

PM Luke 3:21-24, 4:1-13

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[0 : 00] The Holy Bible from the book of Luke, the Gospel of Luke, chapter 3.!

And just to read verses 4 and 5, Luke writes that John the Baptist's ministry fulfills the words of Isaiah the prophet, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight, make his path straight.

Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

And it speaks of John baptizing people, calling people to repentance, and to turn towards God. So we take up the reading in verse 23.

And it's on page 1035 of the church Bible. Sorry, verse 21.

[1 : 33] Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove.

And a voice came from heaven, You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased. Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about 30 years of age, being the son, as it was supposed, of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Mathat.

And then there follows a long genealogy with 77 generations, which concludes in verse 38, with the words, The son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

And then we'll read into chapter 4. And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, for 40 days, being tempted by the devil.

And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.

[2 : 50] And Jesus answered him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone. And the devil took him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, in a moment of time, and said to him, To you, I will give all this authority, and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.

If you then will worship me, it will all be yours. And Jesus answered him, It is written, You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him only shall you serve.

And he took him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you, and on their hands, they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.

And Jesus answered him, It is said, You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test. And when the devil had ended, every temptation, he departed from him, until an opportune time.

May God bless to us that reading of his word. Let's join together again. I'd like us to turn back to the passage we read, to Luke chapter 4, on page 1035.

[4 : 38] So Luke chapter 4, verses 1 to 13. If you watch action movies, or read that kind of literature, especially sort of big epic stories, there's usually some great battle, or fight, between the villain, and the hero.

Often the climax, happens with that great battle. You think of, in the Harry Potter series, the climax, I hope this is not, I'm not spoiling this for anyone, but there's a great battle, a great fight, between Harry Potter, and Voldemort.

Or think of, the Lord of the Rings, and that battle, between Frodo, and Sauron. Well this, passage, is, about a great battle, between the devil, and Jesus Christ.

This is not fiction, this is, for real. This, takes place, before, the, well it's after the baptism of Jesus, but before his, public ministry, his public career, begins.

experience. And, he has this, this ordeal, in the wilderness, with the devil. Who is, the devil?
[6 : 08] Many, in our own culture, the devil is often depicted, as a kind of fun guy, with horns, and a tail. And, that could hardly be further, from the truth.

The villains, I mentioned, Sauron, and Voldemort, are a bit nearer. They're, I guess in some ways, based on, the character of, the devil. But the devil is not fictional.

He is, real. He is an evil, spiritual, being. He is the enemy of God, and the enemy, of the human race. He is a malevolent, destructive, personal, force.

And, he stands behind, the evil, in our world. Of course, human beings, we are capable, of great evil, of horrendous evil. But sometimes, the evil in the world, and sometimes we get a sense of this, that, it's even greater, than the sum of the, the human parts.

And, that is because of the, spiritual forces of evil, at work, in our world. The devil lies behind, the ancient snake, who led, Adam and Eve, into revolt, against, God, their maker, in the garden of Eden.

[7 : 22] after he himself, as, a created, angel, a created, good angel, had, revolted, against God, his maker.

Well, Jesus, we're told, at the beginning of the, of the passage, full of the spirit, full of the Holy Spirit, returned, from, the Jordan. So, it takes place, after his, his baptism, in the river Jordan, where, we read that, in, in, in Luke 3, 22, that the Holy Spirit, descended on Jesus, in bodily form, as a dove.

And now, this same Holy Spirit, leads him, into, the wilderness. In fact, verse 1, is literally, that Jesus, was being led, by the spirit, in the wilderness.

So, it's not just, that the spirit, you know, led him, into the wilderness, and that was it. But, throughout this, period, he is being led, by the spirit. The whole, 40 day, experience, is, the Holy Spirit, leading, Jesus.

Two times, in the passage, in verse 5, and verse 9, it speaks of the, devil, leading, or taking Jesus, to, certain places.

[8 : 40] But, at the same time, the Holy Spirit, is, leading him. In Matthew's, parallel account, in Matthew chapter 4, verse 1, we read that, Jesus was led, by the spirit, into the wilderness, to be tempted, by, the devil.

So, that was the, the purpose, of the Holy Spirit, in leading him there. It was so that, he would be, tempted, by the devil. Now, the devil's purpose, in tempting Jesus, is to, is to, is to, is to, is to, to destroy his work, and to destroy, and bring it to an end, the plan of God, the plan of salvation.

That was, the devil's, purpose, in, in tempting Jesus. But what is the intention, of the Holy Spirit, in, leading Jesus, to be tempted, by, the devil?

Well, I think, the kind of, the context of this, gives us some clues. We read in, in, chapter 3, verse 22, that, the, the, Holy Spirit, this is at Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit, descended on an embodied form, like a dove, and a voice, came from heaven.

You are my, beloved son. With you, I am well pleased. So, Jesus is declared, to be, God's, son. And that's followed by, a, a long, genealogy, a family tree, tracing Jesus' family line, and it's, there's many sons, you know, the son of, so and so, the son of, and it goes back, all the way, to, Adam, who is then called, the son of God, in, in, in verse 38, of chapter, three.

[10 : 25] And, I think that, refers back to a passage, in Genesis chapter five. In Genesis chapter five, um, it speaks about, when, when God created, mankind, or that word, mankind, can be, translated Adam, that's the word in Hebrews, Adam.

And the word Adam, can mean the, the name, or it can mean an individual, human being, or it can mean, humanity as a race. So Genesis five, one, when God created mankind, he made them, in the likeness, of God.

He created them, male and female, and blessed them. And he named them, mankind, when they were created. Then verse three, when Adam, had lived 130 years, he had a son, in his own likeness, in his own image, and he named him, Seth.

So, in one sense, every human being, is a child of God, in that we are made, in God's image, and likeness, that's part of what it means, to be made, in the image, of God.

And here, in this passage, in Luke three and four, both Adam, and Jesus, are called, son of God.

[11 : 38] Now, Adam, was, the representative, of, the whole human race, all his descendants. I don't very often, go to, sporting events, but, in 2014, when the Commonwealth Games, came to

Glasgow, it was a kind of a, kind of a lottery thing, you, you, you applied for tickets, and you were allocated tickets, you didn't really have much choice, it was just, kind of a bit random, and, we were given tickets, to go to, watch badminton.

But one thing I remember, was that, at the beginning of, the match, of, we saw a number of matches, because badminton matches, aren't that long, I can't remember quite, how long they are, but, they don't last very long.

But, at the beginning of each match, they would, you know, announce the player, this is so and so, representing Wales, and this is so and so, representing New Zealand, or some other, some other country.

So one person, one person, one badminton player, was representing, their whole, nation. The nation's hopes, was on that one, individual. It was all down, to how they, performed on the field, as to how the country did, in the Commonwealth Games.

So Adam is presented, in the Bible, as a representative, not just of one nation, but of the whole, human race. And at the beginning of, human history, Adam was put, to the test, by the devil, in the Garden of Eden.

[13:17] And Adam, failed that test. He ate, the fruit, that God had told him, not to eat. He, he, he yielded, to that temptation. And so, brought death, and judgment, upon himself, and upon his, descendants.

Adam, represented, the whole human race. And the whole human race, due to his, failure, has been subject, to death, ever since.

And no one, has been able to pull, the human race, out of that. No one that is, until, Jesus Christ. Well Jesus comes, like, a new Adam.

And he's been presented here, as, a new Adam. At the head, of a new, humanity. The representative, of a new, humanity.

And this is, this is the reason, this is why, the Holy Spirit, leads him, into the wilderness, to be tempted, by the devil. That's the purpose. So that just as, Adam was tested, so this, new Adam, Jesus Christ, must be, tested.

[14:32] Would he be like, the first Adam, and be defeated, by the devil, by the devil's temptation? Or will he come through, victorious, winning victory, not only for himself, but for the whole, new humanity, whom he, represents.

Well this experience, of Jesus, we can, we can, there's a number of, sort of, points of, of both comparison, and contrast, with Adam's, experience of temptation, in the garden of Eden.

The first is that, Adam was created, perfect. Adam was, under that, sort of, declaration, that God made, when he completed creation, that it was all, very good.

And that included, the first humans, Adam and Eve. They were, they were created, perfect. Jesus, at the baptism, God says, this, you are my beloved son, with whom, with you, I am well pleased.

And there may be an echo there, maybe a connection, between them. And the second thing is that, both Adam, and Jesus, were tempted, by the devil.

[15:51] And that tells us that, Jesus is just as much, human, as, Adam was. And the temptation, was just as real, for him. Jesus was not, some kind of, superman, who, just sort of, breezed, easily, through life.

No, he was, he was human, in every respect. He experienced, weakness, limitation, hunger, tiredness, and, real, temptation.

Then the third thing, and this is really, a point of contrast, is that, Adam's temptation, took place, in a beautiful garden, in paradise. Whereas Jesus, was in a wilderness.

The fourth thing is that, in both temptations, the devil, cast doubt, on, the word of God. What was, the devil's word, to Eve, was, did God, really say, you must not eat, the fruit, of any tree, that is in the garden?

So the devil, there was, was casting doubt, on God's word. And he does exactly, the same with Jesus. God has just declared, you are, my son, with you I am well pleased.

[17:09] And the devil comes, and says, if, you are, the son, of God. He is casting doubt, on, what God, has said. But then, also, both, Adam and, Jesus' temptations, involved, food.

They involved, eating. But Adam was surrounded, by, all kinds, of, of, fruit, that he could eat. Abundant, delicious, beautiful fruits.

And there was only one, that he was not allowed, to eat. Jesus, by contrast, was starving. He had gone, 40 days, without food. I don't know about you, I think the longest, I've been without food, is about one day.

And by the end of that, all I can think about, is food. To go, 40 days, without food. He was, he was absolutely, starving. And, I think that just, highlights the power, of this temptation.

And in contrast, to, Adam's situation. Adam also had, a perfect wife. A harmonious, relationship with Eve. It was, the perfect marriage.

[18 : 21] Jesus, by contrast, was alone, and had been alone, for almost, six weeks. Again, the longest, I've spent alone, is probably, just a few days. at the end of that, I was desperate, for human company.

So, basically, you know, summarizing all of that, Adam had, everything stacked, in his favor.

Whereas, Jesus, had everything, stacked, against him.

And yet, Adam fails, whereas Jesus, wins. He emerges, from this, great battle, victorious. Adam, falls into sin, into guilt, and shame, and, becomes subject, to death, and judgment.

Whereas, Jesus remains, pure, and holy, and sinless. Now, Adam is, the father of us all. our representative.

He failed, and brought death, on the human race. And, just in case, you're thinking, well, you know, it's all Adam's fault.

[19 : 30] And, maybe you're imagining, a scenario, at the resurrection, where, everybody piles on, Adam, and beats him up, because of what he did. But, I don't think that will happen, because, of course, all of us, we have, each contributed, our own, amount, to the pile, of human sin.

But, Jesus comes, as, a new Adam. He becomes, a representative, of a new humanity, that's made up, of all who are, joined to him, by faith.

And, he wins, against the devil. And, he brings life, to that new, humanity. and victory, over, our worst enemy. How can we, become part of that, new humanity?

Well, it's, by faith, by believing, in Jesus Christ. By joining ourselves, to that new humanity, through faith, in, Jesus Christ. So, the Holy Spirit, leads Jesus, into, and through this experience, in order that, so where Adam failed, Jesus Christ, might succeed, and win the victory.

Well, let's look at the, different types of temptation, that took place here. And, I think there's two, kind of, opposite aspects to this. The first is that, Jesus is unique.

[20 : 53] He is our representative. He is our champion. Going, where we could not go. Going to fight, where, we could not fight. We would be hopeless, in that situation.

But, he goes to fight, our battles for us, against our enemy, the Satan. So, in one sense, Jesus is unique. But, Jesus is also, our example to follow.

And, the types of, temptation that he faced, are common, to us all. This is what Hebrews says, this is Hebrews chapter 2. For this reason, he, that's Jesus, had to be made, like them, that's like his brothers, and sisters.

Fully human, in every way, in order that he might become, a merciful, and faithful, high priest, in service to God. And, that he might make, atonement, for the sins, of the people.

Because he himself, suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those, who are being, tempted. And then a bit later, in Hebrews chapter 4, it says, we do not have a high priest, who is unable to feel sympathy, for our weakness.

[22 : 00] But we have one, who has been tempted, in every way, just as we are, yet, he did not sin. And so, Jesus is our example, to follow.

He is the one, who sympathizes with us, in those temptations, and we can call, on, for help. The first temptation, is to do with, physical, appetites, and desires.

In verse 3, the devil said to him, if you are the son of God, command this stone, to become, bread.

Now we all have, physical, appetites, and desires, hunger, thirst, sexual desire, the need for sleep. And these are not bad, these are the way, we were made, that it's part of the good creation, that God made. But these things, are to be used, within the limits, that God, our maker, has set.

And that means, that gluttony, overeating, drunkenness, adultery, laziness, are all, sinful. They go against, what God has, made us for.

[23 : 09] And the temptation, here for, for Jesus, was to use, his miraculous powers, selfishly. If he had used, his powers in this way, he would have had, an unfair advantage, over us, in facing temptation.

temptation. But instead, as Hebrews 2 puts it, because he himself, suffered, when he was tempted, he is able to help, those, who are being, tempted.

He didn't use his power, selfishly, to get himself out, of this situation, by just creating food, out of stones. No, his powers, his miraculous powers, were used, for the benefit, for the good, of others. They were used, to serve. The second temptation, relates to the ambition, to power, and prestige, in verses 5 to 7.

Devil took him up, and showed him, all the kingdoms of the world, in a moment of time, and said, to you, I will give all this authority, in their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it, to whom I will.

[24 : 13] If you then, will worship me, it will be yours. The snake, said to, Adam and Eve, if you eat this fruit, you will be like God, knowing good, and evil.

That was a temptation, to kind of, moral autonomy. Don't let God, tell you what to do, you be your own boss, you decide yourself, what is good, and evil for you.

For Jesus here, I think the kind of, the nature of the temptation, is as if the devil, is saying, just think of the good, you could do, if you ruled the world. And also, this is, a path to ruling the world, without suffering.

Your path is one of terrible suffering. Here's a nice easy way, to rule, the world. But of course, it involved, a sin, breaking the first commandment, worshipping someone other, than God.

And if Jesus had yielded to this, there could have been, no salvation, for the world. Salvation, could only come to the world, through the obedience, of Jesus Christ, and through his, suffering, on the cross, for us.

[25 : 27] It was also based on, on a lie, or at best, a half truth. The devil says, that it has been given to me, to give to anyone I want. Well, the world is not the devil's to give, it belongs to God.

This is based on, a lie. But the temptation to power, and prestige, is very common. It's the temptation where, my first priority, becomes my, wealth, my status, my reputation.

And it's based on the lie, that, I am ultimate. That I am at the center, of the universe. Or the lie, that power, and prestige, will bring me, fulfillment, and satisfaction.

The third, temptation, relates to, testing God, in verses 9, to 11. He took him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle, of the temple, and said to him, if you are the son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, he will command his angels, concerning you, to guard you, and on their hands, they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot, against, a stone.

It's the temptation, to try and, bind God. As if to say, well, if I throw myself down, you will have to rescue me. And God has never said, that he will rescue us, if we are foolish enough, to throw ourselves, off a high building.

[26 : 54] There are many, other examples, of this kind of thing. One today may be that, where people say, I will pray for you, to be healed, and God will certainly, heal you.

Immediately. Now that may, or it may not, be God's will. It's good and right, to pray for healing. But we have to leave, the results in God. We cannot tie God's hands, telling him what to do.

And Jesus displays of, power, were not, to be used in, spectacular stunts, like jumping off buildings. But in serving people, and in healing, the broken, and the needy. Because that shows us, what God's reign, is really like. It's not some big show.

It is serving, and healing, and helping, the sick, and the broken. Now you'll notice here, that the devil, uses the Bible. Of course, Jesus has, countered his temptations, by using the Bible.

[27 : 56] And it's, as if the devil, thinks, well I'm going to play you, at your own game. And he quotes, from Psalm 91, verses 11, and 12. He will command his angels, concerning you, to guard you.

And on their hands, they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot, against a stone. But what he's doing here, is he's twisting it. He's taking it, out of context.

Psalm 91, was never meant, to encourage people, to be reckless. Rather, it's about God's care, for his own people. And I think that, it kind of warns us, to be careful.

Just because someone, quotes from the Bible, and uses the Bible, it doesn't mean, that they can be, trusted. History is full of, people using the Bible, to justify all kinds, of things.

People have justified, oppression, slavery, racism, their own warfare. Often, armies have, identified themselves, with the Israelites, and their enemies, with the Canaanites.

[29 : 03] They're twisting, the scriptures, taking it out of context, twisting the meaning, to back, their own agendas. And we need to be, aware of that.

There is a need, to interpret, the Bible, correctly. And to test, our interpretation, against the rest, of the Bible. Not just to take, something out of context, but how does this, fit, with the teaching, of the whole Bible?

Well, how does Jesus, respond to these temptations? Well, we see that, in each case, he uses, the scriptures, to respond, to fight against, all three temptations.

And, we too, can use that. We too, we have the Bible. And we can use it, to counter, the devil's attacks. We see, first of all, that Jesus, believed the scripture.

He treated it as, or he appealed to it, as his ultimate authority. The authority, of the word of God. And if we follow, Jesus Christ, we will have, the same view of scripture.

[30 : 07] We will treat it, as our, ultimate, authority. Jesus, also knew, the scriptures. He, he quotes from it. He's quoting from the, the book of Deuteronomy.

He had, quite likely, memorized, large parts, of the Bible, and meditated on it. And he understood, the scripture. When the devil, quotes, and twists scripture, in the third temptation, Jesus compares it, with another scripture.

He says, do not put the Lord, your God, to the test. And, we too, need to know the scriptures, and to understand them, to be able to know, when it's being taken, out of context.

And, Jesus was able to apply, the scriptures, to his own situation. And again, we need to, to learn, to do that, to read the scriptures, and apply it, to our own lives, and situations.

Jesus, three, quotations from scripture, come from Deuteronomy, chapter six, and eight. And, the context of those, chapters, is the Israelites, getting ready to cross the Jordan, into the promised land.

[31 : 15] So, it's looking forward, to that, going into the promised land, but it's also looking back, to the 40 years, in the wilderness, where the Israelites were, tested.

And, perhaps Jesus is, is meditating on that experience, of Israel, and on Deuteronomy six, and eight, while he's in the wilderness, for 40 days. It also, I think, sheds light, on, who Jesus is, and what the title, Son of God means.

Because Israel, was God's son. In Exodus four, Moses is told, to say to Pharaoh, this is what the Lord says, Israel, is my first born son.

And I told you, let my son go, so that he may, worship me. Now, God's son, Israel, just like God's son, Adam, failed, the test.

Adam failed, in the Garden of Eden. The Israelites, failed the test, in the wilderness. But Jesus, comes as a new Adam, and as a new Israel, as the son of God.

[32 : 21] And he succeeds, where they fail. So Jesus, wins. He comes through this battle, this temptation, still, sinless, pure, holy, perfect, in his obedience, to God, his Father.

The voice from heaven, that said, you are my son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased. And that is still, still applies. God is still, pleased with him. He is the obedient son.

The old humanity, is doomed to failure, to death, and judgment, because of its head, and representative, Adam, who failed.

And no one since him, has been able to raise, the human race, from that situation. That is until Jesus. And Jesus, as the son of God, as the new Adam, as the new Israel, stands at the head, of a new humanity, as the representative, of that new humanity.

And all those who believe, and I join to him, are part of that new humanity. And, as our representative, he gains the victory, for us, for that whole, new humanity.

[33 : 36] Well, in verse 13, we read that, when the devil, had ended, every temptation, he departed from him, until, an opportune time.

And that tells us, that this is not, was not the last, temptation, that the devil, threw at Jesus. It was not the last, conflict, between the devil, and Jesus.

The final, conflict, with the devil, was his suffering, and death. When Satan, entered, Judas Iscariot, and he betrayed, Jesus.

And when Jesus, was arrested, in the garden, led by a group, led by Judas, Jesus says, this is your hour, this is the power, of darkness.

This was Satan's, final, attack, and supreme attack. And it seems, that the devil thought, that he had, destroyed Jesus, that he had finished him. But that was not the case, because on the cross,

Jesus Christ won, a decisive, and an ultimate, victory, over the devil.

[34 : 45] He crushed, the snake's head. He smashed, his power. Satan, of course, is still active, in the world today, but he is a defeated, enemy.

And one day, in the future, that defeat, will be final, and total. And if we are, in Christ, if we are part of that, new humanity, in Jesus Christ, which we come, into through, faith in him, through believing in him, then that victory, belongs to us.

We are on, that victory side, that conquering side. And, the greatest enemy, of the human race, is a defeated foe for us, if we are in, Jesus Christ.

May God bless, his word, to us. Lord, we thank you for, you for,