

## Jesus' Temptations in the Wilderness: Mark 1:12-13

Jesus' baptism had just taken place, and the Spirit had descended on him like a dove (Mark 1:10). A voice from heaven had proclaimed, "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" (v.11). This must have been a truly blessed experience for Jesus.

However, we next read: "At once the Spirit sent [lit. 'drove or thrust'] him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him" (vv.12-13).

Jesus was in a lonely and dangerous place, and there may have been hyenas, jackals, panthers, and even lions there. But Jesus was not alone, as he had angelic support. He resisted Satan's temptations with God's word (Matthew 4:1-11).

According to Dick France in Mark, The People's Bible Commentary (p.22):

"...[W]e see ranged against each other [i.e., Jesus and Satan] the forces which would be active behind the scenes of the story of Jesus... The world is a battlefield between God and Satan, good and evil, and Jesus' mission will take him into the heart of that battle. He will again and again confront the spiritual forces of evil... as they work through the human opposition which will be a constant undertone of his ministry, and which will in the end lead him to the final conflict on the Cross."

Today, we are perhaps more aware than ever of the conflict between good and evil forces in our world. Maybe we are also aware of spiritual conflicts in our own situations. But just as Jesus had the support of angels, so God has promised that "the angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them" (Psalm 34:7). And like Jesus, we also have the word of God, the Bible, to counter Satan's lies.

Remember James 4:7: "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you!"

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