

4 The four Gospels

4.1 SATAN IN MARK, THE EARLIEST GOSPEL: TESTING AND OBSTRUCTING JESUS

Now let us turn to the Gospels. It is generally agreed that the shortest of them, Mark, is also the earliest.

Mark starts simply, with no infancy narrative. First he tells of John the Baptist, who announces that another man will come who will baptize not with water but with (or in) the Holy Spirit. When Jesus appears, he takes his turn and is baptized by John like everyone else. However, the Spirit enters the picture immediately afterwards. For when Jesus emerges from the water, he sees the Spirit like a dove descending upon him. Then a voice from above says, "You are my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Thereupon the Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness. Then Mark says the following: "He was in the wilderness for forty days, being tested by Satan, and he was with the wild beasts, and the Angels ministered to him" (Mark 1.12–13). Mark gives no indication of what Satan's testing of Jesus consisted. But it is clear that it was an experience that he was required by God and the Spirit to undergo as part of his preparation.

Mark did not think it necessary to go into details, or even to state the self-evident conclusion that Jesus passed the testing with flying colors. We may, however, be able to get some idea of what Mark had in mind for Satan's trial of Jesus from a Jewish pseudepigraph known as the *Apocalypse of Abraham* (OTP 1). It was written a generation or so after Mark, and it elaborates on the tradition of testing Abraham that we have studied above (in Genesis 22 and the *Book of Jubilees*). It tells of a test of Abraham that has some similarities to Mark's spare account

of Jesus in the wilderness, and it may be that Mark was drawing on a similar tradition.

The *Apocalypse of Abraham* is basically a "midrash" or meditation on the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, which tells of God's first call to Abraham. The Biblical text has Yahweh ordering Abraham to make sacrifice of animals, which he does, driving unclean birds away from the carcasses. Then Abraham falls into a deep sleep and a terrifying darkness envelops him, whereupon Yahweh tells him that his offspring will be enslaved for 400 years (Gen. 15.9–13). By contrast, in the apocalyptic midrash, God orders the sacrifices to take place on a high mountain, after a forty-day fast. The Angel Jael, who has protective as well as destructive duties, accompanies him. Arriving on Mount Horeb, Abraham finds the prescribed beasts of sacrifice and gives them to Jael and to the other Angels who have joined them. Then Azazel appears in the form of an unclean bird and persistently tries to dissuade Abraham from proceeding, but Abraham refuses to respond to him (*Apoc. Abr.* chs. 9–14). Azazel, we recall, was the leader of the Watcher Angels of the *Book of Enoch*, in charge of teaching the wrong lessons to Humankind. It is odd to see him out and about, still active, since he was supposedly imprisoned and awaiting the Last Judgment.

Mark is more traditional in having Satan perform the role of tester. By having Angels present, he may be recalling the confrontation in Zechariah between "Jesus the High Priest" and "DEVIL," as the Septuagint has it, where the Angel of Yahweh is at hand to speak in Jesus's defense. Of course, there is no role for animals in this schema.

After telling of Jesus's testing in the Desert, Mark continues by relating how Jesus began to gather Disciples and to heal the sick. His first cure is of "a man in an Unclean Spirit" (Mark 1.23). But it becomes quite obvious that it is the other way round, an Unclean Spirit inside a man, for this Filthy or Contaminated Spirit is an invisible parasite, dwelling inside the man.

However, unlike our modern in-dwelling parasites – germs, viruses, tapeworms, and so on – this parasite is rational, very

knowledgeable, and very vocal. It professes to know who Jesus is – he comes from Nazareth, and he is “the Holy One of God” – and it is afraid that he has come to destroy “us.” It begs Jesus to let them alone, for they have nothing to do with him. Jesus commands it to be silent and to come out of the man (Mark 1.23–26). This is the “Messianic secret” that I mentioned above (**chap. 3.1**).

Jesus’s next cure is of Peter’s mother-in-law, who is down with a fever. When Jesus takes her hand, the fever leaves her (Mark 1.30–31). It could be that the fever is also thought of as an in-dwelling parasite, but it does not speak. Later on, Jesus cures many people who have various diseases, some of them caused by Demons – literally, “Demonic Beings” (*Daimonia*) – whom Jesus drives out. These parasitic Demons are clearly the same sort of entities as the contaminated Spirit encountered above; they know who Jesus is, and he commands them to be silent (Mark 1.34).

So far, there is nothing to connect the Unclean Spirits with Satan. That will soon change. Or will it? I am referring to the Beelzebul incident, which many readers interpret as identifying Satan with the ruler of the Demons, in the sense of Chief Demon. This, I believe, is a mistake. Let’s look at the episode in question.

Mark tells us that scribes from Jerusalem explain Jesus’s ability to expel Demons by saying that he is himself possessed by the Chief Demon: “He has Beelzebul, and by the Ruler of the Demons he casts out Demons” (Mark 3.22). This sounds like a sarcastic jibe, like that of the Judeans in John’s Gospel when they accuse Jesus of having a Demon (see p. 56 above), but Jesus takes them seriously, or at least pretends to do so. He calls them over and “speaks to them in parables.” We can count five parables, given in rapid succession:

- (1) “How can a satan cast out a satan?”
- (2) “If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.”
- (3) “If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.”

(4) “If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come.”

(5) “No one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man. Then indeed the house can be plundered.”

(Mark 3.23–27)

By failing to recognize that Jesus is making five comparisons here, to refute the notion that the Chief Demon, Beelzebul, would be interested in casting out other Demons, readers have assumed that Jesus is identifying Satan with Beelzebul, and also saying that Satan had a kingdom, that his kingdom is falling apart, and that he will soon be deposed and incapacitated, and his assets confiscated.

But now that we recognize that Jesus is only making five comparisons, and that Satan is brought up in only one (or perhaps two) of them, what exactly is being said about him? Remember, we know nothing about Satan except that he put Jesus through a forty-day test in the Desert.

In the first parable, Jesus is saying in effect that a satan, that is, an adversary, is not likely to act against a fellow-adversary. Because the definite article is not used here (not *ho Satan* but simply *satanas*), it seems clear that Jesus is not speaking of Satan at this point. But he does introduce Satan himself in the fourth parable: it would make no sense, Jesus says, for Satan to rise up against himself. So we must conclude that Satan is still “standing,” still securely in his place, and that his end is nowhere in sight. At the same time we can read between the lines: it’s too bad that Satan is not divided against himself and that his end is not imminent. This, however, tells us nothing about what Satan’s function is. Except that we already know that he is a tester.

In the next chapter, instead of the mini-parables delivered to the Jerusalem scribes, Jesus tells a long parable, that of the Sower and his seed, to the assembled multitudes. Later, when his intimates ask him to explain the parable, he does so, because they have been given the secret of the Kingdom of God. Others who do not possess this secret

are told nothing more than parables, "so that they may look and not see, hear and not understand" (Mark 4.12). Here Jesus is quoting the words of God to Isaiah that we cited above (p. 66), where He orders Isaiah to deliberately mislead the people.

So, misleading the people is something that we have seen God and His prophets doing to the Israelites of old, and what Paul also said he was doing, and now we find Jesus doing the same thing. But, as Jesus explains the parable, he indicates that there is yet another person in charge of misleading the people, namely Satan. He says, "Some persons are on the pathway where the word is sown, and when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them" (Mark 4.15).

That's it for Satan in Mark, except for the episode in which Peter rebukes Jesus for saying that he must suffer and die and then rise from the dead. Jesus rebukes Peter in turn and calls him Satan: "Turning and looking at his Disciples, Jesus rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on Divine things but on Human things'" (Mark 8.33). Perhaps this is an example of the sort of testing that Satan put Jesus through in the wilderness, urging him to deviate from God's plan for him. If so, we can be sure that Jesus rebuked Satan just as forcefully as he does Peter, when he sees Peter acting in a Satanic role.

When all is said and done, Mark does not give the impression that Satan is a particularly important figure in the scheme of things. At most, he seems to be an obstructionist. His first activity is to induce people, including Jesus, to deviate from their duty. His second function is to prevent people from understanding their duty – but Jesus himself does the same thing, as did God and the prophets before him, and as Paul does after him.

4.2 SATAN AND JESUS IN DIALOGUE: MATTHEW'S THREE-ACT DRAMA OF TEMPTATION

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke share much of the content of Mark. For this reason they are called "Synoptic," a word that in this case

means "having a common vision" or "closely corresponding." But Matthew and Luke also have many similarities not found in Mark. One explanation for this is that they both draw on the same source, conjectured to be a lost sermon or collection of the sayings of Jesus. Believers in this hypothetical source call it *Q* – either from the German word for "source" (*Quelle*), or as the equivalent of "X" (an unknown quantity).

Another possible explanation is that Matthew added to Mark, and then Luke used Matthew (or both Matthew and Mark). This is very much a minority view among scholars. For my part, I shall not decide between the theories, but, for the sake of simplicity, in this section I shall focus on materials in Matthew that are not to be found in Mark (whether they come from *Q* or elsewhere), and then, in the next section, I shall examine what is unique to Luke. Of course, it is probable that the Gospels do not now exist in the form in which they may have been left by their individual authors. The Gospel of Mark is generally dated to the decade of the 70s, Matthew and Luke to the 80s, and John to the 90s.

Matthew begins with an account of the birth and infancy of Jesus (chapters 1 and 2), before taking up where Mark commences. In the episode in which Jesus is baptized by John, after Jesus sees the dove-like Spirit descending, his Father's voice is heard apparently by everyone, not just by Jesus (chapter 3). Then, at the beginning of chapter 4, Jesus is not "driven" but "led" by the Spirit into the wilderness, "to be tested by DEVIL" (Matt. 4.1).

But whereas Mark gives the impression that Jesus was to be tested for the whole forty days, Matthew says that he fasted for the forty days, and only then did "the Tester" test him. DEVIL's testing takes the form of three "suggestions." The first suggestion addresses Jesus's famished state after his long fast. Let's listen to DEVIL's words, for it is one of the rare instances in which he has a speaking part. We have heard him speak earlier only in the Book of Job as one of the Sons of God (or, in the Greek LXX, one of the Angels of God), and as Mastema in the *Book of Jubilees*, when he requested a supply of nasty

ghosts to help him discipline Humankind. Here he is in Matthew, with another name, "Tester":

The Tester [*ho Peirazon*, "the One Who Tests"] came forward and said to him: "If you are a Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."
(*Matt. 4.3*)

We note that Satan does not bother to introduce himself. It soon becomes clear that Jesus knows very well who he is, for he calls him Satan, but it is not clear that Satan knows who Jesus is. Is he trying to find out if Jesus really is a Son of God – did he too hear the voice from Heaven after his Baptism? Is he the same kind of Son of God that Satan is, one of the *Bene ha-Elohim*? Satan's question is usually mis-translated to say, "If you are the Son of God," but there is no definite article in the text, and it must be taken to say, "If you are a Son of God."

Instead of responding directly, Jesus answers with a quotation from Deuteronomy (8.3): "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (*Matt. 4.4*). In so saying, Jesus not only declines to act on Satan's idea for acquiring some instant food, but he side-steps his implicit questions about who he is and whether he has the power to change rocks into bread. Jesus's point seems to be that following God's word at this moment is more important than satisfying the pangs of hunger.

For the next test, Satan physically transfers Jesus from the wilderness to Jerusalem and sets him on the top of the Temple:

Then Devil takes him to the Holy City and places him on the wing of the Temple. He says to him, "If you are a Son of God, leap off! For it is written, 'He will put the Angels in charge of you,' and, 'On their hands they will hold you up, and keep you from striking your foot against a stone.'" (*Matt. 4.6*)

Satan is quoting Psalm 91 here, verses 11 and 12. This Psalm promises that no harm will ever come to anyone who trusts in God. But the promises of the Psalm are so unbelievably sanguine and unrealistic

that they were taken to refer only to a specially favored or anointed (Messianic) figure, a "Son of God" in that restricted sense.

Jesus replies with another quotation from Deuteronomy: "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test'" (*Deut. 6.16*). Here we can imagine that Jesus is saying, in effect, that, while it is perfectly in accord with Satan's duties to submit Human Beings, including Jesus, to *peirasmoi*, it is not allowed for anyone to test God with a *peirasmos* of the sort that Satan has suggested here: endangering one's life in hopes that God will work a miracle and deflect the danger.

Satan's final test for Jesus likewise involves a physical transfer – or perhaps a spiritual move of some sort, since there is in fact no vantage point on Earth answering to the high mountain of the text:

Again Devil takes him, to a very high mountain, and shows him all the Kingdoms of the World and all their splendor. He says to him, "All this I will give to you, if you will bow down and do me homage."
(*Matt. 4.8–9*)

Satan hereby implies that he is in a position to bestow the Kingdoms of the World on Jesus, and also that Satan's position is one that would attract homage.

Jesus responds by quoting Deuteronomy once again, to the effect that the sort of homage that Satan calls for is reserved for God alone: "Jesus said to him, 'Go away, Satan! For it is written, 'The Lord your God is the one to whom you must do homage, and you should serve Him alone'" [*cf. Deut. 6.13*].'" The Tester has no response, nothing more to say: "Then Devil left him, and suddenly Angels approached and ministered to him" (*Matt. 4.10–11*).

What are we to make of this exchange? The first conclusion is obvious: it was not intended as a real encounter between Jesus and Devil. It is rather a fanciful elaboration on the testing episode in Mark, expanded into a typical rabbinical "show-debate." Such debates were a form of midrash (meditation on Scripture) that displayed an authoritative figure responding to a series of challenges by citing the correct passage from Scripture.

There are some striking parallels to Matthew's little debate from later Jewish literature.¹ For instance, in the *Babylonian Talmud* (*Sanhedrin* 89b), Satan first calls Abraham's devotion into question, prompting God to subject him to the supreme test of sacrificing his son. Then, when Abraham goes about complying, Satan comes to him and tries three times to dissuade him. Each time, Satan cites a Scriptural reason for turning back, and Abraham responds with an appropriate Scriptural or proverbial reason for continuing forward.

The *Great Midrash* on Genesis (*Genesis Rabbah* 56.4) presents a similar threefold attempt to dissuade Abraham from sacrificing Isaac, but this time the tempter is not Satan, but an Angel called Sammael ("Poison of God"). When he cannot succeed with Abraham, Sammael goes to Isaac, and this time he does succeed, at least to some extent: that is, he is able to persuade Isaac to try to talk his father out of sacrificing him – but Isaac's appeals are of no avail.

Another example is found in the *Great Midrash*, in *Deuteronomy Rabbah* (11.5). The Angel of Death (a role sometimes played by Sammael) comes to Moses, saying, "God has sent me to you, for you are to depart this life today." Moses responds to each of the Angel's three attempts (in one of which the Angel quotes from the Psalms) with a quotation from Deuteronomy. He finally acquiesces to the Angel of Death's summons, seeing that it is the will of God. (We shall see below, in dealing with the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of Jude, **chap. 5.3**, that DEVIL sometimes assumes the duties of the Angel of Death. In Jude, he debates with Michael for the body of Moses.)

One effect of Matthew's dramatization of Satan's testing techniques is to put the relations between him and Jesus on a rather "gentlemanly" basis. Specifically, Jesus responds readily to Satan's

inquiries, and does not denounce him as "evil." Karl Kuhn has "criticized" Matthew's transformation of Mark's temptation episode for missing the point.² Mark, he says, was following the tradition of portraying trial or temptation as the structure of life in this World. But Matthew has trivialized it with his mini-debate, having Jesus simply defeat DEVIL by citing the proper quotations from the Scriptures. Other exegetes, however, find deeper significance in the DEVIL-Jesus exchange, seeing it as reflecting three major trials undergone by the Israelites during their forty years in the desert.

However, the substitution of the three specific debating points for Mark's global and extended testing results in considerable irony, specifically with regard to the middle temptation. We must remember that Mark already presented Jesus as having had a debate with Satan – that is, with one of his Disciples, Peter. Jesus resisted Peter and his urgings by calling him Satan. We conjectured that this was an example of the sort of testing that Jesus must have undergone in the wilderness. But now, in Matthew's account, we see that DEVIL's suggestion that he endanger himself in Jerusalem is rejected by Jesus, on the grounds that one should not test God in this way. However, when Matthew takes up the encounter with Peter later in his Gospel, Jesus rebukes him precisely for protesting against his plan not only of endangering himself but of putting himself in harm's way to such a degree that he will be killed, while being confident that he will be restored to life afterwards. Jesus calls Peter Satan and repeats the words reported in Mark about his not being on the side of God. He adds, for good measure, "You are a stumbling-block [*skandalon*] to me!" (Matt. 16.23). We could have cited this passage earlier when speaking of Satan as an obstructionist in Paul's accounts (**chap. 3.1–2**).

Matthew may have been inspired to develop his threefold testing of Jesus at the hands of DEVIL by two episodes in Mark's Passion narrative, which Matthew also includes in his own Passion account.

² Karl Georg Kuhn, "New Light on Temptation, Sin, and Flesh in the New Testament," *The Scrolls and the New Testament*, ed. Krister Stendahl (New York: Harper, 1957), pp. 94–113.

¹ For these parallels, see my article, "The Devil in the Desert," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 26 (1964) 190–220, pp. 200–02. For an English translation of *Sanhedrin*, see *The Babylonian Talmud*, ed. I. Epstein, 12 vols. (London: Soncino, 1935), vols. 5–6. For a translation of the *Great Midrash*, see *Midrash Rabbah*, ed. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, 3rd edn., 10 vols. (London: Soncino, 1983): *Genesis Rabbah* is in vols. 1–2 and *Deuteronomy Rabbah* in vol. 7.

They are both three-part ordeals, a set of trying circumstances that do not involve DEVIL. The first triple testing is the Agony in the Garden. Mark portrays Jesus as experiencing three sessions of troubled prayer in Gethsemane, and he warns his Disciples to pray against entering into testing. Jesus first addresses Peter: "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour?" Then, including James and John, he tells them: "Keep awake and pray that you come not into *peirasmos*. The spirit is willing enough, but the flesh is weak" (Mark 14.38, Matt. 26.41).

The second episode is the three-part challenge that Peter experiences in the courtyard of the High Priest, a challenge that he fails miserably to pass (Mark 14.66-72; Matt. 26.69-75). Jesus had warned him about this twice: once, at the Last Supper: "This very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times" (Mark 14.30; Matt. 26.34); and the second time we have just seen, in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14.37; Matt. 26.40).

The question of how evil Satan is must be discussed as we move on to speak of Matthew's other additions to Mark. To begin with, we note that in the Parable of the Sower, instead of "Satan" taking away the word, it is "the Evil One" (Matt. 13.19). At least that is how the Greek *ho Poneros* is usually translated. But I object to this translation, because it begs the question of Satan's moral standing. The adjective *poneros* is like the Latin *malus* and the English "bad": it has a whole range of meanings, from "a bad man" to "a bad cold" to "bad weather." But "evil" inevitably signifies moral wickedness of a very intense nature. We have invested it with such a profundity of malice that we personify it, talking about "the existence of Evil." It is incongruous for us to speak of "an evil cold" or "evil weather," unless we are indulging in humorous exaggeration. Similarly, it sounds funny to talk about "the existence of Bad" or "the prevalence of Badness."

However, the very oddness of such expressions will help to keep us on our toes and prevent us from jumping to conclusions that might not yet be warranted. We should

"blanket evil," that is, the totality of all wrongfulness or wickedness, and see what specific faults he can be convicted of. Other possibilities for rendering *ho Poneros* are "the Harmful One" or "the Troublesome One," or simply "Harm" or "Trouble." We could even say "Malice," without thinking of him as totally beyond the Pale, or as a Miltonic villain, alien to all virtue and good intentions and irreversibly condemned to eternal punishment.

The prayer to "Our Father" that Jesus teaches the Apostles (Matt. 6.9-13) ends with this petition: "Do not lead us to a *peirasmos*, but keep us free from harm" – or "from Harm." We can't tell which is the intended meaning, since the noun is in the genitive: *apo tou ponerou*, and could be either the neuter, *to poneron*, "bad," or masculine, *ho Poneros*, "Bad." In either case, Jesus is telling us to ask our Heavenly Father to ease up on the trials and to keep us out of trouble. He does not elaborate further, but goes on to explain what he clearly considers to be the most important petition of the prayer, "to forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors." "Debts" are "trespasses," he says, and we need to forgive the trespasses of others before God will forgive ours (Matt. 6.14-15).

Matthew reduces the Beelzebul parables from five to four, using the examples of satan/Satan only once, but in so doing he seemingly reveals that Satan does indeed have a kingdom: "If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?" (Matt. 12.25-29).

After the Beelzebul discussion, Matthew adds other interesting uses of "bad" (*poneros*):

- (1) A good man takes good things out of a good treasure, and a bad person takes bad things out of a bad treasure (Matt. 12.35).
- (2) A bad and adulterous generation asks for a sign (Matt. 12.39).
- (3) The Unclean Spirit goes out of a person, and eventually brings back seven other Spirits "badder" than itself, making the last state all the worse; so it will be with this bad generation (Matt. 12.43-45).

In the next chapter, after Jesus tells the parable of the Sower,

sowed good seed while an enemy sowed weeds. He explains that the weeds are "the children of Bad" and the enemy is "DEVIL." At the End of the Age, the Son of Man will send out his Angels, who will cast all obstacles (*skandala*) and workers of lawlessness into the fire, while the just will shine like the sun (Matt 13.38-43).

In this passage we hear about Angels who serve Jesus, but in another discourse about the Last Times Jesus speaks of Angels of DEVIL. He promises that all men and women who have failed to do good deeds will be sent "into the fire of the Aeon [the Next Age] that has been prepared for DEVIL and his Angels" (Matt. 25. 41). This means either that DEVIL and his Angels are destined to be punished for their own bad deeds, or that they are to be the punishers of the bad deeds of Humans.

We will see instances of Satan's being punished by fire in the Book of Revelation (**chap. 6.2**). But the idea of Satan as being in charge of eschatological (end-of-time) punishment is deducible from a passage of the *Book of the Similitudes*, a work that was added to the *Book of Enoch* in the first century AD (it comprises 1 *Enoch* 37-71). In the passage in question, Enoch reports a vision of sinners, and says:

Sinners shall be destroyed from before the face of the Lord of the Spirits – they shall perish eternally, standing before the face of His Earth. So I saw all the Angels of Plague cooperating and preparing all the chains of Satan. And I asked the Angel of Peace who was going with me, "For whom are they preparing these chains?" And he answered me, saying, "They are preparing these for the Kings and the Potentates of this Earth in order that they may be destroyed thereby."

(1 *Enoch* 53.2-5)

Elsewhere in the *Similitudes*, we hear of "Satans" (in the plural), who are accustomed to bring accusations against Humans before the Lord of Spirits (1 *Enoch* 40.7). We are told also of the oppressive deeds of the Satans upon Earth (65.6), whereas earlier we hear of "the Armies of Azazel" who are to be punished for the oppressive deeds they performed "as Messengers of Satan" (54.6).

To sum up, Matthew introduces us to a sophisticated DEVIL, who inquires into Jesus's nature as God's Son, challenging him to work a miracle of feeding himself, and then to invite a miracle of rescue from God, and finally to take over the rule of the World as DEVIL's deputy (Matt. 4.1-11). Then Jesus tells his Disciples to pray against testing and to pray for deliverance from "Harm" (6.13). Much later, Jesus assures his listeners that Satan is not divided against himself and his kingdom is still standing (12.26). DEVIL (as "Bad") snatches away the word of the Kingdom from one's heart (13.19), and he sows harmful weeds (13.38-39). Jesus identifies Peter with Satan for being an obstacle to his destiny in Jerusalem (16.23), and we learn that in the next world fire has been prepared for DEVIL and his Angels (25.41).

As in Mark, DEVIL makes no appearance, even by reference, in Matthew's narrative of Jesus's Passion, Death, and Resurrection. But it may be that certain aspects of the Passion narrative in Mark (the triple Agony in the Garden, the three challenges to Peter) inspired Matthew's stylized account of DEVIL's threefold temptation of Jesus in the desert.

4.3 LUKE'S TWO BOOKS (THIRD GOSPEL AND ACTS): SATAN IN CHARGE, AND HIS PREDICTED FALL "LIKE LIGHTNING"

The Third Gospel is anonymous, but there are good reasons for accepting the early tradition that its author was the Greek physician Luke, a Gentile convert to Christ, who, as we have seen, became a companion of St. Paul (see above, **chap. 3.1**). He was also the author of the Acts of the Apostles, and he addressed both of his books to a high-ranking man, probably a Roman, named Theophilus.

While using Mark as a guide for his Gospel, Luke adds some striking elements to our appreciation of Satan. Like Matthew, he begins with an Infancy Narrative, but one that is very different from Matthew's. He includes the birth of John the Baptist, and John's father, Zachary, speaks of the coming Messiah almost likening him