

I. Jesus Tested in the Wilderness (Lk. 4:1-13)

- A. Led by the Spirit- (vs. 1-2) - There are two different Greek words associated with the idea of being “filled” with the Spirit. One speaks of a static or permanent reality, the other speaks of a temporary filling for a specific purpose. Here, the latter is used speaking of a unique filling for a unique season or assignment. This means that Jesus—like us—relied upon the continual filling and leading of the Spirit as He walked out His ministry.

This particular filling and leading of the Spirit was for testing and trial; not for the rest of still waters and green pastures. Many times when we are in trials or testing we believe that it is a result of our disobedience or drifting from God's leadership. We find ourselves asking, “Where are you God?” Here, the perfect and sinless Son of God, filled with the Spirit to overflowing, was sent into the depths of Satanic testing and trial under the banner and identity of the beloved Son upon whom the pleasure of God rested.

1. Forty Days in the Wilderness - Jesus went into the same wilderness where He tested the Israelites before they could enter the promised land. As you know, they failed this test and the entire generation that came out of Egypt died there. The original language is clear that He was tested the entire time, and the testing increased in pressure and suffering as the days unfolded.

Jesus was tempted for the entire forty days with increasing suffering. What follows are the three main highlights of that season of temptation. - Guzik

- B. The Three-Fold Test of Satan - The text here and other places is clear that it is God's will in certain seasons to allow Satan to test our faith. There are some who teach that all Satanic activity is an illegal infringement upon God's people, or that Satanic activity is only a result of access that we give him through our disobedience or unbelief. There are definitely biblical examples of this being true. However, there are a number of examples of God allowing Satanic activity in accordance to His will upon faithful and blameless individuals to perfect their faith and love. (Genesis Fall; Entire book of Job; Paul's Thorn in the Flesh; Rev. 2 Church of Smyrna; Post Millennial Release of Satan Rev. 20:2-3, 7-8)
1. Stones to Bread (Personal Comforts) - (vs. 3) The fact that Luke the physician noted that “afterward” He was hungry is important. After such a

long fast, renewed hunger often points to a critical need for food. Jesus was beginning to starve to death.

The original language is actually not asking Jesus to prove His identity as the divine Son but rather because of it. In other words, Satan is saying, "You're God's divine Son, so why should you be suffering, surely you can eat a little food." Jesus resists by quoting scripture that man doesn't live on bread alone, but the word. The leadership of His Father was for Him to fast and be tested for forty days.

2. Worship me and Take Possession of the World (Personal Assignment) - (vs. 7) The devil knew Jesus would inherit the kingdoms of the world. This was an invitation to take them outside of the Father's timing and process. Satan would simply give it to Jesus if Jesus would worship or "give allegiance" to the devil. Satan claimed that the authority over the earth's kingdoms was delivered to him, and Jesus never challenged the statement. Once again, Satan tempted Jesus to have something legitimate and good outside of God's will, process, and timing, thus causing it to be sin.

Jesus walks out active resistance by commanding Satan to, "Get behind Me!", and then quotes the truth of scripture once again saying, "You shall worship and serve God and God alone." In other words, I choose to trust My Father's perfect will in His timing and process to inherit the fullness of my destiny and assignment.

3. Throw Yourself Down - (Personal Security) (vs. 9)

For this temptation, Satan quotes Psalm 91, telling Jesus to prove God's care for Him by getting Him to put himself in a position of demanding upon it of His own volition. Satan suggests that maybe God doesn't really care or won't really come through on His Word to protect. Satan tells Jesus to put Himself in a position that makes God show His faithfulness and care in order to prove it. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:16, which is the story of how Israel demanded upon the Lord to show them that He was with them by giving them water in the wilderness on demand. The test here is to trust God to come through in His provision for you in His timing when you're suffering. (Ex. 17:1-7)

- C. Jesus came out of the wilderness in Power - Luke makes it a point to show us that Jesus's Spirit led Him into a time of voluntary suffering and Satanic attack,

resulting in him being filled with power. In other words, He was strengthened, not diminished in light of the season of suffering and testing. This truth should change our heart posture when we are led into these same types of seasons. (Rom. 8:1-31)

II. **Messiah Revealed, Rejected, and Pondered (Lk. 4:14-37)**

- A. Jesus Begins His Ministry throughout Galilee- (vs. 14-15) The Spirit empowered and enabled Jesus in His words and deeds. Luke is unrelenting on this theme and you see it everywhere in his Gospel and in Acts. He attributed Jesus' activity and power to His orientation and intimacy with the Spirit, not His deity.

According to figures from the Jewish historian Josephus, there were some 3 million people populating Galilee, an area smaller than the state of Connecticut, where there were roughly 450 villages with an average population of around 15 thousand. Jesus began to minister throughout this region by teaching in their Synagogues and performing accompanying signs to confirm His teaching.

- B. So He came to Nazareth - (vs. 16) As we learned earlier in chapter one, Nazareth was a very small town. Everyone knew everyone and everyone had known Jesus throughout part of his childhood and into his twenties. Since this was early in the ministry of Jesus, it was not long from the time when He lived and worked in Nazareth. He would have attended this Synagogue hundreds of times all throughout his life.

The usual order of service in a synagogue began with an opening prayer and praise, then a reading from the Law, then a reading from the prophets, and then a sermon, perhaps from a learned visitor. On this occasion, reports from the surrounding cities in which Jesus was ministering had reached them, and they invited Jesus to bring the message that day.

- C. The Fulfillment of Is. 61 - (vs. 17-19) Jesus stood up and read the first part of the second verse of Isaiah 61, a very clear and well known messianic passage. When He announced the fulfillment of this passage, Jesus revealed that He Himself was the predicted Messiah, and that the time for God's gracious deliverance had arrived. Jesus had begun preaching the gospel that enriches the poor (the marginalized), releases bound people, enlightens the spiritually blind, and gives the downtrodden freedom. He also announced that the messianic kingdom was being revealed to them. Jesus sat down and declared that this passage was currently being fulfilled by Him.

Note: I believe why and where Jesus stopped reading from Isaiah shows us the nature of prophecy and its relation to time. The Isaiah passage goes on to describe what Jesus would do at His second coming (and the day of vengeance of our God, Isaiah 61:2).

- D. No Prophet is Welcome in his Hometown - (vs. 24) Luke's account is clear that the attendees of Synagogue that day received His words with amazement and joy but as Jesus began to expound upon what He just read, a resentment filled their hearts. The resentment was one of familiarity, "How could someone so familiar to us (Joseph's son) be the Messiah?" Jesus understood that it is easy to doubt the power and work of God among those most familiar to us. It was unfortunately natural for those in Nazareth to doubt or reject Jesus.

Jesus could feel and hear the internal questions and arguments that were arising in their hearts. He also could feel the next natural response to the doubt and resentment, which is to take a posture of rejection and unbelief and demand personal proof. They wanted Jesus to prove His claims with miraculous signs. Apparently, Jesus had already done miracles in Capernaum, not recorded in Luke. The people of Nazareth wanted to see the same kind of thing, demanding the miraculous as a show or a sign. There is also a clearly prideful offense factor here as well. For them, it was unjust that Jesus had not done any miracles in Nazareth. He was a Nazareth man and surely the people of Nazareth deserved to be first in line to benefit from His Messianic identity if He in fact was the Messiah.

Truly I say to you - Luke recorded Jesus saying this six different times in his Gospel and each time it denotes an extremely important thing to understand and know. What we are to understand is this: We tend to always undervalue and resent the people who are familiar to us, and we generally readily accept and see greatness in those who are unfamiliar. For this reason, God is not able to work through the people familiar to us, and we refuse to receive them and their gifting because of dishonor.

Jesus will intentionally offend your mind to reveal the reality of what's in your heart. - Mike Bickle

Jesus now gives them two true stories that He knows will offend them in light of their wrong heart posture. It is of note that in both stories, the prophets are undervalued and unrecognized and both prophets intentionally offend the mind to reveal the heart, thus demanding faith and trust outside of works of proof.

1. Story of Elijah and the Widow - The first is the story of a time of great drought upon all the land of Israel, that God sent to discipline their spiritual darkness. During this time of drought, there were thousands of Israelite widows who were starving to death and dying, but they did not receive Elijah's words to repent. So God sent Elijah to a gentile widow. Elijah first tested her faith by telling her to do something that went against the natural mind enough to be easily rejected and cause offense. However, the widow carried a humble enough heart posture to believe them and act upon them without a miracle to prove them. (1 Kings 17:1-16)
 2. Story of Elisha and Naaman - The second story is similar. Elisha was a rejected and undervalued prophet by the King of Israel. So God had Elisha reach out to a Gentile military leader named Naaman and tell him to come to Elisha's house to be healed of leprosy. Upon arriving, Elisha intentionally offends Naaman's mind by not even taking the time to receive him or greet him in a way that as he felt he was due because of his rank. Elisha then further offends his mind by telling him to go bath in the Jordan river and he would be clean. After wrestling with his offense, Naaman submits in faith to Elisha's unproven word and is healed upon walking it out. (2 Kings 5:1-19)
- E. Filled with Murderous Rage - (vs. 28) The crowd refuses to believe Him and is angry with Him that He won't give them a sign or wonder to prove Himself worthy of believing. Jesus exposes the dishonor and pride in their hearts and it stirs up a murderous rage inside them to the point that they act on it. They lay hold of Him and lead Him to a cliff in order to push Him off. Pushing someone off a small cliff was often the first step in the process of stoning. Once the victim fell down, they were pelted with rocks until dead. However, it was not Jesus' time to be rejected unto death and they received a miracle after all. Jesus allowed them to lead Him up to the point of throwing him off of the cliff and then supernaturally passed through them and walked out of Nazareth.
- F. Casting out the First Demon (vs. 33) As Jesus was teaching in a Synagogue in Capernaum, a demon manifested out of a man who was attending and spoke to Jesus. In the original Greek, inflections indicate that this demon was surprised by His presence and literally said, "Why and what is this interference with us, this is not the time of our destruction." The demon's next comment is directly the opposite of the angry mob from Nazareth. "I know you are the Messiah, you're Jesus the Nazarene." At this point, Jesus commands him to be silent and come out of the man he was possessing. In all the gospels, Jesus' dealings with demons

were all pointed, immediate, and non-dramatic in comparison to the common practice in the church of his day. The chief difference being that Jesus did not provoke the demons to leave or obey Him on any higher authority. In other words, there was no, “I command you in the name of...”, rather He simply commanded them upon His own word and authority. This caused the crowds to respond in awe and wonder.

III. Public Healing and Deliverance (Lk. 4:38-44)

- A. Healing Simon's Mother-in-law (vs. 38) This is the first recorded miracle in the Gospel of Luke that is initiated or sought out by Jesus. In other words, the other healings and deliverances we have seen so far have been people that have come to Jesus. Jesus goes to Simon Peter’s mother-in-law. There are vast implications here that must be pondered. Why is this particular healing story significantly highlighted by Luke? Why did Jesus go there? What was His relationship with Simon and his wife at this point? Here's what we do know...
1. This happened on the Sabbath after Jesus left the Synagogue.
 2. Simon is the first disciple chosen by Jesus in the next chapter.
 3. Simon's wife is spoken of by all the early church fathers who knew her as the first to offer hospitality and care for Jesus, accepting Him as the Messiah and that she and Simon did ministry together. She ministered extraordinarily to women and in hospitality.
 4. Not only did the fever break, but she had immediate supernatural recovery and began to serve.
- B. Healing and Delivering Each One (vs. 40) As the sun was setting, this marked a new day in Israeli culture, thus, the Sabbath was over and people could freely come to Jesus as the restrictions were lifted off of travel. Jesus healed and delivered all who came to Him. This continued on through the night for some hours until all were ministered to.
- C. Jesus Seeks Seclusion and Crowds Find Him (vs. 42) When the sun started to come up, Jesus sought out rest in seclusion, but the crowds found Him. Luke will further develop this pattern in his Gospel and tell us that Jesus would almost always seek seclusion for personal prayer and rest, seeking a fresh filling and leading of the Spirit for His next assignment.