

Was The Temptation of Christ Internal, External, or Both?

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In considering the question whether the Lord Yahoshua Messiah's temptation was internal or external or actually a combination of both, we have to consider the background of events leading up to His temptation. We are going to try to bring together the historical setting as best we can from the gospel records.

Here we have to look at what the record says about John the Baptist and what he was doing up to the point of Yahoshua's baptism. We see John actively preaching about his role in this divinely appointed process. Consider the following passages of Scripture (common color denotes common ideas):

Matthew 3

1 In those days came John the Baptist, **preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,**

2 And saying, **Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

3 **For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord [Yahweh], make his paths straight.**

4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

5 **Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,**

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when **he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism,** he said unto them, **O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?**

8 **Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:**

9 **And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say**

unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Mark 1:1-11:

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord [Yahweh], make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Luke 3:2-23

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord [Yahweh], make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

John 1:19-34:

19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord [Yahweh], as said the prophet Esaias.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

In these passages let us consider the following points:

1. The Word of Yahweh came unto John and he was found preaching it in the

wilderness of Judea.

2. The specific message that John preached was the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
3. We are told that "ALL the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and ALL the region round about Jordon" were baptized in the river Jordan.
4. Amongst "the multitude" that came out to be baptized it specifically mentions "the Pharisees and Sadducees." Thus the religious leaders are found there.
5. John though unaware who the Messiah was, preached about his coming and what his role would be.
6. The Jews, obviously the religious leaders, sent priests and Levites to try and find out who John the Baptist was. They specially were trying to find out if he was the Messiah. It must be remembered both John's and Jesus' births had many happenings that would be remembered by all. Both Matthew 2 and Luke 2 would relate many things surrounding this time period. Hence, all of these occurrences would be filling the minds of all when John bursts upon the scene with his message. The birth of this priest, to his father a priest, would cause a great stir among the people. It was all of this that was behind their questioning of John which **was required in Deut. 18**.
7. Then all are suddenly presented with the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth who is acknowledged as more righteous than himself by John the Baptist, who finally agrees to baptize on the principle that **this was a requirement of Yahweh**. It thus had to be because Yahweh required it and thus to be declared righteous could only be accomplished by doing it. Yahweh agrees with what His Son declared and demonstrated this by His baptizing of His Son with the Spirit in a shape of a dove and His declaration that, "Thou are my beloved son; in thee I am well pleased."
8. It is all of the events mentioned above that would lead the Jews, or the priests and Levites, or the Pharisees and Sadducees, to speak of the questioning of John and to pursue the one he prophesied of and the Spirit and voice from heaven testified of.

It may be asked, what is compelling the religious leaders to pursue John the Baptist and finally the Lord Jesus Christ in order to establish who they are. The answer is that the Law of Moses is forcing them to take this action. What they were doing and what they would have to do is set out in Deut. 18:9-22:

9 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an

enchanter, or a witch,

11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13 Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.

14 For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.

15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

20 But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?

22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

The first thing that has to be said is that Yahweh is giving certain commandments which therefore must be followed. What are these commandments?

1. The various aspects of pagan worship and thus its prophetic utterances must not be followed or obeyed because they are an abomination unto Yahweh and must be

driven out of the land.

2. They are then commanded to be perfect like Yahweh their Elohim.
3. They are then told that Yahweh would raise up a prophet like unto Moses from among their brethren and they are commanded to listen to him.
4. As Moses was a mediator between the men of Israel and Yahweh, so was He. Yahweh would put His words into his mouth and would speak unto Israel all that He commanded him. In other words, the prophet like unto Moses would be inspired by Yahweh and all His words would be those of Yahweh.
5. As the words that he would speak would be those of Yahweh, they would be required to keep them.
6. Yahweh commands that all false prophets would be put to death.
7. The test whether one who claimed to be a prophet was true or not is now given. If what he says in the name of Yahweh comes to pass, then he is a prophet. If what he says does not come to pass, then he is presumptuous and they are commanded not to be afraid of him. Of course, in regards to presumptuousness, it follows from verse 20, they must be put to death.

Thus, we see that all false spirits or prophets must not be followed, but must be put to death and the true spirit, or the "prophet like unto Moses," absolutely must be followed. This was a commandment of Yahweh that was a life and death issue. If Jesus of Nazareth was the "prophet like unto Moses," he must be followed and obeyed. If he was a false prophet, he must be put to death. The test required them to find this out by listening to his words and seeing if they came to pass. Of course, the religious leaders of the Jews would try to force the answer out of him by asking him to do certain miraculous events that would show them who He was. Furthermore, knowing that He would have Yahweh's power behind Him, they would try to get him to compromise his position by joining forces with them. In this fashion, they would keep their place and nation and would then freely support His drive to conquer the world, which they knew the Messiah would do. But having been alerted of Jesus of Nazareth's existence by those who were at His baptism they sent out their representatives to find him. This search would be divinely controlled until Yahweh was ready for His Son to be tested. Thus, they show up exactly forty days later and after he was allowed to go through the temptations he would endure in that time period. Before we continue, let us list the following passages:

Matt. 4:1-11: Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written,

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Mark 1:12-13: And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

Luke 4:1-15: And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

THIS ARTICLE IS IN PROGRESS AND WILL BE ADDED TO AS COMPLETED, Lord willing

Sadly, bro. Julio fell asleep in Christ before completing his thoughts on this topic
