

- There have been numerous heavyweight athletic match-ups in recent history. The Thrilla in Manila: Frazier VS Ali. The Rumble in the Jungle: Ali VS Foreman. Brady VS Manning. Nadal VS Federer. Yankees VS Redsox. Lakers VS Celtics. And I'm sure there are many more that could be included in that list that are quite memorable. What we remember about those contests was the sheer magnitude of those participating. They were the best of the best. They were the most talented, most well coached, and most fun teams to watch. All eyes of the sporting world stopped to watch when these types of match-ups were on the schedule. They certainly grab our attention and we want to see the results of the battle between these giants of their respective sports.
- On a completely different level, but still involving two ultra heavyweights, we have recorded for us in the Bible an epic battle. In **Matthew 4:1-11**, we see an intense spiritual battle taking place between Satan himself, and our Savior Jesus Christ. The account of this encounter is tremendous and gives us great insight to a literal battle between Good and Evil. I think we also learn some very important lessons concerning our spiritual war that we are fighting in this life.

4 lessons we learn from this heavyweight battle of Good VS Evil.

I. Satan will attack us when we are at our weakest.

- A. Jesus had been lead into the wilderness by the Spirit for the purpose of being tempted by Satan. **(v.1)**
 1. After 40 days and nights of fasting, Satan finally appeared and tempted Jesus with His present weakness, hunger. **(v.3)**
 2. He could've tempted Jesus with anything, but instead he chose to tempt Jesus with that which was His weakness at the time.
 3. He prodded and tried to provoke Jesus to use His miraculous power to turn breads into stone. Almost a, "you need to prove yourself as the son of God, and you can do that by turning the stones into bread."
 4. For Jesus this was tempting because He could almost kill two birds with one stone. He could show His power and fill His hungry belly.
 5. Instead, he resists the temptation and stated that He could live off of more than just bread.
- B. What we learn from this is the fact that Satan will attempt to try to find our weaknesses in order to tempt us.
 1. Satan is walking around as a lion. He is constantly watching for that weak spot where he believes he can have success against God's people. **(I Peter 5:8)**
 2. A man might be having marriage trouble at home. Satan could and will try to exploit that by tempting the man with attention from another woman.
 3. A recovering drug addict or alcoholic is trying to stay clean. Satan would love for nothing more than to have that person be put into a situation where drugs or alcohol could be made easily available to that person.
 4. We must be constantly aware of the situations that could make us stumble, and remember that Satan is looking for those situations where we will be weaker and susceptible to temptation and sin.
 5. Constant prayer, bible study, and communication with other Christians is a must if we are to avoid those weak moments and always be on guard against Satan's attacks.

II. Satan will tempt us in many ways.

- A. Satan didn't come at Jesus in the same way every single time. Instead, he chose to attack Jesus from different angles.
 1. We have noted the first temptation where Satan challenges Jesus with His power and physical weakness.
 2. When that doesn't work, he then come as Jesus from a pride standpoint. He challenges Jesus's power and authority by telling Him to prove that He is all powerful by falling off this cliff and allow the angels to catch Him. **(vv.5,6)**
 3. He also tries to tempt Jesus with the riches and kingdoms of the world if He would just fall down and worship him. **(vv.8,9)**
 4. Some have pointed out some similarities between the temptations of Jesus and the warnings of John in **I John 2:15-17**.
 5. I have no doubt that Jesus had the power to call the angels to save Him at any point. Jesus Himself said that He could command 12 legions of angels to come and fight for Him during the time of His betrayal and arrest. **(Matt. 26:53)**
 6. Jesus also resisted cashing in on physical riches in exchange for glorifying Satan. Even with all of these attacks from different angles, Jesus stood strong and resisted.
- B. We need to remember that Satan is going to do everything within His power to tempt us and cause us to stumble, even if that means trying a lot of different things.
 1. Temptation can take many different forms in this life.
 2. We noted **I John 2:15-17** from earlier with the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life or sensualism, materialism, and egotism.

3. The story of Job is also a perfect example of Satan trying to bring a godly individual down with many different approaches. Job lost everything and then suffered greatly within his own body while also dealing with a bitter wife and foolish friends. **(Job)**
4. Satan will pull no punches and he will not fail to exhaust any and every avenue that he can in order to cause us to stumble and fall before God.

III. Opponents will attempt to use God's Word against us.

- A. In Satan's 2nd temptation, he tried to use God's inspired word as a temptation against Jesus.
 1. He quotes from **Psalm 91:11,12** and abuses it to try to cause Jesus to abuse His power as deity.
 2. Jesus doesn't fall for the bait and rebuts with a proper use of Scripture.
- B. There are many people who will try to use God's Word as a means of attack against God's people.
 1. Atheist will constantly use God's Word as a weapon against Christians. They will use it to show that our God is a hateful being, or that Christianity is phobic in some way.
 2. They will also try to use the Bible itself to show that it is not inspired by alleged contradictions and such.
 3. False teachers will also use Scripture to promote their false and twisted teachings. **(II Peter 3:16)**

IV. We need to fight back with God's Word.

- A. Jesus constantly responds to the temptations of Satan with Scripture.
 1. **Duet. 8:3** is used for the first temptation.
 2. **Duet. 6:16** is Jesus's response to the 2nd temptation.
 3. **Duet. 6:13** is Jesus's final rebuttal to Satan's temptations.
- B. We will only win our individual battles by using God and His Word.
 1. The spiritual battle of this life will be won if we arm ourself with God's weapons. **(Eph. 6:10-17)**
 - a) We need to use God's Truth. **(v.14)**
 - b) We need to put on righteousness. **(v.14)**
 - c) We need to hold onto the Gospel of Peace. **(v.15)**
 - d) We need to have and use a strong faith. **(v.16)**
 - e) We need to remember our salvation. **(v.17)**
 - f) All of these things are found in God's Word. **(v.17)**
 2. Our proper response to Satan and His attacks is God's Word. May we always be ready to use its mighty power when we are attacked.

Of all of the heavyweight battles in this world, none of them can match up to the battle that our Lord fought against Satan in that desert land. May we take the strategy of our Savior to heart and gain the victory in our daily battles. Our enemy is strong and he is wise, but our God is mightiest of all and the victory will be had through Him. May we always look to our Lord for strength and stand strong against the evil one.