

## ***Tempting God. Mathew ch.4***

*Here we encounter the Devil, the great horned beast of myth and nightmares, the ravenous creature who consumes the innocent when they are not looking. But when met, he appears far more like a wise brother than a taunting opponent, a protector rather than a pathological murderer. Yet it is in his smooth rationales, as seen in the Biblical narrative, that his true character is revealed. He is the greatest of the false comforters, leading us to the edge of the abyss with promises of indulgence and glory.*

### **Preliminary definitions**

- 4:1, “Devil;” gr. Diabolos, a false accuser, slanderer, adversary, an initiator of calumny, or the use of fraud in making a false accusation.
- 4:3, “Tempter,” gr. Peiradzo, the tempter, tester, by trying one’s virtue or soliciting one to sin.

### **Jesus in the wilderness, 4:1-2.**

- Led by the Spirit for a specific purpose.
  - To be “tempted.” \_\_\_\_\_
  - By the “devil,” \_\_\_\_\_
- But first a short period of fasting.
  - 40 days and nights. \_\_\_\_\_
  - To prepare? \_\_\_\_\_

### **The tempter’s approach, his plan of attack, 4:3-11.**

- After Jesus was weakened physically, and most likely emotionally. \_\_\_\_\_
- The Plan.
  - Attack the first most obvious weakness, hunger. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Next, attack (supposed in this case) the individual’s sense of self-importance. \_\_\_\_\_
  - “Worship me” said the devil. When weakened, put to doubt an individual’s belief in the sovereignty of the Father. \_\_\_\_\_
- Satan from the beginning, or at least from his fall, has been fulfilling the biblical definitions of his titles. \_\_\_\_\_

*A little theology, perhaps. Perfecting, or completing, the human side of the dual nature of Jesus required that He experience all that was common to man. Thus he was baptized by John to show that He had humbled himself as a human, and by His temptation He demonstrated His subjection to the weaknesses and trials of all humanity.*

### **Now, on with the task before Him, 4:12-22.**

- He loaded up the U-haul and headed for Capernaum.
  - After receiving word that John the Baptist had been arrested. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Fulfillment of Isaiah 9:1-2. \_\_\_\_\_
  - The ultimate fulfillment of 9:3-7 is yet to come. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Luke 4:14-44: his early public ministry was solo. \_\_\_\_\_
- Now for some “loyal” disciples.
  - Starting with Peter, Andrew, James, and John.
  - Luke 4:38-5:11, a longer account. \_\_\_\_\_
  - John 1:35-51, another account. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Growth of Jesus public ministry, 4:23-25.**

- In the Synagogues, but also to the Hellenized Jews in the region around Galilee and also into Syria and Decapolis.
- With healing, teaching, and the proclamation of the gospel.
  - “Teaching” in the synagogues. \_\_\_\_\_
  - “Proclamation” more publicly. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4:24, the healing of “demoniacs,” a controversial subject that needs to be address, and not just glossed over. \_\_\_\_\_

*The Devil and the “daemons” of our life. While the great traducer and tempter general weaves his myths of personal glory and the bountiful wealth of self-idolatry to a generation of over indulged spiritual wanderers, the smaller principals, or demons, whisper of new doors and shortcuts to these goals. Name them if you will, for they are much more than the old temptations of alcohol, adultery, and ill-gotten gains. Chaos and confusion are no longer just tools of the trade, they are goals in themselves.*