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Jesus' Temptation: A Reflection on Matthew's Use of Old Testament Theology and Imagery

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Introduction

Jesus' temptation in Matt. 4:1-11 was far more than an isolated event of three tests. At one level, it was a challenge to His entire redemptive mission. Yet internally, Matthew's construction of the account is utterly drenched in OT theological themes, imagery, and dialogue that reverberates with the words and events of an entire nation tested to its core. Israel's testing was their opportunity to enact their loyalty to God's Covenant. Similarly, Jesus' temptation threatened to derail His obedience to His Father. Image and theology, history and mission all converge in this text.

It is one thing to understand what was at stake, but exactly why Matthew weaves so many OT images and themes into this drama deserves another look. Jesus recognized the devil's tests as *redemptive distortions*, unacceptable detours from His kingdom mission.[1]

The victorious Son achieved what the national son did not—using unique biblical texts and sites. Jesus' temptation was not only determinative for His service, but the devil's tactics themselves were cut from the rich fabric of Israel's historical experiences with YHWH.

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST AND ITS OT THEMES (Matt. 4:1-11)

Metaphorically speaking, the OT often functions as the "theological dictionary" of the NT, animating its message. The biblical writers used specific genres, terms, topographical symbols, and a host of rich images to communicate to their audience.[2] John the Baptist's preaching was no different, capitalizing on the peoples' familiarity with OT themes in his stinging call to repentance (3:1-

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12; cf. 4:17).[3] In Matthew's account, the temptation of Jesus is intimately tied to the language of John's baptism scene.[4] A study of Jesus' temptation cannot overlook some vital connections.

The 'Elijah' Ministry of John the Baptist

As a person, John is presented as "Elijah-like" since John offers a *renewal* to Israel (cf. 1 Kgs. 18:21).[5] His preaching was the final prophetic installment of covenant renewal (Mal. 4:5-6).[6] Even his wilderness location calls the people to acknowledge their current state of spiritual exile,[7] for they must trek out to "see him" (3:1; cf. 11:7-9).[8] John had in mind a "new exodus" built on Moses' work and Isaiah's prophecy (Psalm 114; Isah. 40:3). Their repentance in the Jordan valley reenacts Moses' earlier covenant renewal at the edge of the Jordan (Deut. 9:1ff); Israel's national repentance in the OT could include an element of reenactment.[9] Significantly, it is here that Jesus emerges—at a new "Jordan crossing"—to lead out a purified remnant, ending their exile.[10] "The baptism and temptation of Jesus inaugurates the renewal of the people of God."[11]

Jesus' baptism was not for His repentance but to model for Israel true submission and endorsement of John's word, fulfilling Israel's covenant requirements (3:15; cf. 5:17).[12] Jesus' actions prove a model of obedience to God's law, the very law He will quote in His temptation. As the divine Son (3:17), Jesus does not merely repeat the experiences of the "national son," He *resumes* these experiences at their core (Exod. 4:22; Deut. 8:5),[13] but succeeds where Israel had failed.[14] However, it is vital to see how the Father's testimony is integrated into the Son's ensuing temptation.

Old Testament Texts in Full Bloom

John's voice is one of preparation, but it is the Father's declaration that breaks the silence of 400 years: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased" (3:17, TNIV). These combined voices constitute the OT legal requirement of two witnesses.[15] The "opened heavens" (3:16) signal a new era, marked by new revelation. Yet these words are not new. In fact, three OT texts are represented here. "This is my Son"[16] draws on Psa. 2:7, a king's personal testimony of his adopted "messiahship" and commission by the LORD.[17] The Father's declaration officially commissions Jesus for ministry as the ultimate anointed Messiah (cf. Mark 1:1; Psa. 2:2).[18] According to contemporary rabbinic thought the dove reflected Israel,[19] but more likely signals a new era of

life analogous to Noah's dove (Gen. 8:8-11).[20] The greater Son was now the focus. The Spirit not only anointed Jesus, authorizing His ministry (Acts 10:38), but the Spirit also enabled Jesus to inaugurate the eschatological age itself.[21] This powerful role of the Spirit fulfilled Isaiah's expectation that the Spirit of God would rest on the Servant and king who would bring about Israel's restoration (Isah. 61:1-2).[22]

The second OT text in the Father's declaration signaled that the kingly reign of this Messiah would indeed be different: "my Son...with him I am well pleased" alludes to Isah. 42:1.[23] The tenor of the Servant Songs (Isaiah 40-55) portrayed a role of affliction and personal sacrifice; but coupled with Psa. 2:7, Matthew's point becomes clear—Jesus will be a suffering King!

The third OT text is more opaque. In the middle is the phrase: "my Son, whom I love," likely an allusion to Gen. 22:2, a phrase used by God for Isaac (MT *yaḥid*; LXX *agapetos*).[24] Abraham's profound obedience and submission to God's command to sacrifice Isaac had an acute effect on Israel's theology. Jesus was the only Son whom the Father loved, yet whom He was willing to sacrifice for the sake of the world. Jesus as it were, is now called to imitate Isaac's quiet availability.[25] We can now grasp the weight of the Father's pronouncement, for it gives Jesus His "fundamental theological orientation for his ministry," His guidelines to undertake His mission.[26] In the end, the declaration of the Father combines divine Sonship of the royal Messiah with the Spirit's endowment of the Servant of the Lord.[27] This pulls together OT texts and increasingly raises the status of Jesus for both audience and reader. Not surprisingly, the cross will find kingship language reemerging.[28]

Typology in Matthew's Presentation

As William Dumbrell observes, "The office of messiah is thus not one that grows out of disappointment with the empirical monarchy...but rises with the advent of kingship itself."[29] Beginning with the patriarchs, notions of kingship came early and uniquely defined David.[30] With Jesus' temptation, a four-step "process" is achieved:

1) *Selected* by God (1 Sam. 16:1 = David; Matt. 3:17 = Jesus)
2) *Anointed* by God's prophet (1 Sam. 16:13 = David; Matt. 3:16-17 = Jesus)
3) *Endowed* for office by the Spirit (1 Sam. 16:13 = David; Matt. 3:16 = Jesus)
4) *Attested* public military acts (1 Sam. 17 = David; Matt. 4:1-11 = Jesus)

Significantly, these four elements that distinguished David were not associated with another king until the ideal kingship of Jesus' ministry.[31] With Jesus' temptation, cosmic hostility erupts on the redemptive stage.

For Matthew, the parallels to Jesus' temptation focus on Israel's wilderness experience and Moses' life.[32] Like Moses himself, Jesus' temptation scene reflects a general pattern of "withdrawal and return" evident in the formation of servants prepared for great work.[33] Departure into the wilderness is a common theme verging on a *type scene* (cf. Genesis 27-32; Exod. 2:11-22).[34] The exodus imagery fosters a strong Christological reflection.[35] Broadly speaking, Jesus also "passes through" water, moves into a wilderness, and experiences the core tests of hunger, self-denial, and idolatry that Israel did. In fact, Matthew capitalizes on themes from Deuteronomy 6-8, precisely where Moses explains how a series of tests revealed Israel's devotion to the Lord. Thus, "testing" was the process in which the covenant partner was scrutinized to determine fidelity.[36] As Israel's champion Jesus fought as a representative of His people, using the law as a greater Moses.[37] Additionally, the texts Jesus quoted were all from Deuteronomy, passages where Moses explained the *goal* of Israel's wilderness testing (Deut. 8:1-5).

The context of Jesus' temptation is better appreciated by observing the geographical and thematic orientation of His ministry.[38]

A Genealogy, birth, and the infancy of Jesus (1:1-2:23)
B Jesus in **JUDEA**: baptism, temptation, and preparation (3:1-4:17)
C Public ministry around **GALILEE**; preparing the disciples (4:18-10:42)
X *Response to Jesus' public ministry—the kingdom parables* (11:1-16:20)
C' Private ministry in **GALILEE**; preparing the disciples (16:21-18:35)
B' Jesus in **JUDEA**: from Palm Sunday to Passover (19:1-25:46)
A' Suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus (26:1-28:20)

In this concentric layout the outsides pertain to Judea, recounting Jesus' baptism and temptation, while His passion and death occur on the opposite side (A, B, B', A'). Jesus obedience during His desert testing (Matt. 4:1-11) is perfected during His final testing in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:39).[39] The inner portion reveals Jesus' ministry in Galilee (C, C') with the central unit focusing on Jesus' seven parables of the kingdom (X).

The Literary Architecture of the Temptation

The actual temptation account is triadic, composed of three related units (vv. 1-4, 5-7, 8-11).[40] Rising in intensity, each unit is highly stylized, reflecting a literary genre of rabbinic *disputation* or debate.[41] These scenes are also joined through imagery of rising geographical elevation: "up...into the wilderness" (4:1), "on the pinnacle of the temple" (4:5), and culminating with "a very high mountain" (4:8).[42] Each encounter begins with the narrator's note of a specific location, which is then followed by a confrontational dialogue. As for the characters, the devil is the resourceful initiator and Jesus the vigorous responder. With each temptation the devil issues a proposition that brings a swift and climactic response from Jesus, formally closing that exchange.

In fact, it is *dialogue* that makes this entire temptation unique as Jesus and the devil wage war with words.[43] While the devil uses "Son of God" (4:3, 5), Jesus twice responds with "Lord your God" (4:7, 10). Twice the devil states: "If [= *since*] you are the Son of God" (4:3, 6), a statement that builds on the Father's earlier pronouncement ("my Son," 3:17).[44] The devil's first two propositions ("if you are") end with the third and climactic declaration for worship ("if you bow"; 4:3, 6; cf. v. 8). This reflects a movement from personal to universal as the issue of cosmic sovereignty concludes the temptations.

Significantly, the issue is not whether Jesus is God's Son, but what *kind* of Son He would be—a self-seeking Son or submissive Savior. The fact that Jesus includes a direct reference to "God" in all three responses reveals His loyalty to His Father (4:4b, 7b, 10b). Jesus was under authority, tested by authority before He could assert His own authority.[45] This language and dialogue adds a personal touch to Jesus' encounter. While these temptations do not occur in a public forum, their didactic force is clear enough. What transpires is richly typological, deeply Christological, and highly supernatural.[46]

The narrator opens with the Holy Spirit leading and closes with angels ministering (4:1, 11). The following diagram shows the structure and content of Matthew's account along with the OT citations and allusions in Jesus' temptation.

Mountain

While Matthew's "high mountain" was symbolic or visionary (4:8a), it forms a thematic extension from the temple (4:5b) since temples were built atop mountains.[63] Zion, and the temple built there, was the "cosmic mountain," replicating the heavenly mountain of YHWH at Sinai (cf. Psa. 48:1-4).[64] In OT imagery divine councils occurred on mountains (Isa. 14:13; cf. Exod. 24:12-18). Matthew's mountain imagery draws numerous analogies to Moses' life and Israel's own worship (cf. Exod. 3:1b, 5; 12). Theophanies occurred at Mt. Sinai (Exod. 3-4; 32-34) and divine decrees were made there (Exod. 19-20).[65] When Jesus viewed the "kingdoms of the world and their glory" (Matt. 4:8), the event at least echoes Moses' climb of Mt. Nebo to survey the Promised Land (Deut. 32:49-52; 34:1-8).[66] But mosaic imagery hardly stops here.

Jesus' fast recalls the same experience of Moses and Israel (Exod. 24:18; 34:28; Deut. 8:2-3).[67] However by fasting "forty days and forty nights," Matthew emphasizes the typological number and its correspondence to Moses and Israel more than Jesus' growing state of hunger.[68] Unique to Matthew, the "forty nights" further confirms Jesus' fasting to Moses' forty-day-and-night fast.[69] As Moses fasted prior to confirming God's covenant with Israel, so Jesus' rigorous fast is also *preparatory*, reflecting an appeal for divine assistance in His time of danger (Deut. 9:9; cf. Esth. 4:15-16)[70] and even preparation for war (cf. 1 Sam. 7:6).[71] Engaging the devil, Jesus fights a "new Canaanite" and emerged as the triumphant champion on behalf of His people.[72]

One Encounter, Three Ingenious Tests

According to Matthew, the devil tempts Jesus *after* His forty-day fast (cf. Luke 4:2). So it is arguable that the devil's sequence of tests capitalize on Jesus' physical weakness (1st temptation), then the insecurity of life (2nd temptation), climaxing with the attraction of devotion as a solution (3rd temptation).[73] But how Jesus overcomes the "tempter" (4:3a) requires another look at the makeup of these tests.[74] We'll briefly consider the devil's proposals then the substance of Jesus' answers.[75]

A Desperate Socio-Religious Context

Throughout the three tests it is the nature of Jesus' Sonship that is at stake, not its fact.[76] What is often misunderstood, however, is the actual *goal* of these tests. The devil's ploy is to construct scenarios that tempt Jesus to rely on His Sonship in self-serving ways.[77] External seduction rather than internal lust is

the strategy here.[78] Yet when we read these as isolated and "moralized" tests we fail to appreciate the gravity of what's really at stake—a redemptive mission that extended beyond Jesus' personal moral fortitude, though requiring it. In essence, the devil attempts to lure Jesus away from His redemptive messianic mission. While we might assume that serious temptations would, at some level, involve "money, sex, and power," the devil's attack was more sophisticated than that. What, for example, was so treacherous about making bread for himself (4:3; cf. 3:9)? Leading off this ordeal-like temptation, eating bread seems almost ridiculous, until one looks further.

The devil's propositions amount to three different "paths" Jesus could take as messianic deliverer. It is arguable that each test reflects a popular expectation of the messianic role within the prevailing culture of that time.[79] We could call the first test *the way of the populist* (4:3-4).[80] Would the messianic Son provide for His own physical needs or trust His Father's provision? Only the Son fully clothed in human frailty could model the strain of obedience amid desperate need.[81] Making bread would not only satisfy Jesus' hunger, but as a social strategy it would also give the masses what they want (cf. Matt. 14:17; John 6:7, 26)—nothing resonates with the masses like hunger.[82] But grateful people would come at the cost of Jesus' self-satisfaction. So the Son refuses to be a messianic magician, creating a "new manna" for himself.

The second test is *the way of the wonder-worker* (4:6-7). Would the messianic Son place himself in mortal danger and force God to deliver him since the Father did operate from the Temple? As a strategy, forcing His Father into a spectacular deliverance at an international location might indeed galvanize the crowds. But dazzled crowds at the sacred site would not justify divine protection merely for Jesus' self-vindication. So the Son refuses the role of deluded visionary and that kind of demonstration of divine authorization for His ministry.

The final test could be termed *the way of the political opportunist* (4:9-10). Would the messianic Son use instant wealth, profile, and even militaristic maneuver to attain power? As a strategy such influence might liberate an oppressed nation. But redemption is for relationship and not social revolution, and certainly not self-promotion.[83] So the Son refuses this means of universal recognition in exchange for "all the kingdoms of the world" (4:8).

The devil's tests were driven by scenarios of *seduction*: from dependence to self-assertion (i.e., bread); from trust to coercion (i.e., danger), from allegiance to betrayal (i.e., power). Giving in to these temptations was not about Jesus' personal piety, but His recognition of an unacceptable detour. The

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devil's temptations were intended to remove the cost of sacrifice and the necessity of self-denial, and thereby, derail Jesus from the way of the cross (cf. Heb. 2:18; 4:15; 5:8).

Jesus' Response as a 2nd Mosaic Preaching

In each successive test Jesus not only responds with Scripture ("It stands written..." [4:4, 7, 10]),[84] but He employs texts drawn exclusively from Deuteronomy (i.e., bread [Deut. 8:3], danger [Deut. 6:16], power [Deut. 6:13]).[85] More than "proof texts" of the law, Jesus shows His penetrating grasp of Scripture by employing key portions rooted in the wilderness experience of Israel's testing (Deuteronomy 6-8). God desired *humility* from the nation's testing (Deut. 8:16). Jesus' parry with the devil reveals His stewardship and obedience to the covenant as a new Moses. Yet more is happening beneath the surface than a mere duel with Scripture.

Jesus' references to Deuteronomy come from Moses' "2nd Address" (4:44-28:68)—the very heart of the book with its call to love God.[86] Here Moses' tone is one of exhortation, calling for covenant loyalty to God. This significance is heightened when one realizes that Jesus strategically uses Moses' "preaching" to Israel from Deuteronomy when could have cited the epoch-making events themselves from the book of Exodus. In this way Israel's demand for food (Exod. 16:2-8) and God's provision of manna (Exod. 16:13-31)[87] stand as the backdrop for Jesus' claim that "people do not live on bread alone, but on every word" (Matt. 4:4 = Deut. 8:3).[88] As Moberly explains, "The creative word of divine power which will meet Jesus' needs is not a new word of his own but that word which has already been given *normative shape* in Israel's scriptures, which calls human life into true relationship with God."[89] Whereas Israel had shown an untrusting heart, Jesus illustrated how covenant obedience to God's eternal Word was more important than temporal bread. Similarly, Israel's rebellion at Massah (Exod. 17:1-3) and God's provision of water (Exod. 17:4-7) became the backdrop for Jesus claim not to "put the Lord your God to the test" (Matt. 4:7 = Deut. 6:16).[90] Whereas Israel tested God by doubting His presence with them, Jesus emphatically refused to test the rescuing-presence of His Father.

Finally, Israel's idolatry with the "golden calf" (Exod. 32:1-35),[91] resolved only by Moses' intercession (Exod. 32:11-14), forms the backdrop for Jesus' response: "Worship the LORD your God, and serve him only" (Matt. 4:10 = Deut. 6:13).[92] Israel's actions had brought God to the brink of canceling

His covenant with them (Exod. 32:8-10).[93] In a parody of the tabernacle construction (Exod. 25:1-9), the people had built a golden calf (Exod. 32:1-6) and in so doing broke the first two commandments.[94] By contrast, Jesus makes no concession and refuses any substitute for God's presence, thereby proving His love for God. Trading loyalty was not the way to obtain glory.

Jesus' Use of Deuteronomy

Jesus' use of Deuteronomy, with its allusions to Exodus, raises some important observations. First, Jesus achieved a symbolic second "preaching" of Deuteronomy as a new Moses, qualified to lead a purified remnant. If these covenantal texts defined Israel's mission, they did all the more for Jesus, the eschatological Son. Second, Matthew's thematic arrangement of Jesus' Deuteronomy quotations (Deut. 8:3; 6:16; 6:13) appears designed to preserve the *chronological* and *thematic* development of the Exodus events themselves (Exod. 16:2-8; 17:1-7; 32:1-6). This, in turn, highlights Matthew's rich typological themes drawn between the national and divine Son.

Moreover, Deut. 6:13—Jesus' final quote—encapsulates the vertical theology of the first group of commands, addressing right relationship to God in worship, service, and use of the Divine name. Illustrated negatively by the golden calf scene (Exodus 32), Israel was neither to forget God (Deut. 6:12) nor follow the Canaanite gods (Deut. 6:14). Significantly, between these two poles is Deut. 6:13, contrasting their past "bondage" (עבדים) in Egypt with their present "service" (עבד) to God.[95] What Deuteronomy emphasizes is that service is defined through one's life (cf. Deut. 10:12). Jesus' obedience was the perfect expression of Deuteronomy's teaching on "fearing" the Lord (6:13).[96] Typologically, the significance of Jesus' obedience in the wilderness is a study in contrasts since it was there that Israel had enraged God with their rebellion and apostasy (cf. Psalms 78; 81; 95; 105-106).[97]

Third, it is arguable that Matthew has intentionally set the order of Jesus' tests to reflect the form of the *Shema*—a spiritual plumb line by which the people were constantly measured (Deut. 6:4-5; cf. Matt. 13:21-22; 19:17).[98] By implication, loving God with one's "heart" meant the refusal to make bread in self-interest.[99] "Life" meant the refusal to jump and activate divine protection.[100] "Might" was tied to idolatry and the refusal to worship the devil in exchange for the kingdoms of the world.[101] Viewing the tests in light of the *Shema* helps explain the movement beginning with the inner being, then adding the whole person, and finally concluding with all one claims as one's own.[102] By

citing from the introduction of Moses' speech (Deut. 6:4-9), Jesus pointed to the entirety of Moses' address. But concluding with Deut. 6:13—"serve him only"—Jesus focused on exclusive worship through a text used as a *summary* for the Decalogue itself.[103] In Deut. 6:13 "the first three commandments are set forth in positive rather than negative form."[104] Quoting part for the whole also reflects the use of Psalm 91.

The Devil's Use of Psalm 91

The Psalter also played a role in Jesus' temptation. Both ingenious and contextual, the devil in turn, responds by quoting Psa. 91:11-12.[105] Since a deliberate hurling does not correspond to an accidental stumbling, omitting "in all your ways" may have been intentional rather than incidental.[106] The Temple was a place of refuge, not presumption.[107] Moreover, the Son was to serve the Father, not vice-versa. "Those who dwell in the shelter of the Most High" (Psa. 91:1) began precious words in a psalm of protection,[108] but the devil "displaces the true concept of miracle in Scripture...into that of magic."[109] Sanitizing a dare with a cherished text, the devil prods Jesus to fall back on His Sonship with God "as a direct claim of privilege to all the promises of God."[110]

Further analysis reveals a rich socio-religious backdrop to Psalm 91 that likely explains its use here.[111] While the devil quotes vv. 11-12, v. 10 is the stunning preface: "no evil shall befall you, no scourge [Targum: *or demons*] shall come near your tent."[112] The Aramaic Targum, employed in Jesus' time, reflects an early tradition of demonic harassment: "You will not be afraid of the terror of *the demons that go about in* the night, nor of the arrow *of the angel of death that he shoots* in the daytime, nor of the *death* that goes about in the darkness, nor of *the company of demons that destroy* at noon."[113]

Used for exorcisms in Jesus' day, false understandings of God's requirements and promises also swirled around Psalm 91, as the devil's use shows (Matt. 3:9; cf. Mark 5:7).[114] The language of divine promise is always relational requiring an appropriate interaction with the God of the promise.[115] So while the devil's use of Psalm 91 may have been centered on Christ, it was hardly *God*-centered.[116]

The movement of embedded dialogue is also important. Only in Jesus' temptation does the devil quote Scripture and Jesus in turn, engage him. The four quotations are not those of the narrator—three come from Jesus, and one from the devil himself! When Jesus began citing Scripture (4:4 = Deut. 8:3), the devil mimicked this by citing an equally well-known psalm (4:6 = Psa. 91:11-

12). But following Jesus' second refusal and His reference to "God" (4:7),[117] the devil cunningly substitutes *himself* for God in the final test, offering Jesus the whole world in exchange for His submission.[118] At this point, Jesus calls him "Satan" (4:10a). Because the final test attacks the very foundation of the covenant relationship, Jesus counters with the core theme of Deuteronomy—*exclusive covenant commitment to the Lord.*[119] Satan was, after all, representing the interests of his own kingdom (12:26).[120] For Jesus, what "stands written" has divine authority and "is not the biblical text in the abstract but the text in its meaningfulness for the *current situation.*"[121] Later Jesus will be given what here He must decline. His only extemporaneous words in the entire discourse are reserved for banishment: "Go, Satan!"[122]

Seeing beyond the existential moment, Jesus views His tests as redemptive distortions and stays on the path of pain and suffering to follow His Father's will. There simply could be no messianic kingdom without the cross.[123] Having rejected food (4:3) and angelic assistance (4:6), He receives both at the end (4:11).[124] Hailed as king (Matt. 2:2), He chose the crown of thorns and the Divine King finally reigned from the cross under the title "King of the Jews" (Matt. 27:37).[125] Unlike Israel, however, Jesus demanded neither food nor miracle; messianic expectations were not met on the triumphalist terms of the religious masses but through trust in His Father. The temptation of Jesus shows the cost of His Sonship.[126] As Evans states, "Having accepted God's rule for himself, Jesus has begun to proclaim the rule of God for all of Israel. By remaining loyal to God, *Jesus remains qualified*, as God's "son" (Mark 1:11), to proclaim God's kingdom."[127]

What the devil tested was Jesus' commitment to kingdom stewardship defined by suffering. Jesus' mission remained intact since He remained qualified. As evidence, *both* the Baptist and Jesus began their ministries by announcing the in breaking of the kingdom (3:2; 4:17). Jesus accomplished this phase and one day He would even provide a "new manna" for His people (Matt. 14:13-21; 15:29-38). On other mountains, Jesus was not only transfigured (Matt. 17:1-13), he announced at the close of His life that all earthly power was His, but it came from God and only *after* the cross (Matt. 28:18).[128]

Conclusion

At both theological and practical levels, the account of Jesus' temptation offers much grist for reflection. Our analysis has attempted to appreciate the OT theology and imagery that animate Matthew's pericope as well as uncover some socio-religious trajectories surrounding the temptation.

For Jesus, the eschatological sites of wilderness, temple, and mountain fueled significant reenactments, proving Jesus to be an obedient Son where the national son had failed. Negatively, Jesus' tests threatened redemptive distortions to his messianic mission. Positively, numerous OT texts illustrate a theological continuity of obedience, and even suffering, that continues to define the people of God (Matthew 5). Aligned with the Mosaic figure and the ethics of his preaching, Jesus modeled an obedience reflecting on the historical pathos of Exodus 16, 17, and 32, but quoting from Deuteronomy 6-8 as the abiding ethic.

Exploiting the theological themes of the "Shema" (Deut. 6:5), Matthew structures Jesus' three tests to highlight true covenant-obedience. Significantly, Jesus' own quotations culminate with Deut. 6:13, an overview of the first three commands and, by extension, a summary of the entire Decalogue. These texts highlight Jesus' vertical orientation to God that proved essential in His temptation. The outcome was that Jesus remained qualified for his messianic mission. From His temptation, thematic ironies reverberate throughout Matthew's gospel in Jesus' feeding of people (14:13-21), Divine transfiguration (17:1-13), and His declaration of dominion (28:16-20).

Practically speaking, giving in to temptation may not only destroy, but also forfeit at the cosmic missional level. Ironically, it is the upright that struggle and are tested. Stanley Grenz explains:

> We repeatedly discover that the intensity to which we sense the force of the onslaught of temptation corresponds to the degree to which we are resisting it. In those areas where we are especially vulnerable, we know little of the power of temptation. In such situations we yield to the evil impulse without a struggle, sometimes even without perceiving our own defeat. In other areas—areas where we are gaining victory over the tempter—we have a greater sense of its power...[Jesus] was *completely cognizant of what was at stake* in the choices placed before him. And *he was entirely conscious of the cosmic implications of the decisions he needed to make.*[129]

Integrity is crucial, but it was never meant to function apart from redemptive mission, merely preserving self.[130] Whenever one balks at the accountability of the body, rationalizes the consequences of sin, or minimizes the reputation of Christ, the larger backdrop of Christian community is crumbling. As Jesus' temptation illustrates, such struggles are not about one individual salvaging personal holiness, far more may be at stake.[131]

Believers must see through the physically full, physically safe, and politically powerful, to the kingdom implications.[132] Like Jesus making bread, believers must be able to see beyond the possible, and even the fair, to the issues of stewardship on a redemptive horizon. Temptation truly has a "bigger picture," and Jesus apparently drew from His pivotal experience of temptation to teach the disciples how to pray.[133] Notice that concern for kingdom work, the Father's will, the evil one, and even bread all reappear; and all in the context of community.[134]

"*Our Father in heaven,*
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors,
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one."[135]

ENDNOTES

[1] The Targum of Isaiah reveals mounting eschatological hope in its use of the phrase: "the kingdom of your [sg/pl] God is revealed!" (מלכותא דאלהכון אתגליאת, 24:23; 31:4; 40:9; cf.מלכותא דאלהיך אתגליאת, 52:7). Within the OT was a core belief that God reigned from generation to generation (Dan. 4:34; cf. Exod. 15:17-18; Num. 23:21; Psalms 47; 93; 96-99). This reign would require a "new exodus" and a renewed entry into the Promised Land. Marking the in breaking of God's rule, John the Baptist preached repentance and judgment. In preparation for Jesus' ministry, John attacked Jewish *particularism*, warning against reliance on mere physical descent from Abraham which, in turn, undermined their nationalism (William J. Dumbrell, *The Search for Order: Biblical Eschatology in Focus* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994], 186-87). Tying together this "already and not yet" were the OT concepts of Spirit and kingdom that surround Jesus' baptism and temptation (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). Therefore, following his temptation, Jesus announced the arrival of the kingdom by means of the Spirit that empowered him at his baptism (cf. Joel 2:28; Matt. 12:28; John 3:5; Rom. 14:17; Gal. 5:16-21; *ibid.*, 188). The ethical emphasis of Jesus' teaching showed how he could be both expectant of the future and demanding of the present (Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28; Bruce D. Chilton, "Kingdom of God," in *The Oxford Companion to*

[2] John Goldingay, "The Old Testament and Christian Faith: Jesus and the Old Testament in Matthew 1-5, Part 2," *Themelios* 8 (1983): 5.

[3] Such phrases include: "heaven is at hand," "flee the coming wrath," "the ax at the root of the trees," "harvesting," and "burning chaff." Harvest imagery is a common medium to describe judgment in the OT (Isa. 17:13; Jer. 13:24; 15:7; 51:33; Joel 3:12-14; cf. 4 Ezra 4:30-32).

[4] Unlike Luke's account of Jesus' temptation (Luke 4:1-12) that only employs de ("but") and και ("and"), the adverbs and conjunctions used by Matthew reveal an emphasis on *escalating sequence*: τοτε ("then" [4:1,5,10,11]); παλιν ("again" [4:7,8]). In fact, τοτε is a favorite of Matthew, occurring 90x.

[5] John the Baptist's ministry retained the ethos of his priestly levitical heritage through Zechariah. Using water, John was purifying an eschatological remnant. A similar "washing," according to rabbinic tradition, prepared Israel for the Sinai encounter with God (Jörg Jeremias, *New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus*, vol. 1.; tran. J. Bowden [London: SCM, 1971], 44; cf. 1 Cor. 10:1-12).

[6] This may have been a sabbatical year, allowing a great and diverse number of people to assemble at the Jordan (William S. LaSor, "John the Baptist," in *Great Personalities of the New Testament: Their Lives and Times* [Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1961], 28).

[7] Craig L. Blomberg, "Matthew," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. Greg K. Beale, Donald A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 13; Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 15, ed. Donald A. Carson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 231; Similarly, Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 137. Many OT texts that refer to the wilderness experience of Israel conclude with the national exile (e.g., Psalms 78, 105, 108). This shows that the "wilderness" became a potent metaphor for "exile" experiences (cf. Isa. 55:1-2; Walter Brueggemann, "Wilderness," *Reverberations: A Theological Handbook of Old Testament Themes* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002], 231-32).

[8] Dumbrell, *Search*, 182. John's animal-skin clothing and near vegetarian diet of locusts and wild honey is not only that of an "exiled" person, but one avoiding unclean food (Matt. 3:4; cf. Gen. 3:21; Exod. 10:4; 2 Kings 1:8; 2 Macc. 5:27).

[9] *Ibid.* 161; cf. Hos. 14:1; Amos 4:4; 5:5; Joel 2:12; Zech. 1:3; Mal. 3:7; Rev. 2:5.

[10] Craig A. Evans, "Jesus and the Continuing Exile of Israel," in *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel*, ed. Carey C. Newman (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 99. John also speaks of a baptism for the wicked, but one in "fire" rather than the Spirit

(Matt. 3:10-12; cf. [wicked] Isa. 26:11; 65:15; 66:24; Jer. 4:4; 15:14; [righteous] Isa. 44:3; Ezek. 39:29; Joel 2:28).

[11] William D. Davies, Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988), 1:402-403.

[12] Dumbrell, *Search*, 163. Akin to Matthew's use of four gentile women in Jesus' genealogy (i.e., 1:3 [Tamar], 5a [Rahab], 5b [Ruth], 6b [Bathsheba]), so John's baptizing of the Jews (3:11a) essentially employs a *proselyte* ritual that aligns Jew with Gentile (William F. Flemington, *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism* [London: SPCK, 1953], 16).

[13] Cf. Hos. 11:1 with Matt. 2:15. For a helpful analysis of Jesus' sonship, see R. W. L. Moberly, "Jesus in Matthew's Gospel as Son of God," in *The Bible, Theology, and Faith: A Study of Abrahaim and Jesus*, ed. Colin Gunton and Daniel W. Hardy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 184-224, especially 198-205.

[14] According to Earl E. Ellis, "a case can be made out that Matthew has in mind Christ as the 'embodiment' of Israel" (*Paul's Use of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981], 132). Jesus is God's Son since he is David's heir; see 2 Sam. 7:14; Luke 1:32; Matt. 16:16; John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Gospel*. Vol. 1 (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2003), 817.

[15] Craig Keener, *New Testament Background Commentary* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993), 53; cf. Deut. 17:6; John 1:7, 8.

[16] The parallel account(s) reads: "*You are* my Son" rather than "*This is* my Son" (cf. Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22), making Matthew's more particularized wording beneficial both to Jesus personally and to the crowd as a public pronouncement (I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004], 97).

[17] Even in Psalm 2, the declaration of royal sonship (2:7) climaxes in universal dominion (2:8). The Davidic king was described as "son" to God, an ancient Near Eastern idiom of formal adoption status and "sonship" (2 Sam. 7:14; Psa. 89:26-27; cf. Exod. 4:22-23). For this reason, the king sits "on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD" (1 Chr. 28:5; cf. 29:20, 23), language the more eschatologically-sensitive LXX intentionally mutes in key manuscripts (*Codex Vaticanus*) because the MT directly equates human and divine kingship (see Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible [New York: Doubleday, 2004], 944). The "Royal Psalms" that celebrate the Davidic kings are like royal robes with which Israel drapes each successive "son of David" at his coronation, but none has shoulders broad enough to fill them out. It is during the plight of Israel's Exile that *Messiah* takes on a decidedly eschatological sense of the hoped-for "Son of David" (Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001], 52; also Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms*, NIV Application Commentary, Vol. 1 [Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2002], 114-17).

[18] Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 82. Two Qumran texts connect the title "son of God" with the anticipated apocalyptic leader (messiah) to be sent by God (4Q246 [= 4QpsDan ar[a]]; 4Q174 [= 4QFlor 10-14]).

[19] Herman L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, Vol. 1 (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1922), 123-25.

[20] Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:816; cf. Psa. 55:6-8. Similarly, the "brooding" imagery also recalls the original creation (Blomberg, "Matthew," *New Testament Use*, 14).

[21] Keener, *Background*, 53.

[22] Frank Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 699.

[23] For a discussion of Isaiah's "servant" (42:1-12), also energized by the Spirit, see Robert B. Chisholm Jr., *Handbook on the Prophets* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 99-101.

[24] A text Paul similarly uses (Rom. 8:32; cf. Matt. 12:18). R. W. L. Moberly also sees Genesis 22 in the background, adding national Israel (Exod. 4:22-23) and the Davidic king (Psa. 2:7; *The Bible, Theology, and Faith*, 198-99).

[25] Goldingay, "Old Testament," 5.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).

[28] Cf. Matt. 26:29; Luke 23:42; 23:51; John 3:5; especially Mark 15:2, 9, 12, 18, 25, 32, 39.

[29] William J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel: A Theological Survey of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 85.

[30] Cf. Gen. 17:6, 16; 35:11; 49:10; 2 Sam. 7:12; cf. Psa. 105:15.

[31] Rolf Knierim, "The Messianic Concept in the First Book of Samuel," in *Jesus and the Historian: Written in Honor of E. C. Colwell*, ed. F. Thomas Trotter (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968), 43-44.

[32] Keener, *Matthew*, 137 (cf. Matt. 2:13, 16, 20-21). By contrast, the accounts of Luke and Mark develop an Adam/Jesus comparison as evidenced in their genealogies. Matthew, for example, omits any reference to the "wild animals" (Mark 1:13b); for further discussion, see Evans, "Inaugurating the Kingdom," 49-75, especially 65-66; John P. Heil, "Jesus with the Wild Animals in Mark 1:13," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68 (2006): 63-78. Heil holds that Mark's reference to the animals argues more for the Israel/Jesus typology than the traditional Adam/Jesus typology.

[33] Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 352.

[34] A type scene is a literary convention that repeats common ingredients, recognized by both the narrator and audience, for explaining an episode within a story (e.g., betrothal accounts at wells, sibling rivalry, and dying heroes).
[35] Cf. Matt. 2:16-18 with Jer. 31:15; Exod. 1:15-22; Matt. 26:17, 26-28 with 1 Cor. 5:7; 11:25; and Exod. 17:6 with 1 Cor. 10:4.
[36] Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 66.
[37] Keener, *Matthew*, 138. For examples of representative characterization in epic literature, see 1 Samuel 17; 2 Sam. 2:14-16.
[38] Adapted from Duane L. Christensen, *The Unity of the Bible: Exploring the Beauty and Structure of the Bible* (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 199-200.
[39] Eugene E. Lemcio, "The Gospels Within the New Testament Canon," in *Canon and Biblical Interpretation.* Scripture and Hermeneutics Series, Vol. 7, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew, Scott Hahn, Robin Parry, Christopher Seitz and Al Wolters (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 136. According to LaSor, the garden of Gethsemane was "the greatest temptation He ever faced: the temptation to save Himself. But He knew that if He saved Himself, He could never save others" ("Jesus the Son of Man," in *Great Personalities*, 46).
[40] Cf. Luke 4:3-4; 9-12; 5-8 [Mark 1:12-13]. Similarly, the concatenation of "Jesus-Spirit-Father" at Jesus' baptism establishes the triadic baptismal formula employed in Matthew's final commission (28:19).
[41] Raymond F. Collins, "Temptation of Jesus," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6:382. "Disputation" is an overarching genre found in legal, wisdom, and prophetic texts (cf. Isa. 10:8-10; 28:23-28; Jer. 2:23-28; 2:1-5; Amos 3:3-4a, 5a, 6-8; 9:7; Mic. 2:6-11, etc.). Also called "controversy dialogue," it rhetorically contains a thesis and counter-thesis by its respective parties. Its "dialogue" is contentious in tone and confrontational in stance (Andrew E. Hill, "Non-Proverbial Wisdom," in *Cracking Old Testament Codes: A Guide to Interpreting the Literary Genres of the Old Testament*, ed. D. Brent Sandy and Ronald L. Giese, Jr. [Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995], 263-64; also Keener, *Matthew*, 143; William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed. [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993], 366, 393-95; Eugene M. Boring, "Matthew," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 8 [Nashville: Abingdon, 1995], 162).
[42] Luke's reversed order of temptations two and three reflect his thematic emphasis on Jerusalem. For Matthew, the final temptation corresponds the climax of his entire account in 28:18 (Graham H. Twelftree, "Temptation of Jesus," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green, Scott McKnight [Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992], 823).
[43] Lewis Schiavo, "The Temptation of Jesus: The Eschatological Battle and the New Ethic of the First Followers of Jesus in Q," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 25 (2002): 144-46. Jesus' triadic temptation mimics "the three nets of Belial" in Ethiopian

Enoch (*1 Enoch* 8), the Damascus Document (CD 4:15-19), and the Ascension of Isaiah (4:8-12). These texts not only speak of "triple tests," they also possess similar themes including the highly eschatological "battle for the word" (*ibid.*, 153-57).

[44] This is a first class condition, assumed true for the sake of argument, but here used manipulatively by the devil (see Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996], 690-94). Throughout Jesus' earthly ministry, the demons never question His identity; they recoil, fully cognizant of his mission. In fact, the next confrontation finds the demons fearful of God's Son, terrified that they would be *destroyed* (Matt. 8:29; cf. v. 16; Simon J. Gathercole, *The Pre-existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006], 277).

[45] Frank Kermode, "Matthew," in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. Robert Alter, Frank Kermode (Mass: Harvard University Press, 1987), 397.

[46] For a discussion of typology and its use in early apostolic tradition, see William W. Klein (et al), *Introduction*, 31-34. Literarily, Jesus' encounter with Satan essentially brackets the book of Matthew with the antagonism of the Jewish leaders closing Jesus' ministry, thereby defining a *cosmic conflict* (Boring, "Matthew," 162).

[47] The verb ανήχθη ("was led up") is an aorist passive, which always appears in the passive and indicates an action that *comes from the outside*. "Was led/taken up by the Spirit" (ηγετο εν τώ/'πνεύμτι) does occur in visionary accounts of intertestamental literature (*1 Enoch* 71:1, 5; *Ascen. Isa.* 6:9; cf. Rev. 1:10; Ezek. 3:14; see Schiavo, "The Temptation of Jesus," 144-46; also Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 165-66).

[48] Mark is more forceful, stating that: "Immediately (ευθύς) the Spirit *drove* him (εκβάλλει) into the wilderness" (1:12), with the notion of "casting" or "driving out" (cf. "sent him out," TNIV). Other thematic connections revolve around the "wilderness" and the "voice of God," which is central to Jesus' use of Deuteronomy as the "word of God" (Matt. 4:4).

[49] Israel's Exodus is the *sin qua non* of God's "leading/guiding acts" (Exod. 13:18, 21; 15:13, 22; Deut. 8:2; Neh. 9:12; Pss. 77:20; 78:14, 52; 106:9; 136:16; Hos. 11:2-4). The prophets also see the Spirit's presence in the Exodus (Isa. 63:10-11, 14; Hag. 2:5).

[50] "To be tested/tempted" (πειρασθηναι), aorist infinitive passive, stresses *purpose*. Blomberg's observation is helpful: "Matthew warns against two common errors—blaming God for temptation and crediting the devil with power to act independently of God" (*Matthew*, 83).

[51] James I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit: Finding Fullness in Our Walk with God*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 73.

[52] Gordon B. Gibson, "Satan," *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. David N. Freedman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1169.

[53] Frederick D. Bruner, *The Christbook* (Waco: Word, 1987), 100. Similarly: "My child, when you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for testing" (Sir. 2:1; cf. 4:17b; 6:7a;

44:20d). In this initial poem of 2:1-18, Sirach elaborates on the need to remain faithful the Lord's "words" and "law" as a testament to one's "humility" and state of "heart" (see 2:15-17).

[54] Dumbrell, *Search*, 163. Matthew's use of "holy city" (4:5) is a rare expression and contains eschatological overtones (Matt. 27:53; Rev. 21:1; Isa. 48:2; 52:1; Neh. 11:1, 18; cf. Dan. 9:24, 26; Rev. 11:2; 21:2, 10; CD 20:22 ["city of the sanctuary," 12:1]). The Qumran community saw itself fulfilling the call of Isa. 40:3 (1QS8:13-14; 9:19-20), retreating to the wilderness to await Israel's eschaton. In a similar vein, desert monasteries continue to this day (William H. Propp, "Wilderness," *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993], 799). For an explanation of "wilderness theology," see William R. Stegner, "Wilderness and Testing in the Scrolls and in Matthew 4:1-11," *Biblical Review* 16 (1967): 18-27.

[55] Cf. Exod. 15:22-26; 16; Lev. 10; Deut. 1:19-46; Jer. 7:24-26; Ezek. 20; Psalm 78; Nehemiah 9; Acts 7:38-43; 1 Cor. 10:5-12; Heb. 3-4. See the helpful discussion of David W. Baker, "Wilderness, Desert," *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003), 893-97; also Propp, "Wilderness," *Oxford Companion*, 798.

[56] Brueggemann, "Wilderness," *Reverberations*, 231. The wilderness motif is developed as the people of God struggle in a new "Canaan-wilderness," delivered by Christ from slavery to sin. This is the theological thrust of Psalm 95 as it is used in Hebrews 3 (see Peter Enns, "Exodus Route and the Wilderness Itinerary," *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, 280).

[57] Propp, "Wilderness," *Oxford Companion*, 798. Though less common, the wilderness can also be a place of spiritual renewal (cf. Gen. 16:7; Exod. 3:1-4:17; Luke 5:16; John 11:54). The scapegoat tradition surrounding *Azazel* (Leviticus 16) later represented the chief of wicked angels. Also called a "desert demon," this tradition may also lie behind the emphasis of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (see Armand Maurer, "Azazel," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam [New York: Oxford University Press, 2000], 1:70-71).

[58] Propp, "Wilderness," *Oxford Companion*, 798. Moses' insightful intercession with God (Exod. 32:11-14) showed that he understood that the Promised Land without the presence of God would miss the whole point—Israel's redemption was for relationship not mere possession.

[59] Keener, *Matthew*, 139.

[60] Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, "Living Like the Azazel-Goat in Romans 12:1B," *Tyndale Bulletin* 57 (2006): 260. While Kiuchi's argument centers on Rom. 12:1 as having the OT background of the Azazel-goat, the same imagery applies to Jesus' temptation as the messianic sin-bearer in the theology Matthew's account, stipulating that Jesus was "driven out" (1:12).

[61] Robert H. Mounce, *Matthew*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1991), 30.
[62] Carol Meyers, "Temple, Jerusalem," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6:358. The "Songs of Zion" in particular (Psalms 120-134) portrayed Jerusalem and its temple as the cosmic center of the universe; see P. E. Satterthwaite, "Zion in the Songs of Ascents," in *Zion: City of Our God*, ed. Richard S. Hess, Gordon J. Wenham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 105-128.
[63] For a helpful discussion of the temple and its apparatus, see John M. Monson, "The Temple of Solomon: Heart of Jerusalem," in *Zion*, 1-22.
[64] Richard J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 4 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard, 1972), 7.
[65] For theophanies, see 1 Kings 19; Rev. 21:10; for divine decrees, see Exod. 18:5; 24:13; Num. 10:33; and "Zion," Psa. 68:16[17]; Isa. 2:2; 1 Macc. 11:37.
[66] A theme also found in apocalyptic literature (*2 Bar.* 76:3; *1 Enoch* 24-25). Relative to the site of Jesus' baptism and temptation, Mt. Nebo is located in West Jordan, about 12 miles East of the mouth of the Jordan. Mountains also function prominently in Jesus' ministry as locations of praying, healing, and teaching (Matt. 5:1-7:27; 14:23; 15:29; Mark 3:13; 6:46).
[67] Others also see the connection to Moses (Gundry, *Matthew*, 55; cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:165-72; cf. Deut. 9:9, 11, 18, 25). Elijah also endured a forty-day fast en route to Mt. Horeb/Sinai (1 Kings 19:8).
[68] The forty days of the Lenten season, observed since the fourth century, stems from the forty days and nights of Jesus' fast within the context of his temptation (Lamar Williamson, "Matthew 4:1-11," *Interpretation* 38 [1984]: 51-55).
[69] Gundry, *Matthew*, 54. Even the account of Moses' fast emerges from the context that Jesus will quote to the devil (cf. Deut. 9:9-18; *ibid.*, 54-55). Additionally, only Matthew stipulates "fasting," followed later by additional instructions (6:16-18).
[70] Cf. Ezra 8:21-22, 31b; Dan. 9:3; 6:17-25. This is likely the rationale behind Jesus' comment that some demons are driven out "only by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). Further, Jesus' mention of fasting as incompatible with wedding festivities reflected his conviction "that already the messianic age with its marriage banquet had broken into history," though he was aware that the bridegroom "would be violently taken away from his disciples before the kingdom of God came in all its fullness" (Mark 2:19-20; Larry R. Helyer, *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period: A Guide for New Testament Studies* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002], 170).
[71] Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Fasting," *Eerdmans*, 456; cf. 1 Sam. 14:24; 2 Sam. 11:11-12; 1 Macc. 3:46; 2 Macc. 13:12.
[72] Greg K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 17 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 172-73; Keener, *Matthew*, 138.

[73] Anthony J. Saldarini, "Matthew," in *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*, ed. James D. G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1011.

[74] Switching from "devil" (1:b) to "tempter" (3a; *contra* Luke) emphasizes function. By switching terms, Matthew also establishes overt parallels to the Pharisees and Sadducees who "tempt" Jesus regarding the gospel (cf. 16:1; 19:3; 22:18, 35); especially with the combination of προσέρχομαι ("approach") with πειράζω ("test") used for both the devil (19: 3; cf. Mark 10:2) and the Pharisees and Sadducees (cf. 22:18, 23, 35). Also in disputation, Jesus routinely duels with the Jewish leaders by quoting Scripture.

[75] Rather than viewing the temptations as exclusively (1) *salvation-historical* [= recalling Israel], (2) *Christological* [= against contemporary expectations of messiahship], (3) or *parenetic* [= taking Jesus as a model for believers], Keener seems correct to see elements of all three functioning in Matthew's account (*Matthew*, 137).

[76] Keener, *Matthew*, 139.

[77] Gundry, *Matthew*, 55.

[78] Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 276.

[79] Keener, *Matthew*, 139; Bartholomew and Goheen, *The Drama*, 134.

[80] These descriptive phrases are adapted from Keener (*Matthew*, 139-41) along with Bartholomew and Goheen (*The Drama*, 133)

[81] Gathercole, *The Pre-existent Son*, 55.

[82] Keener notes a Jewish tradition expecting a new exodus from a new Moses with a new manna (*Background*, 54).

[83] E.g., the Zealots and the Jewish aristocracy (Matt. 26:55, 61; 27:11-12; John 18:36).

[84] Essentially a formula (cf. Matt. 2:5; CD 1:13; 5:1; 11:18, 20; 1QS 5:15; *Sanh.* 10:1; *Sukk.* 2:10; *Gen. Rab.* 1:4; *3 Enoch* 2:4).

[85] Namely: "People do not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Deut. 8:3, TNIV); "Do not put the Lord your God to the test" (Deut. 6:16, TNIV); "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only" (Deut. 6:13, TNIV).

[86] Gordon J. Wenham, *Exploring the Old Testament: A Guide to the Pentateuch*, Vol. 1 (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003), 132-32. See Daniel I. Block, "How Many is God? An Investigation into the Meaning of Deuteronomy 6:4-5," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47 (2004): 193-212.

[87] Later in Israel's history manna was symbolically used as "bread from heaven," representing God's care (Neh. 9:20; John 6:31; cf. Rev. 2:17). This 40-year provision was so momentous that a jar of manna was kept in remembrance (Exod. 16:33).

[88] The use of ὁ ανθροπος ("humankind" [=האדם, Deut. 8:3]) emphasized Jesus' identification with the plight of humanity yet in the context of dependant Sonship—He spoke as a man, juxtaposing "human being" to the devil's "Son of God" (cf. John 19:28).

[89] R. W. L. Moberly, *The Bible, Theology, and Faith*, 202; emphasis mine.

[90] Israel's national rebellion became memorialized through the term "Massah," derived from the Hebrew verb "to test, contend." These were occasions when people demanded "wonders" (cf. Num. 20:1-13, 24; 27:14; Deut. 9:22; 32:51; Pss. 95:8; 106:52).

[91] Cf. Exod. 23:20-33; 34:1-11; Psalm 81.

[92] Matthew's construction of Jesus' response (4:10) essentially reflects the LXX (Deut. 6:13), though with key changes: replacing "fear" (φοβέω) with "serve/worship" (προσκυνεω); further, the addition of "only" (μονω) to the text of Deut. 6:13 sharpens the issue as one of exclusive commitment to God (cf. 1 Sam. 7:3).

[93] Wenham believes Moses' smashing of the tablets (Exod. 32:19) cancelled the covenant just made (*Exploring*, 78).

[94] *Ibid.*, 77.

[95] Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1:1-21:9*. Vol. 6A, revised, Word Biblical Commentary, ed. John D. Watts (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 1:147.

[96] In Deuteronomy, "to swear in the name of YHWH" parallels "to fear him, serve him, adhere to him" (Deut. 6:13; 10:10, 20; cf. Isa. 48:1).

[97] See the articulate argument of William H. Propp, *Water in the Wilderness: A Biblical Motif and Its Mythological Background*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 40 (Georgia: Scholars Press, 1987), 37-38, 68-69, 109.

[98] While some scholars are not convinced of this connection others find this a viable argument based on theological continuities, socio-religious practice, and the literary contours of Matthew's pericope. With some basis in rabbinic interpretation (*m. Ber.* 9:5; *Sipre Dt.* #32), this view also has modern adherents (Gundry, *Matthew*, 56; Donald H. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Vol. 33A, Word Biblical Commentary [Dallas: Word, 1993], 66; Saldarini, "Matthew," 1011; Birger Gerhardsson, *The Testing of God's* Son [Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1966], 71). Liturgically, the *Shema* is the greatest passage in the Pentateuch, the fundamental Jewish creed of faith. The context mentions God's love for Israel 4x and Israel's love for God 12x. "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your life and with all your might" (Deut. 6:6; cf. 11:13-21; Num. 15:37-41). This notion of "love" is beyond emotion, reflecting the language of ancient Near Eastern treaties in which sworn loyalty is paramount (Robert Alter, *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary* [New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004], 912).

[99] The word "heart" (*lēb*) refers to the seat of one's emotions and intellect, practically "inner being." For further discussion, see Bruce K. Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology*, 224-27.

[100] The word "life" (*nepeš*) in this context refers to a person or "essential-self" (cf. Lev. 21:11). The translation of "soul" is misleading since it assumes a body-soul dichotomy foreign to OT thought (Alter, *Five*, 912).

[101] The word "might" (*mĕ'ōd*), usually an adverb meaning "exceedingly," is here a noun meaning "wealth" or "property" (so Qumran: CD 9:11; 12:10; see Gundry, *Matthew*, 56).

In the OT, demon worship and idolatry are closely related (cf. Deut. 32:17; Psa. 106:37-38; *1 Enoch* 99:7). Later Jesus would claim to have freed Satan's possessions, having bound him (cf. Matt. 12:29). "The kingdoms of the world" functions in counterpoint to God's gift of "the kingdom of heaven" (John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*. NIGTC, ed. I. Howard Marshall and Donald A. Hagner [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 167).

[102] Block, "How Many," 204. Another triadic expression used for *totality*: "hands," "foreheads," "doorframes" (Deut. 6:8-9); similar rhetorical use occurs with: "iniquity," "rebellion," and "sin" (Exod. 34:7).

[103] Other "summaries" of the Decalogue include: Lev. 19:3-4 (1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th commands); Deut. 10:20 (1st three commands); Psa. 81:8-10 (prologue with 1st and 2nd commands); Psa. 50:18-20 (7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th commands); cf. Ezek. 22:1-12; Hos. 4:2; Jer. 7:9.

[104] Patrick D. Miller, "The Place of the Decalogue in the Old Testament and Its Law," in *The Way of the LORD: Essays in Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 8. That Jesus internalizes the commandments in the following Sermon (Matt. 5:21-30) shows Matthew's intentional development of the 2nd Moses theology.

[105] Contra Richard T. Mead, who sees little contextual use surrounding Psalm 91 ("A Dissenting Opinion about Respect for Context in Old Testament Quotations," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts: Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, ed. Greg K. Beale [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994], 159). For a helpful discussion of how the psalms are used in the gospels, see Dale A. Brueggemann, "The Evangelists and the Psalms," in *Interpreting the Psalms: Issues and Approaches*, ed. David Firth and Philip S. Johnston (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005), 263-78.

[106] Gundry, *Matthew*, 57. Following Jewish disputatious practice, Jesus in turn quotes a more pertinent passage. Interpretively, he illustrates the danger of valuing wording over meaning (Keener, *Matthew*, 143).

[107] The theological significance of the devil's challenge: "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down" (4:6) reverberates at the cross in: "If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross" (27:40, 42). What the primary kingdom antagonist initiated echoes later in the mouths of the masses. Jesus' obedience to either one would have annulled his redemptive mission (Paul W. Meyer, "Matthew 27:38-44: A Sermon," in *The Word in This World: Essays in New Testament Exegesis and Theology*, The New Testament Library, ed. John T. Carroll [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004], 299).

[108] The imagery of "lifting up" (Psa. 91:12) functions as a metaphorical expression for aid in time of trouble (Pss. 35:15; 37:31; 38:17[16]), and works in thematic counterpoint to "stumbling." The angelic rescue mentioned in 91:12a, b is a concrete illustration of the prior guarding "in all your ways" (91:11b).

[109] F.-L. Hossfeld, E. Zenger, *Psalms 2*, Hermeneia. Tran. by L. M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 2:433.

[110] H.-J. Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, Continental Commentary, Tran. H. C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 1:225.

[111] Four exorcism Psalms are found in 11QapocrPs, and Psalm 91 *concludes* these three apocryphal psalms. The Qumran tabulation of David's psalms stipulates: ושיר לנגן על הפגועים ארבע, "and songs to intone over the stricken, four" (11QPs[a] 27:9-10; James A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumrân Cave 11 (11QPs[a])*; Discoveries in the Judean Desert of Jordan IV [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965], 91, 92-93, n. 10; see P. W. Skehan, "A Psalm Manuscript from Qumran (4QPs[b])," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 26 [1964]: 313-22).

[112] This "looming evil" becomes clearer still in light of phrases in vv. 5, 6: "the terror of the night" (5a), "the plague that stalks in darkness" (6a), and "the scourge that rages at noon" (6b; see Robert Alter, *The Book of Psalms: A Translation with Commentary* [New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007], 322).

[113] David. M. Stec, *The Targum of Psalms: Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes*, ed. Kevin Cathcart, Michael Maher, and Martin McNamara (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 175; emphasis noting Aramaic plus to MT (cf. Psa. 91:13 with Luke 10:19). The TgPss of Psalm 91 lists "demons" 3x (vv. 5, 6, 10). The only other reference to demons in the entire Psalter is Psa. 121:6 (MT: "The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night"; cf. TgPss: "When the sun has dominion by day, the morning demons shall not strike you, nor the night demons when the moon has dominion by night").

[114] Within the mid-first century, Psalm 91 is attested on amulets as an *apotropaic* text (= "magical papyri"), and, not surprisingly, affixed to house walls. Analogous to the religious use of Deut. 6:4-9, it is evident that protective amulets citing only medial (91:10-13) or incipit parts (91:1-2) have in view the entire psalm (Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms 2*, 433). Josephus confirms this use of Psalms, citing David's ability to charm Saul's evil spirits with music (*Ant.* 6 §166 [1 Sam. 16:13]; see also 8 §45, regarding Solomon's composed incantations).

[115] R. W. L. Moberly, *The Bible, Theology, and Faith*, 203.

[116] Goldingay, "Old Testament," 8.

[117] Lit. "the Lord your God" (κύριον τον θεόν σου, 4:7) reflects Moses' focus on the covenant language in his 2nd Deuteronomy address, employing "YHWH your God" 31x and "YHWH our God" 4x. Thus 35 out of 68 total occurrences of the phrase appear in Moses' 2nd speech from which Jesus quotes (Block, "How Many," 193).

[118] Saldarini, "Matthew," 1011.

[119] *Ibid.*, Block, "How Many," 193. Later, Paul brings out the Christological significance of the *Shema* in Rom. 3:29-34 and especially 1 Cor. 8:1-6; see discussion in Nicholas T. Wright, "Monotheism, Christology and Ethics: 1 Corinthians 8," in *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991], 129).

[120] However, the triumph of God's kingdom will mean the destruction of Satan's (see Evans, "Inaugurating the Kingdom," 55-63).

[121] Earl E. Ellis, "Biblical Interpretation in the New Testament Church," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Martin J. Mulder (Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1990), 694. The theology flaunted by Satan at the outset of Jesus' ministry: עמו אנכי בצרה ("I will be with him in trouble," Psa. 91:15a [= Matt. 4:6]) is, significantly, celebrated by Jesus for his disciples at the close of his ministry: הנה אתכם כל־הימים ("look, I am with you always," Matt. 28:20b; Delitzsch's Hebrew translation used for illustration).

[122] An eerie anticipation of Peter's rebuke ("Get behind me, Satan!" [Matt. 16:23]), and the scorn of the religious by standers also echoes Satan's theology ("Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" [Matt. 27:40bf; cf. Wisd. 2:18]). Evans states, "for Jesus and his following, the exorcisms offered dramatic proof of the defeat and retreat of Satan's kingdom in the face of the advancing rule of God" ("Inaugurating the Kingdom," 75); see also Dominic Rudman, "Authority and the Right of Disposal in Luke 4:6," *New Testament Studies* 50 (2004): 77-86.

[123] Keener, *Matthew*, 142.

[124] Angels had already protected Jesus (Matt. 2:1-23), and would again if summoned (Matt. 26:53).

[125] Dumbrell, *The Search*, 256.

[126] Ulrich W. Mauser, "The Temptation of Christ," *Oxford Companion*, 736.

[127] Craig Evans, "Inaugurating the Kingdom," 66; emphasis mine.

[128] Boring, "Matthew," 164.

[129] Grenz, *Theology for the Community*, 277; emphasis mine.

[130] Yet this individualistic view of integrity is always just around the corner (see, for example, Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I Here For* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002], especially, 252-72). A helpful corrective is Glen A. Scorgie, "Hermeneutics and the Meditative Use of Scripture: The Case for a Baptized Imagination," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (2001): 271-84.

[131] Bartholomew and Goheen, *The Drama*, 133.

[132] John Shea, *The Spiritual Wisdom of the Gospels for Christian Preachers and Teachers* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 104-105.

[133] This is also the argument of Paul S. Minear, *Christians and the New Creation: Genesis Motifs In the New Testament* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 120-121, 123; and Sydney H. T. Page, "Satan: God's Servant," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50 (2007), 458.

[134] Eight plural pronouns in the prayer (e.g., "our," "we") clearly define the individual *within community*.

[135] Matt. 6:9b-13, TNIV. The word for "temptation" (πιερασμός) can also refer to "testing" (6:13a). Keener translates the line, "Let us not sin when we are tempted" (*Background*, 62). Similarly, "And don't let us yield to temptation" (NLT^2). The request is both rhetorical and reflexive, asking God for protection so as not to "fall victim."

Salvation is *rescue*, whether from "evil" (neuter) or "the evil one" (masculine, v. 13b; so TNIV, HCSB, NRSV). That Satan is the likely referent in 6:13 is supported by the use of the masculine in 13:19 for the "evil one" who steals away the word of the kingdom from receptive hearts (5:37, 39; 13:38-39; cf. John 17:15; so Gundry, *Matthew*, 488).