In *Matthew 4:5–7 (ESV)*, we read:

> “Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 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,
> lest you strike your foot against a stone.”’
> Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written, “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”’”

1. What Is the Holy City Referred To?

The “holy city” mentioned here is Jerusalem—not the Heavenly Jerusalem described in Revelation, but the earthly Jerusalem located in Israel. Though it is called “holy” due to its covenantal and prophetic significance in the history of God’s people (e.g., *Psalm 48:1-2*), it is still part of the current fallen world. Therefore, Satan is not barred from accessing it.

Theological Note:
The term “holy” (Greek: *hagios*) in this context refers to the city’s religious identity, not its moral or spiritual perfection. Earthly

Jerusalem has been both the site of divine worship and of rebellion (*Isaiah 1:21*). Thus, Satan's presence there is not contradictory to scripture.

2. Why Would Satan Bring Jesus to the Temple?

Satan led Jesus to the pinnacle of the Temple, likely the southeastern corner overlooking the Kidron Valley—a dizzying height—hoping to tempt Jesus to test God's protection by performing a dramatic leap.

Satan even quotes scripture, *Psalm 91:11–12 (ESV)*:

> "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.
> On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."

But he misuses the verse, removing it from its context. Psalm 91 is a psalm of trust, not a license for testing God.

Jesus answers with Scripture properly interpreted:

Deuteronomy 6:16 (ESV):

> “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”

Theological Insight:
Satan often tempts not by denying God’s Word but by distorting it—a tactic seen as early as Genesis 3:1–5. Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit (*Luke 4:1*), counters temptation not by personal strength but by submitting to the truth of God’s Word—an example for all believers.

3. Lessons for Believers Today

Satan’s strategy here teaches us something important:
He doesn’t always tempt us in dark, obvious places—but often in holy ones.

In fact, he brought Jesus to the Temple, not a brothel or a pagan temple. Today, many believers fall not in the streets but in the pews—through pride, division, lust, and deception that arise within the church.

1 Peter 5:8 (ESV) warns:

> “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

That’s why we sometimes hear of pastors, ministers, or worship leaders falling into sin—often with other church members, not strangers. Satan knows that temptation is most effective when it comes in disguised holiness.

This reflects Paul’s warning in *2 Corinthians 11:14–15 (ESV)*:

> “Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.”

4. What About the New Jerusalem?

Some may wonder if Satan could ever access the Heavenly

Jerusalem. The answer is a firm no.

Revelation 21:2–3, 23–27 (ESV) describes the New Jerusalem as a holy city that will descend from heaven after the final judgment:

> “Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” *(v. 27)*

This city is holy in both name and nature—no sin, no darkness, no devil will ever enter. It represents the eternal dwelling of God with His redeemed people.

Conclusion: Stay Watchful in Holy Places

Jesus didn’t fall into Satan’s trap because He stood firm on the Word of God. For us, the danger is real—temptation doesn’t always look evil, and the church is not exempt from spiritual attacks.

We must be especially discerning within sacred spaces, just as

Jesus was in the Temple.

> *“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”*
> — James 4:7 (ESV)

May we remain rooted in scripture, filled with the Holy Spirit, and aware that Satan’s strategy often begins where we feel safest.

May the Lord help us to stand firm. Shalom.

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