

Luke 4:1 ¶ And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

Luke 4:2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

I think the wording indicates that it was at His baptism that Jesus was anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Spirit. It is always hard to keep an understanding of Jesus the man who became of “no reputation” as Paul worded it and Jesus—God in flesh. Following is an excerpt from my journal on Philippians.

Philippians 2:7–8 “But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

“made himself of no reputation” and “He humbled Himself” – These phrases emphasize that Jesus came willingly in obedience to the Father to provide the sacrifice needed to redeem man. He affirmed that truth to His disciples during His time of ministry as told us by the Apostle John in one of my favorite chapters in scripture.

John 10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

John 10:18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

The Greek for *no reputation* emphasizes the truth that He *emptied* Himself; He lived in the flesh as a man; He lived in dependence upon the Spirit—just as we are supposed to. He didn’t cease being God; He just **chose** to live with the limitations of a man, albeit a sinless man indwelt by the Spirit—just as Adam was created and intended to live. (I know I am repeating myself, but I think this truth is very important.) I think this truth is the basis for Paul’s statement in chapter 15 of 1Corinthians.

*1Cor. 15:20-22 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since **by man** came death, **by man** came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

He also boldly declared His equality with the Father.

John 10:30 I and my Father are one.

*John 14:9-11 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **he that hath seen me hath seen the Father**; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.*

Although Christ chose to empty Himself, He never quit being God. He humbled Himself in obedience, but He always remained the Son of God, inseparable part of the triune God. I don’t know how to say it any more clearly.....and I don’t

really know how to understand it. My little granddaughter made the statement one day shortly before she was four, "Jesus is God, and God is God; and that is hard to understand." Such an amazing truth from a child!
[end excerpt]

Jesus lived as a sinless man, as Adam was first created to be, in possession of the same Spirit that Adam had before he sinned. Because Jesus did not sin, He had the Spirit indwelling Him and the power of the Spirit available to Him just as surely as do we who accept Him as our Savior by faith today. I'm often reminded of Jesus' words that if we but had the faith of a mustard seed, we could move mountains. Well, I believe Jesus' faith in His Father was far greater than that mustard seed.

I believe this time in the wilderness was a time of testing for the "man" Jesus in preparation for His ministry according to God's plan. Matthew, Mark and Luke all emphasize that Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 2:17-18 "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

I think Satan couldn't wait to "tempt" the man Jesus. I think he actually thought he might get Jesus to yield to the flesh since he knew that Jesus had "emptied Himself." He actually thought he knew where Jesus would be most vulnerable.

Luke tells us that Jesus was tempted for 40 days, but we are only told of three overtures on the part of Satan during that time. Matthew's account indicates that the three temptations came after the 40 days of fasting.

I think it is significant that Jesus denied the flesh for the whole 40 days by abstaining from food. His reliance was on spiritual sustenance from the Holy Spirit. The humanity of Jesus is again emphasized by the fact that He was hungry at the end of the forty days.

Luke 4:3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

Luke 4:4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

This first temptation, if correct in chronological sequence, could only be a temptation if Jesus were hungry and accords with Matthew's account. Satan knows that Jesus is to live as a sinless "man" if He is to qualify as the perfect, acceptable sacrifice for sinful man. He is tempting Jesus to provide for Himself rather than trust God for His provision.

Jesus is very quick to use the word of God as His defensive weapon. He quotes from the book of Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 8:1–3 “All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.”

God never changes. His ways are consistent. Jesus believed this. God declared Himself sufficient for the needs of the people of Israel, and He would be no less sufficient for the needs of His Son.

Luke 4:5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

Luke 4:6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Luke 4:7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

With this temptation, Satan uses some of his supernatural abilities. He takes the Lord up to a high mountain to get a vision of all the kingdoms of the world “in a moment of time.” I think we sometimes forget the mighty powers that God allows Satan to use in accordance with His plan. Satan is making full use of those powers and of the authority that man yielded to him when he yielded to his temptation. He probably figured that by now Jesus was eager to take control of His kingdom without having to suffer for it. One little catch—He would have to worship Satan.

Again, the Lord Jesus uses the word of God, the first commandment, to answer Satan’s temptation, and He basically tells Satan to get lost. Jesus’ answer reminds me of the words of James.

James 4:7 “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

Matthew lists this temptation last, and I tend to think that probably correct in light of Jesus’ answer.

Luke 4:9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

Luke 4:10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

Luke 4:11 And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Luke 4:12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Satan tries another tactic; this time he appeals to Jesus pride. Satan encourages Jesus to make a great display of His power and authority by jumping off the pinnacle of the temple and proving the scripture. Problem is—as is always the case—Satan (and those who serve him) always take God’s word out of context to suit their own purposes. His quote is from the Psalms.

Psalms 91:9–12 “Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

The context clearly qualifies God’s deliverance to the fact that one has made God His “habitation,” from a root that means “to dwell together.” You can’t dwell with God without yielding to Him as your refuge, your source of hope and trust, as did the psalmist.

Again, Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy, the same section He quoted in answer to the previous temptation.

Deuteronomy 6:13–16 “Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth. Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.”

Massah is where God first provided water for His people by having Moses strike the rock.

Exodus 17:7 “And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?”

Scripture qualifies the actions of the people of Israel as questioning whether God was with them or not. Satan is basically goading Jesus to prove He is Immanuel, God with us, by His command of the angels. It is not God’s plan for Him to reveal Himself as God at this time and He knows it. God does not have to prove Himself to anyone; that He chooses to do so in so many ways gives evidence of His love, mercy and grace.

Temptations always come in one of three ways...

- the lust of the flesh
- the lust of the eyes
- the pride of life

...and Satan attacked Jesus in each area.

1 John 2:16 *“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”*

Luke 4:13 **And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.**

Matthew adds another bit of information: *Matthew 4:11 “Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”*

Jesus the man empowered by the Holy Spirit came through His time of testing with flying colors. He was determined to live wholly dependent on His Father through the provision of His Spirit and according to the truth of His word.

The angels came and ministered to Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, just as surely as they minister to us, the heirs of salvation, as directed by the Father.

Hebrews 1:13–14 “But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

Hebrews 2:9–10 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

I think it is significant to note that the devil departed—but only for a season. He would be back when Jesus faced His darkest hours as a man.

Luke 4:14 ¶ **And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.**

This seems to be a summary verse regarding the beginning of Jesus’ ministry (beginning in Galilee) since Luke is yet to record a single miracle that would cause Jesus to become so well known. Matthew seems to make the same kind of summary statement including more supporting context.

Matthew 4:23–24 “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.”

The Greek for “in the power of the Spirit” indicates that He exhibited a divine capacity for working miracles as recorded by Matthew.

Luke 4:15 **And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.**

Luke 4:16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

Luke 4:17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias.

And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

Luke 4:19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Luke 4:20 And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

Luke 4:21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Although the indication is that Jesus has been making the rounds teaching in the synagogues in the region, I think it is significant that the first specific incident Luke records concerns the reading from the scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth, His hometown. I think we can see the sovereign hand of God at work in that He is given the book of Isaiah to read; He didn't choose it. He did, however, choose a very specific portion to read. I have used this incident often as a reference point to understanding that biblical prophecy often embraces great gaps of time in a single prophecy. Jesus read the portion from Isaiah 61 that in context is talking about the coming of the Messiah. He does not read the whole prophecy, however. He stops in mid-sentence before the part that speaks of His coming in vengeance to establish His kingdom. He then closes the book and sits down and basically declares that He is the fulfillment of what He just read.

Note that the prophecy basically outlines Jesus' ministry:

- to preach the gospel, the good news of salvation
- to heal the brokenhearted—which He did through His miracles
- to preach deliverance to the captives—deliverance from the captivity of sin
- to recover sight to the blind—which He did physically through miracles and spiritually through His teaching of the correct understanding of God's word
- to set at liberty them that are bruised—a specific reference to providing forgiveness of sins and a brand new start in life
- to preach the acceptable year of the Lord—a message of God's favor in that Messiah has come

Luke 4:22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

Luke 4:23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

It seems that the people first responded with great admiration for the way He delivered His message with such grace. Grace is defined as God's divine influence upon the heart; so, it seems that they instinctively recognized that His words had spiritual significance. They seemed to be surprised that this message came from one who had grown up among them, Joseph's son; one they knew had received no special training.

Jesus' next words seem to be responding to what He perceived to be their unasked question. My paraphrase—Considering your declaration, why aren't you doing miracles here in your hometown like you did in Capernaum?

This definitely implies that news of miracles He had performed in Capernaum had reached Nazareth before this time.

Luke 4:24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

Luke 4:25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

Luke 4:26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow.

Luke 4:27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

Jesus makes a valid observation—"No prophet is accepted in his own country." He then goes on to back up His assertion with examples from the Old Testament.

In the days of Elijah God sent a great famine that lasted for 3.5 years as a judgment against His people who were following the lead of their evil king Ahab in the worship of idols and had turned against God. God provided for Elijah by sending him to a Gentile woman of Sidon who shared her last provisions with him in response to a promise of provision from God if she would grant his request (1Kings 17). Her faith was rewarded and God provided an unending supply of food for the duration of the famine.

Elisha followed in the footsteps of Elijah. 2Kings 5 records the story of Naaman, Captain of the armies of Syria, whose leprosy was healed when he obeyed (though reluctantly) the directions of Elisha. Naaman came to Elisha because of the witness of a faith-filled Israelite maid. Point is made that there were many lepers among the people of Israel, yet not one of them sought healing from the God of Israel through faith like this Gentile soldier did.

I think these examples were significant in that they highlighted God's compassion on the Gentiles. The Jews had been singled out as God's chosen people to example before the nations the blessing of living in faith and obedience to God. They had somehow developed the idea that God loved them to the exclusion of the other people of the world. Luke is making the point that God's love and compassion is extended to all, Jew or Gentile, who would put their faith in Him.

Luke 4:28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

Luke 4:29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

Luke 4:30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

Luke 4:31 ¶ And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

Luke 4:32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

Doesn't sound like Jesus believed in being "seeker sensitive" as is so popular today. As is often the case when confronted with our sin, the people became angry. They immediately forced Jesus out of the city to the top of a cliff with the intent of throwing Him to His death.

"But he passing through the midst of them" – As is always the case, God's servant is under His special protection until his/her ministry is completed. It is true for us no less than it was for God's Son.

Jesus now heads back to Capernaum, the place that seemed to serve as home base during the time of His ministry. Considering the miracles described below, I think it likely that Peter's home was that base. We are told that He taught on the Sabbath days, indicating a regular schedule for at least a while.

Luke makes special note of the fact that how Jesus delivered His message made a significant impact on those that heard Him. He taught with a power and authority that was distinct from all other teachers.

It grieves me that there are few in comparison today that are able to discern teachers who serve in the power and authority of God vs. those that serve in the charisma and power of the flesh.

Luke 4:33 And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

Luke 4:34 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.

Luke 4:35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

Luke 4:36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

Luke 4:37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

Luke now records a miracle that happened one day while Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. A man was in attendance that was demon-possessed. The demon recognized Jesus and loudly declared His identity as “the Holy One of God” (obviously through the speech of the man). He evidently knew that his reign of terror was limited and questioned if Jesus had come to destroy them (the demon and the man). Jesus immediately rebuked him and commanded him to be quiet and come out of the man and he immediately obeyed—throwing the man down in the process; the man was not injured however. Everyone who saw the incident was amazed! They wondered at a man who had authority and power over the unclean spirits. With this miracle His fame grew exponentially.

It is always interesting to me that Satan and the demons are well aware of the word of God and of the power and authority of Jesus and God the Father. Still, they continue in their rebellion and their attempt to deceive as many as possible. They are truly possessed by their sin in spite of what they know. I think they have become so self-deceived due to the extended time that they have been allowed to continue in their rebellion, that they actually think they have a chance at succeeding in usurping the throne of God and avoiding eternal punishment. I think we are much like the fallen angels in this regard; continued rebellion and rejection of God only hardens one’s heart, one’s spirit.

Luke 4:38 And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon’s house. And Simon’s wife’s mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

Luke 4:39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

After leaving the synagogue, Jesus goes to Simon Peter’s house. Upon arriving, He is met with a request to heal Peter’s mother-in-law who is suffering from a high fever. Without fanfare, He stood over her bed and rebuked the fever and it left her. Recovery was also immediate; she got right up and started tending to their needs.

Mark adds that Andrew lived in the house as well and that Jesus took the woman by the hand and lifted her up in process of healing her. He also tells us that James and John were with them, which is natural considering they were partners in business.

Luke 5:10 “And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon.”

I think it is also interesting that both Mark and Luke emphasize that the woman was Simon Peter’s wife’s mother in light of the Catholic requirement of celibacy for Pope and priests since they claim that Peter was the first Pope.

Luke 4:40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

Luke 4:41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking *them* suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

Luke 4:42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

Luke 4:43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

Luke 4:44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

That evening crowds gathered seeking healing for loved ones with all kinds of diseases—and Jesus laid hands on every one of them and healed them. When Jesus appeared in public, He always healed those who came to Him for healing. He didn't pick and choose or interview them to decide who He would heal and who He would not, and He certainly didn't charge them money.

Jesus also freed many of unclean spirits, many of whom yelled out that he was the Messiah, the Son of God. He forbade them from doing so again. I think that the demon who had been cast out of the man at the synagogue spread the word in the spirit world that Jesus did not want them to do that; so, of course, they took perverse pleasure in doing just that.

Early in the morning Jesus went out for some alone time. It didn't work for long; the people sought Him out and begged Him to stay with them. What a different reception than that in His hometown!

Jesus told them that He was sent to preach the kingdom of God to other cities as well, so he traveled throughout the Galilee preaching in the synagogues. The fact that He was sent implies a sender, and we know that the Sender was God the Father.

John 3:17 "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

John 5:23–24 "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

John 6:35–40 "And Jesus said unto them...For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."