

War of Words
Luke 4:1-13
Berean Baptist Church
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INTRODUCTION

Luke 4:1-2

Vs 1 “led by the Spirit into the wilderness,” Jesus was declared to be the Son of God who chose to be numbered with transgressors at His baptism. And now that He is 30 years old in the flesh, with the Spirit upon Him, and freshly Baptized he goes out into the deep desert to be tempted.

Vs 1-2 “led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil.” The Spirit leads Jesus right into this temptation. This is an unusual event. In fact, Jesus teaches us to pray that we would not be led into temptation (Luke 11:4) but delivered from evil. Like the Baptism, the Temptation was necessary to "fulfill all righteousness." Jesus had work to do -work that only He could do.

In Eden, in the days before the Fall, Adam and Eve were tested by the Devil in a garden, they failed that test and were cast out in the wilderness (Gen Ch 3).

As God continued His plan of redemption throughout human history, He led Israel to the edge of blessed rest but they failed their testing and God led them through the wilderness for forty years.

As God led Israel through the wild, He continually tested them and showed their bent to sin. This is the story of Adam's children and our bent to sin – failure upon failure.

Now, after His baptism, Jesus goes out into the wilderness for His testing.

Jesus, come to redeem humanity, must face and defeat the temptations that have enslaved humanity. He must overcome where Adam, Eve, and Israel were defeated.

Vs 2 “Being forty days tempted of the devil.” 40 is the biblical number of testing. The language implies that Jesus was tempted for the entire 40 days, and what we see in this passage is the culmination of this battle.

Twelve scouts spent 40 days in the Promised Land before they brought the report to Israel, and in their rebellion, Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness.

Moses fasted on the Mountain for 40 days when he received the Law. “And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments (Exd 34:22).” See also Gen 7:4, Exd 34:28, & 1 Sam 17:16.

This is a new battle of Eden, a new battle of the Wild, fought by a new Adam. In a moment that reflects the beginning of history and man's full story, Jesus will begin to undo the power of the Devil. He will show Himself righteous and teach His disciples how to resist evil.

Trust Jesus' righteousness, and resist the Devil as He teaches us!

Luke 4:3-4 Temptation to Do a Good Thing in The Wrong Way

Vs 3 “If thou be the Son of God” Satan's first temptation invokes the Lord's baptism.

“a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased (Luke 3:22).”

And now Satan's point is, “well if that's true, why are you starving?”

This temptation demonstrates something about sin. Satan tempts Jesus to miraculously produce food, and there is nothing wrong with this; the Lord does it all the time! Satan was not tempting Jesus to do a wrong thing, but to do an acceptable thing for the wrong reason or at the wrong time.

Jesus' fast was an act of dependence on the Father. Food is good and the physical need for food is natural. But to follow His craving by performing a miracle at that moment would not be an act of dependence of the Father.

Depend on God and trust His timing! Many temptations to sin are temptations to do an acceptable at the wrong time!

Vs 4 “And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written,” This phrase tells us that Jesus is about to quote the Bible. Even our word “scripture” means “what is written.” **Just as we say “script” to refer to a kind of writing.**

Jesus combats temptation, and the Tempter, by the Word of God. “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph 6:17).”

Vs 4 “That man shall not live by bread alone” Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3 which speaks of Israel's own testing in the wilderness.

“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 (Deut 8:2-3).”

Trust Jesus' righteousness, and resist the Devil by making God's priorities your priorities!

Luke 4:5-8 Temptation to Setup an Idol

Vs 5 “And the devil...shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.” The vision itself must have been supernatural but its accomplishment on a mountain drives home the point that Satan dominates the world.

Vs 6-7 “All this power will I give thee...If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.” This is an absurd offer. Satan does have temporary authority over the governments of the world. But they both know that if Jesus fulfills the mission of the Messiah, then Jesus will take that power from Satan.

“In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth (Psl 72:7-8).”
See also Luke 1:31-33.

Satan is tempting Jesus with something that He will have anyway! Practically, Satan often tempts us with what will only make us miserable, or with things that would be ours if we just obeyed God.

One reason for this is that the Devil cannot offer you anything good. Every good thing comes from God and He withholds nothing good for those who trust Him.

Satan often depends on confusion in temptation. *Pray to God for clarity, seek Godly counsel, and remember that the Devil can't actually do anything good for you!*

Vs 8 In answer, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:13-15:

“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 (Deut 6:13-15).”

Trust Jesus' righteousness, and resist the Devil by acknowledging God's absolute authority over every aspect of your life!

Luke 4:9-12 Temptation to Test God

This last temptation is the most insidious for two reasons. First, Satan misuses Scripture in his argument. And second, it looks like a “step of faith.”

Vs 9 on a pinnacle of the Temple, Jesus was at least 150 feet above the ground level of the Temple complex.

Vs 10-11 Here Satan shifts his strategy and quotes Psalm 91:11-12. Jesus has been defeating him with the Word, so Satan will try to use the Word.

The temptation is to do something just to see if God will keep His promise. To test God in this way is petty and foolish; it's stepping out “in faith” and demanding that God meet you in your foolishness.

Know that Satan can use Scripture and sometimes sin looks superficially like faith. *Trust God on His own terms and don't use Scripture out of context to support your bad ideas!*

Vs 12 Jesus quotes the next section of Deuteronomy – 6:16: “Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.”

At Massah (Exd Ch 17) and in other places, Israel loudly doubted God's faithfulness. They complained that they were just led out into the desert to die, even though God has made promises and was confirming those promises by great miracles.

Trust Jesus' righteousness, and resist the Devil by trusting God's faithfulness!

And, resist Satan by the correct use of the Word; don't be surprised when agents of the Devil misuse Scripture!

CONCLUSION

Luke 4:13 This is Only The First Battle - “he departed from him for a season.” The devil's work is not done.

By tempting Jesus, Satan helped Him prove His righteousness and ability to be the savior of the world.

Trust Jesus' righteousness to be your righteousness by believing on Him!

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom 3:22-24).”

And by tempting Jesus, Satan helped Jesus demonstrate the tactics that bring about His defeat.

Resist the devil as Jesus teaches us! Here are some tactical points:

1. *Use the word of God correctly and completely! Don't "cherry-pick" passages.*
2. *Remember that Satan might tempt you to do a thing that can be good, but to do it at the wrong time!*
3. *Value dependence on God more than dependence on self*
4. *Sanctify God in your life and seek clarity about His goodness. Remember, Satan has nothing good to offer you!*
5. *Do not try to make God jump through hoops!*
6. *Remember that Satan can use Scripture as well. And some temptations look like faith but really they are just foolishness!*

Notice how God let Jesus into this situation, and how Satan's evil efforts are being turned to good ends. God uses the temptations to show Jesus' ability to save and provide practical guidance on freedom from sin.

When evil seems to be invincible, remember that God bends evil intentions to His glory and the good of those who love Him!

And by killing Jesus, Satan will advance the work of redemption that will bring about the salvation of all who trust Jesus and final destruction of Satan.

Trust Jesus' righteousness, and resist the Devil as He teaches us!

The Battles of Testing	Inappropriate Food	Making Another “God”	Testing God's Faithfulness
Adam and Eve in Genesis Ch 3	“the tree was good for food...”	“and ye shall be as gods...”	“Ye shall not surely die:”
Israel in the Wilderness	“Graves of Greed” Numbers Ch 11	“The Golden Calf” Exd Ch 32	“Waters of Strife” Numbers Ch 20
Psalm 106 telling of Israel's time in the Wilderness	“They soon forgat his works; they waited not for his counsel: 14 But lusted	“They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory	“They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

	exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert (Vs 13-14)."	into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass (Vs 19-20)."	Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips (Vs 32-33)."
Jesus in Luke Ch 4	Stones to bread	Worshiping the Devil	A leap of (fake) "faith"