

We begin our text today with the genealogy of Jesus which reminds us that He was all God and all man. Luke preceded this passage with the baptism of Jesus. He follows that with the genealogy to show that Jesus was from the bloodline of those who were promised the Messiah would come through their lineage.

*<sup>23</sup> Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,* Luke 3:23 "About" thirty years of age. I believe Jesus had to be about 31 or 32 because Herod the Great, who sent the soldiers to kill the babies in Bethlehem, died in 4 BC and Jesus' ministry began in AD 27. So why would Luke write this? It is because a Jewish man was considered old enough to be a rabbi at the age of 30. 31 or 32 is about 30. It was the necessary age.

This is Mary's genealogy. Joseph's was given in Matthew because Joseph adopted Jesus and that gave Jesus His legal lineage. Here in Luke we have the DNA connection to the lineage of the seed born of a woman promised from Genesis 3:15<sup>1</sup>. It is a unique genealogy going in reverse order from that of Matthew's and ending with Adam the son of God. This would be the legal genealogy of Jesus IF Mary had no brothers. If that was the case her father, Heli, would legally adopt Joseph, Mary's husband, so the estate would continue in the family. So, Matthew's genealogy is Joseph's ancestry by birth and Luke gives it according to adoption by Mary's father.

I'm not going to go over the rest of the genealogy. **The important thing is that both genealogies go through Abraham and David for it was from those bloodlines that the Messiah was to come.** Both genealogies are the same from David to Abraham.

The baptism and genealogy are followed by the temptation. The Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus was the anointing from heaven to begin His ministry. The voice of God declared He was the Son of God and pleasing to God. The genealogy showed He was in the line of the promised Messiah. Now His ministry begins in an unusual but necessary way, with the temptation to doubt those facts. If the enemy was to have any chance at all, it had to be early on before Jesus publicly exercised the power of the Spirit to demonstrate His unique relationship to God as the only begotten Son.

*<sup>1</sup> And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness <sup>2</sup> for forty days, being tempted by the devil.* Luke 4:1-2a The fact that the human genealogy precedes the account of the temptation may be to emphasize Jesus' humanity in it. He did not face temptation as a god, but rather as the God-man. He didn't use supernatural power, unless you refer to listening to the Holy Spirit and the Word as supernatural powers. He showed us what we can do when we are faced with temptation. We should respond with the Word the Spirit brings to mind.

Mark 1:12<sup>ii</sup> uses the more forceful word "drove" instead of "led". It was a challenge that had to be faced. We wonder at times why God would lead us be tested so severely, but we can see here that it is preparation for what lay ahead. Tests of faith that we are led into are to make us stronger, to teach us, to cause us to be more dependent on God, and to stretch our faith (1 Corinthians 10:13<sup>iii</sup>). Jesus had to be resolved to take no shortcuts or compromises to the Father's will but only to do the will of the Father. We will see that in each temptation. **We need the same resolve when we face shortcuts or compromises. Not my will but yours be done (Matthew 26:39<sup>iv</sup>).**

This wilderness is the Judean wilderness between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea. There is a monastery on the cliffs above Jericho called the Monastery of the Temptation built in the 6th century where there is a cave where Jesus is thought to have spent most of His time during that fast.

*<sup>2b</sup> And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry.* Luke 4:2b The Old Testament foreshadowed this in Moses. He went up Sinai for forty days and ate AND drank nothing (Exodus 34:28<sup>v</sup>). Then he took the tablets down and, seeing idolatry in the Israelite camp, broke them and spent another forty days on the mountain. The number 40 runs throughout Scripture, 40 days and 40 years. It seems to be a time of a person's interaction with the Divine, whether a fast or the reign of a king (Deuteronomy 8:2<sup>vi</sup>; 1 Kings 2:11<sup>vii</sup>).

It is a strange thing about fasting that after three days one feels almost no hunger pains until after about forty days when the body begins to consume good bodily tissue. Then you become very hungry. It isn't hunger pains that distract us as much as the thoughts about food that are a struggle. We are so accustomed to eating on a regular basis that we don't realize how much we think about food. A fast can help to break the pattern and cause us to concentrate more on our relationship with God than our normal cycle of what we are going to eat for our next meal and how long it is until that time comes. It is shocking to realize how much of our thought life is about food.

*<sup>3</sup> The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"* Luke 4:3 We need to understand that Jesus was fully human. The author of Hebrews made this clear when he wrote that Jesus was made like us in "every way" or as NASB translates it, "in all respects." The only difference was that He was born sinless and remained so (Hebrews 4:15<sup>viii</sup>). This hunger He experienced was just like that we would experience if we fasted 40 days. Satan challenged His conviction that He was God's Son. Who among us hasn't at some time doubted our salvation? The big difference is that Jesus was THE Son of God and He only said and did what His Father directed Him to do and say (John 5:19<sup>ix</sup>; 8:28<sup>x</sup>). God had just told Him that He is the beloved Son (Luke 3:22<sup>xi</sup>). Similar to the temptation in the Garden (Genesis 3:1<sup>xii</sup>), the devil was asking if God really said it, and if He did, then why not exercise the power.

What was this first temptation all about? Jesus' body was in desperate need of food. God did miracles to provide food for His prophets and the Children of Israel in the wilderness, so why not just turn a stone into bread? When God miraculously fed His people, the miracle came from God to them (Exodus 16:4<sup>xiii</sup>). The raven was commanded by God to bring food to Elijah (1 Kings 17:4<sup>xiv</sup>). But in this temptation **the devil is telling Jesus, "You don't have to wait for God to act. Take charge and do it yourself.** Why be so dependent if you are the Son of God? Just take care of it."

It is a temptation we constantly face. Will I wait on God in my time of need or rush ahead and do things my way? Will I look to God to meet the need and act at His direction or take care of it myself? Now, I know many of you are thinking what I have thought, that Jesus had a direct line to the Father and we don't hear so clearly like He did. That's why the disciples asked Him, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1<sup>xv</sup>). We hear the response of God in the Scriptures. We have the gentle, whisper of the Holy Spirit (1 Kings 19:12<sup>xvi</sup>). But we must learn to pray, to still our minds to open our hearts and listen as we read or wait in quietness in His presence.

Jesus response came from the Word of God. He quoted Deuteronomy 8:3<sup>xvii</sup>, "*Man shall not live by bread alone.*" Jesus could have asked the Father to provide His daily bread. But that is not what the devil was asking Him to do. He wanted Jesus to *command* that the stone turn into bread. Jesus could have done that, but it would have been expressing a lack of trust in God's will and God's ways. It would be saying, "I know better than the Father what I need and when I need it."

This temptation to do it our way can be very easily justified in our minds. Think of all the hungry people you could feed if you could just do this one miracle whenever there was a need. "Surely God doesn't want people to go hungry. I should act on my own because it must be God's will." Do you see the contradiction in that declaration? God's way is the best way even if you don't like it or are arrogant enough to think you have a better idea. Jesus will feed the multitudes when God directs (Matthew 14:20,21<sup>xviii</sup>)

<sup>5</sup> *And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,* <sup>6</sup> *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.* Luke 4:5-6 Jesus said that the devil is the ruler of this world (John 12:31<sup>xix</sup>). Adam was originally the ruler, but when he sinned, the devil took that title and began to build the kingdom of man apart from God. It is quite magnificent. There is a kind of glory for the one who reigns over it, the glory of man, and of man's achievements. The devil shares his kind of glory with rulers. That is why power so quickly corrupts.

The temptation was once again to do things independently from God. Jesus came to save the world, so why not just bow down, take the reins of civilizations and turn them to the right direction? Think of the suffering you could end. It's a great short cut. Would Jesus even have to die on a cross if He took this route? No. But then we would be saved only for a short earthly existence and go into eternity damned. Once again, this was short-sighted and disastrous in the long run. It would be acting apart from God and would end horrifically.

<sup>7</sup> *If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.*" Luke 4:7 The price that the devil required for this exchange was worship. It is what he wanted from the beginning. If the Son would submit to worshipping Satan, all creation would be overthrown. Again, Jesus' answer was in the Word He had hidden in His heart. He quoted from Deuteronomy 6:13<sup>xx</sup>. When the temptation contradicts the Word of God, you know it is wrong and meant to destroy you. Do you know what the Word says? Do you look to it to make your decisions about how to respond to the choices you face? Do you have some Scriptures in your heart with which to battle the enemy of your soul?

<sup>8</sup> *And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve."*" Luke 4:8 Jesus did not give a word for word translation of the verse He was quoting (Deuteronomy 6:13<sup>xxi</sup>). Instead His words seem to give the intention behind the words, "*It is the LORD God you shall fear. Him you shall serve.*" The Hebrew word for "serve" can also be translated worship. It looks to me like Jesus took the idea of the first sentence to add "only" and took both meanings of the word for worship. The meaning is clearly that it is God alone who is to be worshiped, but perhaps Jesus was also saying that whom you worship you also serve. That implies that if your priority is the glory of this world, then you will end up serving the devil. But if your priority is your Maker, you will worship and serve only Him, not your carnal, worldly desires.

*<sup>9</sup> 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, <sup>10</sup> for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you," <sup>11</sup> and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."'" <sup>12</sup> And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Luke 4:9-12*

Since the devil was rebuked with the Word, he decided to use the Word of God in the temptation. As in the last two attempts, the devil again starts with "if". If you are the Son of God... In other words, it is all in your head. You think you are the Messiah so prove it! It happens to us in a similar way. If you are a Christian, why don't you... and then we are told how the world thinks we should demonstrate our faith. Sometimes it is a rebuke for not being more like Christ. I've had neighbors demand that I do certain things with my property if I am really a Christian. I've had vagrants demand I give them money if I am really a Christian.

The devil quoted Psalm 91:11-12<sup>xxii</sup>. It is a promise to those who take refuge in God and live under the shadow of His wings (Psalm 91:1-2<sup>xxiii</sup>). The devil was saying, "Since you have that perfect relationship with God, this promise is yours, so prove to yourself (and all who see it) that you are that One. The temple was always seen from those on the streets below and some people would surely see Jesus do this and declare He must be the Messiah. "If you believe you are the One, then prove it by showing your faith in the promise." That was very clever.

Jesus looked to the Word again. This time the answer came from Deuteronomy 6:16<sup>xxiv</sup>. It was a similar situation. Israel was murmuring again and demanded that if God was with them that He prove it by providing water, right now! (Exodus 17:2-7<sup>xxv</sup>) **God asks us to have faith and depend on Him, not demand to have Him prove He is who He declares Himself to be.** Many of us at some time prayed, "God, if you really love me, prove it by..."? Or asked God for a sign to prove Himself? Jesus said a wicked and adulterous generation seeks a sign (Matthew 16:4<sup>xxvi</sup>). That is because we refuse to believe the Word delivered to us. Jesus is putting His whole faith and conviction in how to respond by looking to the Word of God, and so should we!

How many believers are without the sword of the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17<sup>xxvii</sup>)? That is one reason there is so much compromise and failure in the Christian community. We don't know how to use the Sword of the Spirit to counter temptations of doubt and discouragement or lust and pride (Hebrews 4:12<sup>xxviii</sup>). We don't have a Scripture at hand to arrest our wayward thoughts or to reveal the error of our reasoning (Psalm 119:11<sup>xxix</sup>). How we need to be in the Word, to hide it in our hearts, to share it with one another, and look to it in the situations of life!

*<sup>13</sup> And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.* Luke 4:13 The devil could see that he was getting nowhere. Jesus was physically weak but spiritually strong from the 40 days with the Father. Jesus had been victorious in the wilderness. It is a contrast with the children of Israel who had succumbed to temptations in the wilderness. Luke is emphasizing the fullness of the Spirit and knowing the Word as being essentials for victorious living. In Acts he points this out with Peter (Acts 4:8<sup>xxx</sup>), Stephen (7:55<sup>xxxi</sup>), Barnabas (11:24<sup>xxxii</sup>), and Paul (13:9<sup>xxxiii</sup>). The fullness of the Spirit is essential for victory over temptation. We can't do it on our own!

I imagine the "more opportune moment" to be the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was about to be arrested and crucified. If there would be a moment when the devil might be able

to get him to act apart from the Father, that would be it. But what Jesus was most concerned about was the separation from the Father when the sins of the world would be upon Him. God would have to turn His face away and pour out the justice the sins of mankind deserved (Matthew 27:46<sup>xxxiv</sup>). I don't think the devil understood that or he would have done everything possible to dissuade Judas from the betrayal instead of inspiring him to do it (Luke 22:3,4<sup>xxxv</sup>).

The devil's mistake is often our own. He thought Jesus would be most concerned about physical suffering and self-preservation. That is because that is how he thinks. We make the same mistake in thinking God is like us, that He wants physical things or actions when what He desires is our hearts. We think God will just overlook sin, because that is what we in our weakness tend to do. But God is holy. We must understand God from Scripture and never think He is like us (Psalm 50:21<sup>xxxvi</sup>). We are made in His image, but that doesn't mean we should think of Him in our fallen image.

Each of the temptations could have easily been justified in Jesus' mind. He could have said, "I could feed a hungry world, or I can reign without the cross and bring peace, or they will all see that I'm the Messiah and receive me." **The natural mind can come up with a reason to do anything, but what does God's Word say** about the issue at hand? How does God want us to go about it? God's way is not the easy way, but it is always the best way! May we by the grace of God learn from Jesus' example our need to know the Word of God and let the Spirit apply it to our daily lives.

## Questions

- 1 Why is Jesus' genealogy important?
- 2 Why was the temptation necessary?
- 3 Why at this time did the Devil tempt Jesus?
- 4 What was the first temptation? Jesus response?
- 5 What was the second temptation? Jesus response?
- 6 What was the third temptation? Jesus response?
- 7 How can we apply each of these to ourselves?
- 8 How was the third temptation so clever?
- 9 How can we be prepared to face temptation?
- 10 How do we justify yielding to temptation?

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### <sup>i</sup> **Genesis 3:15 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

### <sup>ii</sup> **Mark 1:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

### <sup>iii</sup> **1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

### <sup>iv</sup> **Matthew 26:39 (ESV)**

<sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

### <sup>v</sup> **Exodus 34:28 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights. He neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

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vi **Deuteronomy 8:2 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

vii **1 Kings 2:11 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> And the time that David reigned over Israel was forty years. He reigned seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem.

viii **Hebrews 4:15 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

ix **John 5:19 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.

x **John 8:28 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

xi **Luke 3:22 (ESV)**

<sup>22</sup> 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."

xii **Genesis 3:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'"

xiii **Exodus 16:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not.

xiv **1 Kings 17:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> You shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."

xv **Luke 11:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

xvi **1 Kings 19:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper.

xvii **Deuteronomy 8:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

xviii **Matthew 14:20-21 (ESV)**

<sup>20</sup> And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over.

<sup>21</sup> And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

xix **John 12:31 (ESV)**

<sup>31</sup> Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

xx **Deuteronomy 6:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear.

xxi **Deuteronomy 6:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear.

xxii **Psalms 91:11-12 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. <sup>12</sup> On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.

xxiii **Psalms 91:1-2 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. <sup>2</sup> I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

xxiv **Deuteronomy 6:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> "You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah.

xxv **Exodus 17:2-7 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them,

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“Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?”<sup>3</sup> But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?”<sup>4</sup> So Moses cried to the LORD, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.”<sup>5</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, “Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.<sup>6</sup> Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.” And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.<sup>7</sup> And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

<sup>xxxvi</sup> **Matthew 16:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.” So he left them and departed.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> **Ephesians 6:17 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

<sup>xxxviii</sup> **Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

<sup>xxxix</sup> **Psalms 119:11 (ESV)** <sup>11</sup> I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

<sup>xxx</sup> **Acts 4:8 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders,

<sup>xxxi</sup> **Acts 7:55 (ESV)**

<sup>55</sup> But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

<sup>xxxii</sup> **Acts 11:24 (ESV)**

<sup>24</sup> for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> **Acts 13:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him

<sup>xxxiv</sup> **Matthew 27:46 (ESV)**

<sup>46</sup> And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

<sup>xxxv</sup> **Luke 22:3-4 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve.

<sup>4</sup> He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> **Psalms 50:21 (ESV)**

<sup>21</sup> These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you.