

The Three Wilderness Temptations,

The Three Angels'
Messages...

and the Three
Demons' Messages

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(Or, The Three Angels'
Messages As You've
Probably Never Heard
Them Before)

Introduction

- In this presentation, we will examine, compare and contrast (at a high level):
 - ◆ The three wilderness temptations of Christ found in Matthew 4:1-11,
 - ◆ The three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-11, and
 - ◆ The three demons' messages of Revelation 16:13-14,16.

Topics of Examination

- That the three wilderness temptations of Christ, **the three angels' messages, and the three demons' messages are linked together, that is: they are correlated by content.**
- That Satan has set himself up as a being deserving of worship. He has built up a counterfeit trinity that is seen in the book of Revelation. This is especially noticeable and relevant at the end of time.

The First Temptation of Christ

- Matt. 4:1-4 (NASB): 1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.' "

The First Temptation of Christ

- Satan used tactics and methods to attempt to defeat Christ, which he had perfected over about a four thousand-year period of experience with mankind. These were the same tactics that he began to use in heaven at his fall, and with Eve and Adam in Eden.
- **Temptation 1**, Matthew 4:1-4: the temptation of appetite (and passion):
 - ◆ Satan's philosophy and desire: put yourself first, satisfy your *physical* needs. You do not need restraints.
 - ◆ Christ's stance: God *must* be first in all things! I place my will *under* His. I will not sin through self-sufficiency...

The Second Temptation of Christ

- Matt. 4:5-7 (NASB): 5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON {their} HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.' "

7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.' "

The Second Temptation of Christ

- **Temptation 2, Matthew 4:5-7: the temptation of presumption and manipulation of God:**
 - ◆ Satan's philosophy and desire: use your will over and against the Father's. If you are the Son of God, he *must* respect *your* will! Force Him to accept your decision... Base your security on a false premise.
 - ◆ Christ's stance: I will not test the Father through presumption, even if it is a 'religious' point. I will not manipulate His actions. I trust His will for me!
- Note: the symbols of this particular temptation, specifically the "holy city" and the "pinnacle of the temple" are extremely important. They show the 'religiosity' of the situation.

The Third Temptation of Christ

- Matt. 4:8-11 (NASB): 8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.' " 11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and {began} to minister to Him.

The Third Temptation of Christ

- **Temptation 3**, Matthew 4:8-11: the temptation of compromise and "the shortcut":

- ◆ Satan's philosophy and desire: this world is a glorious, wonderful kingdom -- and is mine! Compromise your strict integrity and obedience; my gift to you is worth it. You don't need to go to the cross! Sin on the *spiritual* level...
- ◆ Christ's stance: You are not God, I will not fall to idolatry. The Father alone is God. His will includes a blood atonement for sin – it is the only way for man to be redeemed!

Select, Pertinent Statements of Mrs. Ellen G. White, Concerning the Three Temptations

- “*Four thousand years* had Satan been at work against the government of God, and *he had obtained strength and experience from determined practice*... [Editor’s note: observe the following three points] **Appetite and passion**, the **love of the world** and **presumptuous sins**, *were the great branches of evil out of which every species of crime, violence, and corruption grew.*” *The Review and Herald*, Aug. 4 & 18, 1874, on the ‘First Temptation of Christ.’ (1SM 280)
- “Satan had, through his seductive power, led men through vain philosophy to question and finally to *disbelieve in divine revelation and the existence of God*... He flatters men with the pleasing fable that *there is no rebellious foe, no deadly enemy that they need to guard against, and that the existence of a personal devil is all a fiction.*” *The Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874, on ‘The Temptation of Christ.’ (1SM 270)
- “His anguish was not so much from enduring the pangs of hunger as from His sense of the fearful result of the indulgence of appetite and passion upon the race. He knew that appetite would be man's idol, and would lead him to forget God, and would stand directly in the way of his salvation.” *The Review and Herald*, August 18 and September 1, 1874, on the ‘Second Temptation of Christ.’ (1SM 284)

The Three Demons' Messages Introduced

- Revelation 16:13-14, 16 (NASB): 13 And I saw {coming} **out of the *mouth* of the *dragon* and out of the *mouth* of the *beast* and out of the *mouth* of the *false prophet***, three unclean *spirits* like frogs; 14 for they are *spirits of demons*, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, **to gather them together** for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty... 16 And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

Initial Details Concerning **the Three Demons' Messages:**

- These messages are *relentlessly* preached by the dragon, beast and false prophet. This “unholy trinity” is a parody of the true Godhead: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, respectively.
- These symbols are introduced in Rev. 12 and 13, verses 12:3ff, 13:1ff and 13:11-14ff, in the same order as Rev.
- ~~16:19~~ In contrast, the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18-20 (NASB) states that the gospel is to be given to “make disciples of all nations... in the **name of the Father** and of **the Son** and of **the Holy Spirit**, *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you...*”

The Dragon Counter-parallels the Father

- The Father gives His authority to the Son (Matt. 28:18, Jn. 5:26-27, Dan. 7:13-14).
 - ◆ The dragon gives his authority to the beast (Rev. 13:2b, 4a, 5b).
- To worship the Son is to worship the Father (Jn. 10:30, 14:9-11).
 - ◆ To worship the beast is to worship the dragon (Rev. 13:4a).
- Note: the dragon is the opposite end of the spectrum from the false prophet. He wants no restraint (or law), while the false prophet coerces obedience to a false law.

The Beast (the Antichrist of Rev. 13-14) Counter-parallels the Son - 1

- The Son is the image of the Father (Heb. 1:1-3, Jn. 14:9).
 - ◆ The beast is the image of the dragon: seven heads, ten horns, crowns (compare Rev. 12:3 and 17:3 with 13:1).
- The Son ministered with authority for three and ½ years, and then received what appeared to be a mortal wound at the crucifixion.
 - ◆ The beast acted with authority for forty-two months (three and ½ years), and then received what appeared to be a mortal wound by “the sword” (Rev. 13:5,3a,14b).

The Beast (the Antichrist of Rev. 13-14) Counter-parallels the Son - 2

- The Son's "mortal" wound was healed at the resurrection, and He then ascended to His Father in heaven (Jn. 20:17, Acts 1:9-11).
 - ◆ The beast's "mortal" wound is healed, and he then goes "to perdition." (Rev. 13:3a, 12b, 14b, 17:8, 11).
- The Son lifts up and glorifies the Father (Jn. 17:1, et al).
 - ◆ The beast is full of "arrogant words and blasphemies" against God. (Rev. 13:5, 17:3, cf Dan. 7:8, 20).
- The Son keeps the law perfectly (Jn. 15:10).
 - ◆ The beast makes laws to force idolatrous worship. (Rev. 13:12b, 14ff).

The False Prophet Counter- parallels the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit *gently guides* all to Christ (Jn. 15:26).
 - ◆ The false prophet *coerces* all into conformity to the beast, through idolatry (Rev. 13:12b,14ff, cf 13:7-8).
- The Holy Spirit freely seals the servants of Christ with the “seal of God” (the name of Christ and the Father, representing their *characters*) in their foreheads (Rev. 7:2-3, 14:1). This is a sign of *eternal life to the sealed*.
 - ◆ The false prophet *coerces* all to receive the “mark of the beast” in their foreheads or right hands (Rev. 13:15-17). This is a sign of eternal rebellion and, finally, of destruction to the Satanically-sealed.

Summary Statement Concerning the Three Demons' Messages:

- The three demons' messages are antithetical to the three angels' messages, in that *they prepare the world to war against Christ at His coming* (cf Rev. 17:12-14). That is, they *oppose the end-time gospel* given by the three angels of Rev. 14:6-11, since **the three angels' messages separate the world into two groups, preparatory for Christ's coming** (cf Rev. 14:1-5, 14ff). The preaching of each message yields very different results.

The Three Angels' Messages: the Gospel in an End-time Setting

- The three angels' messages are God's direct antidote, to the fatal toxicity of the three demons' messages! God gives them to the world, at just the right time, to counteract Satan's unholy trinity and their messages.
- Recall that the three demons' messages are directly oppositional to the three angels' messages. *Therefore we can learn details of the preaching of the dragon, beast and false prophet by examining what God is countering with His three end-time messages!*

The First Angel's Message

- Rev 14:6-7 (NASB): 6 And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; 7 and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."

The First Angel's Message, and the First Demon's:

- Rev. 14:6-7, God is to be feared, revered, glorified and worshipped. Put God first in all things!
- He is judge, and the hour of judgment has arrived. Strive for holiness in these solemn times, during the true Day of Atonement. Place your will *under* His...
- He is our Creator, as well as all things terrestrial and celestial.
- He is our law giver. Keep His commandments. (The 4th Commandment is quoted in part...)
- The first demon's (Satan, the dragon's) message contrasted:
 - ◆ Do not fear God (or anything else but me: No Fear TM!) There is no God, so do not glorify or worship Him. In fact, believe whatever you like: there is no God, God is dead, God left us here to die, God is everywhere and in every thing! You yourselves are gods! Just don't believe in, trust and live for the One True God!!! Put yourselves first! Trust in your self-sufficiency.
 - ◆ There is no law, and therefore no judgment, so live without restraint! (The law is irrelevant, *at best*...)
 - ◆ There is no Creator, we are not created beings!

The Second Angel's Message

- Rev 14:8 (NASB): 8 And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."

The Second Angel's Message:

- Rev. 14:8, Babylon the great is fallen! She is a kingdom of presumption (and sensuality): Listen to Rev. 18:7 (NASB): “*she says in her heart, ‘I sit {as} a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning.’ For this reason* in one day her plagues will come... for *the Lord God who judges her* is strong.” (Note: Ellen G. White defines presumption as the counterfeit of faith.)
- She made all nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality. She is a murdering, drunken harlot (cf Rev. 17:4-6).
- Babylon is a great, *religious* “city,” because God has found her responsible for “the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth” (Rev. 18:24, NASB). An unknowing criminal would not be found *responsible* by God for all of these atrocities. This is reminiscent of certain Jews at the time of Christ (Matt. 23:35).
- The beast is the *visible* figurehead, or ‘king’ of “Babylon,” since it has a throne (Rev. 16:10). A last plague is poured out on this throne.
- Babylon is itself made up of the dragon, beast and false prophet, since when God remembers “Babylon the great” in judgment, it splits into its three parts, or components (cf Rev. 16:19).

The Second Demon's Message:

■ The second demon's (the beast's) message contrasted:

- ◆ Babylon will never fall (Rev. 18:7)! She is impregnable; we are secure! (but, recall Dan. 5...) She will never be judged!
- ◆ Rev. 18: Drink her wine, buy her goods, become rich by her trade! Worship her idols. Live for today! "He that dies with the most toys wins!"
- ◆ Rewrite the holy Law! Change it to suit your will! God will have to honor this, for we are many! *Manipulate God!*
- ◆ Change the very plan of salvation!!! (Closer to home than you may think...)

The Third Angel's Message:

- Rev 14:9-11 (NASB): 9 Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

The Third Angel's Message, and the Third Demon's:

- Rev. 14:9-11, Worshipping the beast and his image (and the Devil), compromising with and receiving his mark on your forehead or right hand, will bring about the judgment of all judgments upon your person. This judgment is full, unmitigated, holy wrath! You will have no rest, day or night... This is the only warning in Scripture of *God's pure indignation!* Receive the seal of God—it is free, and you will be free! There is no shortcut! This is a call to endurance and standing for principle – no “easy believe-ism” here... ***This is a direct challenge to the false prophet, by God Himself.***
- The third demon's (the false prophet's) message contrasted:
 - ◆ Receive the mark of the beast! Worship him and be successful! It is the only way for you to buy or sell, and this world is wonderful—why miss out on all the fun?
 - ◆ Compromise your integrity and strict obedience! I will give you the glory of this world—why wait for the next?
 - ◆ Take the shortcut! It leads straight to nirvana!

What This Means - 1

- The Three Angels' Messages are God's supreme, direct, cosmic, complete and final rebuttal to Satan's proven tactics that he has now been perfecting for approximately 6,000 years. He has used the same – but carefully improved – ways and means against God's people since the beginning of his rebellion. These methods are seen in Scripture at Satan's fall in (and from) heaven, in the fall of Eve and Adam, at the temptations of Christ, throughout the history of God's people, and *fully* at the end of time. Yet, at the right time, God Himself will give His people insight and spiritual motivation to give these messages in Latter Rain power. This prepares the entire world for the coming of our Lord and King: Jesus Christ.

What This Means - 2

- Satan is consistently teaching the following:
 - ◆ Deny God and live without restraints; sin on the physical level (the first messages),
 - ◆ Manipulate God and live through presumption; sin boldly (the second messages),
 - ◆ Compromise with the Devil and worship *him* through compromise with the world; sin on the spiritual level (the third messages).
 - ◆ Fall consistently to sins of appetite and passion, presumptuous sins, and to the love of the world, the three “great branches of evil.”

Next Steps

- God has given us all the tools that we need to stand, now and in the future. I entreat you to recommit yourself to God and His Christ, with me, today. Dedicate yourself to spending time – real, quality, focused time with Him *often*. Bend all your spiritual energies to understanding His word. Prepare and be ready, should He come today!