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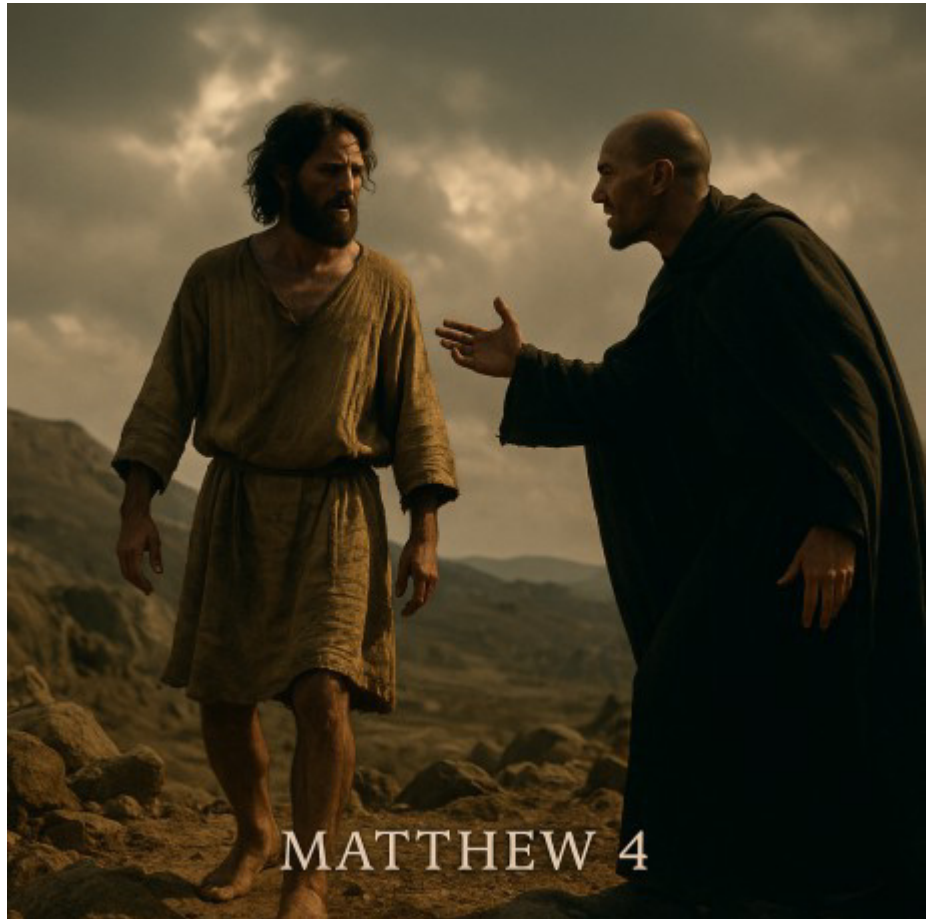
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Matthew 4 This study has not been posted on facebook yet



By Dan Maines

Matthew 4

Matthew 4:1

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

† Just as Israel was tested in the wilderness for forty years, Jesus was tested for forty days. He succeeds where Israel failed, proving Himself the true Son.

† The Dead Sea Scrolls describe how the faithful expected a final confrontation with evil powers in the wilderness (1QM War Scroll). Matthew shows this fulfilled in Christ's victory.

† To us today, it shows that temptation is not sin itself. Like Christ, we are called to resist by relying on God's word.

Matthew 4:2

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

† The forty days connect directly to Moses on Sinai (Exodus 34:28) and Elijah's journey (1 Kings 19:8). Jesus fulfills both the law and the prophets.

† Irenaeus argued that Christ recapitulated Israel's history in Himself (Against Heresies 3.18.1). His hunger displays His humanity, yet He remained faithful.

† To us today, it proves Jesus shares our weakness but overcomes in perfect obedience.

Matthew 4:3-4

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 comes out of the mouth of God.'"

† The first temptation targets physical need. Jesus answers with Deuteronomy 8:3, reminding that true life is sustained by God's word, not merely food.

† Philo noted that true nourishment comes from the divine Logos, not earthly bread (On the Migration of Abraham 130). Matthew presents Jesus as the embodiment of this truth.

† To us today, it shows we must value God's word above all earthly needs.

Matthew 4:5-7

Then the devil took Him along into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and he said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written: 'He will give His angels orders concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will lift You up, so that You do not strike Your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written: 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

† Satan quotes Psalm 91, twisting Scripture to promote presumption. Jesus answers with Deuteronomy 6:16, showing Scripture interprets Scripture. Testing God is unbelief, not faith.

† Origen wrote that twisting Scripture is the devil's oldest weapon, but Christ gave the true interpretation (Against Celsus 2.24).

† To us today, it warns that Scripture out of context is dangerous. Faith trusts God's word without putting Him to the test.

Matthew 4:8-10

Again, the devil took Him along 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 away, Satan! For it is written: 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"

† The third temptation is idolatry, offering glory without suffering. Jesus rejects it with Deuteronomy 6:13. Unlike Israel, He remains loyal to God alone.

† Tacitus noted how Rome's emperors demanded worship as gods (Annals 15.44). Jesus refuses all such compromises, even if it meant avoiding suffering.

† To us today, it proves God's kingdom cannot be gained by compromise with worldly power.

Matthew 4:11

Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to serve Him.

† Victory comes through faithfulness. After resisting temptation, Christ is ministered to by angels, showing God's care for His Son.

† Eusebius emphasized that Christ's victory over the devil marked the start of His ministry and the breaking of Satan's power (Ecclesiastical History 1.3).

† To us today, it reminds us that when we resist temptation, God provides strength and comfort.

Matthew 4:12-16

Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. This happened so that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by way of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned."

† Jesus' ministry begins in Galilee, fulfilling Isaiah 9:1-2. The despised region became the first to see the light of Messiah.

† Josephus describes Galilee as densely populated and diverse (Wars 3.41-43). This made it the perfect place for the gospel to shine first.

† To us today, it shows God often works in the least expected places. His light shines where darkness once ruled.

Matthew 4:17

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

† Jesus begins His ministry with the same message as John: repentance and the nearness of the kingdom. The kingdom was not distant, but imminent in that generation.

† To us today, it proves the kingdom has come. We live in the blessings of what Christ announced.

Matthew 4:18-20

Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of people." Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.

† Jesus calls ordinary fishermen, showing the kingdom is built on humble beginnings. The image of fishing for people comes from Jeremiah 16:16, where God would gather His people.

† The Mishnah records the value of obedience to a rabbi, but Jesus calls disciples to Himself, a claim greater than any rabbi (Avot 1:4).

† To us today, it proves Christ calls us in our ordinary lives to join His mission.

Matthew 4:21-22

Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets; and He called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

† James and John leave family and livelihood to follow Christ. This demonstrates the radical call of discipleship.

† To us today, it teaches us that following Christ means placing Him above all other loyalties.

Matthew 4:23-25

Jesus was going about in all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. And the news about Him spread throughout Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and severe pain, demon-possessed, people with epilepsy, and people who were paralyzed; and He healed them. Large crowds followed Him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

† Jesus demonstrates the reality of the kingdom through healing and teaching. His miracles show that the kingdom was present in power.

† Early church fathers like Justin Martyr pointed to Christ's healing as proof He fulfilled Isaiah's promises of restoration (Dialogue with Trypho 69).

† To us today, it reminds us that the kingdom is not in words only but in power. Christ's authority brings life and healing.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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