



"HE WAS IN THE WILDERNESS FORTY DAYS"

MARK 1:12-13

The Champion immediately begins His work of championing;

1 SAMUEL 16:13, 17:4

¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and *anointed him* in the midst of his brothers. *And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David* from that day forward....⁴ And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named *Goliath of Gath*, whose height was six cubits and a span.

The battle has been brewing for centuries;

GENESIS 3:14-15

¹⁵ *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*

The One burdened with the sin of the people is now sent out from the people;

LEVITICUS 16:21

²¹ And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and *send it away into the wilderness* by the hand of a man who is in readiness.

Consider the divine nobility of a Champion who would willingly be sent out from His people bearing the sins of those who rejected Him. And He would go out to do battle on behalf of a people who, in their rejection of their Champion, are vigorously embracing the very adversary from which He comes to set them free.

'Driven out?' (ἐκβάλλω);

MARK 1:34, 39

³⁴ And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and *cast out* many demons...³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and *casting out demons*.

MATTHEW 21:12

¹² And Jesus entered the temple and *drove out* all who sold and bought in the temple...

MARK 1:43

⁴³ And Jesus sternly charged [the man cleansed of leprosy] and *sent him away* at once...

The overwhelming compulsion of the Son to obey the Father;

JOHN 5:30

³⁰ "I can do nothing on my own...I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me."

The desire for obedience on the part of the Son is so strong that the Spirit's directing of Him is described as *driving* Him into the wilderness. Compare this to John's words in 1 John 5:3: *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.* Jesus is so perfectly filled by the Spirit that the will of the Father is completely His will.

The wilderness: the place of preparation;

MARK 1:35

³⁵ And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to *a desolate place, and there he prayed.*

The theme of “forty days of testing”;

EXODUS 24:18

¹⁸ Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. *And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.*

1 KINGS 19:8

⁸ And [Elijah] arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food *forty days and forty nights* to Horeb, the mount of God.

DEUTERONOMY 8:2

² And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you *these forty years in the wilderness*, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

ACTS 1:3

³ [Jesus] presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, *appearing to them during forty days* and speaking about the kingdom of God.

The Son has come to do battle with the strong man;

MARK 3:27 (See also: 1:21-28)

²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

1 JOHN 3:8

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:45, 47

⁴⁵ Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit... ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.

JOHN 20:15

¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” *Supposing him to be the gardener*, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.”

The Master’s adversary is now ours;

1 PETER 5:8

⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. *Your adversary the devil* prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

What happens in the wilderness is just as divinely orchestrated as what happens in the Jordan;

Jesus’ extended time of temptation, like ours, is not a sign of the Father’s displeasure. The Father never tempts, but He sovereignly designs the circumstances of our temptation.

JAMES 1:13

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and *he himself tempts no one.*

Reflect on the times in which God orchestrated a time of extreme and extended testing and temptation in your life. In what ways were your temptations like those of both the first and the second Adam (“Did God really say...?). In what ways did you grow in these times? For what did God prepare you?

His temptation is both like ours, and not like ours;

HEBREWS 4:15

¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in *every respect has been tempted as we are*, yet without sin.

JAMES 1:14–15

¹⁴ But each person is tempted *when he is lured and enticed by his own desire*. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

Consider how powerful the temptation that feeds upon an inner sinful desire in your heart.

The strength of the enemy's attack upon the Son;

1. Jesus was under constant direct attack from the Prince of Darkness himself, not one of his lesser cronies.
2. Jesus' temptation was never weakened by a single moment of surrender. His temptation was met continually by the strengthening of the force against Him as it met His constant, never-lessening resistance.
3. Jesus' temptation knew no limits. One thought or desire would have cast Him into a pit of sinfulness.
4. Temptation succeeds in causing sin when evil desire is borne. Acting upon the evil desire *adds* to the sin.

COLOSSIANS 3:5

⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, *passion, evil desire*, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

The temptation of the Son far exceeded ours, yet He never failed—not even momentarily. Consider carefully the nature and the character of such a Champion as He.

The suffering of the Son;

HEBREWS 2:18

¹⁸ For because he himself *has suffered when tempted*, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

HABAKKUK 1:13

¹³ You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong...

"They were covered with the hides of wild beasts and torn to pieces by dogs." (Tacitus, *Annales*, 15.44)

HEBREWS 2:9

⁹ But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Have you before considered the "Suffering Servant" who suffered for you, not just on a cross, but also in a wilderness?

Without His victory, all humanity would be hopeless;

HEBREWS 9:7

⁷ But into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.