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EDITORIAL

WHAT A RARE GEM IS A BALANCED JUDGMENT OR a balanced method or a balanced life. Humanity manifests itself in excesses. At an earlier day Christians comprehended to a very limited degree the social aspect of their religion. In most cases religion began and ended in the health of the individual soul. People seemed but dimly to realize that oppressed races, nations or classes, as such, had any claim upon the church as an advocate of their freedom from intolerable conditions, or that it was its duty to seek the establishment of social justice. The civil organization was supposed to care for these things. The Christian reformer was a fanatical upstart, a fellow to be discouraged or suppressed. In our own time the pendulum has swung far toward its opposite limit. The anxiety of the individual over his own soul is branded as selfishness, as an evidence of that narrow conception of religion that makes a man tremble at a future hell, but leaves him indifferent over the fate of his fellows either now or hereafter. We have made progress when the church becomes concerned over the wrongs and evil conditions that belong to the daily experience of thousands, but only a singular blindness to the laws of the human heart will seek to create a

THE TESTING OF JESUS

(Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; Mark 1:12-13)

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THE unique importance of our Lord's wilderness experience has been universally recognized. Signalized by the fact that it has been made a matter of record by three of the four evangelists, the importance of this experience is yet more strikingly signalized by its relation to our Lord's baptism on the one hand, and to His entrance upon His public ministry upon the other. "The Holy Spirit this signifying"—namely, that our Lord's baptism was His necessary preparation for His wilderness experience, and that the latter was equally His necessary preparation for His assumption of the responsibilities of His public ministry. It is but natural, therefore, that so cardinal an event should have occupied the interested attention of each succeeding generation of believers.

The purpose of the present discussion is twofold. Its primary aim will be to determine the precise nature and significance of our Lord's wilderness experience as it stood related to Himself personally. Having done this, an effort will be made to ascertain its significance for the mission of our Lord, and for ourselves as the beneficiaries of that mission. To turn aside, however briefly, to consider any of the numerous and deeply interesting collateral questions raised by the Gospel records would only tend to divert attention from these main issues, and to consume the space necessary for their proper consideration. Such secondary questions, therefore, must, one and all, be summarily excluded from this discussion.

What, then, was the nature, and what the purpose of our Lord's wilderness experience as it stood related to Himself personally? It is obviously safe to say at once

that the first step towards a correct answer to this question will be for us to study His experience in the light of that historical back-ground in the light of which our Lord Himself evidently interpreted it. That back-ground was the wilderness experience of Israel, as the same is interpreted in Deuteronomy 6-11.

Clearly it is not an accident, nor merely a coincidence, that to each several suggestion of Satan our Lord makes reply in terms taken directly from these chapters. Thus the words, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," are, as is well known, quoted from Deuteronomy 8:4. Similarly the words, "Thou shalt not put to the test the Lord thy God," and the words, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," are cited from the 6th chapter of this same book. Further, we cannot too carefully note that in citing these passages our Lord is not using Scripture in the superficial and purely mechanical fashion with which, alas, we are only too familiar. For Him the passages cited are not merely verbally apt and catchy phrases lending themselves to an *ad captandum* use. Such a mischievous and unworthy trifling with the Word of God is in His case unthinkable. His use of the solemn formula, "It is written," is enough of itself to assure us that He regarded the words quoted as divinely designed to furnish guidance for one in the circumstances confronting Himself. But such interpretative application of Scripture, where it is not purely fanciful, and so forced and false, grounds itself, and can only ground itself in the existence of a true parallel between the case of those to whom the words were in the first instance addressed, and that of the person applying their teaching to his own case. The very fact, then, that our Lord cites these particular

passages is itself highly significant for a correct understanding of the experience through which He was Himself then passing. It puts us on notice that our Lord Himself saw a true parallel between Israel's wilderness experience and His own.

To be convinced of the reality of this parallel one has only to compare the language used by Moses with that used by the evangelists. Thus, expounding to Israel the significance of its wilderness experience, Moses says: "And thou shalt remember all the way which Jehovah thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, and so put thee to the test, and thus know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or no" (Deut. 8:2). With this compare the statement of Matthew: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be put to the test of the devil." Differences there are, no doubt, between the two cases, but these will be found to be immaterial. The striking thing is the essential parallel. And how striking that is!

Passing by for the present certain other features common to the two cases, let us notice the following: Like Israel, Jesus found Himself in the wilderness; like Israel also, He found Himself there neither, as we say, by accident nor by His own deliberate choice; like Israel, He had been led up into the wilderness by God; like Israel, He had been led there for a specific purpose; and, like Israel, the specific purpose for which our Lord had been led into the wilderness was that God might put Him to the test, might prove Him. Here we may pause. So far at least the parallel between the experience of Israel and that of our Lord is complete, and too obvious to admit of question. Accordingly we may say with confidence that, looked at in the large, our Lord's wilder-

ness experience, like that of Israel before Him, was a divinely devised and supervised testing process.

This, it should be observed, is not the usual way of conceiving the matter. Indeed, our own excellent English version says: "Then was Jesus led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil." In ordinary speech no one says "tempt" when he means "test." To "tempt" is to solicit to evil. But to "test" conveys no such idea. We may test a man's courage, his judgment, his knowledge, his veracity, not only without any intention, but without any expectation of involving him in evil. Further, we may test in order not only to know, but to make known; not only in order to ascertain, but also to manifest the character, ideas, or point of view of the person tested. Israel was not led into the wilderness to be solicited to evil. We are certain of this not merely because God, as James teaches us, does not solicit to evil; not merely because, as Dr. Driver correctly says, the word describing the divine activity in Israel's case is "a neutral word"; but because the record itself tells us the end aimed at in the whole transaction. Speaking after the manner of men, that end was that God might know what was in Israel's heart, or, dropping the anthropomorphism, that He might bring to manifestation Israel's real attitude toward Himself. Accordingly, in Deuteronomy, our translators have rendered the Hebrew word *nassah* "to prove." And so they should have rendered the word used by the evangelists in the case of our Lord. For it also is a neutral word. It contains in itself no implication of enticement to evil.

Obviously in this instance our translators were influenced by the part that Satan seemed to them to play in the transaction. Misled themselves as to this, their translation has had the effect of misleading others. As

much perhaps as any one thing the translation, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil," is responsible for the fact that students of this incident in the life of our Lord have had their attention diverted from what is really central and essential in it, and focused upon what is at best but incidental; diverted from the true principal in the transaction, namely, God Himself, and focused upon the activities and aims of His mere agent, that is Satan; diverted from the parallel between the experience of Jesus and that of Israel; and so ultimately diverted from the common end aimed at in both cases alike, and focused upon matters foreign to that end. The total result has been greatly to obscure the real significance of what occurred in the wilderness, to obscure its significance both for our Lord Himself and for us, the beneficiaries of His mission.

If, then, we are rightly to construe the significance of our Lord's experience, we must first of all recur to the point of view of Jesus Himself, and of the evangelists, and study it as primarily and essentially not a tempting of Jesus by Satan, but as a testing of Jesus by His Father. In effecting this testing Satan's part was merely that of an instrument. He was, of course, no mere automaton, but a rational, self-motived, and so a responsible, instrument, but still merely an instrument. He had, assuredly, his own point of view and his own ends. And if it were necessary for us to regard these as determining factors in the transaction, we should have no option but to regard it as a temptation pure and simple. But both the parallel between our Lord's experience and that of Israel, and the explicit language of the evangelists, admonish us not to permit the part that Satan played and the ends that he had in view to

divert our minds from God's part, and God's ends in this memorable drama. It was the Spirit who led Jesus up into the wilderness. And He led Him there "to prove" Him, as Israel of old had been proved.

Such being the case, the question at once emerges, Prove Him as to what? Test Him as to what? To this question, with the case of Israel and the record of the evangelists to guide us, it ought not to be difficult to find the true answer.

Israel, as we know from Deuteronomy 8:2, was tested as to what was in its heart. God's message to Pharaoh by Moses, "Israel is my son, my first born," must have run through the nation like flame over a field of dry grass. We hear the echo of it in Moses' words: "And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that Jehovah thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son" (Deut. 1:31); and again: "And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that, as a man disciplineth his son, so Jehovah thy God disciplineth thee" (Deut. 8:5); and, finally, very plainly in the challenge: "Is he not thy father that hath possessed thee?" (Deut. 32:6). Nor in this connection can the language of Exodus 19:4-6 be overlooked: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession above all the peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." Passages like these, and Deuteronomy 6:5-6: "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart"—I say such passages as these and others like them constitute the natural back-ground of

Moses' address in Deuteronomy 6-11, without which it cannot be understood.

In the light furnished by the passages quoted we cannot fail to see that, when Moses speaks of Israel being tested as to what was in its heart, he means that Israel was tested as to its conception—its real, its true conception—of God's relation to it, and its relation to God, tested as to its conception of what was involved for it in that relation, and as to its conception of what was fundamental in the relation, and basic to its very existence; and it was also tested as to its own actual inner attitude towards God, the genuineness and extent of its love for and its confidence in God. And the hinge of the test applied to Israel appears, when Moses adds: "Whether thou wouldst keep His commandments, or no." It is the uniform doctrine of the Old Testament that, on the one hand, there is no real obedience, unless the service or the conduct is inspired by love, and, on the other, that obedience is at once the natural and inevitable expression, and likewise the evidence and the measure, of love. And older than Milton is the truth which he nobly expressed in the memorable words, "They also serve who only stand and wait." That is to say, obedience is a state of heart; it finds expression passively as well as actively. Its essence is submission to the will of another, submission springing not from mere self-interest, and still less from servile fear, but submission rooted in, and nourished, and fructified by rational love and confidence.

Further, when Moses says: "And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that as a man disciplineth his son, so Jehovah thy God disciplineth thee," we learn that this testing was designed to be not only evidential, bringing to manifestation the conceptions and attitude of Israel's heart,

but likewise educative. From it Israel was to learn God's view as to what is basic to the existence of the filial relation, was to learn what it is to love Jehovah its God with all its heart, and with all its soul, and with all its might. It was to learn that obedience has its passive as well as its active side, was to learn the extent to which a rational submission should, and could—I mean could rationally, go. Evidentially the test resulted in disclosing to Israel how far short it fell of realizing the ideal of the filial relation. But Israel's failure neither dimmed the educational significance, nor diminished the educational value of its experience.

Turning now to the record in the Gospels, we will find that, like Israel, our Lord was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness that He might be tested as to His conception of the filial relation, and His possession of the filial spirit. This appears from the language of the record as to the sequence of events. The latter is signalized by the "Then" with which Matthew introduces his narrative of the testing of our Lord. Archbishop Trench is clearly right when he says that this word "is much more than a mere 'then' designating the succession of time: for it evidently denotes the divine order in which the events in our Saviour's life followed one another, and is intended to call our attention to this order" (Trench's Studies in the Gospels, p. 4). That is to say, Matthew uses this word "then" for the express purpose of leading us to link together in thought the events at the baptism and those of our Lord's wilderness experience. But the outstanding events at the baptism were clearly two. One was the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus; the other was the voice from Heaven saying: "This is my son; my beloved in whom I am well pleased." "Then," says Matthew—that is, immediately upon the heels of this

statement—"Then was Jesus led up into the wilderness to be put to the test by the devil." If it is obvious that Matthew's "then" was designed to direct attention to the fact that our Lord's baptism with the Spirit was to prepare Him for the testing to which he was to be subjected in the wilderness, it is no less obvious that that testing related to the filial relation proclaimed at the baptism.

If this view needed confirmation it would be furnished both by the language with which Satan introduces two out of three of his proposals, and even more so by the very nature of the proposals themselves. Satan's, "If thou be the Son of God," is clearly antiphonal to the words, "This is my Son; my beloved in whom I am well pleased." It is Satan's, "We will see," in response to the affirmation and challenge of the latter words. And when we come to consider the proposals introduced by these words, we shall find that each several proposal was designed to be, and was suited to be, a searching test of our Lord's conception of sonship, and, of course, also of His possession of the spirit of sonship. The concrete form of the test was twice changed by Satan, but that which he was testing remained the same throughout. But perhaps the most conclusive evidence of the correctness of the view here presented, is furnished by our Lord's answers to Satan's proposals. Surely, as has already been said, it is no accident that these, one and all, were taken from Moses's exposition of Israel's wilderness experience. This fact itself and particularly the appositeness of our Lord's answers and their profound insight into the meaning of the passages that He cites—I refer, of course, to their meaning as used by Moses of Israel—make it perfectly plain that, prior to the appearance of Satan, He had been pondering deeply in His own heart Moses' exposition of Israel's wilderness experience, and

that He had recognized that the purpose of His own presence in the wilderness was that, like Israel, He might be put to the test as to what was in His heart, that is as to His conception of the basic elements in the filial relation and His actual possession of the filial spirit.

The positions thus far attained are materially strengthened when we come to see that the parallel between our Lord's experience and that of Israel extends to the method of testing employed in the two cases. A comparison of the records will show that in all essential particulars such is the fact. Moses sums up the method employed in the case of Israel in a single highly significant word. "That he might humble thee," says Moses, "and so test thee." Israel, then, was tested by being humbled. To humble is something very different, both in purpose and in effect, from humiliating. If to be humble is to think "truly, and because truly, therefore lowly, of ourselves," then to humble one is to bring him into a position where his lowliness, to borrow Archbishop Trench's word, will become so patent to him that, if he is disposed to think truly of himself, he will think lowly of himself. So God humbled Israel. He brought them into positions suited to cause them to apprehend something of the length and breadth and depth and height of that creaturely dependence and insufficiency to itself that passeth comprehension.

There is no more crucial test of the filial spirit than the reaction of the human soul, when poignantly confronted with the concrete evidences of its dependence and its insufficiency to itself. To be in existence by the will of another, to be continued in existence at and through the will of another, and at every stage and in every manifestation of one's existence to be for the will of another—that for a free, rational, several spirit made in the like-

ness of God, in proportion as it is perceived and its significance fully grasped, is not only worm-wood and gall, but full of terror and torment, except not only as God is recognized in the plenitude of His perfections, but also as the creature is dominated by the filial spirit. Otherwise what would simply produce a wholesome humility, produces an overwhelming sense of humiliation issuing in alternate spasms of abjectness and fruitless rage. The parallel between the method employed in testing Israel and that employed in testing our Lord will come plainly to view in connection with our consideration of the first of the tests to which His conception of the filial relation and His possession of the filial spirit was subjected.

That initial testing will stand out before our minds in true perspective only as it is viewed against the background of the whole transaction of which it was a part. Our data for reconstructing this historical background are few. But upon that very account it is all the more important that we avail ourselves of those we have. Mark's summary of our Lord's experience, though brief, is suggestive. Like Luke, he directs attention to the fact that the testing process extended through the entire period of forty days. What precisely was the nature of Satan's activities, prior to those specifically mentioned, we do not know. Just as little have we any definite knowledge of what was passing in our Lord's own breast. And yet Mark's statement, "Straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness," gives at least some light touching our Lord's subjective state. For the strong word "driveth" seems clearly to indicate that, for whatever reason, our Lord did not enter upon His sojourn in the wilderness *sua sponte*, but on the contrary under a certain constraint to which He yielded only because He

recognized its source. There is no room to question that the transition from the scene and atmosphere of the baptism to that of the wilderness, where He found Himself alone with the wild beasts, raised in the mind of our Lord problems which, if they did not perplex and pain Him, at least caused Him seriously to ponder the significance of the situation in which He there found Himself. How completely these problems preoccupied His thoughts is suggested by Matthew's language: "And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered." For a time, it seems, our Lord was so entirely engrossed with His own thoughts that the claims of nature went unnoticed. But finally the limit was reached, and nature's demands were all the more imperious for having been so long ignored. "He afterward hungered." The meosis here is obvious. By means of it the evangelist notifies his readers how violent and clamorous were the pangs of hunger of which by this time our Lord had become vividly conscious. Under similar pangs Israel in the wilderness had despaired of life itself.

With this intense craving for food began the crisis in our Lord's experience. Satan appears upon the scene, and the testing, already in process, advances to a new stage. It now takes the form of a series of suggestions made by the Adversary.

The character of Satan's first proposal is determined by our Lord's craving for, and extreme need of, food. "If Son thou art of God," says Satan, "speak that these stones become bread." The echo here of the voice at the baptism is too distinct to be mistaken. The "If" with which Satan introduces his suggestion, while not wholly divested of its hypothetical force, approximates in meaning very closely to since, or seeing that—with just

the suggestion, perhaps, of the slightest shrug of the shoulders, or the merest flicker of a suave smile. It implies that tentatively the case may be assumed to be as it is alleged to be, but at the same time it quite clearly implies that, as things actually stand, its reality can be only tentatively assumed. Thus, while in form conceding the reality of our Lord's unique filial relation to God, what is indirectly stressed is the poignant contrast, the bitter contradiction between all that is implied in such a relation and the actual facts of the experience through which He is even then passing—driven into the wilderness, left there alone with the wild beasts, until now He is ready to perish for the barest necessities essential to the maintenance of life itself. The emphasis imparted to the word *υἱός* by its position, by stressing the unique character and dignity of the filial relation in our Lord's case, seems designed to infuse an added venom to Satan's veiled challenge of the reality of that relation. Nor should the implications of the *εἰπέ* be overlooked. As here used it connotes primarily the notions of rights, authority, prerogative. Whether these are accompanied also by the notion of power must be learned from the context. What is implied here is that the very notion of sonship is synonymous with rights, privileges, prerogatives; and that least and most obvious among these would be the right to the sustenance necessary to preserve one from perishing from hunger.

What Satan designed to suggest to our Lord was that the filial relation justified the assertion of the rights, the claiming of the privileges, the exercise of the prerogatives inherent in the relation; and not only so, but that the assertion of His rights, the claiming of His privileges, the exercise of His prerogatives would be the simplest way of justifying the reality of His filial rela-

tion, which His actual circumstances manifestly tended distinctly to discredit. The Son of God permitted to starve, or permitting Himself to starve! Who could be expected to believe it, when He has only to invoke the power of His temporarily forgetful Father, or to exercise the power with which, as Son, He is Himself supposed to be invested, and the very stones of the wilderness would be transformed into bread? Such were the implications of Satan's formally courteous, and plausible proposal. Only those to whom our Lord's true humanity is a mere form of words, empty of any real content, can fail to see how searching was the test to which our Lord's conception of sonship and His possession of the filial spirit were thus subjected. Unquestionably the conception of sonship underlying Satan's proposal, and constituting its virus, has been the one that has always appealed to the human heart, except as that heart has been renewed by the Holy Spirit. It was the conception, as we shall see, upon which Israel in the time of its testing made shipwreck. And I think that without irreverence we may say, that it was because, and only because, our Lord had been baptized with the Spirit and had Himself been made wise unto salvation by Moses' exposition of Israel's experience that He rejected it. He did reject it.

As His reason for rejecting it our Lord cites Deuteronomy 8:3. "It is written," He says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The appositeness of these words, as a Scriptural reply to all the implications of Satan's proposal appears only when we consider them in their original context. But when so considered they will be found to furnish a conclusive proof of the mischievous misconception of sonship which, as remarked above, constituted the real virus of that proposal.

Turning then to Deuteronomy, we find that the words cited by our Lord constitute Moses' own summing up of one aspect of Israel's wilderness experience, namely, of the humbling process by which God had tested Israel that He might know what was in its heart. In this third verse, Moses recalls a typical instance of the means employed by God in humbling Israel, that is to say, of causing Israel to think truly and therefore lowly of itself in its relation to Him, of bringing them to a practical awareness of the nature and the extent of their dependence upon Him and also of the confidence and of the submission to which His character and their filial relation to Him entitled Him. "And he humbled thee," says Moses, "by causing thee to hunger." This means more, much more, than that He put Israel upon short rations, or even upon very short rations. It means, as we learn from Exodus 16:1 ff. that He left them without any rations, that He brought them face to face with the peril of actual starvation. Such specifically was His method of humbling them, that is of causing them to think truly, and therefore lowly, of themselves; His method of bringing before them in a concrete and practical form the absoluteness of their insufficiency to themselves, and of their dependence upon Him.

Such was the rigor, the extreme rigor, of the test by which God not only brought to manifestation the defects in Israel's conception of the filial relation, and its lamentable deficiency in the filial spirit, but by which He sought to correct those defects, and to bring Israel to truer and worthier conceptions upon these vital matters. It was His method of teaching Israel that the confidence that confides only so long as it can understand and satisfactorily explain to itself His dealings is in reality no confidence; that the only justification called for in the case

of His acts is the fact that they are His acts; and that the sufficient guarantee of the wisdom, the righteousness, and the goodness of His acts is likewise to be found in the fact that they are His acts; that, as there is no limit to the love and confidence of which He is worthy, so there is no limit to the loving, loyal, unquestioning obedience that He may rightfully demand and that His rational creatures may rationally accord Him; and that this obedience will include not only doing, but also suffering all His righteous will.

This causing Israel to hunger, then, was God's method of teaching Israel that the essence of sonship is not the rights, privileges, and prerogatives that unquestionably go with it, but rather a cordial acquiescence in the fundamental truth that as all things are from Him and through Him, so all things are for Him. That is to say, God was teaching Israel that a cordial acceptance of dependence upon Him, a loyal, loving, unquestioning, open-eyed acceptance of and response to His will, whatever its manifestations, are, from the nature of the case, basic to the existence of the filial relation, and that they condition not only the exercise of all rights, privileges, and prerogatives attaching to the relation, but the very existence of those rights, privileges, and prerogatives, that is as filial rights, privileges, and prerogatives.

Such, then, was the pedagogical, as distinguished from the evidentiary purpose, of the test to which God subjected Israel, when He "caused them to hunger." It was to make plain to them that sonship is unthinkable apart from the existence of two wills in perfect harmony, one of them supreme and regulative, the other subordinate and responsive—always subordinate and responsive, in every situation subordinate and responsive, at

whatever cost subordinate and responsive—its subordination and responsiveness being rooted in a love and confidence rationally justified by the nature of their object.

But God's humbling of Israel did not stop with causing them to hunger. He humbled them also by coming to their relief and causing them to eat. "And he humbled thee," says Moses, advancing with his exposition of Israel's wilderness experience, "by causing thee to eat manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live." Upon the opening words of this statement we need not tarry. The clue to its closing sentence is suggested by what we read in Exodus 16 concerning the directions with which God accompanied the giving of the manna, and Israel's conduct and experience in connection with the same. In the passage referred to we find that God expressly forbade Israel to hoard any of the manna. They were not even to carry over any part of that gathered one day to the next. And when, despite His prohibition, they did so, it was only to find that the manna thus hoarded over night had bred worms and become foul. Quite as expressly God commanded Israel on the sixth day to gather a double portion of the manna, warning them explicitly that there would be none on the Sabbath to gather. And when, again despite His command, they did not do so, it was only to find themselves without food on the Sabbath.

Thus did God humble Israel, not merely by bringing His dependability into sharp contrast with their lack of dependence upon Him, not merely by showing them that He was competent to cope with a situation that had

filled them with unbelieving despair, but by providing them with food, of such a kind, and under such conditions as were suited to stamp indelibly upon their minds the supreme truth that man doth not live by bread alone—not even when it is bread from heaven, not even when it lies to his very hand in boundless abundance—but that under any and all circumstances man's only real and always sufficient recourse is unfailing dependence upon Himself, evidenced by obedience to every word by which He makes known His will.

Thus it will be seen that, viewed in their original context, taken in their original and intended meaning, regarded as the summing up of Moses' exposition of Israel's wilderness experience, the words cited by our Lord, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God shall man live," constitute a complete reply to Satan's proposal with all of its poisonous implications. Satan's words imply that either between the existence, or, if not the existence, then certainly between the continuance, of the situation confronting our Lord and the fact of His sonship there existed an obvious contradiction; either its existence or its continuance, or both, were incompatible with the rights, privileges, and prerogatives which constitute the very essence of the filial relation; either its existence involved a wilful invasion of our Lord's rights, or its continuance involved upon His own part a fatuous indifference to the possession of them that was incredible.

Whatever force this dilemma possesses is obviously derived from the conception of sonship upon which it is based. Upon the basis of Israel's wilderness experience, our Lord in effect denies the correctness of the conception of sonship upon which Satan's dilemma rested. He does not of course deny that real and most precious

rights, privileges, and prerogatives attach to the filial relation. What He denies is that the situation then confronting Him, or any other situation created or permitted by His Father, did or could involve an invasion of His filial rights. What He denies is that it would be consistent with the filial spirit for Him—on the pretext of merely claiming His own rights as Son—to make that situation, or any other that could arise, the occasion of directly or indirectly impeaching His Father's wisdom, power or love, or of wresting from His Father the initiative in terminating the situation. What He affirms is that there is absolutely no limit to the love and confidence of which His Father is worthy, and accordingly no limit to the open-eyed submission and unquestioning obedience that may be yielded to the will of God by a free, several, rational spirit, made in the likeness of God, without derogating from its own intrinsic dignity, or imperiling any of its real interests.

Here the writer is admonished that the limits of space assigned this paper require that it be brought to a close. He has succeeded, he trusts, in at least indicating to his readers what seems to him to be the nature of our Lord's wilderness experience. In the large it may be described as a divinely devised testing process. More specifically it was a test of our Lord's conception of the filial relation and of His possession of the filial spirit. These are the results thus far reached.

Were we to follow the process through its second and third stages these results would not be altered but confirmed. Further, with the whole case before us, we should see how comprehensive, how thorough, and how searching was the testing to which He was thus subjected. Would He set any limits to His love for and confidence in His Father? Would He presume upon the

love and faithfulness of His Father? Would He recognize any intermediary between Himself and His Father as at least the proximate source of the honors, dignities, and good of whatever kind accruing to Him through sonship, or would He render an undivided homage to His Father as the source of them all? These were the issues in passing upon which He evidenced in a concrete way His conception of the filial relation, and His possession of the filial spirit.

The momentous nature of the issue upon which our Lord was thus put to the test and the significance of the test for His mission and for us who are the beneficiaries of that mission are matters that cannot now be entered upon.

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