

# Luke Chapter 4

Having being baptized by John, Jesus now enters the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. (v1) This chapter is a chapter about power and authority. After forty days in the wilderness, being tempted by the devil, we are told that Jesus ate nothing during this time. (v2) Remember, Jesus was fully human. The Bible says that He hungered. He would have been weak, exhausted and anxious, both physically and mentally. The devil chose this opportunity to seriously test His resolve. Notice that the devil wasn't questioning his power and authority, but was trying to get Jesus to use that power and authority for His own satisfaction. To satisfy His hunger but also to satisfy the need to demonstrate who He was by showing His power. Jesus' power was not to be used for Himself. It would have been very easy to use that power for His own gratification and most people would use it in this way if they had the power which Jesus had. Someone once asked me "Can God create a rock that is too big for Him to move?" The person was trying to trap me. If I say that God CAN NOT create a rock that is too big for Him then I bring into disrepute the claims that God is all-powerful. If on the other hand I say that God CAN create a rock that is too big for Him then again I bring into disrepute the claim that He is all-powerful (Omnipotent). It's a case of heads you win, tails I lose. The devil is very clever, even today. The problem arises when we limit God by our own limitations. Because we are bound by Matter, Time and Space, we assume that God is limited by these things also. I believe that God is beyond, (outside) of Matter, Time and Space. I believe that God created Matter, Time and space. I believe that God is spirit and therefore the size of any material object is irrelevant. Can we change the speed, direction and rotation of the Earth? The Earth is one rock among countless numbers of rocks within the known universe. We can't do this small thing, if we did, we would cease to exist, yet God moves an entire universe, in such a way that we not only exist in it, but also enjoy it.

Jesus didn't fall for it, he countered the devil, "man shall not live by bread alone but by every word of God." (v4) The physical world is not the only thing that exists. By limiting God by what we see, touch, taste, hear and smell, we will never come to realize God. Did you know that scientists have slowly come to realize that the known universe is a tiny part of what the real universe is like. The discovery of dark matter, that is matter that we can't see is very illuminating (pun intended).

verses 5 to 8 :- The devil shows Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time and offers them to Him if He will worship him. It is very interesting that the devil says that he has the power to offer all the kingdoms of the world to Jesus because they were delivered to him. The true power and authority belongs to God and not to the world. Jesus says:- "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve". (v8)

Without God the authority must rest upon the world and the world's fallible leaders, when they make a wrong choice, the world must suffer. It is imperative that we all worship the Lord our God and serve Him only and that includes the world's leaders.

Finally verses 9 to 12. Satan gets clever and tries another tactic. Because Jesus is so reliant on the scriptures to counter the devil, he decides to play Jesus at his own game. Satan says "For it is WRITTEN, He will give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy feet against a stone". (v10-11) Jesus countered again with more scripture "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God". (v12) I once saw a Christian preacher being asked this very thing. He was asked if he would drink some poison because he believed in God and therefore God wouldn't let him die by drinking it. The Christian preacher didn't do it. It was putting God to the test. The devil is alive and well.

In the rest of the chapter Jesus' power and authority is again questioned as He preaches in the synagogue (v16-30). Jesus' words so enraged the people in the synagogue that they were ready to throw Him off the side of a hill. He proclaimed that He was the one who was promised in scripture. (v17-22) and that no prophet is welcome in his own country. (v24)

Jesus then backed up His claims that He was the promised Messiah by performing miracles. Verse 32 - And they were astonished at His doctrine: for His word was with power. Jesus drives out demons and even the demons acknowledge who this man is. The people had seen nothing like it they exclaimed "What a word is this! For with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. (v36)

A Prayer: Heavenly Father, we could never hope to stand the temptation, ridicule, demands, pressure, anxiety and loneliness that Jesus suffered. That Jesus did not use His power for His own glory, gain, power, self-satisfaction where we would most probably have done so, but used His power for the good of the human race. Who could have walked away from the Cross but suffered the pain and humiliation that the Cross brought. That temptation can come in many forms. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Give us the strength for we are nothing without you. In Jesus' name. Amen.