

LUKE

Chapter 4

The Temptation of Jesus

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness 2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. 3 The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” 4 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” 5 And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, 6 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. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” 8 And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’” 9 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, 10 for it is written, “‘He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’ 11 and “‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’” 12 And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 13 And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

4:1 full of the Holy Spirit. Luke emphasizes the Holy Spirit not only in his Gospel (1:35, 41, 67; 2:25–27; 3:16, 22; 4:14, 18; 10:21; 11:13; 12:10, 12) but also in Acts, where the Spirit is mentioned 57 times. (CSB)

This links this episode to Jesus' Baptism (3:21-22) and reinforces the prominent role Luke's Gospel gives to the Spirit. (TLSB)

was led by the Spirit – πλήρης πνεύματος ἀγίου ... ἤγετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι – The Spirit with whom Jesus was anointed in his baptism, armed him for battle against the devil and was leading (imperfect) him in his forty-day wandering in the wilderness. The Spirit always accompanies Jesus in his work for our salvation, and the Spirit always reveals Jesus and his work to the believer. (CC p. 170)

wilderness. The Desert of Judea. (CSB)

ἐν τῇ ἔρήμῳ—The desert is a chaotic place, a place of nothingness. The opposite of the desert is paradise, an oasis, a place of fertility. Jewish hearers would be reminded of Israel's wilderness wanderings, where they were tempted and found wanting. R. Stein, *Luke*, 145–46, notes that “‘desert’ is also frequently understood as a place where one contacts God (Hos 2:14–15) or the abode of demons and wild beasts (cf. Isa 13:21; 34:14; Tob 8:3; also cf. Mark 1:13). It was also seen by some as a place where a messianiclike deliverance of Israel would take place (cf. Acts 21:38; Josephus, *War* 2.258–60 [2.13.4]).” (CC p. 170)

It is clear that the order of events in Jesus' life (baptism, temptation in the wilderness) follows the pattern set by Moses and the temptations of Israel in the wilderness. The references to Deuteronomy (8:3; 6:13 and 10:20; 6:16) strengthen this linkage and help one to recall the messianic prophecy from Deut 18:15 that a new prophet like Moses will be raised up. The Lukan order, however, with the genealogy back to “Adam, the son of God” (3:38) immediately

preceding the temptation of Jesus, calls to mind the first temptation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. There is an Adam typology (cf. also Rom 5:12–21) and a Genesis background to this story, in addition to the parallels with Exodus and Deuteronomy. (CC)

4:2 *forty days* – ἡμέρας τεσσεράκοντα—This is accusative of duration, which goes with the imperfect verb form ἤγετο in 4:1. The number “forty” would recall Israel’s forty years in the wilderness (cf. Deut 8:2), the time Moses spent on Mt. Sinai (Ex 24:18), and Elijah’s forty days on Horeb, the mountain of God (1 Ki 19:8). (CC p. 171)

being tempted. Luke states that Jesus was tempted for the 40 days he was fasting, and the three specific temptations recounted in Matthew and Luke seem to have occurred at the close of this period—when Jesus’ hunger was greatest and his resistance lowest. The sequence of the second and third temptations differs in Matthew and Luke. Matthew probably followed the chronological order, since at the end of the mountain temptation (Matthew’s third) Jesus told Satan to leave (Mt 4:10). To emphasize a certain point the Gospel writers often bring various events together, not intending to give chronological sequence. Perhaps Luke’s focus here is geographical, as he concludes with Jesus in Jerusalem. (CSB)

Though the First Adam (“son of God” in 3:38) failed when the devil tempted him (Gn 3:6), this greater Son of God is obedient when tempted (cf Rm 5:12–21). (TLSB)

This is a present participle showing continuous action. The stress of daily and day-long temptation dare not be minimized. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 2, Part 2)

The temptation of Jesus by the devil foreshadows the conflict of the passion and Jesus’ victory on the cross. Already the triumph is anticipated, although it comes in a way that one might not expect. Jesus’ battle and complete victory over the devil in the passion and resurrection is one of the great themes of his life, giving rise to the *Christus Victor* expression of the Gospel. But the devil is subtle, and he sees that his chance for victory lies in tempting Jesus to bypass the cross and reach for glory *now*. Each temptation attempts this: fill your belly *now*, if you are the Son of God; worship me, and the kingdoms of the earth will be yours *now*; throw yourself down from the temple, and all will see *now* that you are the Son of God because God will rescue you. Had Jesus succumbed to any one of these temptations, he would have reversed the order of the kingdom, placing glory before suffering. The entire rhythm of his life was just the opposite, to show that suffering must precede glory. The rejected stone is the head of the corner. And so he shows that this is the same order for us. Jesus is both the new and greater Adam and the new and greater Israel, remaining the obedient man, Son of God, and Messiah. (CC)

devil – τοῦ διαβόλου—In the temptation account Matthew and Luke refer consistently to ὁ διάβολος, “the slanderer.” Mark (1:13) mentions Σατάν, “Accuser, Adversary.” (CC p. 171)

4:3 *If you are.* εἰ νιὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ—“If you really are God’s Son” calls into question what the Father said at Jesus’ baptism (Lk 3:22) and what the evangelist records at the end of his genealogy of Jesus, that he is “the son of Adam, the son of God” (3:38). To have Jesus distrust, forsake, or misuse his Sonship is the aim of the temptations. The reference to Sonship is repeated by the devil in the third temptation (4:9). (CC p. 171)

command this stone to become bread. The devil always makes his temptations seem attractive. (CSB)

The devil and his minions knew full well that Jesus was the Son of God (cf 3:21–22; 4:41). Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit (v 1). This question, however, functions as a challenge of the fact and tempts Jesus to depart from God’s ways (cf Mk 8:27–33). It likewise challenges the reader to consider who Jesus is. (TLSB)

4:4 *it is written* – οὐκ ἐπ’ ἄρτῳ μόνῳ ζήσεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος—Like all other men, Jesus lives by bread, but not by bread alone. He shows all humanity how to live by the Word of God. Bread sustains physical life; God’s Word gives life. Thus, Jesus conquers the devil with Scripture. He uses the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. The implication here is that the Pentateuch is the Word of God. (CC p. 171)

4:6 *to you I will give all this authority* – τὴν ἔξουσίαν τούτην ἀπασσάν—The devil’s claims for authority will be countered by Jesus both in his temptations and in his teaching and miracles during his ministry. The people will be amazed at his teaching, “because his word was with authority” (ἔξουσίαν; 4:32), and at his miracles, “because with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits and they come out” (4:36). (CC)

The second temptation is longer than the first because of the comments on who has true authority and to whom authority is given. The devil promises Jesus that “authority” and “glory” will be his if Jesus will worship him. But the devil’s promises are hollow. The first man and woman found that he cannot deliver what he promises. His “authority” (such as it is) is over a fallen world, estranged from God. Its “glory” is doomed (Is 40:6–8). To worship him and to be given that authority and glory is, as Adam and Eve discovered, to lose the authority and glory of being a child of God. When worship is right, people recognize God’s proper authority and glory, and God, by grace, confers authority and glory on the creatures he made to be in his image. The “authority” and “glory” of man (the “son of God” [Lk 3:38]) is to worship and serve the true God. To worship another in order to have (supposedly) better or greater authority and glory is to want to be like God—to usurp God’s own authority and glory, and thereby to lose that conferred by God (Ezek 28:1–19). (CC)

An offer to make Jesus a political ruler. Again, the devil attacks Jesus’ pride and destiny as messianic King. (TLSB)

4:7 *worship me.* The devil was tempting Jesus to avoid the sufferings of the cross, which he came specifically to endure (Mk 10:45). The temptation offered an easy shortcut to world dominion. (CSB)

Worship and service (v. 8) go together. (CC p. 171)

4:8 *worship the Lord* – προσκυνήσεις … λατρεύσεις—Worship and service go together, as the hearer encountered in the Benedictus (1:74–75), where service (λατρεύειν) to God in righteousness and holiness forever flows from God’s deliverance. (CC)

4:9 *pinnacle if the temple.* Either the southeast corner of the temple colonnade, from which there was a drop of some 100 feet to the Kidron Valley below, or the pinnacle of the temple proper. (CSB)

Probably refers to the corner of the temple colonnade overlooking the Kidron Valley. If so, there was a drop of 100 ft. (TLSB)

throw yourself down. Satan was tempting Jesus to test God's faithfulness and to attract public attention dramatically. (CSB)

4:10-11 The devil was adept at distorting Scripture and using it for his own purposes. This serves as a warning against those who skillfully misinterpret the Bible. (TLSB)

4:10 *For it is written.* This time Satan also quoted Scripture, though he misused Ps 91:11–12. (CSB)

4:12 Jesus answered with Scripture, as he had on each of the other two occasions, quoting from Deuteronomy. (CSB)

*not put the Lord your God to the test – οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου—*The devil's proposal tested Jesus' obedience to Deut 6:16. The obedient Son, Israel reduced to one, does not put God to the test. Jesus' quotation simultaneously supports his own obedience and chastises the devil for tempting the Lord, *his* God. (CC)

4:13 *he left him until an opportune time.* Stan continued his testing throughout Jesus' ministry (see Mk 8:33), culminating in the supreme test at Gethsemane. (CSB)

The devil would continue to work against Jesus from time to time during His ministry (e.g., Mk 8:33), but esp in Gethsemane on the night of His arrest (Lk 22:39–46). (TLSB)

ἄχρι καιροῦ—Although Jesus will continue to confront the devil/Satan throughout his ministry (cf. Luke 10), the devil becomes a formidable enemy again as the passion begins in Luke 22. L. T. Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, 75, notes that the devil is active during Jesus' ministry (e.g., 11:14–20) and “reemerges forcefully in the passion narrative (22:3, 31, and possibly 22:53).” (CC)

4:1–13 The Holy Spirit leads Jesus and abides with Him through His temptation, affirming that Jesus truly is the Son of God. The blessed Trinity likewise abides with us, that we may withstand Satan's temptation of our flesh, our pride, and our will. Through Holy Baptism in God's name, we are truly His beloved children. • “Almighty God, unto You all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from You no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” (Gregorian Sacramentary, *TLWA*, p 261) (TLSB)

Jesus Begins His Ministry

14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

4:14 *to Galilee* – Galilee is of great importance. It is the place where Jesus begins his ministry (23:5; Acts 10:37; 13:31) and whence he gathers his disciples and followers (Acts 13:31; Lk. 5:1–11; 8:1–13; 23:49, 55). In Galilee he instructs the apostles concerning their future witness. The Galilean “reputation” of Jesus is important during his trial, and the Galilean ministry of Jesus and heritage of the apostles foreshadow the evangelization of the Gentiles in Acts. (CC p. 182)

Jesus returns north to His home territory. There, the first major phase of His ministry unfolds. (TLSB)

in the power of the Spirit. ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος—The same Spirit that rested upon Jesus in his baptism (3:22), filled him as he returned from the Jordan and led him into the desert (4:1), now empowers him for his Galilean ministry. Power and the Spirit are linked throughout Luke-Acts (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:8; 10:38). (CC p. 181)

Jesus shows us that we need not go it alone because the Spirit of God is always available and is to be used.

4:15 Continues the theme of Jesus' extraordinary wisdom (cf 2:41–52). The beginning of Jesus' public ministry was a time of popularity, running all the way through 9:50. (TLSB)

taught in their synagogues. ἔδιδασκεν—The imperfect denotes the continuous teaching of Jesus from synagogue to synagogue. Jesus is a well-known teacher who is filled with the Spirit and that the report concerning him was so significant that he was invited to teach in the synagogue as a respected teacher. Jesus would customarily have been invited to the home of a prominent member of the synagogue or of the town the night before to partake of the Sabbath evening Seder. This was a liturgical meal that began the Sabbath observance. (The Sabbath would begin at sundown on Friday.) Table fellowship at this meal consisted of eating and teaching. Visiting dignitaries would be expected to give a preview of their teaching at the next morning's synagogue liturgy. Examples of these Sabbath evening meals are frequent in Luke (e.g. 5:27-39; 7:36-50; 14:1-24). (CC pp. 181, 182, 183)

synagogues – συναγωγαῖς—There are two places of worship where Jesus' taught. During his Galilean ministry and his journey to Jerusalem, synagogues are the primary place for teaching (4:15, 16, 33, 44; 6:6; 13:10). After he enters Jerusalem, Jesus will teach in the temple (19:47; 20:1; 21:37). Jesus will also teach at the home around the meal (5:29–39; 7:36–50; 11:37–52; 19:1–10; 22:14–38; 24:13–35) and in the open air (6:17–49; 9:10–17). (CC)

4:14–15 Jesus begins to teach publicly for the first time since He was a child (2:41–52). Reflect on Jesus' teaching, which relies on the work of the Holy Spirit and cannot be judged by popularity alone. Pray that the Holy Spirit would bless your speech and lead others to the Lord through you. What blessings He bestows through the Gospel! • “May we in faith its message learn Nor thanklessly its blessings spurn; May we in faith its truth confess And praise the Lord, our righteousness.” Amen. (LSB 580:6). (TLSB)

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and 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 proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,** **19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.**” **20** And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. **21** And he began to say to them, “**Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.**” **22** And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph's son?” **23** And he said to them, “**Doubtless you will quote to me**

this proverb, “Physician, heal yourself.” What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.” 24 And he said, **“Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown. 25 But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, 26 and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. 27 And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”** 28 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. 29 And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. 30 But passing through their midst, he went away.

4:16 He came to Nazareth. Not at the start of his ministry but perhaps almost a year later (v. 23 presupposes that Jesus had already been ministering). Probably all the events of Jn 1:19–4:42 occurred between Lk 4:13 and 4:14. (CSB)

as was his custom. Jesus’ custom of regular worship sets an example for all his followers. (CSB)

Jesus worshiped regularly and so fulfilled the commandments in this regard (cf 2:22, 41). (TLSB)

to read. Jesus probably read from Isaiah in Hebrew, and then he or someone else paraphrased it in Aramaic, one of the other common languages of the day. (CSB)

Any qualified male could read from the Hebrew Scriptures in a synagogue. (TLSB)

4:17 The scroll of the prophet Isaiah. The books of the OT were written on scrolls, kept in a special place in the synagogue and handed to the reader by a special attendant. The passage Jesus read about the Messiah (Isa 61:1–2) may have been one he chose to read, or it may have been the assigned passage for the day. (CSB)

Typical manuscript format of the time, which would be displaced by the “codex” (book) beginning in the first century. (TLSB)

Jews preferred to preserve the sacred Scriptures in “scroll” form and still read from scrolls in synagogue worship today. Among the Dead Sea scrolls found in 1947 were two of Isaiah. One is extant almost in its entirety and dates from ca. 100 B.C. It consists of strips of leather sewn together to form a scroll 24 feet long and 10 inches wide. Because of this length, it took some effort to unroll it to this particular passage. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

prophet Isaiah – Probably a selection from a prescribed lectionary. The reading appointed for this day, from Is 61:1–2, has an unmistakably messianic character. (TLSB)

4:18 This verse tells of the Messiah’s ministry of preaching and healing—to meet every human need. (CSB)

Spirit of the Lord is on me – The first words of Jesus’ public ministry are a reference to the Trinity. Jesus means that Isaiah’s words refer to His baptism, where the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and the Father’s voice proclaimed Him the Christ, who would accomplish the Trinitarian plan of salvation. (CC p. 192)

he has anointed me. Not with literal oil (see Ex 30:22–31), but with the Holy Spirit. (CSB)

recovering of sight – The only mention of a miracle in the Isaiah quotation. Healing the blind is a prominent theme throughout Isaiah. This sight is both physical and spiritual. The fact that Jesus physically healed the blind is an essential part of Jesus’ testimony to John that He is “the Coming One” (Lk 7:21-22). And Jesus’ last recorded miracle before entering Jerusalem is the healing of a blind man (18:35-43). On the other hand, prominent in Luke’s gospel is the theme of spiritually closed eyes that are opened by the power of God to see and believe in Jesus. (CC p. 193)

liberty those who are oppressed – ἄφεσιν – Release has a wide range of meanings, frequently centering on the sense of forgiveness, and indeed this noun (like the verb from which it is derived, ἀφίημι) often refers specifically to the forgiveness of sins, as in 1:77; 3:3; 24:47. This release comes through the forgiveness of sins that Jesus himself brings. (CC p. 190)

The application of Isaiah 61 to Jesus highlights the essence of his proclamation as “release.” The word for “release” (ἄφεσις) is often translated “forgiveness,” and indeed in its three other occurrences in Luke (1:77; 3:3; 24:47), it specifically means the forgiveness of sins. Here it is rendered with the more general term “release,” meaning liberation from the bondage of sin, sickness, and Satan. At times this will involve physical healing, exorcism, and rebuking destructive forces of nature, in addition to forgiving sins; see comments below on this pericope. *Throughout, this commentary will continue to note how Jesus in his ministry carries out this programmatic fulfillment of prophecy by releasing creation from its bondage to sin and restoring it to its proper state of harmony with the Creator.* (CC pp. 192-193)

4:19 *the year of the Lord’s favor.* Not a calendar year, but the period when salvation would be proclaimed—the Messianic age. This quotation from Isa 61:1–2 alludes to the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:8–55), when once every 50 years slaves were freed, debts were canceled and ancestral property was returned to the original family. Isaiah predicted primarily the liberation of Israel from the future Babylonian captivity, but Jesus proclaimed liberation from sin and all its consequences. (CSB)

This refers to the Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8-55), when once every 50 years slaves were freed and debts were canceled and lost property was returned to the original owners. While this was great, the people tended to go back to doing the things that had gotten them into trouble. Jesus’ freeing people was done only once and was good for all time. We can constantly have that freedom by our daily confession. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

4:20 *sat down.* It was customary to stand while reading Scripture (v. 16) but to sit while teaching (see Mt 5:1; 26:55; Jn 8:2; Ac 16:13). (CSB)

Typical posture of a teacher. (TLSB)

eyes of all...fixed on him – Obviously, Jesus’ reading of these words had a profound impact on the hearers. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

4:21 Rabbis commonly taught on the Scripture passages just read from the lectionary, like sermons today. (TLSB)

today – With this word Jesus announces the inauguration of the eschaton. This is a profound Christological statement that identifies the kingdom of Jesus. Jesus announces in Galilee that the

Jubilee year is now present in Him and His ministry. This message of release unties the OT and NT. It reveals to the hearer how His Baptism initiates him into a life of continual release, sustained in the Lord's Supper. (CC pp. 193-194)

has been fulfilled in your hearing – Peclarotai – This is the perfect tense, signifying completed action that affects the present: in Jesus the Scripture has been fulfilled and remains so today. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

4:22 spoke well – Martureo – Means to “testify favorably, speak well of, approve.” This refers back to verses 14 and 15. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

they marveled – Thaumaso – This is used to express the people’s surprise and wonder in miracle stories such as Mk. 5:20; Lk. 8:25; 11:14. It is also used, as in our text, for the wonder and awe created in the hearts by the teaching of Jesus. Certainly this reflects on the statement at the end of our text that Jesus taught as one who “had authority” (verses 32,36) (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

isn’t this Joseph’s son – The People of Nazareth must have known Jesus since he was a boy. Probably he was trained in their midst as a carpenter. We gather that he had received no rabbinic schooling beyond the normal Jewish upbringing and synagogue instruction. Their question could be understood favorable: isn’t it amazing that a son of Joseph can teach like this? But it could also be understood negatively, and that appears to be the direction in which their thoughts turned. From where does he get this authority? Can an unschooled son of a carpenter be a rabbi, much less the Messiah? Jesus did not conform to their expectations, leaving them perplexed and confused. They kind says this is great, BUT. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

ἐμαρτύρουν αὐτῷ—The imperfect verbs in this verse give a sense of the continuing agitated reaction. The dative after μαρτυρέω can designate the person about whom testimony is given (BAGD) 1 a; cf. Acts 10:43; 22:5). (CC)

4:23 proverb – παραβολή—This is the first occurrence of παραβολή in Luke’s gospel. Here is the only time it refers to a proverb or shorter saying like the Hebrew נְבָשׁוּ usually does. (It is the title of the book of Proverbs.) Every other occurrence refers to what we commonly think of as a parable, i.e., an illustrative story. (CC)

hometown. Nazareth. Although Jesus was born in Bethlehem, he was brought up in Nazareth, in Galilee (1:26; 2:39, 51; Mt 2:23). (CSB)

what you did in Capernaum, do here – He uses his omniscience to discern their thoughts. Jesus confronts the flaw in their thinking – that his Word is trustworthy only if accompanied by miraculous signs. Based on Jesus’ response, their thinking must have been something like this: “The man speaks with authority and claims to be the Messiah, but we really know where he is from. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

4:24-27 Jesus’ words outraged his audience because they subtly made a case for including Gentiles in the Messiah’s salvation. Elijah and Elisha are examples of prophets who previously extended God’s grace to Gentiles. (TLSB)

4:24 truth – ἀληθίνη—This word always introduces a significant saying of Jesus, in this case, one about his prophetic character. Luke records this important word on Jesus’ lips only six times, all in critical locations: here; in the parable about alertness when the Lord returns from the wedding

feast (12:37); in his statement about receiving the kingdom as a small child (18:17); in response to Peter about leaving everything for the kingdom of God (18:29); in the final words of Jesus before the passion begins about the signs of the kingdom's coming (21:32); and in the words to the thief on the cross that today he will be with Jesus in paradise (23:43). (CC)

I say to you – λέγω ὑμῖν—This will be repeated again in 4:25. These two references here in the Nazareth sermon are the first of numerous “I say to you” statements, in which Jesus speaks authoritatively as the enfleshed Word of God. Oftentimes, they are concentrated in a single discourse (see Lk 12:1–13:9 where it is used ten times). In Luke, this expression is often spoken by Jesus. (CC p. 191)

no prophet is acceptable in his hometown – This is similar to a saying we have today, “Familiarity breeds contempt.” (CBS)

The fact that a prophet is not able to be received by his own is corroborated by two illustrations from the OT. Elijah and Elisha were well known for their preaching and miracles. But at critical times they received no welcome in Israel. And so God sent Elijah to the (Gentile) widow of Zarephath and let the (Syrian) leper Naaman be cleansed by Elisha. The Gentile mission is anticipated already in Jesus’ first service! (CC pp. 195-196)

4:26–27 Mention of Jesus’ reference to God’s helping two non-Israelites (1Ki 17:1–15; 2Ki 5:1–14) reflects Luke’s special concern for the Gentiles. Jesus’ point was that when Israel rejected God’s messenger of redemption, God sent him to the Gentiles—and so it will be again if they refuse to accept Jesus (see 10:13–15; Ro 9–11). (CSB)

Jesus combats Jewish unbelief by citing two OT examples of God’s mercy shown to Gentiles. The stubborn unbelief of one portion of humanity does not cause God to cancel his Gospel promises; he simply turns elsewhere. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

4:26 *Sidon.* One of the oldest Phoenician cities, 20 miles north of Tyre. Jesus later healed a Gentile woman’s daughter in this region (Mt 15:21–28). (CSB)

4:28 *filled with wrath.* Because of Jesus’ condemnation of Israel and favorable attitude toward Gentiles. (CSB)

ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες θυμοῦ—πληρώ in the passive is followed by the genitive of the thing filled with (BAGD 1 b). The sense is that anger has taken control of them (cf. Acts 13:52; also 5:3). (CC)

The people of Nazareth understood well what he said in this second part. No longer confused, they are not filled with anger – anger that he will not be the Messiah they want. (This same anger is focused on prophetic and apostolic bearers of the Word.) (CC p. 196)

4:29 *throw him down the cliff* – In addition to the violence of the fall, the people might have also planned to stone Jesus. (TLSB)

4:30 *passing through their midst.* Luke does not explain whether the escape was miraculous or simply the result of Jesus’ commanding presence. In any case, his time (to die) had not yet come (Jn 7:30). (CSB)

This attests to both Jesus' power and God's timing. The hour of His death had not yet come. (TLSB)

4:16–30 Jesus' ministry begins with victories over Satan and his minions, but also with an episode in Nazareth that foreshadows His rejection at the hands of His own people. Our lives typically include a similar mixture of successes and rejections. That is why we do well to focus more on the end of the Gospel story, for there we see resurrection, God's greatest victory over sin and the devil, and the revelation of His grace and mercy for us. • Eternal God, give me grace when I face temptations from the devil and assaults from the unbelieving world. Remind me that You have already overcome these things for me and even now are preparing a place for me in Your eternal presence. Amen. (TLSB)

Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit

31 And he went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he was teaching them on the Sabbath, **32** and they were astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority. **33** And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, **34** “Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.” **35** But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him, having done him no harm. **36** And they were all amazed and said to one another, “What is this word? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!” **37** And reports about him went out into every place in the surrounding region.

4:31 *went down to Capernaum* – This was a more important place than Nazareth. The Romans had a company of soldiers here. Many incidents from the life of Jesus took place in Capernaum. We may regard it as His home during His earthly ministry. Peter and Andrew lived there, plying their fishing trade on the nearby sea. (PBC)

he was teaching them – This synagogue may have been on the site of a fourth-century synagogue discovered at Capernaum. (TLSB)

4:32 *were astonished* – They did not react to it negatively as did those in Nazareth.

Teaching...authority – Jesus, in contrast to the rabbis, does not appeal to previous religious authorities. He states the truth clearly and forcefully without any hedging. The difference was obvious, even to uneducated, sinful people. He will state that he has this authority also in Matthew 28:18 when he commissions his disciples and us to go out and make disciples. It will be evident when the apostles preach the Word as is illustrated in Acts 4:13 “When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.” The Word of God carries the day and is not dependent on signs or the people proclaiming it. (CSB)

Different from the rest of the rabbis, and all the more because it could effect miraculous signs (cf v 36). (TLSB)

4:33 *spirit of an unclean demon*. To pagans, “demon” meant a supernatural being, whether good or bad, but Luke makes it clear that this was an evil spirit. Such a demon could cause mental disorder (Jn 10:20), violent action (Lk 8:26–29), bodily disease (13:11, 16) and rebellion against God (Rev 16:14). (CSB)

It caused the people it possessed to be unclean or wicked. (TLSB)

loud voice – The demon itself cried out before Jesus’ superior power. (TLSB)

4:34 Jesus of Nazareth – This title is used three times (here; 18:37; 24:19) in contexts that recall His reputation as a teacher and miracle worker. (CC p. 200)

The Christological testimony at the opening to Jesus’ Galilean ministry is spoken by a being from the world of spirits through the mouth of the man in whom that unclean demon’s spirit dwelt. In 4:34 the demon says to Jesus: “Ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth [Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ?] Have you come to destroy [ἀπολέσαι] us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God [ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεού].” The title “Jesus of Nazareth” is used three times (here; 18:37; 24:19) in contexts that recall his reputation as a teacher and miracle worker, i.e., the first phase of the prophet Christology. This is part of Luke’s geographical perspective, as Nazareth/Galilee becomes identified with this first stage of his ministry. (When Jesus turns his face to Jerusalem in Luke 9, he will predict his passion and the focus will be on his rejection.) The demon recognizes that, as the Messiah, Jesus has come to destroy the demons. The use of ἀπόλλυμι, “destroy,” suggests an eschatological interpretation. This is the end-time conflict. Jesus’ teaching and miracles demonstrate that the new era of salvation has broken in; the demonic powers fear the appearance of “the Holy One of God.” (CC p. 200)

Until Peter’s confession in Luke 9, no human participant in the gospel know who Jesus is. But the demons do. They hold people in bondage. But they recognize that the power of God is with Jesus to destroy their kingdom by releasing those who are bound by it. This He will do on the cross. Jesus has the power to exorcise, to prevail over demons. This and all other exorcisms point to the release from Satan’s bondage wrought by Jesus’ death and resurrection, the ultimate exorcism of the world. (CC p. 200)

Holy One of God. Demons know Jesus’ divine identity. Here, the demon calls Him by name in an attempt to exercise control over Him. (TLSB)

The title “Holy One of God” is messianic. It expresses the strong relationship between Jesus and the Spirit. Jesus has just been anointed by the Spirit (3:22), filled by the Holy Spirit and led by the Spirit in the wilderness (4:1), and returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee (4:14). (CC p, 200)

4:35 threw him down – The Lord bade him keep silence, and also come out from the man, from the victim of his spite. The spirit had to obey, but in doing so, he took the last opportunity to wrench the poor man in a frightful manner, throwing him down in the midst of the synagogue. (Kretzmann)

4:36 were amazed – But beyond that he could not hurt him; Jesus would not permit it. But the effect upon the congregation was such as to throw a stupor upon them all. They were inclined to doubt the evidence of their own eyes and ears. To hear a man speak words of command, with power and authority, lay down the law to unclean, evil spirits and receive unquestioned obedience, was an entirely new thing in their experience; it filled them with something like horrified reverence. (Kretzmann)

4:37 *out into every place* – But they thought of promises like Is. 49:24-25, and were soon busily engaged in spreading the news of this deed to every town of the entire neighborhood. The miracle was a proof that Jesus was indeed the Holy One. (CSB)

4:31–37 With authoritative words, Jesus silences and sends away unclean spirits. God’s Word bears authority for your sake, too, pointing out your uncleanness due to sin, yet also promising deliverance from sin and from attacks of the evil one. Revel in Jesus’ teaching and its great blessings for you. • “Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous; Bright with Thine own holiness, Glorious now, we press toward glory, And our lives our hopes confess.” Amen. (LSB 578:3) (TLSB)

Jesus Heals Many

38 *And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf.* 39 And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them. 40 Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. 41 And demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

4:38 *Simon's mother-in-law.* Peter was married (1Co 9:5). (CSB)

From the synagogue Jesus went directly to the home of Simon Peter, of whose call Luke tells in the next chapter. Having lived at Bethsaida formerly, Simon had moved to Capernaum, where he lived with his family, to which the mother of his wife belonged. Evidently, Scripture knows nothing of the foolish unkindness which is now so commonly shown to those to whom reverence and honor is due. (Kretzmann)

a high fever. All three Synoptics tell of this miracle (Mt 8:14–15; Mk 1:29–31), but only Luke, the doctor, mentions the fever. (CSB)

A high fever was often the harbinger of something worse. (TLSB)

4:39 *stood over her and rebuked the fever* – The Lord immediately signified His willingness. Stepping to the cot on which she was lying, He raised Himself in the fullness of His majesty, He threatened the fever, and it obeyed His voice. The healing was immediate and complete. If in any family someone becomes a disciple of Jesus, there is a path between that house and heaven, guarded by angels. Not only in temporal things, but especially in spiritual matters blessings will attend such a house where a faithful soul prays. (Kretzmann)

began to serve them – And the subsequent serving of the mother-in-law of Peter after healing shows that the beautiful, but rare plant of gratitude nourished in that house. (Kretzmann)

Provides a picture of discipleship. (TLSB)

4:40 *When the sun was setting.* The Sabbath (v. 31) was over at sundown (about 6:00 P.M.). Until then, according to the tradition of the elders, Jews could not travel more than about two-thirds of a mile or carry a burden. Only after sundown could they carry the sick to Jesus, and their eagerness is seen in the fact that they set out while the sun was still setting. (CSB)

Because it was the Sabbath (v 31), the crowds waited until the end of the Sabbath (sundown) to transport the sick. Carrying them earlier would have violated the holy day. Now, needy people began streaming to Jesus. (TLSB)

laid his hands on every one of them – ὁ δὲ ἐνὶ ἑκάστῳ αὐτῶν τὰς χεῖρας ἐπιτίθεις ἐθεράπευεν αὐτούς—Laying on of hands is used only one other time in Luke, when Jesus heals a crippled woman on the Sabbath (13:13). In Acts it is used only once in connection with physical healing, when Paul lays hands on Publius' father who is sick with a fever and dysentery (Acts 28:8). However, it is used frequently in Acts as part of the baptismal rite, the new healing of the new era of salvation. It is also used to set apart the diaconate in a separate ministry (6:6) and Paul and Barnabas as they begin the first missionary journey (13:3). (Being set apart by laying on of hands gives Paul and Barnabas authority to baptize.) (CC)

4:41 you are the Son of God – In this verse the title is a sign from the demons that they are fully aware of who Jesus is and what He has come to do. It is placed here by Luke (missing in Matthew and mark) to show that Jesus' release of the captives is part of His work as the Son of God, fulfilling His destiny first announced at His baptism. (CC p. 201)

he rebuked them – The word “rebuke” is used three times in this section. Jesus makes no distinction between body and soul. Demon possession, sickness, sin and death are all manifestations of creation’s bondage in its fallenness. He rebukes the demon, and it comes out after a violent struggle (4:350 He rebukes the fever of Peter’s mother –in-law, and it leaves her (4:39). He rebukes the demons who call Him “the Son of God” because they know Him to be the Christ, those demons come out (4:41). This word ties together not only demon possession and sickness, but also sin, for Jesus encourages His disciples to rebuke those who sin, and if they repent, to forgive them (17:3). (CC p. 201)

Jesus likely silenced the demons because He knew that they would misrepresent Him and distort the nature of His mission (cf vv 1–11). (TLSB)

4:38–41 Jesus heals many people by a word and a touch. His works reveal the bond between sin and sickness, which corrupts the world and touches our lives. Pray that Jesus would deliver you from evil and protect you from the effects of sin. Christ can forgive and restore you by His grace.

- Restore me, precious Savior, that I may serve You faithfully. Amen. (TLSB)

Jesus Preaches in Synagogues

42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, 43 but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” 44 And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

4:42 desolate place. Mark includes the words “where he prayed” (Mk 1:35). (CSB)

Early Sunday morning Jesus went out to a solitary place. The Sabbath had been long and hard; He had been engaged in bitter warfare with the devil. Now He needed time for meditation and prayer. (PBC)

would have kept him – But the absence of Jesus was soon noticed, and a large multitude of people, with Peter in the lead, went out to search for Him and bring Him back. But He would not

be persuaded by them. He knew that it was not the Word of Life for which they were eager, but the miracles which they hoped to see. (Kretzmann)

4:43 *I must preach the good news* – And so He explained to them the principal purpose of His ministry. The obligation rests upon Him to bring the Gospel news of the kingdom of God to other cities also. This work He has taken upon Himself; in this work He wants to show all faithfulness. And so He departed on a preaching tour of Galilee, Himself proclaiming the Gospel-message in His sermons in the synagogues of Galilee. (Kretzmann)

kingdom of God. Luke's first use of this phrase; it occurs over 30 times in his Gospel. Some of its different meanings in the Bible are: the eternal kingship of God; the presence of the kingdom in the person of Jesus, the King; the approaching spiritual form of the kingdom; the future kingdom. (CSB)

Major theme in Lk; this is merely the first of over 30 occurrences of this phrase, which describes the coming of the Messiah and the exercise of God's reign through Him. (TLSB)

The kingdom of God occurs here for the first time in Luke's gospel, and without explanation. It is never defined in the gospels, and one must deduce its meaning from the context. Its use here is programmatic for Luke. It means the Good News that God's plan of salvation is now being manifested in Jesus, who teaches and performs miracles that testify to the presence of God in Him. The connection between the kingdom of God and the teaching and miracles of Jesus is an intimate one. (CC p. 201-202)

Thus, Jesus, the preacher of the Gospel to the poor, is also the kingdom preacher who must preach the Father's redemptive plan, for this is His mission. The expression "for this purpose I was sent" also recalls 4:18. (CC p. 202)

4:44 This summary statement includes not only what has just been described (from v. 14 on) but also what lay ahead in Jesus' ministry. No express mention is made in the Synoptics of the early Judean ministry recorded in John (2:13–4:3), though it may be reflected in Mt 23:37 and Lk 13:34. (CSB)

Judea. Some manuscripts, as well as the parallel accounts (Mt 4:23; Mk 1:39), mention Galilee instead of Judea. In writing to a rpose), Luke possibly used "Judea" to refer to the whole of Palestine, the land of the Jews (23:5; Ac 10:37; 11:1, 29; 26:20). (CSB)

Refers broadly to all of ancient Israel's territory, since the account continues with Jesus' ministry in Galilee. (TLSB)

4:42–44 People chase after Jesus as though they could possess Him and keep Him for themselves. Do we blame them? They had never before witnessed God's blessings so greatly. Yet, with His blessings, Jesus would also teach us His generous ways, that He belongs not only to us but to all. His kingdom knows no human boundaries. • "Son of God, eternal Savior, Source of life and truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth among us Hallows all our human race, You our Head, who, throned in glory, For Your own will ever plead: Fill us with Your love and pity, Heal our wrongs, and help our need." Amen. (LSB 842:1). (TLSB)