



# SUNDAY SCHOOL MARCH 9, 2025

Prayer:

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## OLD TESTAMENT

### Deuteronomy 8:11-18

#### *MOSES WARNS THE ISRAELITES*

“Take care that you do not forget the Lord your God by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes that I am commanding you today.

“When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them and when your herds and flocks have multiplied and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions.

“He made water flow for you from flint rock. He fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you and in the end to do you good.

“Do not say to yourself, ‘My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.’ But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.”

#### *OVERVIEW*

Deuteronomy 8:11-18 serves as a cautionary passage where Moses warns the Israelites against forgetting the Lord amid forthcoming prosperity. He emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's commandments, reminding them of their deliverance from Egypt and sustenance in the wilderness. **Moses cautions that attributing their wealth to their own efforts, rather than recognizing it as a blessing from God, could lead to their downfall.**

#### *BIBLICAL CONTEXT*

Situated within the Book of Deuteronomy, this passage is part of Moses' final address to the Israelites before they enter the Promised Land. Deuteronomy reiterates the laws given earlier and emphasizes covenant faithfulness. In chapter 8, Moses reflects on the Israelites' 40-year journey, highlighting God's provision and the necessity of humility and obedience as they transition to a life of abundance.

#### *HISTORICAL / NON-BIBLICAL / POLITICAL CONTEXT*

Deuteronomy is traditionally dated to the late Bronze Age, around the 13th century BCE, as the Israelites prepare to enter Canaan after wandering in the desert. **This period marks a significant transition from a nomadic lifestyle to settling in a land with established cultures and practices.**

The warnings against forgetting God amid prosperity reflect concerns about adopting the idolatrous practices of neighboring nations and the potential erosion of their distinct identity and covenant relationship with God.

#### *HISTORICAL TIMELINE / BIBLICAL TIMEFRAME*

- **Circa 1446 BCE:** The Exodus from Egypt.
- **Circa 1406 BCE:** The Israelites' arrival at the borders of Canaan after 40 years in the wilderness. [blueletterbible.org+22belikechrist.com+2enduringword.com+2](http://blueletterbible.org+22belikechrist.com+2enduringword.com+2)



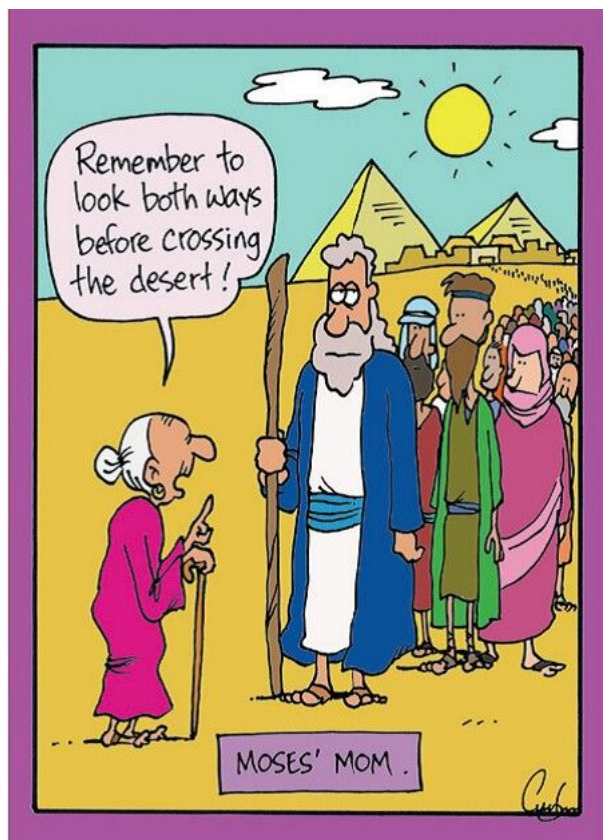
- **Composition of Deuteronomy:** While traditionally attributed to Moses around 1406 BCE, some scholars suggest it was compiled during the 7th century BCE, possibly during King Josiah's reforms, reflecting an adaptation of earlier traditions to new contexts.

### *SCHOLARLY METAPHORICAL INTERPRETATION & MODERN-DAY CONTEXT*

Scholars often view this passage as a timeless warning about the human tendency to become self-reliant and forget one's foundational values during times of success. Metaphorically, it addresses the "theology of the underdog," where initial humility and dependence on divine provision can be overshadowed by pride and self-sufficiency in prosperity. In modern contexts, this can be likened to individuals or societies that, after achieving success, may neglect ethical principles, community responsibilities, or spiritual foundations, attributing their achievements solely to personal effort and overlooking the broader support systems and opportunities that facilitated their success.

### *SUMMARY*

Deuteronomy 8:11-18 is a poignant reminder of the dangers of complacency and pride that can accompany material success. Moses urges the Israelites to remember their dependence on God's guidance and provision, warning that forgetting this relationship and attributing success solely to personal effort can lead to moral and spiritual decline. This passage underscores the importance of humility, gratitude, and continual acknowledgment of the foundational sources of one's blessings, a lesson that resonates across both ancient and contemporary settings.





## NEW TESTAMENT (GOSPEL)

### Luke 4:1-13

#### *THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS*

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tested by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished.

The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread."

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Then the devil led him to Jerusalem and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

#### *OVERVIEW*

Luke 4:1-13 narrates the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, a pivotal event that showcases His obedience and readiness for His public ministry.

After His baptism, Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, is led into the wilderness, where He fasts for forty days. During this period, the devil presents Him with three temptations: turning stones into bread to satisfy His hunger, gaining authority over all kingdoms in exchange for worshiping the devil, and testing God's protection by leaping from the temple's pinnacle. In each instance, Jesus counters with Scripture, rejecting the temptations and affirming His commitment to God's will.

*See Addendum on Scriptures Jesus Referenced*

#### *BIBLICAL CONTEXT*

This passage follows Jesus' baptism (Luke 3:21-22), where He is declared God's beloved Son. The wilderness temptation serves as a preparation for His ministry, echoing Israel's forty years in the desert but highlighting Jesus' faithfulness in contrast to Israel's failures. Each temptation targets aspects of Jesus' mission: reliance on God for sustenance, allegiance to God alone, and trust without testing.

#### *HISTORICAL / NON-BIBLICAL / POLITICAL CONTEXT*

The setting is the Judean wilderness, a desolate area symbolizing testing and reliance on God. At this time, Judea was under Roman occupation, and messianic expectations were high. Many Jews anticipated a political Messiah who would liberate them from Roman rule. Jesus' rejection of



temporal power and spectacle underscores a spiritual mission distinct from contemporary political aspirations.

#### *HISTORICAL TIMELINE / BIBLICAL TIMEFRAME*

This event occurs around 26-30 AD, at the onset of Jesus' public ministry, following His baptism and preceding His teachings and miracles in Galilee.

#### *SCHOLARLY METAPHORICAL INTERPRETATION & MODERN-DAY CONTEXT*

Scholars often view this narrative as a metaphor for the spiritual tests individuals face. The temptations represent common human struggles: physical needs, power, and the desire for proof of God's care. Jesus' responses model reliance on Scripture and steadfast faith. In modern times, believers can draw parallels, recognizing the importance of spiritual discipline, resisting materialistic and power-driven urges, and trusting in God's presence without demanding signs.

#### *SUMMARY*

Luke 4:1-13 depicts Jesus' triumph over temptation, emphasizing His obedience and the primacy of spiritual devotion over earthly desires. This passage invites readers to reflect on their own challenges and the ways in which faith and Scripture can guide them through trials.



## ADDENDUM

### Scriptures Jesus References

In Luke 4:1-13, during His temptation in the wilderness, Jesus responds to Satan by quoting specific passages from the Old Testament. Here's a breakdown of each temptation and the corresponding scripture Jesus cites:

#### 1. First Temptation: Turning Stone into Bread

- a. **Temptation:** Satan challenges Jesus to prove His divinity by turning a stone into bread to satisfy His hunger.
- b. **Jesus' Response:** "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"
- c. **Referenced Scripture:** Deuteronomy 8:3, which emphasizes that life is sustained not just by physical bread but by every word from God.
  - i. *He humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.*

#### 2. Second Temptation: Worshiping Satan for Earthly Authority

- a. **Temptation:** Satan offers Jesus authority over all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for worship.
- b. **Jesus' Response:** "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'"
- c. **Referenced Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:13, which commands exclusive worship and service to God.
  - i. *The Lord your God you shall fear, him you shall serve, and by his name alone you shall swear.*

#### 3. Third Temptation: Testing God's Protection

- a. **Temptation:** Satan urges Jesus to throw Himself from the pinnacle of the temple, citing Psalm 91:11-12 to suggest angels will protect Him.
- b. **Jesus' Response:** "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"
- c. **Referenced Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:16, which warns against testing God.
  - i. *Do not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested him at **Massah**.*

In each instance, Jesus counters Satan's provocations by quoting Deuteronomy, underscoring the importance of obedience, reverence, and trust in God without resorting to tests or seeking undue proof of His power.

### What is Massah?

Massah, meaning "testing" in Hebrew, is a location mentioned in the Hebrew Bible where the Israelites tested God's presence and provision during their wilderness journey. This event is primarily detailed in Exodus 17:1-7.

#### Biblical Account

After departing from the Wilderness of Sin, the Israelites encamped at Rephidim, where they found no water to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, demanding water and questioning why he led them out of Egypt only to die of thirst. Moses, fearing for his life due to the people's



anger, cried out to the Lord. God instructed Moses to take his staff and strike the rock at Horeb, promising that water would flow from it for the people to drink. Moses did so, and water gushed out. He named the place Massah (meaning "testing") and Meribah (meaning "quarreling") because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord by saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

### **Significance in Scripture**

The incident at Massah is frequently referenced in later biblical texts as a cautionary example of testing God's patience and doubting His presence:

- **Deuteronomy 6:16:** "Do not put the Lord your God to the test as you did at Massah."
- **Psalms 95:8-9:** "Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness, where your ancestors tested me; they tried me, though they had seen what I did."

### **Location and Historical Context**

The precise **location of Massah is uncertain**. Biblical accounts place it in the vicinity of Rephidim, near Horeb (another name for Mount Sinai). However, exact geographical identification remains a topic of scholarly discussion.

### **Theological Implications**

**The episode at Massah underscores themes of faith, obedience, and the dangers of doubt.** It serves as a reminder of the Israelites' struggle to trust in God's provision and presence, even after witnessing numerous miracles. This narrative has been used throughout biblical literature to admonish believers against testing God and to encourage steadfast faith.

In summary, Massah represents a critical moment in the Israelites' journey, highlighting human tendencies toward doubt and the importance of trusting in divine guidance.