

# **CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS**

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Christ in the wilderness by F. W. Krummacher

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**F. W. KRUMMACHER**

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MATT. IV. 1—11.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

# CHRIST IN THE WILDERNESS.

BY

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THE  
TEMPTATION OF CHRIST  
IN THE WILDERNESS.

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WE stand to day on that memorable battle-field where those laurels were won which encircle *our* brows, and that triumph was achieved which makes us victorious before the conflict, and even in death more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us. (Rom. viii. 37)

Never was there a battle fought more wonderful in its nature, more important in its consequences, nor one which so deeply affects our everlasting interests.

It is good for us to sit down awhile, and give ourselves to the absorbing contemplation of this great sight.

## I.

### THE LEADING INTO THE WILDERNESS.

TOGETHER with the consecration and anointing of our Lord to the mediatorial office by the water of the Jordan, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, did Jesus receive from heaven the divine testimony that he was the only begotten Son of God in whom the Father was well pleased. (Matt. iii. 16, 17.)

The Sonship of our Lord, and his essential unity with the Father, appear to have been to him, in the days of his flesh, more an object of faith than of sight, perception, or feeling. At moments, at least, he could, in such a manner, conceal his Godhead from his view, and hide it in the back ground, that he apprehended it only in simple faith on the bare word of the Father.

It was not for the disciples only, but for himself also, that the voice was heard on different occasions from heaven, "This is my beloved Son"—for himself, to strengthen his faith, which, sometimes, as for instance, when he was forsaken of the Father on the Cross, was bare and simple trust in the Father's love, without any sensible experience of that endearing relationship. (Matt. xxvii. 46.)

Consecrated and divinely invested with his priestly office, Jesus immediately hastened into the depths of

the wilderness. He who led him, was, according to the evangelists, the Holy Ghost. (Verse 1. Mark i. 12.)

*Was the Saviour aware for what purpose the Spirit led him into the wilderness?* Perhaps only in part; the great and special cause the Father may have concealed from him. We learn also from our own experience, that it is not always the will of the Holy Ghost to make known to us beforehand his designs in leading us.

*He not unfrequently conducts us in entire darkness.* We are conscious of his inward call, "Arise, and depart to such a place, or in such circumstances, or at such a time." We ask, "why? for what purpose?" but receive no answer. The command is only given yet louder, and with more urgency in our heart, "Go, haste, delay not." We inquire again, what can be the meaning of this internal impulse, but it remains a mystery. We must proceed in darkness, and should we object, the probability is a tumult in the conscience, and a bitter feeling of the divine displeasure in our soul. We must go, we are obliged, and not till afterwards is made known to us the reason. (John xiii. 7.)

Here, Philip finds a chamberlain who has been awaiting his exposition of the Scriptures, (Acts viii. 27.) and there, Elijah meets a widow, whose soul he should enrich with heavenly treasure. (1 Kings xvii. 10.) At one place a disconsolate brother cries to us, even when yet we are a great way off, "Ah, you come to me as an angel sent from God;" and in another place it is made manifest to us, in a different way, wherefore the Spirit hath called and sent us: either the sun arises upon our path, and all becomes clear and bright around us, or

the Spirit gives us some slight intimations of his purpose; but all beyond this, and that which is most important, he keeps back, hidden from our eyes.

One says, I must retire to my chamber to pray, or go to such a house to succour and assist an afflicted brother, or to a particular place to render some special service; but of all that which is designed for us in such places, more than the service, assistance, or prayer—that we shall wrestle with God, (Gen. xxxii. 24.) or become humble and contrite in spirit, (Isaiah lvii. 15; lxvi. 2.) or pass through the purifying furnace, (Mal. iii. 3. Isai. xlviii. 10.) or meet the hosts of Mahanaim, (Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.) or whatever it may be—of all this no mention has been made to us. It shall become known to us hereafter in the way of experience.

It seems to have been thus with our Saviour. *He went into the wilderness half in light and half in darkness.* Perhaps he knew only generally, that he must go into the wilderness to fast, suffer want, and endure hardship, and in the depths of extreme humiliation and poverty enter upon the work of his priesthood. So much the Spirit unfolded to him, but the severe, the fearful temptation which awaited him appears, according to the counsel of the Father, to have been carefully hidden from his view. The unexpectedness of the assault would add severity to the conflict, that the triumph might be the greater and more glorious.