



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Holy Gospel According to St. Luke

Chapter 4

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Introduction

Chapter Outline

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The Temptation 4:1-13

- The consecration of our Lord in His baptism was immediately followed by what is known as His temptation
- *into the wilderness*, Supposed by some to have been in Judea; by others to have been the great desert of Horeb, or Sinai, where the children of Israel were tried for forty years, and Moses and Elijah fasted forty days
- Here we see that our Lord began His ministry immediately after His baptism, not by going directly to Jerusalem, but by retiring into a wilderness, that, without interruption, He might prepare Himself for His work by fasting, meditation, and prayer, and by sustaining temptations



The Temptation 4:1-13

- Hence His journey to the wilderness is said to have been undertaken by the direction of the Spirit, by which Mark says He was *driven*, Mark 1:12-13
- Only the Gospels of Matthew and Luke have the details of Jesus' temptation by Satan with very slight difference of detail, the principal one being the order in which the three great temptations occurred
- According to Luke here, and Mark 1:13, he was tempted by Satan during these forty days and it reached its most awful climax at their close



The Temptation 4:1-13

- But only the three assaults which he made at the end of the forty days are recorded
- Perhaps because they were more for the instruction of mankind
- Jesus did not, it seems, even feel the sensation of hunger till the forty days were expired
- Moses fasted at two different times, when he was forty days and forty nights with God, Deuteronomy 9:9-25, 10:10
- In like manner Elijah went in the strength of the meat he had eaten, for *forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb, the mount of God*, (1 Kings 19:8)



The Temptation 4:1-13

- At the end of His ordeal of 40 days of fasting and prayer, Jesus was hungry like any man
- Recognizing His physical weakness, Satan saw a fitting time to test Jesus
- It may be useful to remark here, that, during the forty days and forty nights in which He is said to have been tempted by the devil, He is carried about, continually sustained and supported, by the Holy Spirit
- Let those who are tempted by Satan look for, and, in virtue of the power and intercession of Christ, claim, the same support



The Temptation 4:1-13

- The last words of the previous chapter, that Jesus was the *Son of Adam*, indicating Him be the *seed of the woman*
- In His encounter with Satan, Jesus the Son of God is portraying both Adam's temptation by the Serpent in the Garden of Eden and Israel's temptations in the desert after leaving Egypt as God's "first-born son" among the nations of the earth, Exodus 4:22-23
- St. Paul called Jesus the "last Adam", 1 Corinthians 15:21-22,45-47, and the Fathers of the Church called Him the "new Adam" and the "second Adam"



The Temptation 4:1-13

- It has been interestingly said of the tempter "that he thought very fast about a temptation of a matter of eating just as he did with the first Adam, so he practiced the old manner of his trading with the second Adam"
- Test 1 the devil tempted the physically hungry Jesus to prove He was the Son of God by turning a stone into bread
- Weakened and exhausted by long abstinence from food, the temptation to supply His wants by this easy means at once was great
- Jesus responded by quoting Scripture, Deuteronomy 8:3 to show that He came to assert and maintain the authority of the Scripture as uncontrollable, even by Satan



The Temptation 4:1-13

- He lays down the writing of Moses and the prophets as a rule to Himself, and recommends to us as a reply to Satan and his temptations
- Christ did not yield to the temptation though He was hungry because He would not do what Satan proposed Him to do
- Miracles were done for the confirming of faith, and the devil had no faith to be confirmed
- He did miracles for the approval of His doctrine, and therefore till He began to preach He would not begin to work miracles
- He would not work miracles for Himself and His own supply



The Temptation 4:1-13

- He came not to please Himself
- He would rather turn *water into wine*, for the credit and convenience of His friends, than *stones into bread*, for His own *necessary supply*
- He would rather be rebuked by Satan with being weak, and not able to do it, than be persuaded by Satan to do, as He was rebuked by His enemies as if He could not *save Himself*, and *come down from the cross*, when He could have come down, but would not, because it was not fit that He should



The Temptation 4:1-13

- St. Luke here adopts a different order of the temptations from St Matthew, perhaps because he thought that the temptation to spiritual pride (which he places third) was stronger and more intense than that to temporal ambition
- In the devil's tempting of our first parents, he presented to them the forbidden fruit, first as *good for food*, and then as *pleasant to the eyes* and they were overpowered by both these charms
- Satan here first tempted Christ to turn the stones into bread, which would be good for food
- Then showed Him the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, which were *pleasant to the eyes*



The Temptation 4:1-13

- *All this authority I will give You, ...* Are only mentioned by Luke
- Where we may observe, that the devil was a liar from the beginning
- The dominion over the things of the world was not given to the angels, but to man, Genesis 1:26
- Neither has he any such power as he pretends to, being not able to do any thing against Job till he had obtained permission from God, nor to enter into the swine without approval first obtained from Christ



The Temptation 4:1-13

- A wide difference there is between a good angel and a fallen angel
- A good angel will not ask to be worshipped by men, but directs others to the worship of God only, Revelation 19:10
- But a fallen angel not only seeks to be worshipped by men, but by the Son of God Himself, even by Him whom all the holy angels worship, Hebrews 1:6
- This was what Satan at first wanted, and by which he fell
- He assumed deity, and sought to have divine worship given him; and in this sin he still persisted, and grew worse and worse



The Temptation 4:1-13

- How our Lord Jesus *triumphed* over this temptation?
- He gave it an absolute discard, rejected it with outrage, "*Get behind Me, Satan!* “
- Such a temptation as this was not to be reasoned with, but immediately refused it, “*For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’*”
- Jesus did not treat this temptation as the others; but, with Divine authority, commanded the tempter to return to his own place



The Temptation 4:1-13

- The first temptation had been to natural appetite and impulse; the second was to unholy wicked ambition; the third is to unwise confidence and spiritual pride
- It was based, with profound ingenuity, on the expression of absolute trust with which the first temptation had been rejected
- Since Our Lord had repelled the first temptation by an act of confidence in the power and goodness of God
- Now Satan asks Him to make trial of it and shows that he could quote scripture as well
- Through the incomparable deceitfulness of Satan, the very means we make use of to repel one temptation may he used by him as the groundwork of another



The Temptation 4:1-13

- This method he often uses, in order to confuse us in our confidence
- The devil may place the soul in peril and temptation, but can never *make* it sin
- “It is,” as St. Augustine says, “the devil’s part to suggest, it is ours not to consent.”
- Christ quoted Deuteronomy 6:16
- So Satan was defeated in the temptation
- Our victorious Redeemer kept His ground, and came off a conqueror, not for Himself only, but for us also



The Temptation 4:1-13

- *until an opportune time*, Signify until the time of His passion, when He entered into the heart of Judas, and armed all his instruments against our Savior
- St. John the Apostle wrote: *Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, sensual lust, enticement for the eyes, and a pretentious life, is not from the Father but is from the world”* (1 John 1:15-16)
- St. John has summed up the temptations of the world into three categories: sensual lust (desires of the flesh), enticement for the eyes, and a pretentious flashy life

Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee 4:14-15



- Jesus came from His time of testing stronger than ever
- Though Jesus was already filled with the Spirit 4:1, He continued to walk in the power of the Spirit after experiencing victory over temptation
- The region of Galilee was a fertile, progressive, highly populated region
- There was a reason for centering His ministry in the Galilee
- Two of the great international trade routes passed through or by the Galilee
- So it was not difficult to find people to hear His Gospel message because crowds of people traveled these trade route

Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee 4:14-15



- *their synagogues*, Their places of public worship, where they met, not, as in the temple, for ceremonial services, but for the moral acts of devotion, to read, to pray and praise
- He gained a great reputation, *news of Him went out through all the surrounding region* and it was a good fame for he *was glorified of all*
- Every body admired Him, and praised Him publicly as they never heard such preaching in all their lives
- Now, at first, He met with no contempt or contradiction all *glorified* Him, and there were none as yet that slandered Him

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- It is clear that our Lord did not begin His ministry at Nazareth
- Jesus came to His hometown of Nazareth and attended the Sabbath day service in the local Synagogue
- *as His custom was*, To keep the Sabbath command and also reading had been for years His practice in the little synagogue of the village
- Children at the age of five years were admitted into the synagogue, and at thirteen attendance there was part of the legal life of the Jew
- Up to this time, it would seem, He had limited Himself to reading

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- Now He came to preach, after an absence possibly of some months, with the new power that had already made Him famous
- It was not unusual for the synagogue officials, if any stranger was present who was known to be competent, to ask him to read and to explain a passage in the Law or Prophets
- Our Lord was well known in Nazareth, and lately had evidently gained a great reputation as a preacher
- It was, therefore, most natural that He should be asked to take a prominent part in the Sabbath services

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- The passage Jesus read was from the Septuagint Greek translation of the scroll of Isaiah 61:1-2
- Our Lord immediately adds to it Isaiah 42:7
- The proclaiming of liberty to the captives, and the acceptable year (or year of acceptance) of the Lord, is a manifest allusion to the proclaiming of the year of jubilee by sound of trumpet, Leviticus 25:8
- This was a year of general release of debts and obligations; of bond-men and women; of lands and possessions, which had been sold from the families and tribes to which they belonged

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- It could be no undesigned coincidence that the opening words of the passage contain a singularly clear mention of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity - the Spirit, the Father, and the Anointed Son, *The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me*
- The common interpretation referred this passage to the state of the people on the return from the Captivity
- Nothing, however, that the people had yet experienced in any way satisfied the bright picture painted in the great prophecy

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- A remnant certainly had returned several centuries back from their distant exile, but the large majority of the chosen people were scattered abroad
- Only could deliverance come and a golden age of prosperity return with the promised Messiah
- *the acceptable year of the LORD*, The primary allusion is to the year of Jubilee, Leviticus 25:8-10; but this was only a type of the true Jubilee of Christ's kingdom

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- The custom was to read the Scripture standing and sitting down when they taught or preached
- They looked very closely at Him, and were very attentive to what He should say upon such a passage of Scripture, which they knew referred to the Messiah
- Jesus told them that the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled in Him
- He was revealing to them that He is the promised "Anointed One," that Isaiah wrote about in this passage, and therefore He has the authority to proclaim an extraordinary divine Jubilee liberation for the people of God as described in the prophecy

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- Quickly Jesus caught the mind and feeling of His audience
- They praised and admired the wisdom of His sermon but not that He was the Messiah
- Surprise and admiration soon gave place to a spirit of unbelief
- They wondered, “Is not this who speaks to us such words, bright and eloquent with hope, is it not the young Carpenter we have known so long in our village? “
- They stumble at His parents, because (though of the house of David) they were so poor and uneducated

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- Christ here tells those of Nazareth what was in their hearts
- They, in their hearts, despised Him, because of the poverty of His parents, and challenged Him to confirm His doctrine by miracles, urging that Nazareth was His home town, and physicians in the first place ought to cure themselves, and their friends, and those of their own families
- They therefore challenge Him to work some such miracles as He had before done in Capernaum, as they had heard
- He gives them the reason why He did no miracles amongst them

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- The Lord quotes a proverb well known to all people
- The Master was evidently looking far beyond the little prejudices of Nazareth
- *His own country* meant far more than the narrow circuit bounded by the Nazareth hills
- He was thinking of all the chosen people - of the Jews, who as a nation He knew too well would not accept Him
- But if Israel would have none of Him, He would reign in the hearts of that unnumbered multitude who peopled the isles of the Gentiles

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- In support of these assertions, Jesus proceeds to quote two well known incidents in the Old Testament
- They must remember God's mercies in past times were not limited to Israel
- There were many starving widows among the chosen people; but their own great Elijah was sent to none of these, but to a despised Phoenician woman in Sarepta, hard by Sidon
- Elisha, that loved man of God, who passed by the homes of the people continually, performed his famous miracle of healing on no child of Israel; but on the Syrian leper Naaman, the great enemy of Israel

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- Those of Nazareth think they had as good, if not a better, right to Christ's miracles than those of Capernaum
- God is Sovereign in His acts of grace, and acts freely, and Jesus can do no miracles but where He will have them done
- He tells them that His work is not to be for *their* special benefit or glorification, but that He had now passed far beyond the limitations of earthly relationships
- In every nation he that feared God, and done righteousness, was accepted
- God had no respect to this country, or that country

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- He sent Elijah to do good to a Sidonian, and Elisha to do good to a Syrian, while he neglected the ungrateful and disobedient Israelites
- Thus He also clearly hints, that for their unbelief, and rejection of, and disobedience to Him, God would send His gospel to the Gentiles, and reject them, which came to pass within a few years after
- None of all these were comforting sounds in the ears of the men of Nazareth

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- Unhappy Nazareth, where Christ had now lived more than thirty years!
- They had seen Him growing up, increasing *in wisdom and stature, and in favor both with God and man*, Luke 2:52
- They had had the first fruits of His ministry, and, Luke 4:22, they *bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*
- They knew His education, so as they could not think He had this wisdom and knowledge from any advantages of that, but must have it from Heaven

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- But the suggestion that the Israelites' rejection of Him could also lead to the offer of God's grace to the Gentiles enraged the Israelites of Nazareth
- They might also have tried to kill Him because they judged Him to be a false prophet for refusing to do a miracle for them
- But when the townspeople attempted to kill Jesus, He miraculously passed through the crowd and went away
- They wanted Jesus to perform a miracle for them, but His disappearing from them was the only miracle they would ever see

Jesus, Rejected by His Own People at Nazareth 4:16-30



- St. Cyril the Great says, “Christ passing through the midst of them went his way not because He was afraid from the suffering but because His hour was not yet come.”
- This event is a foreshadowing of the whole future of His ministry
- At first the Jews and Israelites will gladly receive His healings and His teachings, but then opposition will grow until Jesus is rejected by many of His own people who will succeed in having Him put to death

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 4:31-37



- *He went down*, Down from Nazareth, which was upon a hill, to Capernaum, which was situated on the shore
- When He came there, He keeps on His course preaching on the Sabbath
- It appears that He preached in the synagogue here also
- It is said that the people, *were astonished at His teaching*, Astonishment is one thing, believing is another
- Men may be some ways and to some degrees affected at the word of God, that yet are far enough from believing, as the most of these Capernautes were

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 4:31-37



- Astonishment is to be understood of the gravity and spirituality of His doctrine, His majesty and energy in the delivering of it, and the power of God going along with it for the conviction of sinners
- He assumed the tone and manner of a new Lawgiver; and uttered all His doctrines and the unction of the Holy Spirit accompanying all He said
- He also confirmed it by powerful miraculous works, such as casting out devils, and healing diseases

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 4:31-37



- After the general picture of Jesus' life and work in Capernaum, St. Luke proceeds to give a detailed account of the way in which one sabbath day was spent, as an example of the ordinary sabbath-day work of the Master
- As soon as the devil saw Jesus, fearing His power, and expecting to be dispossessed, he cried out in great terror, *"Let us alone!"*
- They had nothing to do with Christ, as a Savior; they had no interest in Him, nor in His redemption, but He had something to do with them, to show His power over them, and to deliver men out of their hands

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 4:31-37



- He doubtless feared what followed, that he should be cast out
- It is strange, this presence of God causing pain
- It is the impossibility of the wounded eye bearing light
- Many glorious testimonies to our Lord were given by demons, as we know, with no good will, but in hope that, by the acceptance of them, He might appear to the people to be in union with evil spirits
- A lie which His enemies were ready enough to throw out against Him

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 4:31-37



- It is both here and in many other places, that when the devils made a confession of Christ, yet neither Christ nor His apostles would ever take any notice of it
- Truth is never advantaged from the confession of known liars, as the devil was from the beginning
- Christ did not need the devil's testimony, either to His holiness, or His being the Son of God
- Nor was He to be imposed upon by the devil's good words; He was to make no peace with him, but to destroy him and his works, He therefore charges him to hold his peace, and to come out

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 4:31-37



- It was necessary that our Lord should at once assert His absolute power over the evil spirits; and not only this, but also that He should show that He had nothing to do with them
- Later on in His ministry it was objected to Him that He cast out devils by the prince of the devils
- Then, further, the time was not yet arrived when Christ was to be publicly proclaimed as the Son of God
- This great truth was to be gradually unfolded, and the people were to be persuaded by many miracles

Jesus Casts Out an Unclean Spirit 4:31-37



- Having previously recognized the authority of Jesus' teaching, the congregation at Capernaum now recognizes Jesus' authority over unclean spirits
- News of His words and works spread throughout
- Not only in the city of Capernaum, where these things were done, and where His fame was first spread, but also throughout all the region round about Galilee
- And not only throughout Galilee, but throughout all the country that was bordering upon it Syria, Matthew 4:23

The Healing of St. Peter's Mother-in-Law 4:38-39



- St. John Chrysostom says, "But for what intent did He go into Peter's house? As it seems to me, to take food. This at least is declared when it is said, "She arose and ministered unto Him."
- Sometimes He healed by a word, as the centurion's servant; and sometimes by a touch, as here; and sometimes by both, as the leper
- Fevers are often cured by ordinary means, but this was *a high fever*

The Healing of St. Peter's Mother-in-Law 4:38-39



- The miracle here was not in the cure of an incurable disease, but in the way of the cure, by a touch of His hand, or a lifting her up; and the suddenness of the cure, it immediately left her
- And her sudden recovery of strength, that she could presently arise and minister to them
- Just as Jesus rebuked the demon, He also rebuked her sickness and healed Peter's mother-in-law

Many Healed After Sabbath Sunset 4:40-41



- The healing of the "possessed" in the synagogue that morning, followed by the cure of the fever of Peter's mother-in-law, was rapidly echoed abroad that they brought their sick to Him in the evening
- No work was to be done on the Sabbath, Exodus 21:10, 31:12-15, 34:21; Deuteronomy 6:13-14 including "healing" according to the Pharisees, 6:6-11
- In accordance with these restrictions, many of the people didn't bring their sick to Jesus until the Sabbath was ended at sunset when the next day began

Many Healed After Sabbath Sunset 4:40-41



- Laying His hands upon those He heals and exorcising demons demonstrates the active power of the Spirit of God in and through Jesus
- Jesus offered physical and spiritual healing; He purified both body and soul
- Notice that this is the second time healing and exorcism of demons are paired, and as before the demons are both rebuked and silenced, 4:33-39
- The stress is on *every one*, Jesus' acts of healing are not limited to the privileged, but He embraced every one
- None were so ill as to be beyond His power, and no kind of disease too great for Him to subdue

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

4:42-44



- He departed from Peter's house, and from Capernaum, and *went into a deserted place* for the sake of solitude, that He might be retired from company, and have an opportunity of privately praying to God
- But the people's wish was that He should remain at Capernaum, to abide with them constantly
- Perhaps this was not so much from love to Christ's person and presence, or any regard to His ministry, and the good and welfare of their immortal souls, as on account of the miracles He did, and the substantial benefits He bestowed on them

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

4:42-44



- But He explained to them that His mission was to proclaim the Gospel that was not limited only to them
- To proclaim the kingdom of God was the Messiah's great work
- Healing the diseases of the people was only a symbolic and secondary work, a work that was to be the proof of His goodness, and the demonstration of His authority to preach the Gospel, and open the kingdom of heaven to all believers

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

4:42-44



- Clearly the favorable crowds do not yet understand His mission and are only interested in securing Jesus' gifts of healing for themselves
- They have not come to the realization that to follow Jesus means to totally reestablish their lives around Him and His Gospel message, to repent all sin, and to become part of the Kingdom of God, Matthew 5:17



Discussion

- Compare the responses and outcomes of Luke 4:1-13; Deuteronomy 8:3, 6:13, 6:16; and Genesis 3:1-6. When you fall into various temptations, what can you do to be more like Jesus in these circumstances and less like Adam and Eve? What verses can you use to help defeat the temptations you are facing?
- What can you start doing today to ensure that you are always going into battle with your armor on?
- In verses 31-35 Jesus encounters a man who is demon possessed. What can we learn from Jesus' response in verse 35?



Discussion

- In verses 23-27, Jesus relates the people of His hometown to those who rejected Elijah and Elisha. Why were they so offended at what He said? Who would Jesus relate the church to today and why? What verses would He read to the Church today? How about to you?
- In verses 42-44, why was it important for Jesus to preach the kingdom of God to other cities? Why not just allow Himself to be a sacrifice without the teaching, miracles?