

CHAPTER 7  
MEMRA 21: ON THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

Mar Narsai

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**Introduction**

This dramatic Memra is a theological explication of the temptation account in the Gospel of Luke. It begins by recounting some selected events from the life of Christ, beginning with the annunciation, the words of Simeon and Anna in the temple, the preaching of John the Baptist, and the Baptism of Christ. The thematic connection between these events is brought into strong relief by Narsai in making the observer of them to be Satan. The words of Gabriel to Mary, and of Simeon, and John, and most of all the voice of the Father pointing out his Beloved, taken together terrify Satan and his hosts, and force him to ask how Christ can be a mere man when he is spoken of in these ways (line 42). The second section of the Memra continues Satan's perspective and asks a series of questions about how Christ can be either God or man, or both. This section (paralleled by a hymn in the Christmas Office of the Church of the East attributed to Narsai and discussed in the Introduction) verifies Narsai's orthodox Christology, since there is a singular Subject spoken of in discussing both the Divine and the human nature of Christ (line 43f).

This is an important point here, since much of this Memra focuses deliberately on Christ's humanity, and refers to him as both "the Son of Man" and "the Man." This focus is necessary in the context of the temptation narrative for several reasons. First, Christ enters the arena to fight against Satan precisely as the Second Adam (line 90f) – God sees that his image Adam has fallen and therefore sends Christ to repair what was broken (line 415); second, in his victory, Christ gives the whole human race victory over temptation, since if in the first Adam all of us fell, in the Second Adam all of us rise up (lines 213, 376, 385); third, Christ's battle against temptation is depicted as an example for us to learn from in fighting our own temptations (line 360). These reasons, added to the plain fact that Christ cannot be tempted in his Divinity (line 522), make it clear (on the one hand) that it is Christ the Son of Man who is the focus of the temptation, but also (on the other hand) that it is Christ the Son of God who alone has the Power of the Spirit needed to defeat Satan (line 372).

Indeed, the baptism of Christ reveals not only the Trinity, but also the Incarnation, since there we witness both the humble virtue of Christ baptized by John as well as the voice of the Father announcing his Eternal Son (line 61). But again, Satan is bewildered by this, and sets out to see whether Christ is truly Divine or merely another son of Adam. The memory of the temptation of Adam is still fresh in Satan's mind (line 90), and this is the pattern he takes up as he approaches Christ. The Memra is filled with the imagery of gladiators fighting in a stadium, with Christ and Satan as the fighters and the angels (and later the human beings around the temple) as spectators (line 141). Christ, armed with the Spirit, is not only victorious, but gloriously so, making Satan and his armies a laughingstock, which is especially embarrassing because he, a spirit, was defeated by one with a Body (line 119, 210).

The first temptation is the most like that of Adam, since it involves food and bodily desire (line 173). But the temptation itself, while based on human desire, tests Christ's divinity, since transforming the nature of a thing would be an act of creation (line 189). Christ is not led into the wilderness to prove anything to Satan, however, but rather to teach us how to defeat him. The way to defeat the enticements of bodily desire, it turns out, is by means of the Law, which Christ quotes (line 224). Through obedience to the Law, Christ, and in him all of us children of Adam, can find the strength to defeat the temptations based on the body's desires.

The second temptation (following Luke's ordering) focuses on the material aspect of the kingdoms that Satan shows to Christ, and Narsai interprets it in terms of love of money and the glory

that comes from wealth (line 241, 252). The drama again is elevated here, and Satan comes across as a clever and experienced conman, telling Christ to merely say a few words of worship in order to gain the whole world (lines 270, 280). He depicts himself as a kind tyrant who asks so little of his subjects and gives them so much (line 282). Christ responds in furious zeal (line 306), first because only God is God and deserves worship, and second because money itself is worthless (line 310).

The third temptation is the most public, since Satan in his arrogance wishes for human spectators as he attempts victory again. This is why he takes Christ to the temple (line 324), but the temptation itself is not for Christ to simply show off, but to prove publicly that God rewards the just man (line 350). Christ throwing himself off the temple and being carried by the angels would therefore be a shortcut to coerce faith in those who do not believe. Remarkably, Narsai does not immediately (or even explicitly) narrate Christ's response to this third temptation. It is not until nearly 100 lines later that we are given an implicit answer: Christ is not simply some messenger to bring the faith of God into people's hearts; he is himself the Temple where God and Man become one (line 449).

Christ's humanity is stressed in this Memra, therefore, not only because it was "one of us" who had to defeat Satan (lines 118, 134), but because the Incarnation which unites God and Man completely is revealed during this trial. In a way, Satan got his question answered, not for himself, but for us – though the full battle, and the full revelation of Christ's Divinity, is not complete until after Christ's death (line 478). The temptation is therefore a prefiguring of the passion of Christ, where his Body truly fulfills its sacrificial destiny in being the Temple of God where all things are re-ordered and restored, all becomes what it should (line 487), and God and man are ultimately united (line 491). It is no surprise, then, that the Trinity is also revealed at the temptation: the Spirit, by the command of the Father, leads the Son into the wilderness (line 445), and allows Satan to tempt him exactly three times (line 473), subsuming the ultimate desires of the evil one into the redemptive plan of God.

## Translation

### I. Christ's Life Until the Temptation

1. Satan heard new sounds among mortals:
2. men and angels speaking of peace for men.<sup>1</sup>
3. The rebel heard of the peace of man from Gabriel,
4. and fear seized him – what is this new thing happening?
5. The head of the angels greeted the daughter of mortals,
6. and the envier trembled at the good news to man.
7. “Peace to you, Mary,”<sup>2</sup> the spirit said in the ears of Mary,
8. and the evil one lamented and gathered the demons to his laments.
9. “The Lord is with you,” the angel called to the daughter of mortals,
10. and the laments of the backbiter doubled at the peace of man.
11. The messenger called the Son of the daughter of mortals “the Son of the Most High,”
12. and the hater was shocked, and his legions sat in mourning.
13. The man of spirit explained these things among the earthly,
14. and the demons shook, and Satan, the head of their ranks, trembled.
15. One spirit preached his conception to one woman,
16. but on the day of his birth, many cried out in hope for man.<sup>3</sup>
17. Spirits cried out with good hope to the bodily,
18. and the rebel died at the hopeful things for the life of man.
19. Hopeful sounds were spoken by every mouth,
20. and man and spirits rejoiced, and demons were saddened.
21. Simeon heard the sound aloud of him to come,<sup>4</sup>
22. and man was tested in the dawning of his light as in a furnace.
23. Anna the prophetess narrated his various commands,<sup>5</sup>
24. and Hebrew women erupted after her words.
25. The voice of the son of the sterile<sup>6</sup> was louder than thunder,
26. when he cried out that the time is fulfilled and has come.<sup>7</sup>
27. He prophesied that the time of the Law is complete,
28. and the time for leading a spiritual life has come.
29. The pure one, purifying the impure, named him the pure Lamb,<sup>8</sup>
30. by whose sacrifice would erase sin and give life.
31. The ambassador called the One who sent him “master of the threshing-floor,”<sup>9</sup>
32. and showed that he is the Lord and Judge who tests all.
33. Men and the heavenly preached these sounds,
34. and the Father added the stamp of his voice, and sealed them.<sup>10</sup>
35. The rebel, hater of man, heard these blessed words,

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 2:14.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 1:28.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 2:14.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Luke 2:32.

<sup>5</sup> Luke 2:36.

<sup>6</sup> That is, John the Baptist.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 3:2.

<sup>8</sup> John 1:29.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Luke 3:17.

<sup>10</sup> Luke 3:22.

36. and became embittered against the words alien to him.
37. New sounds were spoken among the rational,
38. about a Son of Man who resembles man but is above man.
39. Even the rebel looked at him as if a man,
40. and was embittered at the speech about him implying he is not.
41. The hater was between two considerations about him,
42. for he did not know what to call him, man or God.

## II. Christological Interlude<sup>11</sup>

43. If he calls him man, things said about him are greater than that;
44. if he calls him God, his embodiment witnesses that he is man.
45. The composition of his body shows that he is fully man;
46. but the power of his words preaches that he is Divine.
47. His conception and birth proclaim his humanity;
48. but those who brought his tidings,<sup>12</sup> the Power of Existence dwelling within him.
49. Even Satan was considering the Power of Existence,
50. how he is man and how his Power is greater than man.
51. The one lacking in intellect was amazed by his great Power,
52. and was consumed by [the thought that] these two can be in one Man.
53. A womb conceived him; organs birthed him; knees carried him:
54. these are of a man who has sensible senses.
55. He was conceived by a Voice, not by a physical union:
56. this is higher than a fleshy man.
57. He suckled milk, and received instruction, and tired from labor:
58. natural things witness that he is of human nature.
59. He was baptized by a man like a man, as if in need;
60. this reveals the neediness according to his humanity.
61. The Holy Spirit descended, and the Father proclaimed “this is my Beloved;”
62. here is the Divine Power that empowers the Man.
63. He went up from the water, one Man with body and soul,
64. and the Spirit descended and alighted upon him without moving.

## III. Satan's Scheme

65. The Second Adam was led in the power of the Spirit,
66. and the enemy marveled at his power and his Body.
67. The backbiter whipped himself with stiff cords,
68. and considered whether to fight against him or not.
69. He of bitter inclination was dismayed like a child,
70. and thought about ways he could fulfill his inclination.
71. The rebel felt a hateful feeling in his mind,
72. and longed to fight against him as against a man.
73. He thought, “who will grant me to fight against him?”

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<sup>11</sup> This section is paralleled by a long hymn in the *Hudhra* for Christmas attributed to Narsai. See vol. 1, 562-565, as well as the Introduction.

<sup>12</sup> That is, the angels in Luke 2:14.

74. For I will reveal his passions by means of passions, if he is [merely] a passionate being.”  
75. He looked upon the Son of Adam as if upon Adam,  
76. and he expected to lead Adam astray like Adam.<sup>13</sup>  
77. He supposed he could fight with him adamly,  
78. but he feared that the Hidden One would overcome him.  
79. The vessel of wrath counted him as [merely] one of the just,  
80. and was too bitter to speak judgment openly with him.  
81. He was consumed by his good works for thirty years,  
82. until he heard the sound “this is my Beloved.”  
83. This sound brought trembling to his armies,  
84. and they began to cry out from the sadness of their minds.  
85. The drowning awoke as from sleep at the voice of the Father,  
86. and they gathered as one to weave a plot against the Mystery of our salvation.  
87. The rebel and his armies wove an evil plot,  
88. in order to battle against the Warrior who was stronger than they.  
89. The deceiver armed himself with an armor of deceit,  
90. and began to trouble things as he did in Paradise.  
91. He had compared that time to this one,  
92. but did not know that one time does not resemble another.  
93. He called the Second Adam an Adamite,  
94. and like him, he tempted him in the passions of the flesh.  
95. He reminded the bodily one of the passions of the body,  
96. and he troubled him with various enticements as if a friend.

#### IV. Christ the Champion in the Arena

97. The lover of conflict wished to face him in a conflict,  
98. where the needs of life could not be found by earthly beings.  
99. He provoked him to the fight like an Athlete,  
100. to see whether he had the kinds of enticements that Adam did.  
101. He armed himself with every adamic passion,  
102. for he thought he might escape from his temptations.  
103. What was said of him shook him to trickery,  
104. and he plotted to fight against him craftily.  
105. The craftsman prepared his armory craftily,  
106. and he gathered opportunities to fight with various attacks.  
107. He arranged crafty opportunities in his mind like weapons,  
108. and he gathered his strength and tested the weapons of his deception.  
109. He sought a time to show the manners of his tricks,  
110. and in time he measured which opportunities were best.  
111. He prepared the opportunities of his deception for a long time,  
112. and as he lied, he feared his deception would be revealed.  
113. He fought him before he fought an open battle,  
114. and he tested himself before he was tested, lest he fail.  
115. He attacked a Warrior mightier than himself,

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<sup>13</sup> Genesis 3:6.

116. and so he strengthened himself lest he become a laughingstock to man.  
117. The hater of man considered these things by himself,  
118. and the Lover of man prepared a Man to fight against him.  
119. The Spirit armed a Man from us with the armor of the Spirit,<sup>14</sup>  
120. and sent him to do battle in the war against the mighty one.  
121. He prepared the match according to the preparation of the enemy,  
122. and wherever the headmaster wanted, there the Athlete went.  
123. The Athlete of Justice went out like an athlete,  
124. and he was entirely armed with the armor of the Spirit.  
125. The Power that chose him sent the armies above along with him,  
126. to be witnesses and spectators of his athleticism.  
127. The Lord of the world set the world as a theater,  
128. and the armies above were spectators of the fighters' contest.  
129. That fight was a fight on behalf of the world,  
130. so he did well to gather the heavenly to cheer at it.  
131. They had been saddened since the time Adam had failed,  
132. and were awaiting the time when Adam would conquer in Adam.  
133. Those who love our race were prepared for the day of victory,  
134. and they longed for our race to conquer through the Son of our race.  
135. The fighters stood one against the other for forty days:  
136. the prince of the air<sup>15</sup> and a Man from us – an amazing sight.  
137. An amazing sight was shown to the eyes of the spectators,  
138. as a spirit and a Body fought, but not with hands.  
139. The Bodily One fought, but not with hands,  
140. and spiritually he held his own against the spirit of the air.<sup>16</sup>  
141. He chose a laborious fast as a weapon to fight with,  
142. lest the backbiter think that the Power was that of food.  
143. He came to battle with the mighty one without food,  
144. that demons may see that though he is Man, he is greater than man.  
145. Through his endurance he taught the savage ones  
146. that there is another Power within him, mightier than all.  
147. The head of their ranks considered his great Power,  
148. and because of this prepared many battles of every kind.  
149. The rebel arranged every kind of trap for the Man,  
150. lest he escape his tricks, and he become a laughingstock.  
151. The attack which he made immediately against the Warrior was great,  
152. and did not resemble the attacks he had made in any other age.  
153. Great fear came upon the one who had put on a soul,<sup>17</sup>  
154. and he feared to make battle with the Bodily One.  
155. The Bodily One also considered his fear and boldness,  
156. and provoked him to a fight through the form of hunger.  
157. The Faster fasted for forty days from enticements,

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<sup>14</sup> Ephesians 6:10.

<sup>15</sup> Ephesians 2:2.

<sup>16</sup> Ephesians 6:12.

<sup>17</sup> Narsai seems to be imagining that Satan appears to Christ in human form.

158. and at the end, nature demanded natural things of him.  
159. The nature of Adam considered his nature,  
160. and because of this he concluded his fast like the fast of his kinsmen.<sup>18</sup>  
161. Satan was encouraged by this opportunity,  
162. that the amount of fasting did not pass that of those who had fasted.

#### V. The First Temptation: Stones into Bread

163. The rebel looked at the hunger of the Body of the Bodily One,  
164. and he approached him and saw a Body which hunger had overcome.  
165. He saw that the senses of his Body had weakened like any body,  
166. and he thought in himself that this is the time to entice the body.  
167. He remembered that time in Paradise,  
168. when he saw that Adam longed to eat the fruit.<sup>19</sup>  
169. He looked upon the Adamite as upon Adam,  
170. and in the same way he brought forth a bodily enticement.  
171. He awakened the desire of the body in the Body of the Bodily One,  
172. and as if a friend, he moved him to ask for food.  
173. He had convinced the house of Adam to go astray with him using food,  
174. and he thought that perhaps he could convince him like them.  
175. He had previously taken up the argument of bread like a battle,  
176. and he began to show the manners of might to his Enemy.  
177. The deceiver explained: "Say the word 'let it be bread,'<sup>20</sup>  
178. and then it will truly be known that you are the Son of God.  
179. Command insensitive nature as the Creator,  
180. and do a thing appropriate to your Name, for he called you in his Name.  
181. Transform rocks from the hardness of their nature,  
182. and give them the nature of edible bread.  
183. Through actions reveal a proof of the things said about you,  
184. and the greatness of your station will be revealed before the eyes of spectators.  
185. The Father proclaimed before the eyes of many that 'this is my Beloved;'  
186. if you are the Beloved, perform a miracle and verify your love.  
187. Thousands heard the sound that you are the Son of God;  
188. verify the Name by an act that comes from you.  
189. Perform an act that resembles your Father for the work of his hands,  
190. and the rational and mute will lift their hands at the Name of your authority.  
191. Speak a word filled with marvel before the spectators,  
192. that those who see the marvel of your powerful words may praise you.  
193. You are in the wilderness and cannot find sustenance;  
194. command the natures to nourish you as a Lord.  
195. You are a Lord according to the Voice that spoke of you;  
196. complete your Lordship by a complete word from your mouth.  
197. See your need, as the righteous, your friends, also saw,

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<sup>18</sup> That is, Christ fasted for the same number of days as Moses and Elijah. Cf. Exodus 34:28; 1 Kings 19:8.

<sup>19</sup> Genesis 3:6.

<sup>20</sup> Luke 4:3.

198. and do a thing that is justified by the need of your body.  
199. Your friends also fasted in a fast like yours,  
200. and after a time, they turned to fill their needs.  
201. The choice of your Name is greater than theirs,  
202. so perform a wonder that is fit for one greater than your friends.  
203. It is fit for you to change a thing into another thing,  
204. that your act may be a verified witness to the word of your mouth.”  
205. The prince of the air explained these things to the Head of our race,  
206. thinking he would entice him through his troublings.  
207. The master of error had held this battle before  
208. and led many to error, but his claw did not touch the skin of Christ.  
209. The skillful combatant had won this fight before,  
210. but now a Bodily Combatant made him a laughingstock.  
211. By this fight, the one haughty by nature tempted his Power,  
212. and the Nature clothed with mortality crushed his arrogance.  
213. The spirit brought the Bodily One to a battle of desire,  
214. and the spirit lost, and the Body with noble senses won.  
215. He enclosed desires with boiling desire,  
216. and sent them like scouts to the Bodily One.  
217. The miserable one sent miserable scouts to the quick-minded One,  
218. and he sent them back in the miserable shame they deserved.

#### VI. Christ's First Response

219. The Second Adam slapped the scouts of the evil one in their faces,  
220. the way the Creator treated the sacrifice of Cain.<sup>21</sup>  
221. He trampled the advice of the deceiver like garbage,  
222. and he mocked and laughed at his boring tricks.  
223. He wisely gave a word to the weak-minded one,  
224. and with the Law he shut the mouth of the blasphemer.  
225. He judged his condemnation lawfully,  
226. that he may know that he fought him lawfully.  
227. He undid the binding of the many-worded one with a single word,  
228. with the Scripture, “man does not live by bread alone.”<sup>22</sup>  
229. “Man does not live by bread alone” he answered the liar,  
230. and he destroyed and brought down the deceitful tricks of every kind.  
231. The Creator is able to give life to man without bread,  
232. and the word of the Name of the Creator is enough for anything.  
233. The shamed one was ashamed of the confidence which had inflated him,  
234. and he moved on and ran to devise other tricks.  
235. He exchanged tricks for tricks for the Champion,  
236. thinking there was hope for his deception.  
237. The loser thought he had a vain hope against the Victor,  
238. for he did not know that his hope was less than victorious.

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<sup>21</sup> Genesis 4:5.

<sup>22</sup> Luke 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3.

239. The shamefaced one was fighting against the Victorious One,  
240. thinking there were tricks to entrap the Man.

### VII. The Second Temptation: Worldly Glory

241. The deceiver set the deceitful traps of love of money,  
242. and hid them with comely beauty that shuts the eyes.  
243. He arranged every kind of lovely beauty to shut the eyes,  
244. gold and silver, beryl and pearl.  
245. He arranged everything illusively, though it was nothing,  
246. and held them up, while they were really nothing.  
247. He considered the Man from us as merely a man,  
248. for this he arranged a likeness of what man loves.  
249. The love of money is greatly loved by mortals,  
250. and for this he kept its pleasure for the second battle.  
251. In the first battle, he fought him with a comely desire;  
252. and in the second with the love of money, the sea of sins.<sup>23</sup>  
253. He saw that the mind of man was drowning in this sea,  
254. and he unleashed and made it flow over the land before our Savior.  
255. He covered the earth with the garment of money as with a sea,  
256. and did not know that the Quick Minded One derided it.  
257. He arranged his shadows in a garment,  
258. and saw while hidden that all of his hidings were torn up openly.  
259. He arranged all kinds of lovely things while they were naught,  
260. and approached the Champion in order to stomp his Power.  
261. He opened the theater of his shameful, evil things,  
262. and the ignorant one entered and stood among gold which was not gold.  
263. The haughty minded one cried out rabidly against the Humble One:  
264. "Come, O human, see something that is difficult to show.  
265. Come, O man," the evil one said to a Man from us,  
266. "the whole world, which I hold under my authority."<sup>24</sup>  
267. Mine is the world and the glories within it,  
268. and I give it to whomever I will if he worships me.  
269. Only worship me as a lord almighty over all,  
270. and take the world in exchange for the confession of the word of your mouth.  
271. Confess my lordship, and call me lord lovingly,  
272. and I give you the good reward of the world and its wealth.  
273. I give you the world and its wealth with one word,  
274. and you return to me the worship of love lovingly.  
275. Take the world, you man who is of the world,  
276. and give me as a dwelling the word of your mouth, that you worship me.  
277. Give me your mouth as a temporal temple,  
278. and take the thing that cannot be comprehended by the rational.  
279. See how large is the great station of the entire world,

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. 1 Timothy 6:10.

<sup>24</sup> Luke 4:6.

280. and how small is the worship of the word that you repay me.  
281. See how overflowing I am in my love to man or the son of man:  
282. I do not demand heavy things from those who love me.  
283. I ask for love alone from him who hears me;  
284. hear me and see how generous I am to him who hears me.”

### VIII. Christ’s Second Response

285. The evil one spoke this to the Son of our race,  
286. and the Son of our race became zealous against his deceptions.  
287. The One Zealous for noble things put on great zeal,  
288. hearing that the servant desired the worship of his Lord.  
289. Intensely, he launched the arrow of chastisement into him,  
290. he burst his heart, and the bile that was there came out.  
291. Evil bile was hidden in the evil-minded one,  
292. and our Lord revealed it with the open word of the word of his mouth.  
293. He answered the adversary from the Scriptures,  
294. and taught him the order that he should have known without this.  
295. “Have you heard or not heard, O rebel, that it is written,  
296. that the Lord is One, and all worship is due to him?<sup>25</sup>  
297. The Lord is One, who has dominion over all divinely,  
298. and there is no participation in his Divinity for another.  
299. The Name of God is not due to one who is not God,  
300. nor allowing the station of Fashioning to a thing that is made.  
301. You are a thing that is made, O insolent one, supreme in arrogance,  
302. know your nature, lest you try to raise yourself above your Maker.  
303. Know that you are made, a work made by a Maker,  
304. and you cannot grasp at the station of your Lord insolently.  
305. Cease, O insolent one, from your insolent explanation,  
306. and do not explain your hateful babbling blasphemy to me.  
307. I know you and your deceitful explanations,  
308. and the error by which you lead others astray will not fool me.  
309. Go fool others, you fool, like you always do;  
310. take the fantasy of money gathering and slam it in your own face.  
311. You give nothing, and you do not gain what you think;  
312. you fight in vain, and your battle is pointless.  
313. Go fight your fight against yourself,  
314. and receive the reward of shamefacedness for your loss.  
315. Go, you loser, and look at how vile you are,  
316. and leave off your fights against honest men, lest they cut you apart.  
317. Lo, your loss in two battles has been revealed:  
318. go prepare a third battle, and lose three times.  
319. Three witnesses raise their hands in every decree,  
320. and thrice I will win against you in the third battle.”

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<sup>25</sup> Luke 4:8.

### IX. The Third Temptation: The Temple

321. The fighter went up from the contest of the second fight,  
322. and he changed the place and the manner of fight.  
323. He ran away from the war where he thought he would win,  
324. and he began to arrange an evil battle before spectators.  
325. He wanted to show his battle in a peaceful place:  
326. "When I win, there will be men to witness my victory."  
327. The fault-filled one fought for victory,  
328. and did not know defeat upon defeat would increase for him.  
329. The impure one went up to the holy temple to fight,  
330. where everyone could plainly see his loss.  
331. The lowest of the low brought the Exalted One to a great height,  
332. and he stood there and became mad with his usual madness.  
333. "Throw yourself from this height to the depth below,"<sup>26</sup>  
334. and if you remain uninjured you are the Son of God.  
335. God called you the Son of God before the eyes of many;  
336. fly on the air as is fitting to the Son of God.  
337. You are a just man, and what was said about you witnesses this;  
338. descend from the heights and the assemblies above will receive you.  
339. It is written about the just that they will proceed on earth without injury,  
340. being protected by spiritual angels.  
341. You are one of the just, and indeed your station is greater than the just;  
342. prove your justice with diligence regarding your justice.  
343. Test your Power through the diligence of the heavenly,  
344. who would bear you upon their hands, as it is written.<sup>27</sup>  
345. They will not leave you among difficulties, as difficult as they are,  
346. for they are commanded to protect you by God.  
347. Prove the help of your guardians through deeds,  
348. and the portion of the just will be encouraged to continue in justice.  
349. Tread a path by a trial through difficulties,  
350. and show man the crown of the reward that comes from justice."

### X. Litany on Christ's Victory: Man Defeats Satan

351. O deceiver, how deceptive you are in laying traps;  
352. O Quick One, how well you jump over the hidden traps.  
353. O cunning one, how cunning you are in weaving tricks;  
354. O Wise One, how wise you are in cutting them up.  
355. O battered one, how much did you fight to fulfill your inclination;  
356. O Thoughtful One, how thoughtful you were to win in order.  
357. O spirit, how quickly your tricks flew away;  
358. O Bodily One, how robust your senses passed over them.  
359. O uncustomary fight upon earth,  
360. which made it custom for the world to fight against spirits.

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<sup>26</sup> Luke 4:9.

<sup>27</sup> Psalms 91:11-12.

361. One Bodily One fought against the spirits,  
362. and men began to fight spiritually.  
363. A Bodily One conquered the one with great power by the Power of the Spirit,  
364. and the heavenly assemblies marveled at the victory of man.  
365. Assembly upon assembly of spirits stood at this fight,  
366. and were amazed at how a Body can overcome a spirit.  
367. A great marvel was spoken of among their assemblies:  
368. "what is this new thing that has happened among mortals?"  
369. They saw the Son of mortals fighting against a mighty one,  
370. and they were amazed and dumbfounded that mortality overcame the tyrant.  
371. They considered the victory of man and the loss of the evil one,  
372. and they glorified the Power of the Creator which gave man victory.  
373. Spirits cried out in glory to the Power who gave man victory,  
374. and who reconciled the world to his Greatness through one Son of Man.  
375. One Man fought against Satan,  
376. and Satan lost, and the Man won, and gave man victory.  
377. The Son of Man won in the battle he made against the mighty one,  
378. and the mighty one lost in the battle against the Son of Man.  
379. The assemblies above considered this fight,  
380. and wondered at the unusual victory.  
381. They saw the unusual victory and loss,  
382. and praised and exalted the One who had exalted the race of man.  
383. The race of man had lost and been conquered by Satan,  
384. and the Son of Man rose and paid the debts of the sons of his race.  
385. Adam was guilty in the desire of the fruit through the advice of the evil one,  
386. but the Son of Adam conquered the one who had conquered man.  
387. Adam sought the uprising of Adam against the hater of Adam,  
388. and he humbled him and threw him down from his tyrannical throne.  
389. He openly held a battle against him before the spirits,  
390. and he picked him up and tossed him, and made him a laughingstock and a byword.  
391. He entered with him into a stadium filled with sufferings,  
392. and he kicked the difficult passions with the legs of the mind.  
393. The rebel had arranged every suffering for the Bodily One,  
394. and he divided them into three battles.  
395. The ignorant one held three battles against the Wise One,  
396. and in all three, the Son of Adam won and Satan lost.  
397. In the desire for bread every desire that man desires was contained,  
398. and the Son of Man despised human desires.  
399. In the love of money he had arranged all forms of money,  
400. and the Athlete of the Truth considered them as nothing.  
401. In the love of glory he hid all the traps that entrap man,  
402. and the Man jumped over them and passed by them without injury.  
403. The Athlete went up from the contest without injury,  
404. and was extolled by the spectators of his athleticism.  
405. The Bodily Athlete won victory victoriously,  
406. and the spirit, the head of the air, lost like a loser.

407. The head of the air fought against the Son of Man,  
408. and the Man won and the mighty one who had beaten man lost.

### XI. Christ Redeems Adam as God's Image

409. Now that all kinds of fight and loss had ended,  
410. he asked where was the fight, and what was its cause.  
411. Its cause was the battle that had happened in the land of Eden,  
412. when man had lost, and the evil one had won until now.  
413. The Adamic race had been bound in the loss of losses,  
414. and the tyrannical demons had become haughty over its loss.  
415. The One who had called it his image<sup>28</sup> saw its loss,  
416. and did not like it that demons stomped on his image.  
417. Now he has renewed the same image<sup>29</sup> that had lost in sin,  
418. and returned and fashioned it in that original form.  
419. He had formed Adam from the dust without copulation,  
420. and without the union of sharing he formed the Last One.  
421. He undid sin through the same race that had lost to sin,  
422. through the Son of Man that he fashioned through the Spirit without copulation.  
423. He fashioned the Son of Man from the daughter of man by the power of the Spirit,<sup>30</sup>  
424. and filled him with the Spirit and called him in his Name – the Son of God.  
425. God called the Son of Man the Son of God,  
426. and Satan trembled at the Name of the Son of Man that was greater than man.  
427. These names made him come to the fight,  
428. and he was consumed about when there would be room for his desire.  
429. He was scorched with the fire of his desire as in a fire,  
430. and did not know how to cool off the furnace.  
431. “Who will grant me to fight against him?” he thought,  
432. and he feared the divine command.  
433. “Who will let me bring all kinds of enticements to him,  
434. and learn whether he also is a man full of enticements?  
435. Who will bring him out to the wilderness, far from humanity,  
436. that I may go out with him and test his strength by the passions of man?  
437. He is a man entirely, of the humanity filled with passions –  
438. but what is this, that he treads on passions while being a passionate being?  
439. Who will disregard the Power of the Creator which helps him,  
440. and give me a chance to come before him as against Adam?”  
441. The hater of man considered these things,  
442. and the Lover of man anticipated his shameful desires.  
443. He saw that he prepared to do battle against the Son of Adam,  
444. and he armed Adam with the armor of the Spirit, and sent him against him.  
445. It is written that in the Spirit he left a peaceful place for the outer wilderness,<sup>31</sup>  
446. so it is clear that he was led by the Power of the Spirit.

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<sup>28</sup> Genesis 1:26-27.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Colossians 3:10.

<sup>30</sup> Luke 1:35.

<sup>31</sup> Luke 4:1.

447. The Power of the Creator signaled that he should go out to where he went out,  
448. and because the hater saw it, he went out with him to see the ending.  
449. The Spirit revealed to the Temple of the Spirit that he would do battle,  
450. and taught him the way to destroy the tricks of the backbiter.  
451. He showed him that the hater who defeated Adam would fight against him,  
452. and he anointed him with the Spirit, that the hand of the spirit would not strike him.  
453. He instructed him how to hold battle spiritually,  
454. and how to overcome in a stadium full of sufferings.  
455. The Athlete of the Spirit did all he did in the Power of the Spirit,  
456. since the will of his soul was united to the Spirit he had accepted.  
457. He with the Spirit, and the Spirit with him, made battle,  
458. and he repaid the debt of the eviction from Paradise.  
459. He repaid the eviction that fell upon Adam to the evil one,  
460. that he may know that Adam has the power of victory.  
461. The Son of Adam won, and gave Adam victory over his debts,  
462. and Satan lost, and the army of demons lost along with him.  
463. The Son of Adam answered a tough answer to his envier,  
464. and it was not enough for the hater to give a word in response to a word.

## XII. The Trinity Revealed in Christ's Temptations

465. The deceiver asked the Mindful One three times,  
466. and he exposed his responses with one word.  
467. He held three battles with the Champion,  
468. and three times he beat him into the dirt like death.  
469. The Son of Adam kicked the son of Gehanna three times,  
470. and he mourned and cried out, and the legions of his armies trembled.  
471. The Archer of justice shot three arrows,  
472. and three times he completed the fight against his envier.  
473. He was destined to preach three Names among the earthly,  
474. and he preached them mysteriously in the battles he fought.  
475. Through the Mystery, the Power hidden within him won in battle,  
476. and he depicted it in mystery before he showed it after his death.  
477. This is the reason why he battled with Satan:  
478. to save his race, and to reveal the Mystery of the Name of his Existence.  
479. Mysteriously, these things were hidden in him:  
480. the salvation of man, and the Power of Incomprehensible Existence.  
481. By the Power that chose him, he revealed both of them through the battle he fought,  
482. and verified them through the victory he won over the evil one.  
483. By the Power that chose him, he defeated the tyrant that had defeated man,  
484. and the Good One declared the victory in favor of his might.  
485. By his might, he strengthened the habits of the passions of man,  
486. united to the Will which chose him over all.  
487. The Will of the Hidden One dwelt in the Temple of the construction of his Body,  
488. and accomplished in it whatever was appropriate to order all things.

489. It was appropriate to accomplish all<sup>32</sup> to order all things,  
490. and for the Son of Man to complete the love of his Sender.  
491. The Hidden One sent the Son of Man with this intention:  
492. to save man, and to reveal the love of his Sender.  
493. Man was captive to the hater of man from the beginning,  
494. so a Man went out and returned the captive to the house of his fathers.  
495. The Lover of his race went out to visit his race in the wilderness,  
496. to the place where the captor wished to capture his race.  
497. The Son of Man saved the captivity of man from the rebel,  
498. and his Power shamed him and made him a laughingstock before all creatures.  
499. This very Man defeated the tyrant who had defeated man,  
500. and by his victory, he exalted man and humbled demons.  
501. He humbled demons by the battle he made with the head of demons,  
502. and took from them the armor they had taken from his fathers.<sup>33</sup>  
503. He made the haters of his race stand naked,  
504. that they may no longer be armed to make battle with man.  
505. The Son of Man fought a great battle with their ranks,  
506. and the spiritual assemblies marveled at the power of his victory.  
507. The spectators of the contest saw the power of his victory,  
508. and they gathered to him to praise him as King.  
509. They weaved and offered a crown of praises to the Athlete of mankind,  
510. and they praised and thanked the Power that empowered him in the contest of passions.  
511. The Athlete of justice won against all passions,  
512. because the evil one had brought forth all three battles.

### XIII. Christ Victorious in His Humanity

513. The Son of our race was mighty in three battles against the mighty one,  
514. and he humbled the hater that had taken over our tribes.  
515. He humbled the mighty one who had humbled our race,  
516. he and the Power that empowered his weakness.  
517. The Power of the Creator made him victorious over the enemy,  
518. while the Creator was hidden in his constant glory.  
519. The Hidden One was constantly hidden in his constancy,  
520. for the Power from him upheld the Man from us.  
521. A Man from us fought against Satan,  
522. not the Creator, as the hard of heart pretend.  
523. ...<sup>34</sup>  
524. the Creator could not fight with bodily passions,  
525. The demons even witnessed whom they fought in battle:  
526. with a Son of Man, whom hunger overcame after his fasting.  
527. Hunger overcame him after fasting for forty days,  
528. and the hater knew that hunger witnessed to his humanity.

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<sup>32</sup> John 19:28.

<sup>33</sup> Referring probably to Adam's nakedness in Genesis 3:10.

<sup>34</sup> It appears that a line is missing here.

529. He saw that the fashioned Flesh was weakened by need,  
530. and thought that perhaps he could lead him into error through the desire for bread:  
531. the Second Adam was aware of the desire for bread in his body,  
532. in the way that he led Adam into error by the desire for the fruit.  
533. His tricks lost, and his opportunities were broken, and his lies were destroyed,  
534. and there was not found a place in the Pure One with faults.  
535. The rebel and his armies lost entirely,  
536. and the Son of Man won and gave victory to his race entirely.  
537. Henceforth, the race of Adam must give due glory  
538. to him who exalted the race of Adam through the Son of Adam.