

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

On a human level, when I preached in Arminian style, using my own intellect and methods, my preaching was a failure. It was contrived and false, yet people invited me back again, especially when I also sang to guitar. But, as soon as I realised my falsity and began to preach truth, letting God speak through me, things changed – no-one invited me back again!

Everyone loved Jesus... until He started His public ministry and began to speak the truth; then most loved His miracles and powerful preaching, but stalled on Him when He was accused. People do not mind 'truth' so long as it is abstract and does not affect them personally! From the start the crowds loved Jesus, but over the three years, others, the religious leaders in particular, were fermenting anger and destruction. If this could happen to God, why should we, created beings, expect anything more?

Verses 1&2

1.

And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2.

Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

After leaving John the Baptist at the river, Jesus went back home. He was "*full of the Holy Ghost*". This is

probably best interpreted as

"being complete with the Holy Ghost"

, or 'lacking nothing spiritually - perfect'. Jesus was accompanied in His earthly work by the Person of the trinity known as the Holy Spirit, strengthened by enormous and incalculable power.

Immediately, the Holy Spirit led Him into the desert. This is a very interesting start to Jesus' public ministry, for it seems He was led there to be deliberately assaulted by Satan. In many ways, the period is similar to the time Satan spent trying to destroy Job. It is similar because if

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier

Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

Jesus had failed only once, in the smallest of ways, then His whole ministry and life would have been useless, with Satan as the 'winner'.

But, this is just musing, for Jesus could NOT have failed! For some reason, however, Satan did not seem to understand this, which is why he spent a long time trying to seduce the Christ from His eternal work. (Note: 'Ghost' and 'Spirit' are the same word in Greek, *pneuma*, and is very similar in kind to the 'breath' of God into Adam to bring him alive; see the root,

pne

o

).

Jesus was in the desert for forty days, and each day Satan tried his best to cause Jesus to fail. Jesus was 'tempted', *peirazo*. He was 'being tried' or tested. Just as Job was tested severely by Satan, so Jesus was tested. This was highly malicious, designed to make Jesus fracture in His spirit and resolve.

It would only have taken a tiny slip or sin... but, it did not occur. Jesus had a task and would fulfil it at the cost of His life. Even as Satan tempted Him, Jesus knew this... but Satan did not. He had a vague idea of Jesus' ministry but did not have the exact details. Even so, he tried very hard to make Jesus fall.

(For those who are unsure: temptation itself is not sin. But, if we listen to temptation and are seduced to do wrong, that is when we sin... from the smallest beginning to the fullest expression of sin).

During those 40 days, Jesus did not eat, though it is likely that He drank water (this is an assumption). Interestingly, for human beings, not eating – fasting – is not recommended over more than about two days, because it can lead to hallucinations and a variety of symptoms. We can conclude that this did not happen to Jesus, and that He would not have subjected Himself to such a danger, because it would have been used to His disadvantage by Satan.

We can safely say that Jesus was kept by the Father and the Holy Spirit for the forty days. When Jesus left the desert, Satan having failed to seduce Him, Jesus was very hungry... and Satan knew this: he used the fact to try a different approach to Jesus!

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

Though I refer to him as 'Satan' the actual word used is 'devil', which is a *description* of what Satan does, not a name:

daibolos

: he is the false accuser or slanderer ('the Accuser'); he opposes God

We see this in the next verse, where he insinuates that Jesus is not God. Or, to be more precise, it was a very crude way to try and get Jesus to do something because Satan said so – which, if Satan has succeeded, would have made Jesus subject to Satan. An impossibility!

Verses 3-8

1.

And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

2.

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

3.

And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

4.

And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

5.

If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

6.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier

Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

And so Satan tried to play to Jesus' pride... only He did not have any! 'IF you are the Son of God, and you are hungry, why not just command this stone to be turned into something to eat?' Another way of putting it is 'Hah! If you are Who you say you are, prove it by doing a miracle!'

But, Jesus did not need to prove Himself. Rather, He turned the not-so-subtle taunt around: 'Man needs meat to live physically, but above all he needs to feed himself on every word of God.' Note that 'word' has a lower case 'w', which means Jesus was not referring to Himself (on this occasion), but to God's instructions and commands. He insisted on moving away from a mere taunt to God's word. This is how all of us should respond to taunts and ungodly demands.

Undaunted, Satan conveyed Him to a high mountain. This tells us several things: first, that Satan has the ability and power to move someone from one place to another. Second, that he could only have done this to Jesus with Jesus' consent as God. Third, that Jesus had a purpose in allowing it, and knew what Satan would do anyway. God is now able to use the incident to show the followers of Jesus how to tackle temptation and the power of Satan (NEVER in our own strength, but always from God's word and by the Spirit).

We also see the power of Satan to show Jesus every country in the world, as if they passed before His very eyes (which they did). In the same way, Satan can deceive us into accepting His temptations, by showing us all kinds of benefits and glories, if only we step away from obeying the Lord.

Really, what Satan said next is almost laughable – but it was said in deadly earnest, because even Satan does not know everything. All of Creation belongs to the Creator, Christ, so no-one on earth or in Heaven could offer Him anything that is not His by right! And to offer it is just an insult. It would be like a thief handing a stolen goblet to its owner for a small fee! Even so, Satan stupidly offered Jesus power over all the world if only He would worship him.

Satan had it partly right – when God threw him out of Heaven, He gave Satan and his minions the earth as his abode. Satan also had certain freedom to command people.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

But, his commands only applied to those who did not obey God. Even so, Satan tried to deceive Jesus with paltry earthly power. This incident shows us that Satan often does offer real wealth or some other power to humans, if they obey him.

In this text the word 'worship'* is not meant in the usual Christian sense. It meant for Jesus to kiss Satan's hand in homage and reverence, or to fall on His knees as a sign of obedience to someone superior. In a very real sense, Satan was playing with fire! But, Jesus did not destroy him, because Satan still had a role to play in His death, and in the future destruction of generations of people.

(*Please read my article, 'Worship', to see what it really means).

Instead, Jesus was dismissive and we can imagine Him waving His hand over His shoulder... "Get thee behind me, Satan!" This was a command by Jesus to one who was himself created. Jesus was putting Satan in his place – only Jesus could stand in front of Satan by right, and by power. This is known as an 'enclitic of direction', which shows the subject (Satan) to be insignificant but joined to the word 'behind'.

Note that Jesus used the name of Satan (*Satanas*), whereas Luke used Satan's description, 'the devil'; *Satanas* is Aramaic for 'Satan', but is found in the corresponding Hebrew noun of same spelling to refer to a superhuman adversary; and this is underlined by a further root verb, again with the same spelling, meaning to act as an adversary/to resist or oppose. The term 'Satan' can also be given to a man who acts like Satan.

Once more, Jesus countered Satan with God's word, "*it is written*" that Satan will worship God... not God worshipping Satan! And Satan must only serve God, His Creator. Of course, this brief statement by Jesus showed Satan how absurd he was, and also how lost. Satan believed he had complete power on earth, but it was a power that was, and is, partial, allowed by God for His own purposes. He set himself up as king of earth, when it was a delusion, for God ruled him and even though he was cast down to earth, Satan had to obey the Lord, not himself.

Verses 9-13

1.

And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

2.

For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

3.

And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

4.

And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

5.

And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

Undeterred, Satan tried yet another ploy. He took Jesus to Jerusalem in the blink of an eye, and put Him on the topmost part of the Temple. Again, he tried to both flatter and taunt Jesus: 'If you are Who you say you are – throw yourself off this tower!' This time he tried to be clever by copying Jesus: he quoted scripture! He told Jesus that God would send angels to catch Him and save Him from harm. This would have been true – but it was not how things work! Satan does NOT tell Jesus what to do!

Jesus simply replied "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God"! This immediately tells us that Jesus referred to Himself as God. Yes, it also applied to the Father – but Jesus, being the Son, is also God. Nothing would tempt Jesus to stop His mission.

Satan knew when to give up and left Jesus. But, only for a season... he would be back at times of immense turmoil, in attempts to cause Him to deviate from His eternal plan, and from His divine character. In this part of the account we see that Satan can himself use scripture. Indeed, he knows scripture backwards and inside out! And he uses it to initiate many cults and occults, misleading and deceiving millions, so that God's word is scorned. It is why every Christian

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

MUST know God's word deeply; the Christian who remains ignorant is an easy target for deception.

Verses 14-21

1.

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

2.

And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

3.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

4.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

5.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

6.

To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

7.

And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

8.

And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Jesus left the desert *"in the power of the Spirit"*. That He was very different and charismatic was obvious (I use the word 'charismatic' to refer to the dynamism and power of His personality and character). You will note that He returned *"in"* the power... the word 'in', is the preposition, *en*

. It can also mean 'with', or 'by'. It means that His power was a fixed attribute because He was/is God, and that this power was instrumental in what He did. Therefore, nothing could deter His ministry or aim.

It is how all men called to ministry should be! But, are we? People should look at us and discern the Holy Spirit in us and in what we say and do. It is the proof that our calling is true and real. Sadly, in my view, I have come across very few who are like this – if anything, they have pointed away from the Spirit and any calling by God. In other words, they are false. They might be sincere, but sincerity alone is not enough. And the vast majority who are paid to be pastors or preachers are of this kind. It is obvious in how they think, speak and act. Let Jesus be the model, not peers, congregations, seminaries, or a 'golden tongue'!

As soon as He went back to Galilee, He became famous! He had not yet preached and yet word spread like wildfire about Him. This proves that *God*, not marketing or publicity, or even fine speaking, was the authority in Jesus. He was so powerful that no-one could resist following, if only to see miracles and hear powerful speaking. Nothing was contrived. Jesus did not have to devise funny anecdotes, or a 'balanced' agenda, or follow the 'Geneva pulpit method', with its three points!! He just opened His mouth and spoke.

He began by speaking in the synagogues in the area. He would not have been allowed to do so unless the elders in each place thought His words were wrong or unwise. And everything He said and did brought glory to Himself. The people had no option but to praise Him, *doxazo*, for His words. Only God can legitimately be praised for what He says. If a human preacher accepts praise without instantly directing it back to God, then he is proud and unworthy to preach. If a man speaks well and his words are powerful, it is only because God is the author, not him.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier

Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

Eventually, Jesus reached Nazareth, His home village. He attended the local synagogue on the Saturday, the Sabbath, stood up, and read from the holy scrolls: an assistant handed him a copy of Isaiah, so Jesus read from that. And what He said was prophetic and staggering: *"The Spirit of the Lord is with me!"*

God had appointed Him to preach to the poor in spirit, to heal them, to deliver those caught in Satan's web of sin, and even to heal their afflictions. He had come to *"preach the acceptable year of the Lord."*

The time for salvation was now!

Jesus finished and closed the book/scroll, and handed it back to the minister (an attendant or assistant in the synagogue). Then, He sat down quietly. He had spoken from the scriptures, and yet, the way He spoke, and the power, caused all to fix their eyes on Him as He sat down. He was unabashed! *He told them that He was God!* He even told them *"This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears!"*

Nothing could have been so blatant or open, and yet so humble.

Note how Jesus attended synagogues. So did the apostles and disciples. Yes, they met in non-synagogues, such as homes, but synagogue attendance was very common for about 300 years after Christ died. Synagogues that experienced salvation on a large scale then turned over to teaching the words of Christ and the apostles. Where whole synagogues did not convert, those who were saved still attended them, because, after all, what the Jews taught was mainly scripture. What was missing was the Gospel.

Jesus attended synagogues for a good reason – the Old Testament era was not yet completed. It would remain until Jesus died and rose again, and the new Gospel began a new era, eradicating the need for formal priests, rites and sacrifices. Until then, Jesus was the epitome of a faithful Jew.

Verses 22-24

1.

And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

2.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier

Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

3.

And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

Jesus spoke before large crowds that would soon become even larger. They all witnessed the power and grace of His words, and we can be left in no doubt that He did not 'pull his punches'! Yet, His task on earth was to speak to the Jews, before anyone else. As God's chosen people, they needed to repent and be saved. And this meant being born again, as Jesus told a secret night-time visitor.

Many modern Christians think that someone who warns or rebukes is not gracious. To them, 'grace' is allowing sin to arise or to continue without a single word of admonition. But, Jesus was not like that. He spoke as God. And this would soon make a lot of people angry. It began at the beginning of His preaching, and we see it here in verse 22: *"Is not this Joseph's son?"* this was not a query, but rhetorical scorn... 'Who does this young man think he is? He is only the son of our local builder, Joseph, who we all know! Someone you know

cannot

be exceptional!'

The implication still stands firm today! If we know someone, then he cannot possibly be of any note. We should not take any notice of him at all. And if he contradicts tradition, he 'must be a troublemaker'. But, if he comes from another country, he is revered and followed and thought of as a teacher! This happens today! And it was no different for Jesus, even though His behaviour and words from a young child were exemplary, godly and true. (Note a very similar scorn was shown at His crucifixion: 'If you are God's Son then let God save you now!').

Jesus knew what was behind the doubts of the people, and answered them. 'You want me to heal everyone in my home town, or even myself, just as I have done elsewhere.' Jesus did not heal for the sake of it – healings were signs to the Jews that this was God amongst them, and they ought to repent. Instead, they chose to ignore His words if they were not accompanied by healings. Today, charismatics do this – they avoid scriptural truth in favour of signs and wonders, and rhetoric full of hype and no substance.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

Jesus followed up his response by saying what is very true, even in modern times: *“Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.”*

I remember telling a young man in one of my former churches that I was called to a ministry and would carry it out regardless of being sent out by the elders (who usually ignored me anyway). He was shocked, saying that I ‘had’ to be sent out and approved by my own church. But, if I waited for their approval I would not even begin my ministry!

I replied that I was called by God, not by other human beings, and so would do it anyway. You see, I was just another young man amongst others, in a local church. Therefore, in their eyes, I was nothing, with even less to say that was worthy! Coincidentally, I was also very poor. Strange, eh?

This is how Jesus was treated, so why should I expect anything better? Even now, in my home town, my name is synonymous with ‘trouble’ because I do not toe the pastors’ fraternal and say what they say. I am ignored, but will be happily sent on my way when I leave this earth! For similar reasons Jesus did not do much in His home town. The people were too prejudiced against Him, no matter what He said.

Verses 25-27

1.

But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

2.

But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

3.

And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

I have no doubt that if Jesus were walking this earth today, He would be charged with “*hate speech*” !

That is – telling the truth! Jesus added to His condemnation of his home town. He reminded the people (they were well versed in the scriptures) of how, in the time of Elijah, there was famine throughout the land for three and a half years, but Elijah did not visit any of the stricken cities, except for one – Sarepta in Sidon. And even then, he only visited one person – a holy woman who was a widow. And during the days of the prophet Elisha (Eliseus) the country was filled with lepers, but Elisha only cleansed/cured one of them, Naaman the Syrian. Both did not help, because of the dire sinfulness of the nation.

Today, charismatics claim healings everywhere – they allegedly occur at will, as does casting out of fictitious demons, and the speaking of fake tongues. They think this is how spiritual things are proved. But, charismatics are like the people of Nazareth – God will do nothing among them, because of their unbelief. He has already shaken the dust from His sandals, never to return. They are like the fizz on top of soda pop.

Jesus did very little in His home town, because of their unbelief. I do almost nothing in my home town, because of the attitude of the people in the churches (with very few exceptions). This is not arrogance on my part – it is simply fact. It is also why I never advertise our meetings, believing that in such a town only those whom God sends will come and remain. Those outside my town are another matter!

Verses 28-32

1.

And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

2.

And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

3.

But he passing through the midst of them went his way,

4.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

5.

And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

As always happens when truth is told, the people took umbrage and were enraged. How dare Jesus tell them they were unreceptive? So, from their outward joy the people turned to inward and outward hatred in a very short time! They dragged him to a hill outside the city, intent on throwing Him off the edge to His death. But, with divine power, He just walked away from them, leaving them embroiled in their evil.

He walked until He arrived at Capernaum on the shore of Lake Galilee, where the river Jordan enters, a rich and lively city. There, for a while, Jesus taught the Jews on the Sabbath, and, unlike his own neighbours, they listened intently, and were “astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power”. Here were the words of God from His own mouth, even if they did not fully realise Who Jesus was!

Every called preacher and teacher should reflect and have this power. It will be recognised by the way many genuine believers accepting what he says, and by the few who adamantly refuse to listen or be instructed. And some will mock or scorn. Yet, preachers must be like this, for they speak from God. If they do not, it will be like listening to an unknown sound or the tinkling of hollow brass... and I have heard many like this! Who do I think I am, talking like this? No-one special.

Verses 33-37

1.

And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

2.

Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

3.

And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

4.

And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

5.

And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

Oddly, a man with an unclean demon shouted at Jesus one day, in the synagogue. In this context it would appear that the man was led to think, speak and do immoral things. It begs the question – why was such a man allowed to remain in the synagogue? (On the other hand, it is possible that he had not been there before, or that he stayed quiet when there). We have an interesting situation today – most churches do not believe in demonosis, yet charismatics believe there are demons around every corner. Thus, the first will ignore the most obvious forms of demon possession or influence, while the second casts out demons that are not there! In the case of both, there is appalling ignorance, with attendant problems.

Demons do not usually bring attention to themselves unless society accepts the things they say or do. (We see this with various extreme occults, homosexuality, street violence, government leaders who drag people along their own wicked paths, and so on). But, wherever Jesus was, demons had to acknowledge that their Creator was present. The demon cried out loudly (when they do this the demon uses an human's throat and mouth, the voice usually sounding 'odd') to Jesus.

I have heard demons using a whining voice when I approached persons who were possessed, and they have pleaded a similar thing – to let them alone, and not to harm them. The body of the persons, too, were slinking away from me. The reason was that the demon recognised Who my Lord was and feared that I might cast them into outer darkness. I have no power, but Jesus has!

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

It appears that there may have been more than one demon in the man, for the voice referred to “us” and “we”

. On the other hand, perhaps the demon was referring to himself and the man together. The demon demanded to know why Jesus was there – was He about to deal them a death-blow? Leave us alone, it called. Note that the demon asked if Jesus was about to destroy him/them. This is because he knew that Jesus was God, and could easily just obliterate him from existence.

Remember that demons are persons, and have desires. They inhabited Heaven before God cast them out. Though very powerful, they nevertheless want to be left alone, unharmed, just like any other person. The only difference is that God has declared them already condemned to hell, and this fills them with fear; when someone is fearful they can be very dangerous. They hate mankind, because some are elected to salvation, whereas no demon will ever be saved or will enter Heaven again. So, they do as much harm to humans as they can get away with. They wanted Jesus to let them alone, to live out their misery until the day of Judgment.

Jesus, firmly and with absolute authority, did not argue, but cast the demon out with very simple words: ‘Shut up! Come out of him!’ As he came out (because he had no choice) the demon threw the man to the floor in hatred, and went away. The man was unhurt and, no doubt bewildered to find himself in the synagogue and faced with Jesus. The matter of Christians casting out demons is worrying, because too many think they have power over Satan and devils. Nothing could be more foolish!

Only God has power over demons and Satan. That is why even the archangel Michael dare not oppose Satan in his own mighty strength; instead, he called on God to do it: “*The Lord rebuke thee*” . I am often asked what a Christian should do in these circumstances, but I always refuse to answer. Why? Because the Christian might think I have given a spiritual method that will always work! The best way to tackle these things is when they arise, and you can call on the Lord to help you. There are those who foolishly go looking for demons so they can cast them out – or so they think. It is more likely that the demons will scorn the Christian for being so foolish, and let him *think* he has cast them out, so that they can deal with him later.

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

When the devil was cast out, everyone in the synagogue was amazed. They saw Jesus cast a demon out merely with His word. How could a man have this kind of power and authority, they asked among themselves? Well, no man has this kind of power... it has to come from God, because mankind is made lower than the angels, and have no power of themselves. (I have only touched on the subject – please do not use it as a final authority or instruction... these are God's prerogative).

Verses 38&39

1.

And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

2.

And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

Jesus left the synagogue and went to Peter's house on the lakeside. This tells us that Jesus had by that time chosen at least several of his full-time disciples (apostles). When He got there, Jesus found Peter's mother-in-law was gravely ill with a fever. As Luke was a physician, he normally divided up fevers into 'little' and 'great' to signify their severity... he says the woman had a "great fever". We do not know what had caused it (a fever is the symptom of an underlying problem), but even a fever, if the temperature is high enough, can cause many physical problems and even death.

Because of its severity, "*they*" (Peter? His wife/others?) asked Jesus if He would come to her. He stood by her bed and "*rebuked the fever*", which immediately left her. She felt so well that she got up straight away and made a meal for the household. It is true that fevers can 'break', but they do not break so suddenly and leave a person feeling completely well immediately. Only God could do that!

How could Jesus 'rebuke' a physical condition? To rebuke is to admonish someone sharply, but here we have something that is not human, but a symptom of a physical condition. We should look at it this way – all things are under God's power. To God all things are equal in their created demand to obey Him, even inanimate objects and 'things' such as the body. Therefore,

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier
Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

Jesus could rebuke anything He wished - from humans, to animals, to weather, to waves, to demons, to fevers. And with the fever went the underlying physical cause.

Can we likewise command a fever (or a condition) to be healed immediately? Yes, we can. Again, I will not apply a formula for this, because healing is in the hands of God. If He wishes someone to be healed He will prompt the one healing and it will be done. Once more, this is only a very brief note on the subject.

Verses 40-44

1.

Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

2.

And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

3.

And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

4.

And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

5.

And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

As the sun went down, dusk, big crowds gathered outside Peter's house. They brought their family and friends who were sick with all kinds of diseases. Why at dusk? Probably because

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier

Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

they had to work during the day, and only now had time to do so. Jesus turned no-one away and healed them all. He did it by laying hands on them. Now, we may not take this as a formula: it is how *God* dealt with the sick at that time. It does not necessarily mean we can do it the same way, or on every occasion. That is, we have here an historical event, not a set of principles we can use in similar circumstances. (However, laying on of hands is acceptable at times. See texts).

Too many modern Christians assume that such passages are instructions, when they are not. Believers must learn to differentiate historical narrative from teachings or instructions. Sadly, few acknowledge this difference and so do all kinds of exotic things, without any form of biblical warrant. Also, many Christians are arrogant, thinking they know better than other Christians, even when they are badly taught.

Jesus cast out “*many*” demons. Each one cried out an acknowledgement of Jesus’ status: “*Thou art Christ the Son of God*”

! Jesus did not allow them to say anything else, and rebuked them sternly to shut up. Not only because they were subordinate to Him, but also because Jesus, at that time, did not want everyone to learn that He was God. Slowly, many came to the realisation, but, He did not wish to be mobbed by crowds for being God, before His time was due to be sacrificed.

In a very similar way, Christians should not allow wicked people to speak in a Christian domain, whether they are homosexuals, Muslims, occultists, etc. God is supreme, so we must not allow evil to add its voice in the midst of God’s people. To do so is to give credibility and equality of worth, when they have neither.

Next day, Jesus went into the desert, but the people found out where He was and went after Him, begging Him to stay and deal with them. They wanted what He could give to them – they were not so keen to obey or to listen to deeper divine truths. It is why charismatics are so poverty-stricken spiritually. They want the fancy baubles and dazzling displays, not biblical reality... and even those things they *think* comes from God are either empty psychological trickery or demonic delusion: God does not lower Himself to be present in meetings of disobedient people.

Jesus heard their pleas but refused to stay. He had little time on this earth and had to press on. “*I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.*”

This ‘kingdom’ always refers to a spiritual kingdom, though many misheard or misunderstood,

Luke 4

Written by K B Napier

Wednesday, 20 March 2013 10:47

thinking he meant an earthly kingdom surpassing that of the Roman occupiers. The kingdom of God/Jesus/Messiah/Heaven, etc., are all the same thing; they are the spiritual rule of God in every saved life. And this is what He went around Galilee preaching, in as many synagogues as possible.

We can define the “*kingdom of God*” in a variety of ways, including reference to righteousness, the power shown by Christ, those who will inhabit it. It is linked to the preaching of the Gospel and many other things. For more details see article [“*The*](#)

[“*Kingdom of Heaven*”](#)

[, O-069](#)

. (Note that there will be no millennial rule on earth).

© August 2012

---oOo---

{loadposition btm_address}