

Matthew

Chapter 4



As you prepare for this week's study, begin by praying and asking God to open your heart and mind to understand the truths He has for you this week. Then read this week's chapter, Matthew 4. As you read through the entire chapter, what are your first impressions? What stands out to you?

Mission 119: Search Matthew and listen to the commentary for Matthew 3-4, if you haven't already done so.

Day 1 - 40 Days and 40 Nights

Matthew 4:1-11

- 1) Re-read Matthew 3:13-17. What significant event immediately preceded Jesus' temptation?

a) What did the Father declare about Jesus? _____

b) What role did the Holy Spirit play? _____

- 2) Where was Jesus led and for what purpose? (v.1)

3) Who led Jesus into the wilderness? (v.1)

4) How long did Jesus fast before the temptations began? (v.2)

5) What physical condition did Jesus experience? (v.2)

6) Satan tempted Jesus three times in this passage. What were the temptations?

a) First temptation (v.3): _____

b) Second temptation (v.5-6): _____

c) Third temptation (v.8-9): _____

7) How did Jesus respond to each temptation?

a) First response (v.4): _____

b) Second response (v.7): _____

c) Third response (v.10): _____

8) What repeated phrase did Satan use in the first two temptations?

9) Read Psalm 91:11-12. Who referenced this Scripture in verse 6?

10) What did all three of Jesus' responses have in common?

11) Count how many times Jesus said, "It is written." Why might Matthew want us to notice this repetition?

12) What locations are mentioned throughout this passage? Check them out on your map and list each setting in order.

13) What happened after the third temptation (v.11)?

a) What did Satan do? _____

b) Who came to Jesus after Satan, and what did they do? _____

Day 2 - Fishers of Men

Matthew 4:12-25

1) What news led to Jesus withdrawing to Galilee (v.12)?

2) Matthew pointed out Jesus' move to Galilee fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy (v.14-16). The Messiah was described as "a great light" shining on people living

in darkness (v.16). Read the following passages. What did each one reveal about this imagery of light and darkness?

a) John 1:4-9 _____

b) John 8:12 _____

c) John 12:46 _____

d) Ephesians 5:8-14 _____

e) 1 Peter 2:9 _____

3) What message did Jesus begin preaching in verse 17?

Matthew used the Greek word *metanoeō* (μετανοέω), meaning "to change one's mind or way of thinking." Jesus likely spoke the Aramaic word *shuv* (שׁוּב), meaning "to turn back or return to God." Together, these ideas described repentance as both an inward change of mind and a wholehearted return to God. Jesus wasn't simply calling people to feel remorse for their sin. He was inviting them to rethink everything in light of the arrival of God's kingdom.

4) Research the word "repent." How does its modern usage compare with the Greek and Aramaic meanings above?

5) According to verse 17, what reason did Jesus give for urging people to repent?

Matthew recorded Jesus beginning His ministry with the exact same message John the Baptist proclaimed in Matthew 3:2: "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.*" John announced the coming of the King; Jesus now proclaimed the King and His kingdom had arrived.

6) In verses 18-22, what two sets of brothers did Jesus call as His first disciples?

7) Read the following accounts of Jesus' first followers: Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:1-11, John 1:35-42. Most scholars understand these passages as describing different stages of the disciples' relationship with Jesus rather than contradictory accounts. Taken together, what fuller picture did these Gospel accounts give of Jesus' first disciples and His call to follow Him?

8) In verse 19, Jesus said, "*Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.*" What metaphor did Jesus use to describe the mission to which He was calling these men?

9) How did Simon Peter and Andrew respond to Jesus' invitation? (v.20) How did James and John respond? (v.22)

10) According to verse 23, what three activities characterized Jesus' ministry in Galilee?

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

11) What kinds of people and conditions did Matthew specifically mention as coming to Jesus for healing?

12) According to verse 25, what was the result of Jesus' ministry?

13) From what regions did the crowds come? What did this suggest about the growing reach of Jesus' ministry? (v.25)

14) **Is there anything in this chapter new to you?

Day 3 - Connecting the Dots...

After God brought Israel out of Egypt through the Red Sea, He immediately led them into the wilderness (Exodus 14-16). This moment marked their deliverance and established their identity as God's redeemed people. In the wilderness, that identity was tested through hunger, thirst, and repeated pressure to trust or doubt God's care and provision.

Matthew drew a clear parallel as Jesus began His ministry. After Jesus was baptized and declared to be God's Son (Matthew 3:17), He was led into the wilderness to be tested (Matthew 4:1). His identity was affirmed and then immediately tested. Jesus entered the same pattern of deliverance followed by testing, but He responded with faithfulness where Israel failed.

1) What identity were they given?

a) Israel: Exodus 4:22-23 _____

b) Jesus: Matthew 3:16-17 _____

2) How long were they in the wilderness?

a) Israel: Deuteronomy 8:2-3 _____

b) Jesus: Matthew 4:1-2 _____

3) What was their response to doubt about God's provision?

a) Israel: Exodus 16:2-3 _____

b) Jesus: Matthew 4:3-4 _____

4) What was their response to doubt about God's protection?

a) Israel: Numbers 14:1-4 _____

b) Jesus: Matthew 4:5-7 _____

5) What was their response to doubt about God's plan and goodness?

a) Israel: Exodus 32:1-8 _____

b) Jesus: Matthew 4:8-10 _____

6) In Matthew 4:5-6, Satan took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem - the center of Israel's worship and national hope. Many in Israel expected the Messiah to be

revealed there in visible power and glory. Read Malachi 3:1-4. What were people expecting the Messiah to do when He came to the temple?

Following the wilderness temptation, Matthew recorded Jesus began His public ministry in Galilee, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy (Matthew 4:14-16). During Isaiah's time, Zebulun and Naphtali were the northernmost tribes of Israel and the first to be invaded by the Assyrians. As a result, they came to symbolize judgment, exile, and spiritual darkness. Although Galilee was largely Jewish by Jesus' day, it was still known for its Gentile influence and life in the spiritual margins. Matthew highlighted Jesus began His public ministry in the very region first marked by darkness, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy that the people living in darkness would be the first to see God's saving light.

- 7) Read Isaiah 9:1-2. What picture did Isaiah give of this region before the light arrived?

- 8) Read the following passages: Psalm 2:8-9, Daniel 7:13-14, Zechariah 9:10. Based on these passages, what kind of king might many have been expecting?

- 9) Instead of beginning in the center of religious and political power (the temple in Jerusalem), Jesus began His ministry in Galilee, calling ordinary people and announcing the kingdom. What did Jesus' message, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near," begin to reveal about the kind of kingdom He was bringing? What was He asking them to repent?

Jesus didn't enter the story of Israel as expected through visible power at the center of religious life, but through wilderness testing, marginal places, and ordinary people. Matthew presented a kingdom that was arriving, but in a way that redefined expectations of power, place, and purpose.

Day 4 - Walking the Way of Jesus

Temptation is part of human experience. Even Jesus was tempted. Recognizing temptation for what it truly is - a pull away from God's will and toward independence from Him - is a crucial part of walking faithfully.

Temptation itself is not sin, and it shouldn't immediately lead to shame. Shame is one of the enemy's tools, because it turns us inward, isolates us, and keeps us hidden in darkness. Instead, temptation can become a moment to step into the light by anchoring ourselves in God's Word and choosing trust, obedience, and dependence on Him.

- 1) How do you see Jesus as fully human in Matthew 4? What aspects of His experience showed real physical, emotional, or spiritual testing?

Immediately following His baptism in Chapter 3, Jesus was led into the wilderness. After 40 days of fasting, Satan came to tempt Him.

- 2) **Have you ever experienced a "wilderness season" after a season of clarity or spiritual momentum?

- 3) **Why might the wilderness be a strategic place for spiritual testing?

- 4) In Matthew 4:3-8, Satan tempted Jesus to doubt God's provision, protection, and ultimately God's goodness and plan. We see similar patterns throughout Israel's story.

- a) **Where have you personally felt these kinds of pressures or doubts? ____

- b) Which one tends to be most difficult for you to resist with truth? _____

5) In verses 4, 7, and 10, Jesus responded to each temptation by allowing God's Word, not His circumstances or emotions, to determine what was true. How was this different from the way Satan used Scripture in verse 6?

6) **How did Jesus' use of Scripture shape the way you can respond to temptation in your own life?

7) **In each temptation, Satan offered something not inherently wrong (provision, protection, authority), but at the wrong time or in the wrong way.

a) **What did this reveal about how temptation often works? _____

b) How have you experienced this in your own life? _____

Just as temptation invites us to let our circumstances define what is true instead of trusting God's promises, Jesus invited us to see His kingdom through God's perspective rather than the world's definitions of power, success, and influence.

8) Who was Jesus primarily interacting with throughout these verses? Were they people of status?

9) What other ways do you see Jesus challenging or reversing common expectations of what God's kingdom and power should look like?

10) How did Isaiah's prophecy about a "great light" being seen in darkness help explain what was happening in Jesus' ministry?

- 11) **Looking back on your walk with Jesus, where has He been “light in the darkness” for you personally?
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- 12) **What expectations or assumptions about God or the Christian life have you had to let go of in order to follow Him more fully?
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- 13) Are there any current ways of thinking, trusting, or living Jesus may be inviting you to release or reorient as you continue to walk with Him?
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Jesus doesn’t only meet us in moments of strength, but also in wilderness places, places of temptation, and places where our understanding of God is being reshaped. The invitation of this passage isn’t only to resist temptation, but to learn to recognize His voice more clearly than every counterfeit one - and to follow Him into a kingdom that often looks different than we expected but is always better than we imagined.

- 14) **What key point did you learn this week about walking the way of Jesus?
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Day 5 - What Do You Think?

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33, NIV)

Today, read chapter 4 with a seeking posture, and be attentive to where God is forming your heart, reordering your priorities, and inviting you into His kingdom life. As you do, take time to reflect on how God’s living Word is at work in your life.

Use the questions below to notice where you sense His invitation, conviction, or encouragement. You do not need to answer every question each week. Instead, choose two or three that stand out and spend time with them. Pay attention to

where God is leading you toward deeper trust, understanding, and transformation.

- 1) **What part of God's redemptive story became larger, stranger, or more beautiful after studying this chapter?

- 2) **What insights gained from this chapter challenged you to think or act differently?

- 3) Where do you see yourself in this story? Are you the hero, someone in the crowd, or someone in need of the grace being revealed?

- 4) **What part of God's kingdom seemed upside down in this passage compared to the kingdom of this world?

- 5) Did any mystery remain unresolved after reading this chapter? Rather than solving it, how might living with that mystery deepen your trust in God?

- 6) **What invitation did Jesus extend to experience transformation in your life?

- 7) If we lived out the truths we've read about in this chapter in our families, workplaces, churches, and neighborhood, what might become more beautiful about our community? What might become uncomfortable?
