



The Gospel According To MATTHEW

Chapter 4:1-11

"THE BATTLE!"

> THREE DISCIPLINES FOR SPIRITUAL WARFARE:

> (v1-2) DISCIPLINE #1 - BE LED BY THE SPIRIT!

(v1) *How does the Holy Spirit lead us?*

Jesus said in John 14:26-27 - *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

John 15:26-27 - *"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.*

John 16:7-14 - *the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.*

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

(v2) **Who is this devil? UNDERSTAND YOUR ENEMY! SATAN (adversary)** is the great opposer, of God and man. Another common name for Satan in the New Testament is **"the devil," meaning "slanderer" or "false accuser."**

Other titles by which Satan is identified in the New Testament include "the tempter" (1 Thess 3:5); "Beelzebub" (Mt 12:24); "the wicked one" (Matt 13:19,38); "the ruler of this world" (Jn 12:31); "the god of this age" (2 Cor 4:4); "Belial" (2 Cor 6:15), "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2:2); and "the accuser of our brethren" (Rev 12:10).

- **History** - Two Old Testament passages, **Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:11-19**, furnish a picture of Satan's original condition and the reasons for his loss of that position. These passages were addressed originally to the kings of Babylon and Tyre. But in their long-range implications, many scholars believe, they refer to Satan himself.

They tell of an exalted angelic being, one of God's creatures, who became proud and ambitious. He determined to take over the throne of God for himself. But God removed him from his position of great dignity and honor.

Building upon this foundation, **Revelation 12** sketches the further stages in Satan's work of evil. **In his fall from God's favor, Satan persuaded one third of the angels to join him in his rebellion (Rev 12:3-4).**

Throughout the Old Testament period he sought to destroy the messianic line. When the Messiah became a man (Jesus), Satan tried to eliminate (kill) Him (Rev 12:4-5).

During the future period of tribulation before the Messiah's second coming, Satan will be cast out of the heavenly sphere (Rev 12:7-12). Filling the Anti-Christ and deceiving the whole world (2 Thess. 2). Then he will direct his animosity toward the Messiah's people (Rev 12:13-17).

Revelation 20 notes the final phases of Satan's work. He will be bound for a thousand years and then finally cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:2,10).

- **Characteristics** - Satan has "the power of death," because "the sting of death is sin" (1 Cor 15:56); Satan being author of sin is author of its consequence, death.

God's law (Gen 2:17; Rom 6:23) makes death the executioner of sin, and man Satan's "lawful captive." Jesus by His death gave death its deathblow and took the prey from the mighty; as David cut off Goliath's head with his own sword (Matt 12:29; Luke 10:19; Isa 49:24; 2 Tim 1:10; Ps 8:2; Heb 2:14). "Christ ... through death ... destroy (katargeesee, render powerless) him that had the power of death."

Satan seeks to "get an advantage of" believers (2 Cor 2:11); he has "devices" (noemata) and "wiles" (methodeias, methodical stratagems) (Eph 6:11), and "snares" (1 Tim 3:7), "transforming himself (Greek) into an angel of light," though "prince of darkness" (2 Cor 11:14; Luke 22:53; Eph 6:12). "Satan hinders" good undertakings by evil men (Acts 13:10; 17:13-14; 3:8-10), or even by "messengers of Satan," sicknesses, etc. (2 Cor 11:14; 12:7; 1 Thess 2:18; Luke 13:16).

Satan works or energizes in and through antichrist (2 Thess 2:9; Rev 13:2) in opposition to the Holy Spirit energizing in the church (Eph 1:19). The wanton turns aside from Christ the spouse after Satan the seducer (1 Tim 5:11-15). The believer's victory by "the God of peace bruising Satan" is foretold from the first (Gen 3:15; Rom 16:20).

The opposition of Satan in spite of himself will be overruled to the believer's good, the latter thereby learning patience, submission, faith, and so his end being blessed, as in Job's case.

Man can in God's strength "resist Satan" (James 4:7); by withholding consent of the will, man gives Satan no "place," room or scope (Eph 4:27). "The wicked one toucheth not" the saint, as he could not touch Christ (1 John 5:18; John 14:30). Self-restraint and watchfulness are our safeguards (1 Peter 5:8).

As a result of his original status and authority, Satan has great power and dignity. So great is his strength that Michael the archangel viewed him as a foe too powerful to oppose (Jude 9).

Satan's influence in worldly affairs is also clearly revealed (John 12:31). His various titles reflect his control of the world system: "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31), "the god of this age" (2 Cor 4:4), and "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph 2:2).

The Bible declares, "***The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one***" (1 John 5:19).

Satan exercises his evil power through demons (Matt 12:24; 25:41; Rev 12:7,9). An outburst of demonic activity occurred when Jesus came to earth the first time because of the Savior's attack against Satan's kingdom (Matt 12:28-29; Acts 10:38). Another such outburst is expected just before the second coming of Christ, because this will bring about the downfall of Satan and his angels (Rev 9:3-17; 12:12; 18:2)

- **What does the word *tempt* mean?** In a bad sense (by the devil): to test one maliciously, craftily to put to the proof his feelings or judgment. In a God sense to try or test one's faith, virtue, character.

Remember God is on our side for scripture tells us in 1 Corinthians 10:13 - *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

James 1:13-15 - *When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (i.e. – Adam & Eve in the Garden of Eden, Genesis Ch. 3)*

- **Jesus taught us to prepare for battle daily in Matthew 26:40-42** - *And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? "**Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.**"*

Our Lord fasted and prayed for forty days and forty nights to take on the devil in hand-to-hand combat (spiritually speaking).

- **FASTING in the New Testament** - Anna at the Temple *"served God with fastings and prayers night and day"* (Luke 2:37). John the Baptist led his disciples to fast (Mark 2:18). Cornelius was fasting at the time of his vision (Acts 10:30).

The church in Antioch fasted (Acts 13:2) and sent Paul and Barnabas off on the first missionary journey with fasting and prayer (Acts 13:3). Paul and Barnabas prayed with fasting at the appointment of elders in the churches (Acts 14:23).

Paul suggested that husbands and wives might abstain from sexual intercourse to give themselves to fasting and prayer (1 Cor 7:5).

A demon-possessed son could not be delivered except through prayer and fasting (Mt. 17:15-21).

Fasting and prayer breeds' humility, self-denial, dedication, and spiritual power.

> (v3-10) DISCIPLINE #2 - *FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT!*

(v3-4) TEMPTATION #1 – *The lust of the flesh! (False gratification!)* –

- **Listen to the insight from Warren Wiersbe**, "It is important to note that Jesus faced the enemy as man, not as the Son of God. His first word was, "**Man shall not live by bread alone.**" We must not think that Jesus used His divine powers to overcome the enemy, because that is just what the enemy wanted Him to do!

Jesus used the spiritual resources that are available to us today: the power of the *Holy Spirit of God* (Mt. 4:1) and the power of the *Word of God* ("It is written**").** Temptation involves the will, and Jesus came to do the Father's will. (Heb. 10:1-9)."

Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3 - *He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.*

- Observe Galatians 5:16-26 - *Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

(v5-7) TEMPTATION #2 – The pride of life (False glory!) – Satan wants Jesus to glorify Himself now! Avoid the cross, forget paying the bloody price for man's sins, you don't have to be obedient to the Father, take the easy way out and follow my religion of pride and self-glory!

Satan follows the tactics of Jesus by quoting Scripture back to Him, but Satan the liar tries to mislead Jesus by **“taking away”** from the Word of God, remember Satan specializes in religious deception.

Satan quotes from **Ps 91:11-12** - *For He shall give His angels charge over you, (but leaves out) to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.*

Jesus pulls out the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (**Eph. 6:17**), and quotes **Deuteronomy 6:16-19** - ***"You shall not tempt the LORD"** (the rest of the passage is thought provoking) your God as you tempted Him in Massah. You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you.*

And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of which the LORD swore to your fathers, to cast out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken.

Other passages on religious deception are found in: 2 Cor 11:3,4,13-15; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; 2 Peter 2:1-3.

(v8-10) TEMPTATION #3 – The lust of the eyes (False god!) – Satan shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and their glory! Satan was saying, “Jesus you can have it all, riches, power, fame, anything, and everything will be ready for you, just bow down and worship me!”

Jesus did not argue regarding the devil's dominion and rulership, but quotes from **Deuteronomy 6:13** - ***You shall fear (worship) the LORD your God and serve Him,** (once again, ponder the rest of the passage in verses 14-15) and shall take oaths in His name. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you (for the LORD your God is a jealous God among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth. Remember, what you worship is what you serve.*

> **(v11) DISCIPLINE #3 - VICTORY IN CHRIST!**

In James 4:7 - Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

In 1 John 4:4 - You are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Finally, Satan's destiny - Revelation 20:10 - *The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*