



MATTHEW 4; LUKE 4–5

COME FOLLOW ME COMMENTARY

LYNNE WILSON

JESUS TEMPTED OF THE DEVIL

Satan's temptations were possibly the third most grievous experience Jesus endured (behind Gethsemane and the cross). The Hebrew and Greek meaning of "tempt" is to try, test, or prove. In King Benjamin describes the Savior: "he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue" (Mosiah 3:7).

Gospels in Harmony

Mark 1:12–13, is the fastest moving and shortest Gospel. He only makes a two-sentence reference to Jesus' temptations. JST adds that it came *after* being in the wilderness for 40 days. Then Mark 1:13, ends with "and was with wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him." The wild beasts quoting Job 5:22–23, "... and need not fear the wild animals. For you will have a covenant with the stones of the field, and the wild animals will be at peace

with you”). If the Spirit led the Lord to be alone, what do you think Jesus had to go into the wilderness? I assume, like many other prophets in the wilderness (Enoch, Moses, Nephi, the brother of Jared, Paul, Joseph Smith), Jesus was taught through visions and grew from grace to grace (Luke 2). I presume His Father prepared Jesus spiritually for his mission (“I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me” John 8:28).

Matthew and Luke fill their account of Jesus’ temptations with more details (probably from a shared source, “Q”). As you find differences in the Gospels, ask “Why did the author include or change this information?” “What does a different order of events do for the author’s message?” “Who is copying who?” “Can I feel what the author was trying to teach?” The KJV of Mt and Lk’s accounts are very similar and have only four significant differences:

1. The order of the second and third temptation is reversed.
2. Mt 4:4 includes a longer OT citation

MATT 4:4

It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

LUKE 4:4

It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

3+4. Slight word changes in both Greek and English in Mt 4:6–7 compared to Luke 4:10–12, as well as:

MATT 4:8–10

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written . . .

LUKE 4:5–8

5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 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. 7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written

JST Changes

Major changes of these biblical texts come in the Joseph Smith Translation or JST (see LDS Bible Appendix). In particular, the prophet Joseph wanted to make sure three doctrinal changes were clear—

1. Jesus went into the wilderness to commune “with God,” *not the devil* (JST Mt 4:1–2). Jesus didn’t go looking for him (and neither should we!).
2. After the 40 days of instruction and fasting, Jesus “was left to be tempted of the devil” (Mt 4:2; Mk 1:13; Lk 4:2). Satan sought Jesus at his weak point. Temptations or Satan’s presence came after Spiritual experiences, not during.
3. The Spirit (*not the devil*) can take your spirit to see other places (Mt 4:5,6,8; Lk 4:5, 6, 9). We see this in other scriptures too (i.e. as in 1 Nephi 11:1, 19–21; Hel 10:16–17; Acts 8: 39–40).

Text of JST Matthew and Luke’s section on Jesus’ Temptations

Mt 3:1; Lk 4:1—After Jesus’ baptism, He was, “full of the Spirit,” which led him to commune with God in the wilderness / *erēmon* (elsewhere translated as solitary, secluded, or desert place).

Where has the Spirit led you?

Lk 4:2 JST adds “after 40 days the devil came ...” and Mt 4:2 includes 40 days and nights, as well the JST changes “left to be tempted” after He “communed with God.” The number 40 saturates the Bible as a *purification period*

1. Purification period of a woman after childbirth of a son (7 days + 33 days = 40; Lev 12:1–4)
2. Noah’s 40 days of rain, 40 days of flood, 40 days to open the window (Gen 7:4, 12, 17; 8:6)
3. Isaac’s age when he married Rebekah, Esau age when married Judith and Bashemath.
4. Jacob / Israel 40 days after death for embalming and Egyptian purification (Gen 50:3)
5. Moses on Sinai also fasted from bread and water for forty days and nights (Deut 9:9)
6. Moses’ spies searched out the land of Israel 40 days (Num 13:25)
7. Children of Israel in wilderness 40 years eating manna, without their clothes wearing out or feet swelling (Ex 16:35; Duet 8:4)
8. Goliath taunted Saul’s army 40 days before David arrived (1 Sam 17:16)
9. Elijah fasted 40 days when he went to Mt. Sinai (Horeb) through the wilderness (1 Kgs 19:8)
10. Jonah prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed in 40 days if they did not repent (Jonah 3:4)
11. Jesus’ post resurrection ministry lasted 40 days (Acts 1:3)
12. Jesus fasted 40 days (Matt 4:2; Luke 4:2)

THREE TEMPTATIONS



Temptation of Christ. 12th century mosaic in basilica di San Marco. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

The temptations given to Jesus are also prototypes for all temptations of man. The underlying question with temptations is one of who to worship. Temptation is to detour one from following God's will by following Satan's will. Each of the issues underlying Jesus' temptations will be fulfilled as part of Jesus' mission. This suggests that Satan knew Jesus would fulfill each—but Satan wanted to have Jesus carry them out on his timing to thwart the Father's plan.

Temptation to the Senses

Mt 4:3-4; Lk 4:3-4

- Satan often appeals to our appetites. The natural man needs are already in place. What is wrong with eating? Well the use of all our appetites needs to follow God's directions. Our bodies must follow advice from our creator. The food is not necessarily the problem, it's taking it from the wrong hand. Obeying Satan is wrong.
- BYU Pres. Jeff Holland, explained in 1982, that Jesus' temptation included getting his bread the easy way.¹
- Soon Jesus will feed 5,000+, turn water into wine, but Elder McConkie says this would "Prostitute his powers," because it is self-serving, and obeying Satan's suggestions.²

- The question is not about *when* one can eat bread, but rather, is Jesus going to submit to Satan or His appetites, rather than submit His will to God? As disciples, who partake of “*the Bread*” weekly, we covenant to obey the Lord and submit our will to His. Sometimes Satan, as the great counterfeit, tries to alter God’s timing to invalidate God’s blessings (i.e. sex after not before marriage). Just like in the Garden of Eden, where Satan tried to usurp God’s timing and role by intervening to get Adam and Eve to eat from his hand, on his time table, his way. Fortunately, the “second Adam” did not fall for it (1 Corinthians 15:47).
- Following God includes accepting His time schedule for our appetites.
- Jesus answer’s Satan by quoting scripture (Deut. 8:3; see also D&C 98:11), a good pattern for all who confront temptations.



Temptation of Christ by Philips Augustijn Immenraet (1663). Image via Wikimedia Commons.

Temptation of Pride

Mt 4:5-7; Lk 4:9-12

- The JST clarifies that *the Spirit* took Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple and then Satan tempted Him there (Mt 4:5; Lk 4:9). This change suggests that Satan did not have power to move Jesus.
- Satan pesters Jesus with doubts, “IF thou be the Son of God...” to raise insecurity. Insecurity can lead to either self-doubt or pride as a means of defending one’s feeling of self-worth.

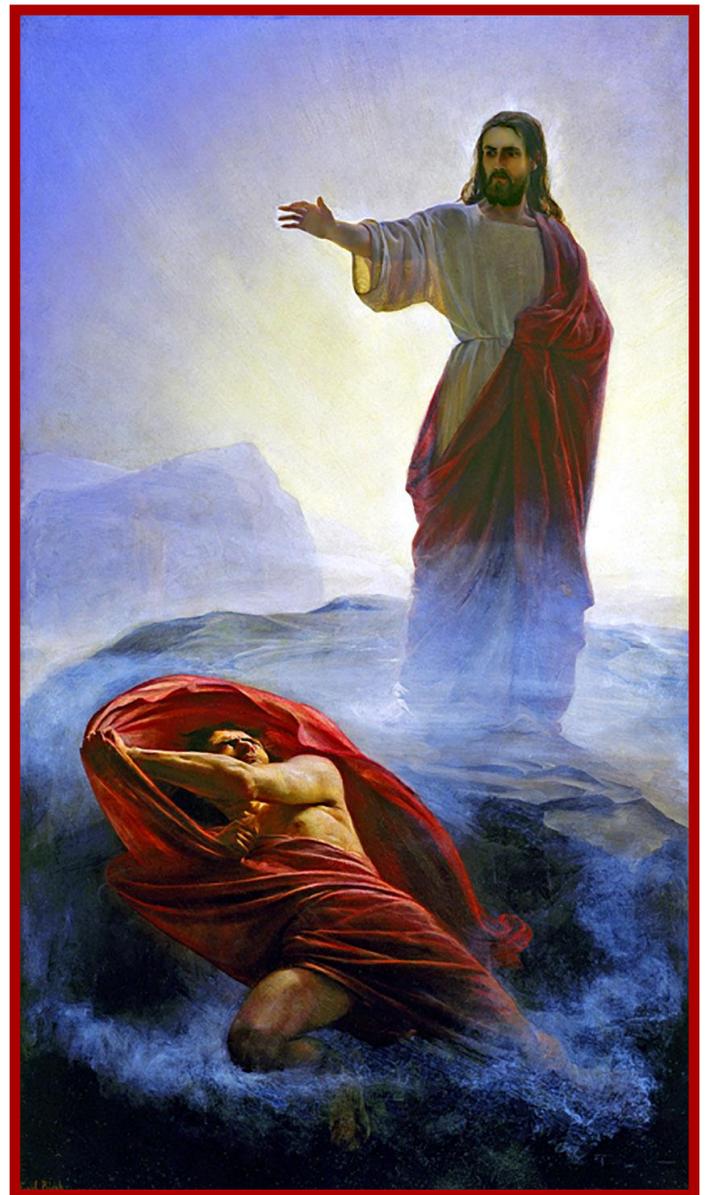
Has insecurity every caused you to become prideful?

- The drive to feel noticed, more important, and indestructible, is Satan’s temptation. Instead, God wants us to feel His love by serving Him and others. Jesus will teach that we become greater by serving others and when we humble ourselves can become exalted (Matt 23:11–12).
- Satan quotes scripture mixed with his philosophy, and asks Jesus to prove his divinity with a sign.
- Satan’s tries to logically argue that by Jesus jumping into the crowded temple courtyard, He could gain a huge following, start his mission off with a bang. It would also prove to Jesus, that God would indeed protect Him as promised.
- Jesus again answers the tempter by quoting scripture (Deut 6:13 and 16), *and so can we!*

Temptation for Power

Mt 4:8-11; Lk 4:5-8

- The JST consistently corrects the text to communicate that Satan does not possess Jesus, but that the Spirit led Jesus to a high mountain. When the Spirit leaves, *then* Satan comes to tempt Him.
- Luke adds that Satan promises “power” and “glory” (Lk 4:6)—*which are not Satan’s to give!* The Prophet Joseph Smith restored that Satan only has power when we yield it to him.³
- Ironically, Jesus is The Creator of the heavens and earth. These are not Satan’s to give. He is the one who will rule and reign—never Satan. From the beginning of the earth, the devil is always trying to usurp God’s role and power.
- This temptation festers at the question, “Will you ever really reign, Jesus?” The answer is Yes, but not Satan’s way, nor on Satan’s time. The easy way out is not our goal, but rather our goal is to follow God’s plan. We fought for it before, and we continue to fight in mortality. Our generation often seeks the fastest way to earn a buck (or a million of them). But those who follow Jesus, do not selfishly desire riches and power by following Satan’s easy route. The Lord



Jesus Tempted by Carl Bloch. Image via Wikimedia Commons.

taught Joseph that by “long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned” we will learn from our experiences (D&C 121:41; 122:7).

- Satan basically asks Jesus, “What is your price?”⁴ This is a common temptation. “Satan’s first article of faith,” according to Hugh Nibley is: “You can buy anything in this world for money.”⁵ Jesus again answers by quoting scripture (Exodus 34:14).
- Satan’s time schedule only *appears* easy. With an eternal perspective, God’s plan—which requires growth, obedience, and patience—is the best route. God’s always has a plan and backup plan that works. This was part of the problem in Eden. Satan lied to our first parents by pretending there was no other way. God’s plan provides “another way” (the 116 lost pages and the small plates for one), rooted in the atonement of Christ.
- Later in Luke 4:32, 36, Jesus’ power heals and exorcises devils in a synagogue and home.
- Jesus will have to wait until the Millennium to fully fulfill the call for him to reign upon the earth.



Christ in the Wilderness by Ivan Kramskoi (1872). Image via Wikimedia Commons.

Why did Jesus have to go through this?

We learn in scripture that Jesus also learned line up on line and progressed. He needed to experience earth-life in order to gain compassion and empathy. To be our judge and advocate he needed experience (i.e. Hebrews 2:10, 18; 4:15; 5:8)

Why three temptations? Perhaps they apply to all temptations. Interestingly, Jesus gave Satan three witnesses. Also, the three temptations apply to Jesus' three periods of his mission as our Savior: 1) During His First Coming, he provided bread physically and spiritually left us with bread as a symbol to convent with Him; 2) At His Second Coming, He will come down from Heaven to Temple; and 3) During the Millennium he will reign over all the earth as King.

What can you learn from your temptations?

THE BEGINNING OF JESUS' PUBLIC MINISTRY

Jesus moves to Galilee

Mt 4:12 Matthew and Mark move Jesus to Galilee with the news that John is in prison. This is not the same timing across all accounts. John's gospel has 4 or 5 months before JBPst is imprisoned (I presume that is more accurate). Nevertheless, all four Gospels moves Jesus to Galilee sometime after His baptism.

MATT 4:12

Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee

MARK 1:14

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

LUKE 4:14

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.

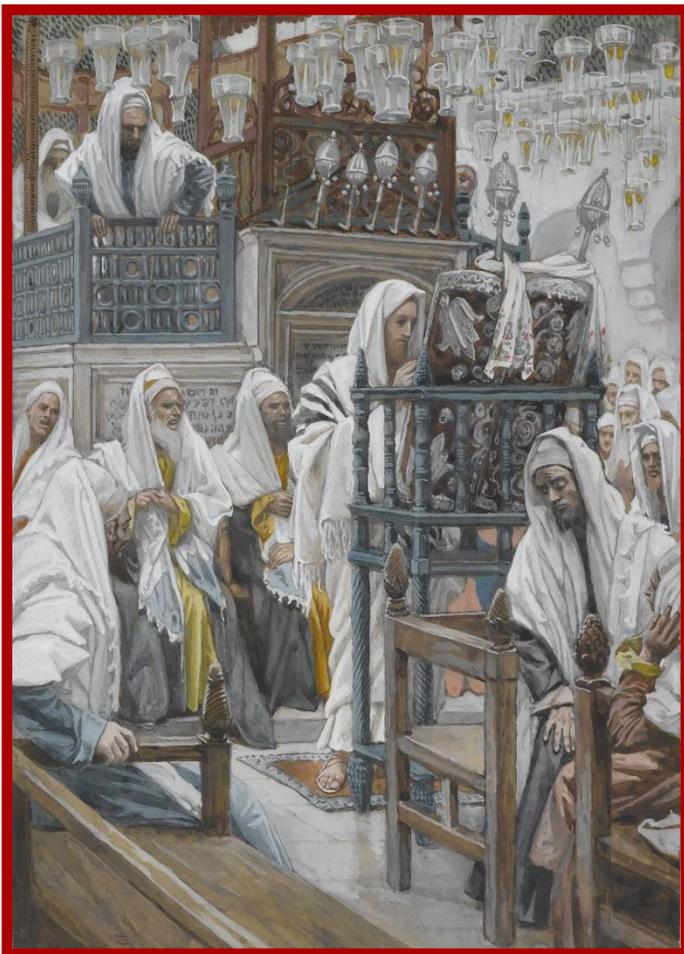
JOHN 4:1-3

When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

Mt 4:12 JST adds: "Jesus *knew* that John was cast into prison, *and he sent angels, and, behold, they came and ministered unto him.*" It sounds like Jesus sent the angels to JBPst. When JBPst bestowed the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith, he specifically mentioned the role of *ministering angels* as part of the Aaronic Priesthood (D&C 13:1 and D&C 107:20).

Ministering angels are a blessing to all ages and genders as a confirmation of truth (D&C 20:10; Omni 1:25; 3 Nephi 19:15; Moroni 7:25; 10:14). Furthermore, the “Parchment of John [the Beloved]” reveals that “he has undertaken a greater work; therefore I [God] will make him as flaming fire and a ministering angel; he shall minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation who dwell on the earth” (D&C 7:6). You can find nine more verses in the D&C that teach about ministering angels including their roles in other kingdoms (i.e. D&C 13:1; 20:6,10, 35; 43:25; 67:13; 76:88; 84:26; 107: 20; 130:5–6; 132:16–17).

Mt 4:13–17 In Matthew’s style, he includes the OT geographical markers listing by old tribal lands, followed by one of Isaiah’s prophecy that was fulfilled. Half of Matthews citations are from Isaiah. (I think Matthew liked Isaiah as much as Nephi did!) This is the seventh of Matthew’s “14 Prophetic Fulfillment” verses, where he repeats: “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken . . .” showing that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies for their promised Messiah.⁶ The message of going from darkness to light is one of repentance and forgiveness. There are 574 scriptural verses that address repent or repentance. It is especially important in the restoration scriptures



Jesus Unrolls the Book in the Synagogue by James Tissot.

Jesus Preaches in Nazareth

Luke 4:16–30

Lk 4:16 Luke alone includes the stories from Nazareth “where he had been brought up” (i.e. starting with Mary and Joseph leaving Nazareth for the Roman enrollment and Jesus’ birth, and here the story of Jesus’ rejection there thirty years later). Luke claims that his stories came from eye witnesses, and so we assume that Mary or others shared this sad event with Luke. Archeologists estimate the ancient population of Nazareth between 300–1,000 people (most speculating on the smaller size because of the location on a rocky hillside that made it difficult to sustain life through farming).

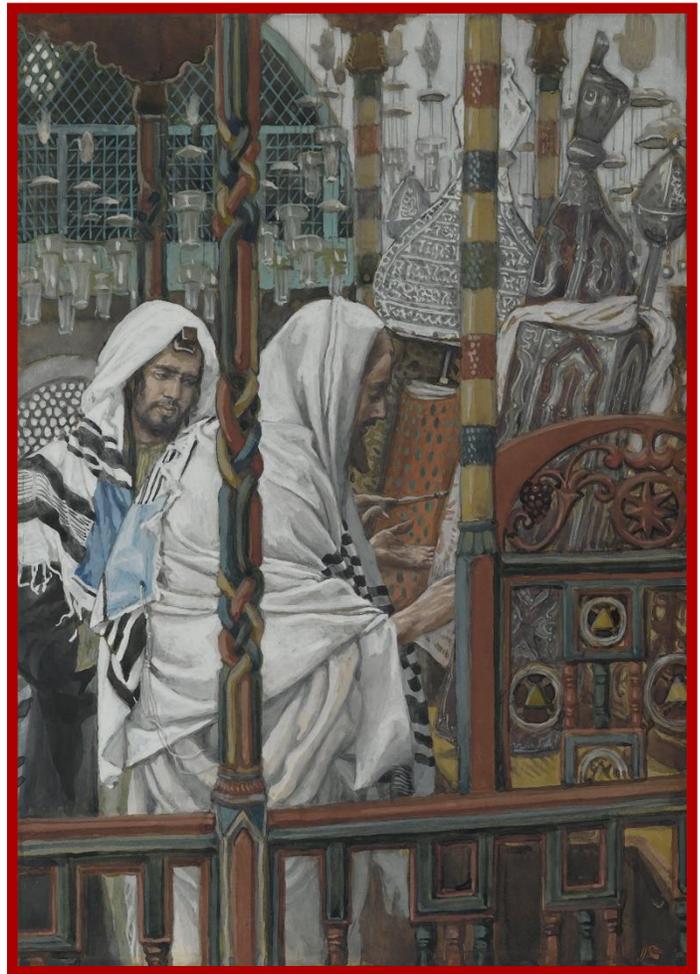
At the time of the Gospels, the late Second Temple Period, Jews met each Sabbath (from Friday at sunset to Saturday sunset) to worship in synagogues or house churches (depending on the size and wealth of the Jewish community).⁷ Women and children were allowed to attend if they were silent and sat in a separate section.⁸ The

synagogue ceremony included reading a section from the Torah (first five books of Moses), and if they had the means to own other scrolls, they also read from one of the Prophets (i.e., Isaiah, Jonah, etc.). The service began with singing Psalms, recitations, and then a Jewish man in the congregation stood to read the assigned Scripture passage of the day from the scroll, and then sat down to discuss it. They sat to signify the higher place of God's word over man's interpretation.⁹ The service usually closed with a blessing.

Lk 4:17–19 The small town of Nazareth seems eager to hear from their hometown, now “rabbi / teacher” who gained a reputation as a miracle worker over the time he has been gone. He is either reading the assigned passage of the day from Isaiah 61:1–2, or he chose. It was one of the passages known to speak of the Promised Messiah.¹⁰ The phrase, “he hath anointed me,” uses the word for *messiah*. Reading the scripture describes beautiful details of the Messiah's mission. No one in the OT ever healed the blind, it was a sign of the Messiah as mentioned here.

What can we learn from His Preaching in Nazareth?

Lk 4:20–22 The small-town congregation gave him full attention as their eyes “fastened on him” (Lk 4:20). His short and clear declaration, “This day is this scripture fulfilled,” was highly offensive. They had a hard time accepting His declaration as they knew Him from childhood and were still living with his younger siblings (who also did not believe we are told in John's Gospel).



Jesus Teaches in the Synagogue by James Tissot

Lk 4:23–27 In their disbelief, His neighbors ask for a miracle like he has performed anywhere as a sign for them. In response, He reminds them of the OT stories where Israelites' lacked faith, and gentiles exhibited greater faith from Sidon and Syria. This message was also clear, and equally as offensive. They felt it disrespectful too.

Lk 4:28–30 In their rage, they attempt to stone Jesus as a false prophet.¹¹ Stoning was prescribed for many sins including, Sabbath breaking, idolatry, a false prophet, and blasphemy (Leviticus 24:11–16). Instead, they receive a miracle that they do not recognize, Jesus remained unharmed. They did not have power over his life.

Call of First Disciples

Mt 4:18–22; Mk 1:16–20; Luke 5:1–11



The Calling of Saint John and Saint Andrew by James Tissot.

Mt 4:18–22 Even though the details and timing are different in each Gospel (John in Judea, synoptics in Galilee), two of the first few disciples to follow Jesus in all four Gospels, include Andrew and his brother Simon Peter (Mark 1:16). Many assume that John the Beloved is the other disciple of JBpst who first asks Jesus, “Mater, where dwellest thou?” and is told, “Come and see” (John 1:38–39).

Mt 4:19, JST, Jesus identifies himself as the fulfillment of the prophets’ messages. Matthew records that he is also mending his nets in Galilee when called by Jesus to follow Him.

What “nets” in our lives do we need to stop mending to more fully follow Jesus?

It requires great faith to leave “all” and follow then and now. I presume it was hardest on their families. How did their families react? (We know of Peter’s wife and mother in law, Papa Zebedee and his wife, and undoubtedly each of the twelve was connected someone—see Mark 1:20.) Following the Lord required a complete change of life and heart. Luke fills in with a few more details.

Lk 5:1 In the morning, a crowd followed Jesus to a beach near Capernaum which was a prosperous city at the north of the Sea of Galilee (also known in the NT as Lake of Gennesaret).

Lk 5:2 The two boats belonged to Peter and his partners, James and John the sons of Zebedee and Salome. Their “fishing nets” were very heavy casting nets. The unsuccessful fishermen must have been exhausted and discouraged as they go through the laborious work of cleaning and folding their linen threaded nets.

Lk 5:3 Jesus would have sat in the back of the boat while Peter walked beside the front pushing it out into the shallow waters. I presume Peter and his partners listened to Jesus teach the crowd. Jesus had already visited Peter and healed his family (4:38), so asking him to use his boat seems reasonable. Peter must have grown his faith and meekly received advise on fishing from a builder.

Lk 5:4–6 Jesus now offers a miracle with broader power over creation. Luke selects miracles that grow in their scope and power (fulfilling Jesus’ mission as announced at the Nazareth synagogue from Isaiah 61:1). Luke starts with protection through invisibility; 4:33–35 casting out devil; 4:38–39 healing Peter’s mother-in-law’s fever, power over the deep, healing permanent conditions of leprosy and paralysis, and forgiving sins).

Deep—echoing creation (Gen 1:2); the path for the ransomed (Isa 51:10); the depths of the earth hold the dead who need redemption (Ezekiel 26:19–20; Romans 10:7), depths pose danger (Psalms 69:2; Amos 9:3).

Nets—The linen threads that are woven into 25’ circular casting nets, snap and pop under the fishes’ weight. The image of a breaking net alludes to snapping off each thread of the Devil’s net that bound us as we come unto Christ.

Lk 5:7 This catch of a lifetime could provide income to sustain the families of the newly called apostles. Just 4.5 miles south is the town of Magdala / Taricheae where they dried or smoked fish. We assume the families took the catch of fish there to sell. Peter’s partners probably included his brother Andrew as well as James and John. Their working together foreshadows the unified team of Apostles as well. The boats in that area were 4 ½ ft deep, and still sinking with the load of fish.

Lk 5:8 Both names for Peter are used only here in Luke. Luke highlights Peter who falls at Jesus’ feet as the first called apostle. Imagine the chaos of tugging the nets into the boat with all the wriggling fish. The miracle is in the timing! I love seeing Peter’s humility as He worships Jesus. This vs also speaks of the need for disciples to be cleansed and live worthy lives to follow the Lord. Yet the Lord calls sinners.

Lk 5:9–10 Astonishment or “Fear seized him” as this miracle is tailor made for Peter! Luke points specifically to the three chief apostles as eye witness’. Jesus observes their fear and commands, “fear not” (one of the most repeated commandments throughout Luke). The Lord gives them a grand catch before calling them to grander things.

Lk 5:11 Immediately they respond to the Lord's call to serve, and left their catch with others. The Lord asks us to forsake our sins to follow and serve Him as well. As a side note, the Lord has provided for the apostle's families by first healing Grandma (Lk 4:39; Peter's mother-in-law), and now fish provided income for the next three years (D&C 118:3; 49:21)

Preaches and Heals in Galilee

Matt 4:23–25, Mark 1:35–39, Luke 4:42–44



Christ Healing the Mother of Simon Peter's Wife by John Bridges (1839). Image via Wikimedia Commons.

Mt 4:23, JST, adds the significant requirement of faith in the Lord's Name to be healed.

Mt 23–25 From the outset of Jesus' ministry, Matthew includes an international crowd following Jesus with his missionary focus. Throughout his Gospel, he uses "book ends" five times to divide his record into sections. Verses 23–25 are the end of the first section (ending with the exact same verse in 9:35). The whole section between the two book-ends is one unit where Jesus teaches (ch 5–7), heals (ch 8–9). Sometimes the KJV translators use different words even though words like "every" and "all manner" are both the same Greek, *pas*.

4:23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing *all* manner of sickness and ...

9:35 ¶ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing *every* sickness and ...

Mk 1:35 includes that Jesus chose to be alone in the wilderness to prayer in order to prepare. He left to the hillside to be alone and pray at nearly 4:00 in the morning! Mark's Gospel highlights the miraculous nature of the Lord's ministry, while the other Gospels include that Jesus had more to do than perform miracles in Capernaum, he was there to preach the Good News / *gospel*.

Capernaum Synagogue and Healing Peter's Mother in Law

Lk 4:38–40 After the Lord teaches in the Capernaum synagogue and casts out a devil there, he is requested to heal Peter's mother in law. In addition to Luke including more information on women, he is more aware of family life as well. It is also interesting in Luke's account that Simon / Peter has heard the Lord preach (possibly twice) and has the Lord in his home to heal his mother in law, before his call to leave his profession behind and become a fisher of men.

Luke 5:12-16 Jesus Cleanses a Leper

also Mt 8:2-4; Mk 1:40-45

Lk 5:12 "One of the cities," suggests that the unclean man had come into an area where he shouldn't. Especially in the advanced stage of "full of leprosy." (As a physician, I presume Luke knew much of leprosy.) He falls at Jesus' feet with great faith, as did Peter (5:8). Old Testament Mosaic Law stresses "Clean and Unclean" in Leviticus 13:45 (1-46); 14:2-3; Number 5:2; etc. Rabbi's put bans on Lepers as the most unclean (next to the dead). They could not go into a walled city. If they were on a road they must stay at least 6 feet away from others and call out "unclean" loudly. Leprosy was known as "living death" (read Talmage p. 199 description). It was believed incurable once seated in the blood, and this man had the worst form of it ("full of leprosy"). Rabbi's required Lepers to dress as mourners with a black cloak completely covering all their body, most of their face, with "disheveled hair." Rabbi's taught that 11 specific sins brought about Leprosy.

Lk 5:13 Jesus violates the letter of the Law by touching the unclean, while keeping the spirit of the Law by healing him. Jesus send him to a priest to be pronounced clean by under the Law of Moses.

Lk 5:14 Jesus honors the Law by complying with the details of a priest pronouncing the cleansing pure (Lev 14:2-3). We saw this earlier in Luke's nativity where he included the earliest members of the Christian tradition as

respecters of the Law of Moses (Luke 1-2: Zacharias at the temple, Elizabeth at the circumcision, Mary forty-day purification at the temple, young Jesus attending Passover at the temple, etc.).

Lk 5:16 If Jesus needed spiritual rejuvenation, SO DO WE! Find your “wilderness” or place to pray.

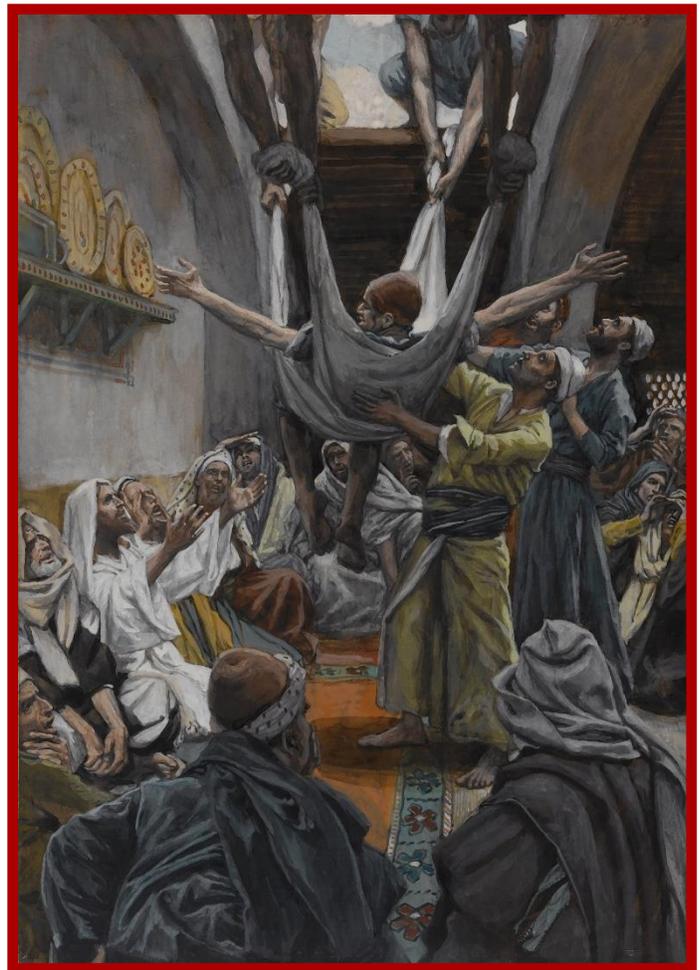
Lk 3:6. Each Gospel cites Isaiah 40:3-4, but Luke alone continues in Isaiah and adds the fifth verse: “all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” This specifically highlights Luke’s theology that Jesus came for *all*.

Luke 5:17-26 Jesus heals Paralysis

also Mt 9:2-8; Mk 2:1-12

Lk 5:17 Pharisees (Josephus identifies a group of 6,000, who emphasized the 10,000 oral laws, especially Sabbath observance and dietary laws), and teachers start attacking Jesus. At the time, small houses were 9' X 12,' medium were 12' X 15', and larger homes had rooms surrounding a courtyard. Often an outside stairwell led to the flat roof where you could work or sleep in warm weather.

Roof: There were outside and inside stairs that lead up to the roof, as well as “the road of the roofs” passing from roof to roof if the house adjoined others in the same street. Many Galilean roofs were hard beaten earth with rubble underneath it, with paved brick, stone, or any other hard substance and surrounded by a balustrade which was at least 3' high. The roof over the courtyard would have been covered with a lighter frame work which supported the tiles. Roman tiled homes have also been unearthed in Palestine.



Paralyzed Man Let Down by James Tissot.

Lk 5:18 The friends of the paralyzed man had great faith and determination! A great example in doing all we can to reach God.

Lk 5:19 The Greek word for “before the Lord” is used “almost as a technical term in temple worship” and when Moses stood before the Lord (p.290). The speaks of a sacred setting. I wonder how disruptive the scene must have been?

Lk 5:20 Faith propels this miracle. Jesus heals in the “psychological order;” inward thoughts first before outward (remember some Jews thought ever illness came from a sin). The healings spoke of His Divine Personality.

Lk 5:21–22 Reading other’s thoughts is another miracle and sign that Jesus is God. The word for “power” is also authority. *Note again the similarities with the Devil’s temptation, now from the questioning leaders “if...if...if thou be...”

Lk 5:23–24 The JST helps, “Does it require more power to forgive sins than to make the sick rise . . .” which immediately happens proving Jesus has power over both. His healing is even shown to provide strength to carry his stretcher!

Levi/Matthew's call

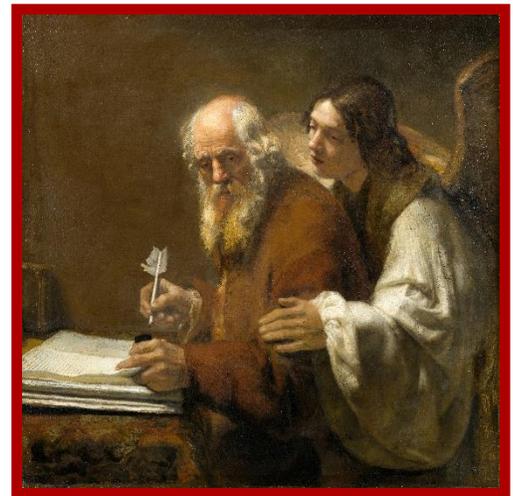
Mt 9:9–13; Mark 2:13–17; Luke 5:27–32

Lk 5:27 The Lord “observed” Levi/Matthew possibly at the custom’s post on the main road just east of Capernaum, on the boarder of Herod Antipas and Philip’s territories (2 miles west of where the Jordan River meets the Sea of Galilee). Luke calls him Levi, but Matthew (“gift of God”), calls him, “Matthew the Publican.”

Tax Collector: Usually, publicans were despised and listed with harlots and sinners (Mt 18:17). Because some were dishonest, none were allowed to be witnesses or judge. Their positions were leased from the government, and lived on the excess that they collected.

Roman Taxes: There were three different taxes each with their own tax collectors: 1) Ground tax: 1/10% of your ground production (ie. grain, wine) paid either in kind or \$; 2) Income-tax amounted to 1%; 3) Poll-tax or head-money was levied on all men over 14–65, and girls 12–65.

Taxes were paid on all imports and exports, all that was bought and sold, toll roads, bridge money, town dues, admission to markets, harbor dues, and ship toll. Taxes ranged from 2 ½–12 ½ % . The price was nothing compared to the hassle of constantly being stopped, unloading your pack animals, every bale and package opened, contents counted, private letters opened, etc. There was plenty of room for favors (Edersheim, 514?)



St. Matthew and the Angel by Karel van der Pluym (ca. 1655). Image via Wikimedia Commons.

Lk 5:28 Luke describes Levi, just as P, J and J, “forsaking all.” Disciples must be willing to leave all to follow Christ (and still must listen and obey His Spirit and servants). Levi as a publican would have had to brake his contract

Lk 5:29–30 Jesus is the guest of honor and “reclines” to eat at the feast Levi /Matthew provides. (Later Pharisaic Jewish laws forbad eating with publicans, p. 296). After the meal, the self-righteous confront Jesus’ disciples about eating with unclean publicans. Eating with “clean” people (male guests ate with men only) was especially important--because eating with someone was the same as if you were covenanting with them or at least shared values with them as you dipped together in the same dish (sharing germs)

Lk 5:31–32 These two statements are cited in the synoptic gospels. We also find them in reverse order as statements from Jesus quoted in Mormon 8:8. None of us are “whole” without the Lord’s atonement making up the difference.

Jesus’ Early Teachings

Luke 5:33–39

Lk 5:33 The audience appears to still be the publicans and scribes, but in the Gospel of Matthew it is JBst’s disciples. Yet Jesus also speaks so that his new disciples will understand that he is not intending to reform the old Law, but calls for a completely new or fresh restoration. The call for fasting would return after Jesus’ death. (Don’t get hung up on order of stories as each Gospel. It’s like a patchwork squares to create a different overall design.

Lk 5:34–35 Jesus uses the “bridegroom / bride” for imagery for God and Zion as we find in the OT too. The analogy is built on throughout the NT in parables and sermons (including the Book of Revelation).

Lk 5:36 A new patch was “un-shrunk” and would pull away as it shrinks and tear or stretch at the seams. Matthew uses the word, “*pleroun* / to fulfill” speaking of the fulfillment of the Law of Moses in Christ.

Lk 5:37 New or “fresh grape juice” was kept in animal skins, so they were only flexible enough for fermentation when new. Christ is symbolically the new wine and must be received with a flexible, soft, heart. Old bottles would not have the supple nature to expand with fermentation. Most wine was diluted significantly with water (10 parts water for the poor, 3 parts water for Passover). ❖

ENDNOTES

¹ Jeffery R. Holland, *BYU Speeches: The Inconvenient Messiah* (Provo, UT: 1982), from his Feb. 27, 1982, devotional. Also see https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/jeffrey-r-and-patricia-t-holland_inconvenient-messiah/ or <https://www.lds.org/liahona/1989/03/the-inconvenient-messiah?lang=eng>

² Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary* (SLC, UT: Deseret Book, 1979), 1:412.

³ na, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (SLC, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of LDS, 2007), 213. “Satan cannot seduce us by his enticements unless we in our hearts consent and yield. . . . We can resist the devil; if we were not organized so, we would not be free agents.”

⁴ Holland, *The Inconvenient Messiah*.

⁵ Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion* (SLC, UT: Deseret Book, 1989), 255.

⁶ Matthew’s 14 fulfillment prophecies include: Mt 1:22; 2:5, 15, 17, 23; 3:3; 4:14, 8:17; 12:17; 13:14, 35; 21:4; 26:56; 27:9. This use of fourteen points to his Davidic roots as discussed in the handout of Matt 1.

⁷ Howard Clark Kee and Lynn H. Cohick, *Evolution of the Synagogue* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1999), 91. “The basic meaning of the Greek *synagogue* is ‘a gathering, a collection,’ and can be used either of people or of things . . . Jews in antiquity coined the word *proseuche* to designate a place (usually a building) of prayer.” See also 12, 14, 17, 20. Scripture scrolls were found in the synagogue in Masada. First century Jews referred to places of worship as *synagogue* and *proseuche* (Josephus, *Against Apion*, 14.216; 16.164; *Vit.* 277ff; 290; 295; *BJ* 2.289-92; Matthew 9:35; Mark 13:9; Luke 4:16-30; Acts 9:20; 13:15; 18:4, 17).

⁸ Michael Avi-Yonah, “Synagogue Historical Roots,” Skolnik, *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 19. 364-366. Later a separate entrance for women and children and lattice screens were set up to keep the women and children unseen and unheard. Archeologists found a lattice separation for gender in a Mesopotamian synagogue from AD 245. Between the third and seventh century, galleries were built to keep the women on separate floors from the men in addition to their separate entrance.

⁹ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 56.

¹⁰ Mark Harding, *Early Christian Life and Thought in Social Context* (NYC: T&T Clark International, 2003), 323. The Messianic hope of the time was outlined by the *Psalms of Solomon* (69-40 BC) and focused on a conquering Messiah: “He will have Gentile peoples serving him under his yoke, and he will glorify the Lord publicly in the whole world. He will pronounce Jerusalem clean . . . He will have nations come from the ends of the earth to see his glory . . . He will be a righteous king over them, taught by God, there will be no unrighteousness among them during his reign, because everyone will be holy, and their king will be the Lord Messiah . . . And he himself will be free from sin, in order to rule such a great people. He will expose officials and drive out sinners by the strength of his word.”

¹¹ Stoning was carried out by pushing the offender of the law off a cliff, if that did not kill him or her, one person was chosen to throw a large rock on the wounded one. If that did not kill him or her, everyone else picked up stones and throw them to attempt to end life.