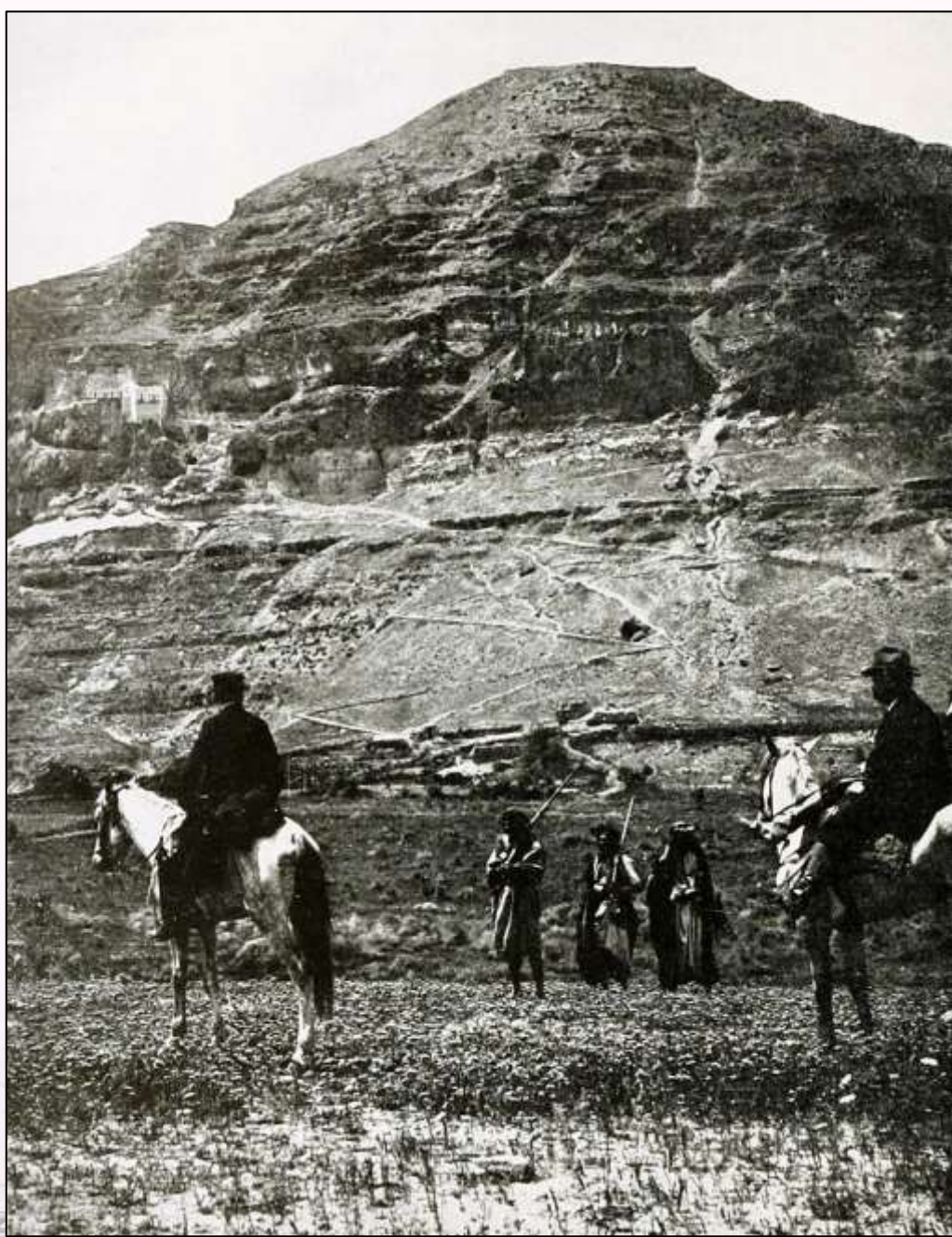
**Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, “All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’ ”**

**Matthew 4:8-10 (quoting Deuteronomy 6:13 and 10:20)**

**And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 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. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.’ ” Luke 4:5-8**

**You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name. Deuteronomy 6:13**

- The Judaeian Hills reach up to 2,447 feet above sea level and offer extensive views westwards towards the Mediterranean coast and eastwards across the Dead Sea.
- The place where Jesus was tempted by the devil is traditionally regarded as **Jebel Qurantal** (the 'mountain of temptation' in Arabic), overlooking the Jordan Valley near the site of Ancient Jericho.



**Mount of Temptation in 1910**



**Mount of Temptation today**

## ***Pride of Life (3<sup>rd</sup> Temptation)***

**Satan is ready to give the world to anyone who worships him. God gave Satan authority earth to tempt people because He wants us to choose obedience. God did not create robots.**



# ***40 Days of Temptation Ends***

**Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him. Matthew 4:11**

**When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time. Luke 4:13**



# ***How Did Jesus Face Temptation?***

- **Jesus trusted God.**
- **Jesus submitted to God.**
- **Jesus correctly quoted Scripture.**
- **Jesus obeyed God.**

# ***What About Us?***

**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. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:15-16**



# ***What About Us?***

No **temptation** has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and **God is faithful**, who will not allow you to be **tempted** beyond what you are able, but with the **temptation** will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

**1 Corinthians 10:13**

# ***How Do We Overcome Temptation?***

- **By storing God's Word in our hearts. (Psalm 119:11)**
- **By living a lifestyle pleasing to God. (Colossians 1:10)**
- **Complete surrender. (Romans 12:1)**
- **Complete obedience. (John 14:23)**

**Because Jesus submitted to the will of God and resisted the devil, the devil ran away from him.**

**Therefore James 4:7 says, "submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."**

**The Spirit of God chose to make the very first mission of the Messiah a contest between the king of this world and the real King. The devil could only use the things of this world, the things that all men are enslaved by, the enticing pleasures of sin, to offer Jesus. He was no match for Jesus because sin had no power over Him.**