

# The Temptations of Jesus

📖 Luke 4:1-13

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Last time we studied the baptism and genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:21-38. If you catch what Luke is doing, he makes an elegant argument that Jesus is Son of God and Son of Man. In the baptism He is proclaimed to be the Son of God. In the genealogy He is the Son of Man and this sets us up for the temptation of the God-man. Reviewing the baptism, verse 21, when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized. Why? Jesus did not have any sin, so He did not need to repent or be forgiven of sins. Rather, He was the one who would provide the forgiveness of sins for others. Therefore, He was baptized in order to identify with John and his message. The Jewish people needed to prepare by repenting so that they could recognize the Messiah and believe in Him. After the baptism He came up out of the water and while He was praying heaven was opened, meaning a revelation was made to John, and verse 22 says John saw the Holy Spirit descend upon Jesus in bodily form like a dove, not as a dove, but like a dove, which floats gracefully through the air. What John saw was the Spirit descending in the form of a human body, very gracefully until He lit upon Jesus, identifying Him to John as the Messiah. At that time John heard a voice out of heaven saying, "You are my beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." The Father is identifying Jesus as His Son and endorsing Jesus as the Messiah. In verse 23, Jesus began His ministry when He was about thirty years of age. Thirty-three would be more accurate. He was supposedly the son of Joseph, that's what people thought, but He was not. And as for who's genealogy this is, there is much debate. I personally would like it to be Mary's, but I can't be sure. With the available evidence there are insurmountable difficulties for both views. On the face of it we are looking at Joseph's genealogy, but Luke's says Joseph was the son of Eli, whereas Matthew's says Joseph was the son of Jacob. This can be harmonized if there was a Levirate marriage, but whether there was or not is unknown. Others conclude that it is Mary's under Joseph's name, since it was illegal to use a woman's name in a genealogy. However, Matthew used four women's names in his genealogy, so that doesn't seem to work. In any event, the names in the two genealogies differ except when they cross paths in verse 27 with Zerubbabel and Shealtiel. Then they are different until David and Nathan, where Matthew says David and Solomon. This may give credence to the view that this is Mary's genealogy, though it could indicate that the Davidic line was switched to Nathan when Jeconiah was cursed. It's just not clear and I'm not confident to give a definite conclusion. What is clear is that Joseph was a descendant of David and this genealogy goes through David back to the patriarchs, Jacob, Isaac and Abraham and then pre-

Abraham to Terah, Nahor. Serug, Reu, Peleg, all men who lived after the tower of Babel, and then back to Shem who was the son of Noah and to the pre-flood patriarchs like Methuselah, all the way back to Seth and finally to Adam. Jesus is the Son of Adam who is the son of God. But Adam, the first son of God failed, and so Jesus the last son of God came to provide salvation for all humanity. As McGee said, "Adam...was the first "son" of God—the created son of God. But he fell from that lofty position when he sinned. Jesus Christ, the last Adam and the Son of God, is come to bring mankind back into that relationship with God which Adam formerly had and lost." Wiersbe added, "By putting the genealogy here, Luke reminded his readers that the Son of God was also the Son of man, born into this world, identified with the needs and problems of mankind." Today we come to the temptations. If the baptism proves that He is the Son of God and the genealogy proves that He is the Son of Man, then the temptations prove that He is the Son of God and Son of Man who is impervious to sin, and thereby qualified to save us from our sin.

There are two major introductory notes before we begin the exposition and I think this will help clarify as we go through First, Jesus established Himself as the ideal Israelite through the temptations. He did this by showing that where Israel as a nation failed, He succeeded. This is shown five ways. First, Israel was declared to be the Son of God at the Exodus, but they failed to live up to the title, so Jesus as the ultimate Israelite was declared to be the Son of God at His baptism, and He successfully lived up to the title. Second, the nation Israel's temptations took place in the wilderness, and that is where they failed, so Jesus was taken into the wilderness, and that is where He was successful. Third, the nation Israel was tested for forty years, they failed, and Jesus was tested for forty days, and He was victorious. Fourth, the Holy Spirit was with Israel in the wilderness while they were tested, and the Holy Spirit was with Jesus in the wilderness while He was tested. Fifth, the nation Israel was to trust the word of God in order to be victorious over temptations, and Jesus, as the ideal Israelite did trust the word of God. So the five points illustrated in this passage are designed to demonstrate that where the nation Israel failed, Jesus as the ideal Israelite succeeded. This qualified Him to please God as the final sacrifice for sin.

The second introductory note is that through the temptations Jesus becomes our high priest by identifying with us in our temptations. Hebrews 4:15 says, "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." The "all things" does not mean that Jesus faced every situation or circumstance we may face, but the three avenues of temptation. 1 John 2:16 says, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world." These are the three avenues of temptation in the world and every temptation we face fits into one of these three categories. Jesus was tempted in all three of these categories and shown to be impervious to sin. The first temptation was aimed at the lust of the flesh, the desire to fulfill His hunger when it was not God's will for Him to do so by using His omnipotence. The second temptation was aimed at the lust of the eyes, seeing all the kingdoms of the world leading to the desire to rule them without having to go to the cross, but simply through the act of worshipping Satan. The third temptation was aimed at the boastful pride of life, the desire to demonstrate openly that He was the Messiah and gain glory in a way that was

not the Father's way. In all three categories of temptations, He was tempted, but He did not sin. This has bearing on the hypostatic union and impeccability-peccability controversy, but ultimately it establishes Him as our sympathetic high priest, tempted in all things as we, but without sin, again, qualifying Him to please God as the final sacrifice for sin.

Hopefully that will help as we press on to the verse-by-verse exposition. In verse 1, **Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness.** This is the fifth time we have seen Luke comment that an individual was **full of the Holy Spirit** (Luke 1:15, 17; 1:41; 1:67; 2:25, 27; 3:22; 4:1). Neither the parallel in Mark, nor the one in Matthew make this note. They only refer to Jesus being led into or around the wilderness by the Spirit. Luke has a special purpose in noting this. He wants to emphasize Jesus' humanity and how He met the temptations in His humanity. He didn't cheat and borrow His divine attributes. So He did it the same way we have to do it, in dependence upon the Spirit and hopefully we learn what that means tonight in a way that we may not have thought about it. So, Luke is very careful to note that Jesus was **full of the Holy Spirit** during the temptations so that we know that He won His victory in the same way that we must win the victory, by dependence upon the Holy Spirit, being filled with the Holy Spirit. This passage establishes the background for understanding the command in Eph 5:18, "Do not be drunk with wine but be filled by the Holy Spirit." It refers to a dependence upon the Spirit in the same way that Jesus depended upon the Spirit, and which is described in this passage and another as the equivalent of depending upon the word of God.

When He **returned from the Jordan** it says He **was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness.** Note that it was **the Spirit** who **led** Him into this situation. Jesus did not stumble into temptation. The Spirit led Him into this situation. The reason was to demonstrate that Jesus was the ultimate Israelite, the true Son of God and impervious to sin. And where did He lead Him? **Into the wilderness.** And where had the Israelites been led by Shechinah Glory after the Exodus? The **wilderness.** That was their place of testing. So, from the Spirit's point of view, Jesus is going to be tested in the same place Israel was tested. Now what is testing and what is the difference with tempting? Testing is never designed to disapprove of someone in the Scripture, but to approve, to show worth, to show quality. The Spirit's purpose then was to prove that Jesus was impervious to sin through His dependence upon the Spirit. At the same time, verse 2 indicates that the devil will be tempting Him. Temptation is different. God does not tempt. Only the devil tempts. And the purpose of tempting is different. Tempting is always designed to cause one to sin. So the purpose of what follows, from Satan's point of view, is to tempt Jesus to sin, to fall. Thus, on one occasion, Jesus will be tested by the Spirit and tempted by Satan. And many of our situations involve both of these taking place simultaneously.

Verse 2 says this took place over a period of **forty days.** Why **forty**? The number **forty** is commonly seen in the OT. The torrential rain at the flood took place forty days and forty nights. Moses was on Mt Sinai forty days. Israel wandered in the wilderness forty years. What's happening is another comparison between Israel in the wilderness under testing and Jesus in the wilderness under testing for forty days. These comparisons are

designed to establish Jesus as the ultimate Israelite and one who would save from sins. Observe that Luke says that He was **being tempted by the devil**. How long did this go on? The present passive participle, **being tempted**, indicates that Jesus was not just tempted three times at the end of the **forty days**, but throughout the entire **forty days**. There literally could have been thousands of temptations. Constable said, "Evidently Jesus experienced temptation all 40 days, but the three instances Luke recorded happened at the end of that period (cf. Mark 1:13)." The parallel in Mark 1:13 confirms this understanding, as does Matthew, but all we have record of is the last three temptations at the end of the forty days.

Further, during those **forty days** Luke reveals that **He ate nothing**. Jesus was fasting. There are several fasts in the Bible. A full fast is one day with no food or water. There are fasts that are a little longer that involve water. And then there is the forty day fast. This is a kind of fast from food but not water. It's not something to do for fun. Usually, the only reason to do a fast like this is to devote yourself to prayer over some dire situation. In this case the Spirit took Jesus into the wilderness for testing and He was involved in intense prayer to not succumb. Then Luke says that **when** those days **had ended, He became hungry**. Obviously, He became hungry and there is nothing sinful with becoming **hungry**. But it was at this time that Satan saw an opportunity to tempt Him with respect to His hunger.

In verses 3 and 4 we have the first temptation. It comes by means of the first avenue of temptation, categorized in 1 John 2:16 as "the lust of the flesh." **And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread."** Satan knew that at Jesus' baptism the Father had declared Him to be **the Son of God**. In fact, he knew He was the Son of God. The Greek construction, **If You are** is  $\epsilon\iota$  + the indicative, which is a first class condition. The first class condition assumes the truth of the statement for the sake of argument. In this case it is true. Satan knew that Jesus was the Son of God. The temptation was for Him to demonstrate that He was **the Son of God** by telling **the stone to become bread**. This is something Jesus could easily do. The word **telling** is interesting. Satan knew that Jesus was the Creator and that He created by telling things to come into existence. All that Jesus would need to do was **tell this stone to become bread** and it would **become bread**. Why would it be sinful for Jesus to do this? There is nothing wrong with satisfying one's hunger. Eating food is not sinful. So why not just do it? The answer lies in that it was a test to see if He would depend upon the Spirit of God or act independently of God. The real issue was dependence, not whether God wanted Him to satisfy His hunger. Put another way, was this the way God wanted Him to satisfy His hunger? No. If He had done it this way He would not be depending upon God to provide for Him. He would be depending upon Himself.

In verse 4 we see His answer. **And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.'"** Where does this quote come from? Jesus is quoting Scripture. Deut 8:3. Go ahead and turn there. All the passages Jesus quotes in the temptations will come from Deuteronomy. And why is that? Because Deuteronomy was written while Israel was in the wilderness. That comparison is kept throughout the passage. So, what this means is that the very passages the nation Israel had available in the wilderness to keep them from

sinning, are the very passages Jesus used to be successful, showing that the Scriptures work, that they are powerful. This passage, **MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE**, comes in a context beginning in Deut 8:2 where it says, "You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3" He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord." The situation was this, every morning for six days of the week God would provide manna for the Israelites. All the people had to do was go pick up the fresh manna each day. This manna was some kind of bread of sustenance that enabled them to continue to live. But there was a lesson in all this. Because they lived in a wilderness and there was no food they had to depend upon God to provide it. Therefore, their lives did not just depend upon bread, did it? No. They depended upon the God who provided the food. That was the lesson in the manna. You really depend upon Me. Now Jesus is in the same situation as Israel; a wilderness with no food and it's been forty days and He's hungry. And the devil says, "Just tell this stone to turn into bread. I mean, You are God, aren't You?!" But Jesus knew the Scriptures. Jesus knew the lesson of the manna. And what's the lesson of the manna? My sustenance does not just depend upon bread, but it depends upon God. And My real dependence is upon Him. And if He wants Me to have bread, He'll supply the bread. He's done that before and He can do it again. So, the first avenue of temptation is the lust of the flesh. Jesus was hungry, He wanted to satisfy His flesh, but in order to do so He needed to depend upon God because man does not live on bread alone, but by dependence upon God.

Now that response has very practical application for all of us. We, too, are tempted by the lust of the flesh. We need things like food, shelter, transportation, and there's nothing wrong with having them. Of course, we can't speak to rocks and turn them into these things, but God knows that we need these things. Satan tempts us to try to satisfy our desires for these things without depending upon God. He wants us to try to produce these things in and of ourselves. Bock characterized the way Satan tempts us to think, "Is not God treating you poorly? If so, take care of yourself. You can look out for yourself better than God can look out for you!"<sup>1</sup> That's the lust of the flesh and when we give in to it we are not depending on Him and it's sin.

In verses 5-8 we come to the second temptation. It comes by means of the second avenue of temptation, categorized in 1 John 2:16 as "the lust of the eyes." **And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.** Where Satan **led Him up** to is not known, but what Satan did was **showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.** Constable said, "Evidently he showed Jesus the kingdoms in a vision since He saw them all "in a moment of time (instant)." The situation has to do with sight, lust of the eyes. Satan **showed Him** these things. So this is clearly the second category.

As He was seeing all these kingdoms, in verse 6 Satan **said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish."** Question, is this something that

Satan could offer? Is it true that it had **been handed over to** him and he could **give it to whomever** he wished? Basically, yes. When God created the world, He gave it to Adam. Adam was the first king and Eve was the first queen. Together they were to rule the world and its kingdom for the glory of God. But when Adam sinned he **handed it over to** the one who tempted him to sin. And Adam is the one Satan is referring to in this verse where he says, **it has been handed over to me**. Adam lost his kingship over this realm when he sinned and the NT says Satan became the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, and it is said that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. That is a very powerful picture of the present political, social and economic state of affairs in our world. Satan is the ultimate dictator over this world system and it is against God. Now, what this does not mean is that Satan has unlimited authority over the world and can do anything he wants. Job teaches us that. God puts limits on how far he can go, but he does have extensive power and influence over the world. The idea of millennialism that Satan and the demons are presently locked away is one of the most treacherous and malignant doctrines in the history of the world. Satan is alive and well and seeking to devour. To think otherwise is to be willfully ignorant of the Scripture and reality. So he makes this offer; **I will give You all this...and I give it to whomever I wish**. All that Satan showed Jesus in vision could be His; all power, all glory, all kingdoms. Now, it will all eventually be His, when He has completed His Messianic purpose. But the temptation is that He can have it all now, devoid of the cross, devoid of suffering. Verse 7, **therefore if you worship before me, it shall all be Yours**. How would you like a kingdom without a cross, Jesus? Doesn't that sound tempting? A global reign without suffering? And all that Jesus had to do was worship Satan. Bock explained, "Often the temptation is described as if all Jesus had to do was hit his knees once and all would be his. But the challenge represents a defection from God, and such a defection would have lifetime consequences. Jesus was to give the devil the respect and honor due to God alone." If Jesus had done this, what would have happened? The whole plan of salvation, all human salvation would have been impossible. He would have taken up arms with Satan against God. He would have become an idolater.

In verse 8 we see Jesus' answer. **It is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'** Where does this quote come from? Deut 6:13, another passage from the time of Israel's wilderness wanderings. Turn to this one. And what's the context of Deut 6:13? All the blessings that God had given them that could only be maintained by worshipping Him alone. Notice verse 10, "Then it shall come about when the Lord your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, <sup>11</sup>and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied, <sup>12</sup>then watch yourself, that you do not forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." See, watch out, because God gives you all this and you start to take it for granted and forget. Then you're in real trouble. You start to think you are entitled to have what you have and that you deserve more. So he warns, verse 13, "You shall fear *only* the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name." <sup>14</sup>"You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, <sup>15</sup>for

the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth." Jesus took a passage that presents God as the one who gives all blessing and the dangers of forgetting that and starting to have this attitude of entitlement, yeah, I deserve this stuff and I deserve more. And at that point we're already worshipping false gods. Satan posited that Jesus could get blessings from him if He would just bow down and worship him. But all blessing comes from God, and Jesus stated it, worship and serve Him only. That means exclusively. So, the second avenue of temptation is the "lust of the eyes," and in it Satan showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and told Him He could have them all if he just bowed down and worshipped him.

There is a lot of practical application of this to us too. We too are tempted by the lust of the eyes. Things we see draw our attention and produce craving. The more we look at them the more we want them. Maybe it's power, maybe it's fame, maybe it's money, maybe it's all of these things wrapped together in one. Or maybe they are even things that are valid and not evil, even things God wants us to eventually have, like kingdom rewards. But the real issue is what are we willing to do to get them? Are we willing to try to cheat in order to get them? It is best to wait for God to give them to us, to depend on Him to supply all our needs.

In verses 9-12 we come to the third temptation. It comes by means of the third avenue of temptation, categorized in 1 John 2:16 as "the boastful pride of life." **And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU TO GUARD YOU' and 'ON THEIR HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"** This time the devil took Jesus **to Jerusalem**, the heart and center of Jewish life. He **had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple**. The location of the **pinnacle** is debated. The Greek word *περυγιον* refers to "the tip, or extremity of anything, *end, edge*." Because of this it is often translated "pinnacle" or "summit." It refers to a high point. Most think that this refers to the SE corner of the Royal Stoa of the Temple, where the drop was about 450 feet to the Kidron Valley below. Josephus said that if one peered over that edge he would become dizzy. Others disagree and argue that the location would have been more central to the Temple area, on the height of the central sanctuary, where everyone could see Him. If He had been standing there, it's true, He would have been much more visible. Wherever this was, and nobody knows for sure, just that it was in the Temple area on a high point, at that time Satan said, **"If you are the Son of God,"** using a first class condition again, just as in the first temptation. Satan knew He was **the Son of God**. He's not doubting it. He knows it. But in order to prove it to the people of Israel, he says to Him, **throw Yourself down from here**. Then he quotes Ps 91:11-12 as part of the temptation. Fruchtenbaum wrote, "When Satan challenged Yeshua to throw Himself off the pinnacle of the Temple, he basically said, "If you are the Son of God, prove it to me by jumping off the pinnacle, because Psalm 91 says that if the Messiah stumbles, the angels will catch Him, so He could not be hurt before His time. So if you are really the Son of God, prove it to me by jumping off, and let me see Psalm 91 fulfilled." Satan was right. If Yeshua had thrown Himself down, Psalm 91:11-12 would have applied. Angels would have rushed to His rescue

because He was not allowed to die before His time. The angels would have let Him down gently from where He had jumped. The Temple compound was always full of people. If they had seen Yeshua jump from the pinnacle and float gently to the ground, they would have instantaneously proclaimed Him the Messiah." Why would this be a temptation? Because if Jesus leaped and landed safely He could claim instant fame and glory. Think of the power of instant fame. All the people would instantly receive Him. This is the boastful pride of life at work, an attempt to gain great notoriety or fame. Jesus is destined for great notoriety and fame, but there is a right way and a wrong way to attain it. The wrong way is to test God by testing His promises to see if they are true. The right way is to trust God's promises and timing.

Verse 12, **And Jesus said to him, "It is said, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"** If Jesus had thrown Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, He would have been testing the promises of God. That is not the way to depend upon God. We don't give tests to God. He gives tests to us and we either pass or fail. But the way to pass is to depend upon God, simply believe the promises. That's the third temptation.

Now I want to point out that Satan used the word of God in this temptation and how dangerous this means the world is. Satan knows the word of God, probably better than you. He is not ignorant. He even knows the word of God is the power of God. So how does he negate the problem? By misusing the word of God, by taking it out of context. Ps 91:11-12 was never meant to be used in the sense of testing God's protection by doing something stupid like leap off a building. It was meant as a promise of protection under the normal circumstances of life while trusting God. When we realize that Satan knows and uses the word of God, we understand why there are so many false teachers, as well as how to recognize false teachers. When a teacher uses passages out of context to support all kinds of faulty theology, like the tongues movement, the word of faith movement, the entire Roman Catholic system, which strings together verse after verse into one of the most satanic systems the world has ever seen, Jehovah's Witnesses do the same thing, the Mormon's, the Church of Christ, all of them vilely use Scripture out of context, and it is all coming from where? Satan. Satan has misused the word of God to produce every heresy that exists and this is his strategy to derail us, to destroy us, to make us impotent, to make us think that the Scriptures we do know are not working because when we apply them as we think they are meant to be understood, they don't work. That is why we must know not just verses but contexts. Contexts of Scripture establish meaning, not verses. Verses can be misconstrued easily. Think of the passage that says, "There is no God." Ps 14. If you read all of it, it says, "The fool says in his heart, There is no God." Contexts nail down the intended meaning, not verses taken out of context. This was discussed this week in our Chafer Board meeting on Rom 10:9-10, the passage about confess with your mouth in Rom 10:9-10, which is taken out of context in almost every gospel tract there is and used as a condition for eternal justification. It is amazing to me the amount of gullibility and ignorance of proclaimed Bible-believing Christians who must not read the Bible. And they continue to sit under pastors who are basically inspired by Satan to misinterpret and misuse passages just like Satan did with Ps 91 to Jesus. But Jesus knew the Scriptures and His answer was a proper use in Luke 3:12 of Deut 6:16, **'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'** That context is a reference to Exod



17:17 where there was no water to drink and the people started fighting with Moses and saying "Give us water to drink" and Moses said to them, "Why do you fight with me? Why do you test the Lord?" The people wondered whether God was really with them and really cared for them. They were testing God. But Jesus would not test God. He knew that God was with Him and that He cared for Him. He didn't need to run a test by jumping off a building. So, the third avenue of temptation is the "boastful pride of life," and in it Satan tempted Him to jump off the temple so that God's angels would rescue Him, giving Him safe transport to the ground so that all would accept Him as Messiah instantly, and He would be instantly famous. Jesus wouldn't do it.

There is a lot of practical application of this for our lives. We can be tempted by the boastful pride of life. How many times do we want to make our name great? Gain notoriety and popularity and acceptance with people? Are we willing to try to claim certain promises in the word of God that are not really for us? Or would put the Lord to the test? Many in the Church claim that if we have enough faith we can get healed or be rich, and our only problem is that we don't have enough faith. These are all distorted uses of the Bible. They don't do anything but create more doubt in people because they don't get rich and don't get well. Instead, just believe the promises that are written to us as they are intended to be taken, in their given context.

Finally, in Luke 4:13 it says, **When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.** When it says **every temptation**, it means every temptation that took place over the forty days, the most intense of which were the final three, one from each category, the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life. But though he left at this time, he did not leave Him permanently. It says **until an opportune time**, or simply, "another time." The word **opportune** is not in the original text. Satan would return to tempt Him further at another time. But through all this Jesus proved to be the ultimate Israelite, our sympathetic High Priest and impervious to sin, qualifying to dye for our sin.

Fruchtenbaum had this good summary, "God's aim in allowing these temptations was to prove the sinlessness of His Messiah. Satan's aim in these temptations was to cause Messiah to sin. He simply tried to accomplish the impossible. Messiah was impeccable; He simply was not able to sin, but that did not discourage the fallen one from attempting the impossible. Satan's subsidiary aim was to keep Yeshua from the cross by offering Him a shortcut to His Messianic goal. If Yeshua had succumbed to this temptation, it would have been a good example of the attainment of a legitimate end by illegitimate means."<sup>2</sup>

In summary, in verse 1, Jesus had just withdrawn from His baptism, full of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit was leading Him around in the wilderness, just as Israel had wandered around in a wilderness. In verse 2, this went on for forty days, just as Israel had wandered around for forty years, a clear point of contact and indication that Jesus is being presented as the ideal Israelite. During the entire forty days he was being tempted by the devil, so as to cause Him to sin so that He would fall short of His Messianic goal of dying for our sin. During those forty days He ate nothing and when the days came to an end He was extremely hungry. At that time, in verse 3, the devil tempted Him with the lusts of the flesh, saying, "If you are the Son of God, and you are, then tell this stone

to become bread." Create food for yourself, act in independence of God, don't trust Him for your needs, trust yourself. But Jesus knew the Scriptures and in verse 4 answered, "Man shall not live on bread alone." Jesus knew that bread did not consist of what is necessary for life because the manna came from God. So life came from the word of God, not bread alone. In verse 5 Satan tested Him with the lusts of the flesh. He took Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a vision. And in verse 6 the devil said to Him, I will give you all of these kingdoms and all of the glory that comes with ruling them, because they've been handed over to me by Adam and I have the right to give them to whomever I wish. All you have to do, verse 7, is defect from God and worship me and you can have it all. But Jesus knew the Scriptures. Jesus knew that all blessing came from God and that if you worshipped idols you would call down the judgment and wrath of God. So he said in verse 8, "You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only." So in verse 9 Satan tempted Him with the boastful pride of life, taking Him to Jerusalem up on the highest point of the temple and challenging Him to demonstrate that He was the Son of God by throwing Himself down. He even quotes Scripture, quoting Ps 91 to the effect that God would send His angels to gently capture Him and lower Him to the ground. Then Jesus could have great fame and acceptance as the Messiah. Oh, how tempting it might be. But Jesus knew it was all a deception and He answered by quoting Scripture again, saying "You shall not put the Lord God to the test." The nation Israel had done this when they grumbled about water, doubting whether God was with them and cared for them. Jesus did not doubt this. He knew God was with Him. There was no reason to test Him. In verse 13, the devil left at that time, but he returned later to continue to cause Him to fall.

Theologically, in this passage, the doctrine of the hypostatic union and the impeccability of Christ are in view. The doctrine of the hypostatic union teaches that Jesus Christ is undiminished deity united with true humanity in one person without confusion, mixture or separation, forever. In this one person there are two natures, a divine nature and a human nature. The doctrine of impeccability teaches that Christ's divine nature was not able to sin, and His human nature was able not to sin. The difference rests on the location of the word "not" in the two expressions." As not able to sin the emphasis is on impossibility. In the expression able not to sin, the emphasis is on possibility. It's the possibility aspect of His human nature that rendered Him temptable in all things as we. Luke's emphasis is that Jesus handled the temptations in His human nature. In this respect he points out in verse 1 that Jesus was full of the Spirit. This means that in His human nature He depended upon the Spirit of God to overcome these temptations and defeat Satan. But He is still one Person and we can never totally isolate His humanity from His deity. And in this respect, as a Person, He is impeccable, not able to sin.

In conclusion, what can we learn? That temptation is defeated by the right use of Scripture under the filling of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was giving us the example of how to successfully navigate temptations. He is our High Priest and He showed how to depend upon the Spirit for victory so that we learn to depend upon the Holy Spirit. This involves a close connection with the word of God. As our passage shows, Jesus was full of the Spirit and He used Scripture rightly at each temptation. I cite two passages that you should have memorized and that show a close, even equivalence of the word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, so that the two can never be

separated. Eph 5:18, where Paul says, “Do not be drunk with wine but be filled by the Spirit.” That passage has a parallel in Col 3:16. The contexts are identical, and when Paul comes to this point he doesn’t say “be filled by the Spirit,” he says, “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you.” That is what it means to be filled by the Spirit, it means to let the word of Christ richly dwell within you. There is not a difference in the world between those two expressions. And Christ demonstrates that in this passage. He was full of the Spirit and what happened, the word of God dwelled richly within Him, it flowed out of Him and that is how He defeated temptation. And that is the way that we are to defeat temptation. But to do that we have got to know the word of God. We don’t know it well enough. Even the OT taught this truth saying, “I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You” (Ps 119:11). Knowing the word of God is the key to defeating temptation. But, as I stated, it’s “the right use” of the Scripture, meaning, the passage you use has to be legitimately applicable to the situation you are in. That’s why I think we don’t know the Scripture well enough. We don’t know the given context inside of which these verses are given, so when we try to claim and use one, we might be using it wrongly, like Satan did. We often memorize verses because we like the way it sounds or what it means to us, but if we aren’t using them as they are intended to be used, then they aren’t promises of God for our situation, and we are wasting our time trying to misuse it. That’s the tool of Satan and that’s why we focus on exposition of the word in a given context, so that we know the valid limits of application of a verse or passage. And once we do, then we are set to use it to resist the devil, with the result that he will flee from you.

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<sup>1</sup> Darrell Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, 373.

<sup>2</sup> Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Yeshua: The Life of Messiah from a Messianic Jewish Perspective*, 537-8.