

# Luke 4:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

## Analysis

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**And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.** Jesus counters Scripture with Scripture, quoting Deuteronomy 6:16 which recalls Israel's failure at Massah (Exodus 17:7). The verb *ekpeiraseis* (ἐκπειράσεις, you shall not tempt/test) means to test with hostile intent or to demand proof, challenging God's faithfulness. The phrase **Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God** (*ouk ekpeiraseis Kyrion ton Theon sou, οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου*) establishes a fundamental principle: faith trusts God without demanding miraculous validation.

Jesus' response reveals the proper hermeneutical principle: **Scripture interprets Scripture**. While Psalm 91 promises angelic protection, Deuteronomy 6:16 prohibits testing God. Both are true; neither should be used to contradict the other. Satan's error was isolating one promise from the comprehensive biblical witness. Jesus demonstrates that genuine faith rests confidently in God's character without demanding signs. This is the opposite of Israel's wilderness failure when they demanded proof of God's presence and provision (Exodus 17:2-7). Where Israel failed through unbelief demanding signs, Jesus succeeds through obedient trust in God's word.

## Historical Context

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At Massah (meaning 'testing'), Israel demanded Moses provide water, essentially testing whether God was truly among them (Exodus 17:7). This rebellion

represented covenant unfaithfulness—God had just delivered them from Egypt, divided the Red Sea, and provided manna, yet they demanded further proof. Deuteronomy 6:16 commanded Israel never to repeat this sin. Jesus' quotation identifies Satan's temptation as equivalent to Israel's wilderness rebellion. The principle applies broadly: Christians should not presume on God's promises by deliberately creating crises expecting miraculous rescue. True faith obeys God's revealed will and trusts His providence without demanding spectacular interventions.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus' use of Deuteronomy 6:16 demonstrate the principle that Scripture interprets Scripture?
2. What is the difference between trusting God's promises and testing God by demanding He prove Himself?
3. In what ways might you be guilty of testing God rather than walking in simple obedience and trust?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ	ἀποκριθεὶς	εἶπεν	αὐτῷ	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς	ὅτι	Εἴρηται
<b>And</b>	<b>answering</b>	<b>said</b>	<b>unto him</b>	G3588	<b>Jesus</b>	<b>It is said</b>	G2046
G2532	G611	G2036	G846		G2424	G3754	
Οὐκ	ἐκπειράσεις	κύριον	τὸν	θεόν	σου		
<b>not</b>	<b>Thou shalt</b>	<b>the Lord</b>	G3588	<b>God</b>	<b>thy</b>		
G3756	G1598	G2962		G2316	G4675		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 6:16** (References God): Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.

**Matthew 4:7** (References Jesus): Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

**Psalms 95:9** (Parallel theme): When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

**1 Corinthians 10:9** (Parallel theme): Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

**Malachi 3:15** (References God): And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.