

Scripture Reading:

Luke 4: “1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. 3 And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." 4 But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.' " 5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. 7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." 8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' " 9 Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, 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 shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you,' 11 "and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " 12 And Jesus answered and said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' "13 Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. 14 Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.

“That Serpent of Old”

Satan attacks John & Jesus

As we continue our series on the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts we meet this morning our arch enemy of the faith:

The devil...

Satan...

That old serpent!

**Today, we will look at what the Bible teaches about Satan and who he is...
And who and what he is NOT!**

Next week we will study how Jesus responded and the example He sets for us to respond

And finally Lord-willing a look at Satan in action today!

We are transitioning from Luke’s prologue to the beginning of Christ’s ministry and before we look at Satan directly, we must note that Jesus once again identifies with His people: Those whose sins He came to forgive!

“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness 2 for forty days,”

Jesus: Filled and led by the Spirit just as we are!

Jesus set apart by God for forty days, just as Moses and Elijah had been.

*We will consider this some
more next week!*

We now see Satan enter the picture:

However, this was not the first attack:

- **Herod's slaughter of the children**
- **John's imprisonment**

Who is Satan??

First some misconceptions:

- **Not red guy with horns & tail**
- **Not Star Wars "dark-side of God"**
- **Not Jesus' brother**
- **BUT Satan is real [Lewis]**

Bible presents Satan as a real and formidable foe!

In the Book of Beginnings, we see Satan as the Serpent!

First appearance as Satan comes when he attacks King David:

1 Chronicles 21:1 "Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel."

- -- **Satan stands against God's people in the garden;**
- -- **Satan stands against the Children of Abraham, or the Body of Moses, God's chosen nation;**
- -- **Satan NOW stands against the Body of Christ, The Church.**

Job gives the fullest picture in the Old Testament... your homework

[Job & Revelation both give us special glimpses of Heaven and Satan's actions there!]

Job 1:6 “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. 7 And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." 8 Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" 9 So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" 12 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.”

➤ **Lessons that we learn:**

- **Satan is a fallen angel**
- **Satan is very powerful**

We saw Satan in our study of the restoration when the Prophets encouraged the people to complete the Temple and walls:

Zechariah 3:1 “Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. 2 And the Lord said to Satan, The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire? 3 Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. 4 And the angel said to those who were standing before him, Remove the filthy garments from him. And to him he said, Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.”

- **Just as with Job, we see that God has the final say!**
- **We MUST remember that this is the Lord’s battle and not ours**

Jude reminds us of this lesson as he comments on this battle for the “Body of Moses”:

Jude “6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day...

8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. 9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

These lessons are very important because later in Luke, as we saw with Job, Satan gets very personal:

Luke 22:31 “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers. 33 Peter said to him, Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.”

- **Again we see that it is God who prevails in the battle**
- **We should all remember how effective Peter’s battle was in the power of the flesh!**

This should teach us to have this proper balance:

- **Fear of Satan’s power**
- **Trust in the Savior’s care**
- **We will look at this in more detail next week**
- **This week we have focused on who Satan is and want to see the BIG picture**

Satan has now focused his attack on Jesus and His Church

Revelation shows us that once again Satan has failed:

Revelation 12: “1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne...

-- A great battle in heaven with Satan cast down --

12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

Later in Revelation we learn that Satan who once deceived the nations has now been chained, and we as Christ's Church are commissioned to disciple those nations.

Satan's final defeat is yet future even though he is chained, just as our old nature is still with us although we are dead in Christ.

This is why he is still one of our three great enemies: The world, the flesh and the devil.

As I said, next week we will look at the specifics of how Christ responded and the weapons He has given His Saints.

This is important because in Acts we will see Satan wrack havoc with Saints like Ananias and Simon.

Paul shows that Satan is used by God as a discipline for wayward saints to destroy their flesh and bring them to repentance.

The one lesson we all should take from this morning's message is the importance of being filled and led by the Spirit as Jesus was:

- **Would Jesus have preferred the Sermon on the Mount over the agony of the wilderness and the company of Satan?**
- **Would Jesus have preferred feeding the five thousand to suffering on the cross?**

If we are going to follow Jesus, we must be prepared for where the Spirit will lead us:

Example of the sons of Zebedee:

Mark 10:35 “Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him...

38 But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

- **They were anxious but not ready**
- **After Pentecost they were filled with the Spirit & ready to serve!**
- **Would you want the calling given to James or the calling given to John?**

In Summary:

- **Satan attacked John & Jesus**
- **We can expect him to attack us**

-- We looked at JOB & Peter

-- Godly responses in Hall of faith...

Hebrews 11:32 “And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions...

36 Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— 38 of whom the world was not worthy -- ”

➤ **Our trust, wherever the Spirit might lead us, must be in God as we learned this week from our morning reading in Psalm 27**

“ The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? 2 When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. 3 Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident. 4 One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. 5 For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock. 6 And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

Let us sing & make melody this morning with that great hymn of faith by Martin Luther based on Psalm 46:

A Mighty Fortress is Our God!