

“In the Wilderness for Forty Days”, Part 2; Mark 1:12-13

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Still ringing, still vibrating in Jesus's ears are the words, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” And here comes the temptation, “If you were the Son of God, You wouldn't be hungry.”

The Spirit drives Him out, drove Him out into the wilderness, and He was in the wilderness being tempted by Satan for forty days. So, we said earlier, that the same Spirit is the Spirit that compels, that that impels Him, so, to speak, to go into this period of temptation.

And so, the same Spirit is expressing, He's expressing to Jesus, the will of the Father, it is the Father's will, that Jesus would then enter into this time of extreme, extended testing and trials. So, Jesus is in the will of the Father when He goes into this period of testing and trials. Which says to us that the same God who divinely orchestrated what took place at the Jordan River, is the same God who sends Jesus into the desert. What happened at the at the Jordan, what happened at the Jordan—the anointing, the Spirit, the voice from heaven—all of that was just as much the will of God, as Jesus is going into this period of extended, radical temptation and trials.

So, Jesus's time of temptation is not the result of the displeasure of His Father. Jesus is not being tempted and tried, Jesus is not suffering, so, to speak, as we'll get to that a little bit, because of His Father's displeasure. The Father is just as pleased with Jesus as He ever was, in fact, He's more pleased with Jesus now.

So, this is not the Father's displeasure, the Father is not saying, “I'm just not happy with my Son, let me let me sort of whip Him into shape a little bit.” It is the Father's pleasure, it is the Father's will, as He sends the Son into this time of tempting.

So, the so, the Father is going to send Jesus into this time of tempting, and Jesus will be tempted, we'll talk a little bit about the temptation that He undergoes. But He'll be tempted. And it's important for us to see where the temptation comes from, and who organized the temptation.

So, the Father is never depicted as the One who's tempting Jesus. But nevertheless, the Father is the One who arranged the circumstances. The Father is the One who orchestrated the situation for Jesus to be tempted in. It's crystal clear in the passage, it's crystal clear from the other Gospel accounts. It is the Father who sent Jesus into the wilderness. Yet it is not the Father who tempted Jesus.

We read from James's epistle, James chapter one and verse 13. “Let nobody who's being tempted say that God's tempting me, because God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does God tempt anyone.” So, no temptation comes from God. But it's important to see that God sovereignly arranges the circumstances of our temptation. Why? Because He uses that temptation for our good. He uses the evil that comes against us for our good. So, He orchestrates the circumstances, the situation—think of Job, Remember Job? God organize the circumstances. But God didn't do the tempting. The same thing with Jesus—the Spirit sends Jesus into the wilderness. But the Spirit is not doing the tempting. The Father is not doing the tempting. No one is ever tempted to evil by God, God cannot tempt anyone to evil. But He sovereignly arranges the circumstances in which He allows the Tempter to do that, and then uses that for our good, just as He's using it for Jesus's good here. Okay.

So, Jesus goes in by the will of the Father to be tempted under these sovereignly designed circumstances. Now, it has been said some scholars have looked at the early church and they have concluded that this Roman Church

actually had a little bit of—hold on, do your seat—prosperity gospel. You know, sometimes we think of the early church in sort of overly, I don't know, romanticized ideas of the early church. The early church was an incredible example for us, because they were so close to the beginning of the church, and the apostles—the founders of the church—the apostles were still there.

So, the early church is an incredibly valuable thing for us to look at. However, the early church—like us—was made up of sinners. So, the old church was not perfect. And one of the things that some scholars have seen in the Roman church is that there was a little bit of a tendency to what we would think of as a prosperity gospel, meaning this you remember a few weeks back, where we talked about the situation which Mark's writing this gospel. It's the situation in which the persecution under Nero has exploded. And this is the most violent persecution that the church had experienced up until that point. This is the time in which Peter was crucified. This is the time in which Christians were being hung up on posts and lit on fire, soaked in tar, and lit on fire, they were being thrown to wild animals, persecution was rampant.

And so, there is some evidence that there were some Roman Christians who believed that Jesus could deliver them from this persecution—which of course He can. But there was some evidence to believe that, or for us to think that, that the Roman church, to a certain degree thought that Jesus should and would deliver them from this persecution.

So, Mark may be writing this to them with the intention that they were to see—your Master wasn't delivered your Master with the forty days. And so, if your Master submits to this, then we follow in His steps.

So, there's a sort of maybe a little bit of a correction, a little bit of rebuke to the Roman church to say—no, to be a follower of Jesus doesn't mean that everything just gets made all right. And it doesn't mean that when, when the thing right in front of you look so, dark and so, grim, that you're to expect that Jesus would just deliver you from everything unpleasant. So, they are in a very, very unpleasant time. And I think perhaps Mark wants to say to them—take confidence. Your Master has been there. He's been there. He endured this on your behalf. And yes, this is not pretty, this is, this is not pleasant. But Your Master has been there, and He will carry you through. So, perhaps there's some of that going on, as well.

So, this is all being orchestrated, because Jesus, of course, Jesus is the second Adam. So, if we think about what's going on here, it's all going to make perfect sense for us, there was the first Adam. First Corinthians 15 tells us that there was the first Adam, the first Adam was the one who underwent this trial. And he failed it, he failed it spectacularly. And then the Scriptures tell us that Jesus is now the second Adam, or sometimes called the last Adam. And so, the first Adam undergoes his trial in the garden. And he fails it so spectacularly. He and his helpmate, cast the entire human race into this condition of sinfulness. They spectacularly fail their test.

Now, God has orchestrated these scenario, this scenario to show us the here now the second Adam, He's going to undergo the same test, but He's not going to fail where the first Adam failed.

So, this second Adam, and isn't it? Isn't it just beautiful? How, remember how the Mary sees the risen Jesus? And she even mistakes Him for the gardener? She says, aren't you the gardener? And we think back. Oh, yeah. Adam was the gardener. So, here's the risen Christ, the second Adam. He is now the true Gardener. Adam, the first Adam was put in the garden to tend it and to care for it here, the second Adam is now placed into the same trial, the same test as the first Adam.

So, now let's, let's kind of compare their test and let's contrast these two tests. So, the first Adam, he underwent his test in the lushest, the most comfortable of circumstances. The Garden of Eden in which he had every food

available to him. His belly was full. He lived in this garden and there wasn't a dry, acrid sort of place. He was put here to tend the vegetation and to care for the garden that God had created. And in this garden, he had all the food at his fingertips. He had all the companionship at his fingertips, because remember, that God had created the special helper for him, "Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." And she was made to be the perfect companion the perfect helpmate. So, he had perfect companionship. Do you know how much easier it is to go through a trial with someone—with someone who supports and understands?

So, here's Adam, in the most comfortable conditions, all the food he wants full belly, perfect companionship, Adam and his wife were sinless. And so, they enjoyed a sinless relationship, giving one another perfect support and perfect companionship.

And then Adam's test was one simple command. One simple command—don't eat of that tree.

So, now let's compare this to Jesus' test. Jesus' test didn't play take place in a garden. Jesus' test took place in the wilderness with no vegetation, no life. Jesus didn't undergo His test with the full belly, Jesus underwent His test with an utterly empty belly, no food for forty days. Jesus' test wasn't one simple command, it was keep the entire law of God we'll talk in just a minute about His temptation, but His command was keep the entire law of God perfectly.

Furthermore, Jesus didn't undergo His test with companionship. He didn't undergo His test with a perfect helpmate. In fact, He underwent His test with no one. He was utterly alone, utterly lonely. This is what Mark means by He was there with the wild animals. His only companionship was the hostile wild animals.

So, contrast this now to Adam. Adam is in the garden, also with the animals, but the animals for Adam are a help. They are perfectly submissive to him, he is exercising dominion over the creation, and the creation is serving him willingly. Now, the second Adam undergoes His tests, and the only animal companions he has, are the hostile wild animals, the ones that are trying to kill Him, the scorpions, that are trying to sting Him, and the snakes that are trying to bite Him.

And furthermore, here is the Son of Man, denied of all companionship, the One who perfectly loves the image of God in other people. Have you ever thought about just how much Jesus would have enjoyed being with people, as the one who perfectly loves the image of God and others? Jesus must have been so lonely. Here, in complete and utter solitude, undergoing His test, but where the first Adam failed, the second Adam will not fail.

But here's where the two tests are the same. Because both of those tests had the same, exact, identical purpose. Remember, Adams test? "Did God really say that you can't eat of any tree? Did God really say that?" Well, no, He didn't. Exactly. Here's what He said, well did God really say that?

His test was: Are you going to believe and trust and obey what God said?

Jesus' test is the same. Mark wants us to read this account, seeing, reading it in such a way that the last words ringing in Jesus' ears were, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Now Mark doesn't relate the exact details of the test to us, Matthew and Luke do, in fact, Mark doesn't even tell us how Jesus fares, he just says Jesus was tempted. But Matthew and Luke relate to us the details of at least some of the temptations. So, still ringing, still vibrating in Jesus's ear still, echoing off the distant mountains are the words, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And here comes the temptation, "If you were the Son of God, You wouldn't be hungry. If You were the Son of God, You'd turn these stones into bread.

Because if you really were the Son of God, what Father would want His Son to be hungry? What Father would want His Son to endure such a thing as this”?

If you were—you see how they're the same test? Will you believe will you trust and will you obey what God has said? Where the first Adam failed, the second Adam will not fail.