

Religious Githeka

The Temptation of Christ

by

Murshid Samuel L. Lewis

(Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti)

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

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A question has been asked in regard to the story of The Temptation of Jesus Christ which is presented in Chapter IV of the Evangel of Matthew. One may wonder whether there be some mystical or esoteric explanation and it may be answered that there is a connection between the spiritual initiation and the struggle with the devil, representing the lower forces.

1. Jesus was led up by the spirit in the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. That is to say he was to have the initiation of breath and ether, which is also called the initiation of the spirit. It is held in the desert because the wide open space is the best for it, also because when one is alone, it is performed with least inconvenience; also because when one reaches this stage one is far apart from the generality.

This temptation of the devil means that there is a struggle to be freed once and for ever from the glamour and control of nufs, which is the breath working through Urouj with the thought of self foremost. When thought of self is removed breath changes. This can be tested and proved by watching the breath and thinking in turn of oneself, some other mureed, any stranger or person not a mureed, Murshida, God and oneself again. You will see the breath change considerably during the process.

2. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights and he afterwards was hungry. That is to say, although he kept the required 40-day Khilvat for the highest spiritual development he did not attain illumination, there was still the great need of the soul and the thirst for God. Heart and soul were famished.

3. Nufs tempts him with magic to turn stones into bread. Now there is a subtle truth in this that what one calls the akashic records are hidden in all things and there is still a more subtle-truth that to the mystic all of nature speaks and gives him knowledge. But this comes of his surrender to God and not by any command he gives to the objects of Nature unless it be in accordance to Divine Law.

4. Jesus answered that man does not live by bread, alone, but by every word that comes from God. That is to say, spiritual victory comes by surrender to God, not by mastery over what is outside of self. It is God Who sustains man, Who is the life of man.

5. Then the devil took him to the top of the temple in the holy city. Nufs endeavors to tempt man in his mind. All those who say that the end of spiritual development is the opening of the pituitary body or pineal gland have fallen into this error. These organs are located at the pinnacle of the body-temple. This is not the true way.

6. Then the devil tells Jesus to cast himself down so that the angels can lift him up. This is the danger of spirit-communication. Many spirits masquerade as angles and all people without heart-awakening fall from occultism to psychism unless endowed with a terrifically strong will.
7. Jesus answered that it was wrong to tempt God. This is to suppose that God is other than the true self, outside of self. Elsewhere he says, "He who has seen me, has seen the Father," which is to say that the true self was the same as the One and Only Being.
8. The devil took him to an exceedingly high mountain. This is the temptation of fame, pride, glory and power, which are all in reality evanescent.
9. He tells Jesus to worship him and all things will belong to Jesus. Now devil is nothing but nufs and nufs longs for these things, but the devil has no power except as man gives it to him falsely. Notice God is strong and God gives strength, God is wise and God bestows wisdom, but the devil seems to bestow what he himself has not—he offers Faust youth. The truth of this is well illustrated in *A Strange Story* of Bulwer Lytton, less in *Dracula*; the favored person has to resort to black magic and diabolatry to attain the devil's treasure, then only to lose it and all else.
10. Jesus answers that God alone is to be worshipped and served. This shows that Jesus was really a Sufi. He did not give any code or creed or dogma, only complete surrender to God. He did not do what later people did in exorcisms, who debased religion into superstition. He called upon God.
11. Then the devil left him and the angels came and ministered. Nufs ammara is completely transmuted to nufs selima, the heart is filled with love and inspiration and the initiation is completed.