



GOD'S PEOPLE AND THE TRIALS OF LIFE

"THE FIRST TRIAL OF JESUS"

MATT. 4: 1-11

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS WAS A NATURAL AND INEVITABLE PRELUDE TO HIS WORK AS THE SAVIOR FROM SIN. ON THE CROSS HE TASTED DEATH FOR EVERY PERSON, AND IN THE WILDERNESS HE TASTED TEMPTATION FOR EVERY PERSON. JESUS' TEMPTATION WAS A LONELY EXPERIENCE—THAT IS ALWAYS SATAN'S PLAN. THE DEVIL ALWAYS TAKES THE SOUL WHOM HE DESIRES TO TEMPT INTO A DESERT—A LONELY PLACE. THE SCENE OF OUR TEMPTATION MAY VARY, BUT ALWAYS, WHEN SATAN COMES, THE SOUL IS ALONE.

AS IN THE CASE OF JESUS, GOD ALLOWS THAT WE WILL BE PLACED IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE WE WILL BE TEMPTED AND WHERE WE MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL.

THE FIRST TEMPTATION (VV. 1-4)

SATAN CAME TO JESUS WHEN AFTER 40 DAYS OF FASTING HE WAS "HUNGERED." IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NO TEMPTATION TO JESUS IF THE TEMPTER HAD COME AFTER THE FIRST OR SECOND DAY, BUT AFTER THE FORTIETH DAY IT WAS A GREAT TEMPTATION. HE TEMPTED JESUS BY CHALLENGING HIM TO GIVE IN TO HIS TREMENDOUS SENSE OF HUNGER AND TO USE HIS POWER TO TURN STONES INTO BREAD AND SATISFY THAT HUNGER.

SATAN TEMPTED JESUS TO DEPART FROM THE PATH THAT GOD HAD OUTLINED FOR HIM AT THIS TIME. JESUS RESISTED THE TEMPTATION BY QUOTING FROM SCRIPTURE.

THE DEVIL KNOWS WHEN TO TEMPT US, AND HE TEMPTS IN THE SAME MANNER AS HE DID WITH JESUS IN THAT HE WANTS US TO SATISFY OUR NORMAL DESIRES AND APPETITES IN FORBIDDEN WAYS.

THE SECOND TEMPTATION (VV. 5-7)

SATAN TEMPTS JESUS TO TRY GOD BY ASKING FOR HIS PROTECTION AND CARE IN AN ACTION NOT IN THE WILL OF GOD.

HE TEMPTS US IN THE SAME WAY BY OUR GIVING IN TO A TEMPTATION OF PUTTING OURSELVES IN SUCH BAD SITUATIONS THAT WE THEN DEMAND GOD'S MIRACULOUS INTERVENTION.

THE THIRD TEMPTATION (VV. 8-11)

SATAN NOW SHOWS JESUS ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD AND OFFERS THEM IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS WORSHIP. AGAIN, JESUS RESISTS BY QUOTING SCRIPTURE.

SATAN TEMPTS US BY ATTEMPTING TO GET US TO COMPROMISE OR ABANDON OUR FAITH IN GOD AND ACCEPT WHAT HE (THE DEVIL) HAS TO OFFER.

MAY GOD'S WORD SO RICHLY DWELL IN US THAT WE, LIKE JESUS, WILL OVERCOME THE TRIALS OF OUR TEMPTATIONS.