

Luke 3:23-4:30 (Luke 4:14-30)

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

²³ Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph son of Heli, ²⁴ son of Matthat, son of Levi, son of Melchi, son of Jannai, son of Joseph, ²⁵ son of Mattathias, son of Amos, son of Nahum, son of Esli, son of Naggai, ²⁶ son of Maath, son of Mattathias, son of Semein, son of Josech, son of Joda, ²⁷ son of Joanan, son of Rhesa, son of Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, son of Neri, ²⁸ son of Melchi, son of Addi, son of Cosam, son of Elmadam, son of Er, ²⁹ son of Joshua, son of Eliezer, son of Jorim, son of Matthat, son of Levi, ³⁰ son of Simeon, son of Judah, son of Joseph, son of Jonam, son of Eliakim, ³¹ son of Melea, son of Menna, son of Mattatha, son of Nathan, son of David, ³² son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Boaz, son of Sala, [i]son of Nahshon, ³³ son of Amminadab, son of Admin, son of Arni, son of Hezron, son of Perez, son of Judah, ³⁴ son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, son of Terah, son of Nahor, ³⁵ son of Serug, son of Reu, son of Peleg, son of Eber, son of Shelah, ³⁶ son of Cainan, son of Arphaxad, son of Shem, son of Noah, son of Lamech, ³⁷ son of Methuselah, son of Enoch, son of Jared, son of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan, ³⁸ son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God.

4¹ Jesus, *full of the Holy Spirit*. **returned from the Jordan** and **was led** by the *Spirit in the wilderness*, ² where for **forty days** he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. ³ The devil said to him, "*If you are the Son of God*, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." ⁴ Jesus answered him, "**IT IS WRITTEN**, '*One does not live by bread alone.*'"

⁵ Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please." ⁷ *If you, then, will worship me*, it will all be yours." ⁸ Jesus answered him, "**IT IS WRITTEN**, '*Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.*'"

⁹ Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "*If you are the Son of God*, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ **FOR IT IS WRITTEN**, '*He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,*'" ¹¹ and '*On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.*'"

¹² Jesus answered him, "**IT IS SAID**, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ¹³ When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

The gospel of Luke is written with a Gentile or Greek-speaking cultured people in mind. The Greek language is more complex, and Hebraic notions, Jewish practices are explained (whereas in Matthew they are not). In writing the gospel account Luke focuses upon the role and importance of women and the poor, more than the other three gospels, and relates the most parable teachings of Jesus.

The Genealogy of Jesus (also recorded in Matthew 1:1-17) shows the interest in affirming the genealogical tracing of Jesus back to the patriarchs and the root of Hebrew tradition. It immediately follows the affirmation that Jesus is the son of God (Luke 3:22), highlighting his humanity. Here Luke traces his line back to Adam (the genesis in creation, incorporating all of the human race); whereas Matthew traces it back to Abraham (the genesis in God's call to discipleship, focused on Israel); both demonstrating that Jesus is issued from the properly messianic line of David. This list contains 75 names, ending with a paradoxical jump from Adam (human) to God (the 76th). Matthew focuses on genetic birth, whereas Luke focuses on legal sonship (according to the Torah, hence Luke's phrase "the son of..." whereas Matthew says "the father of...") Matthew places his list at the very beginning of the gospel, much like done in the Hebrew Scriptures (see Abraham in Genesis 12); whereas Luke puts it here, at the baptism and temptation. Why? Does it convey any message to us?

was led by the Spirit in the wilderness:: The movement of Jesus defines each scene of action and seems to be driven or accompanied by the Spirit of God. Remember that the term "**wilderness**" also means desert. It was the place outside of human space (like we compare the city and the country) where one had to depend upon God in trials of survival in harsh conditions – like the Israelites in the Exodus and the prophets.

forty days:: 40 is an auspicious number in the Hebrew Scriptures; designating a time of trial, waiting, testing or refinement. Think of the 40 days of rain of the flood, Moses, who lived 40 years in Egypt and 40 years in the desert waiting on Mt Sinai for 40 days to receive the Law, the spies exploring Canaan for 40 days, Elijah fasting for 40 days and the Israelites wandering in the wilderness for 40 years (among others). Curiously where John went from the desert to the Jordan, Jesus does the inverse. Undoubtedly Jesus was hungry.

Devil :: διάβολος, [diábolos]: the root of the English word, "Devil". As a verb, it means "to slander, accuse, defame"). as a noun it means: a slanderer; a false accuser; unjustly criticizing to hurt (malign) and condemn to sever a relationship. in secular Greek means "backbiter," i.e. an accuser, literally someone who "casts through," i.e. making charges that bring down (destroy).

1st Temptation: v.3-4 :: connects the themes of miracle and food. It harkens to Deuteronomy 8 (where God educates and forms the people in the desert trials after the Exodus and supplies them with manna). The question of his identity as the son of God harkens back to his baptism in 3:21-22. Jesus responds to the temptation about power, hunger and his identity by quoting Deut 8:3 "[Yahweh] humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord."

2nd Temptation: v.5-8 :: The devil tries to subvert the newly affirmed relation of Father and Son, claiming to have the power to give power over the nations, offering an exchange if Jesus only denies, twists and perverts his relationships with God the Father. Jesus responds by quoting again from the Exodus story, Deuteronomy 6:13 "¹² take care that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹³ The Lord your God you shall fear; him you shall serve, and by his name alone you shall swear."

3rd Temptation: v.9-12 :: In the most public space possible Jesus is tempted to test God's faithfulness and relationship. He again responds with scripture harkening back to the Exodus in Deut 6:16 "Do not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah." and Psalm 91:11-12 "Because you have made the Lord your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, ¹⁰ no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent. ¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. ¹² On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone."

as was his custom:: Jesus is presented as a pious Jew, it was common for a member of the community to preach on a section of the Law through an allusion to the prophets. He reads from Isaiah 61, an exact citation of the Greek version of Isaiah 61:1-2, seeming to announce the beginning of the year of Jubilee, to be announced by the Messiah, accomplished in and by him.

All spoke well of him ... filled with rage :: How does the crowd go from acclamation to violent animosity? Jesus quotes two stories of the Hebrew Scriptures found in 1 Kings 17:1-15 & 2 Kings 5:1-14) in which the Gentiles are praised and included in God's plan. They seem to reject him in his proclamation that God's justice is for all peoples of the earth: Jew and Gentile.

¹⁴ Then Jesus, *filled with the power of the Spirit*, **returned to Galilee**, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶ When **he came to Nazareth**, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.*"

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²² *All spoke well of him* and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

²³ He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'"

²⁴ And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. ²⁵ But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶ yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon.

²⁷ There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

²⁸ *WHEN THEY HEARD THIS*, all in the synagogue were *filled with rage*.

²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰ But he passed through the midst of them and **went on his way**.

Questions for the practice Examen & Contemplation

What strikes you in this passage? How does it interact with your life?

***How have you known the message, passion and person of Jesus to be a radical word of healing and experience of deliverance as is described in the reading from Isaiah in Luke 3:18-19? How do you hold that message of Jubilee in the darkness that exists as a shadow in our life?**

***The people of Nazareth are initially attracted, then deeply offended by the universal purpose and person of Jesus which seems to be first for others (the Gentiles), not them. What offends you in the message of Jesus? What part(s) of his teaching are hard for you to accept, to practice, to embrace? Talk to God about these challenges, asking for wisdom, new sight and a teachable spirit.**