# The Book of Luke

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We are going to compare how the gospel writers recorded John’s baptism of Jesus. The Literal Standard Version\(^1\) is used below:

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\(^1\) This is a 2020 translation which claims to be *strictly literal and in modern English.*
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<th>Scripture</th>
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| Matt. 3:13 Then Jesus comes from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be immersed by him,... | Matthew mentions the geography. Jesus was raised in the Galilee region. Traveling to Jordan would have been a fairly long trip which probably involved taking a boat across the Sea of Galilee.  
There is a lot more going on here than idle curiosity, “I wonder what John is doing?” |
| Matt. 3:14 ...but John was forbidding Him, saying, “I have need to be immersed by You—and You come to me?” | There is some reticence on the part of John when it comes to baptizing Jesus. This suggests that John understood that his baptism was seen as a ritual of cleansing (see Luke 11:38), associated with the coming King (John 1:23). For this reason, John believes that he should be baptized by Jesus, and not the other way around. Therefore, John did not fully appreciate what his baptism of Jesus actually meant. |
| Matt. 3:15 But Jesus answering said to him, “Permit [it] now, for thus it is fitting to us to fulfill all righteousness,” then he permits Him. | Despite John’s reticence, Jesus urges John to baptize Him. This baptism would have been unique. Even though Jesus has been on this earth for 30 years and has interacted previously with some of the great scholars of the Temple, this marks the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry.  
Jesus tells John that he will need to baptize Him, which fulfills all righteousness. Let me suggest that the baptism of Jesus was Jesus ending His private life and entering into a public ministry, as per the plan of God. In short, this baptism indicated that Jesus was entering into the plan of God. Jesus’ public actions over the next few years would bring Him to the cross. Obviously, Jesus did not deserve to be crucified; but His public ministry would lead to the cross.  
By His sinless life and by going to the cross, Jesus would fulfill all righteousness. |
<p>| Matt. 3:16 And having been immersed, Jesus immediately went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him,... | John baptized Jesus. When He came up out of the waters, the heavens opened. I believe that Matthew alone says that the heavens were opened to Him (to Jesus). I would understand this to mean that Jesus had full access to God the Holy Spirit for His public ministry. |</p>
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<td>Matt. 3:17a <em>...and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming on Him,...</em></td>
<td>People there observe the Spirit descend upon Jesus in the form of a dove, coming out of heaven. Some of you may have had the rare experience of a bird landing on your shoulder, and perhaps, this is sort of what this looked like to the disciples of John. Matthew focuses on Jesus seeing this take place. The Holy Spirit is specifically said to come upon Him, suggesting the Holy Spirit’s empowerment of Jesus.</td>
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<td>Matt. 3:17b <em>...and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, “This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delighted.”</em></td>
<td>God speaks aloud so that He could be heard by the people there. This is a very rare occurrence. The only other time I can recall God speaking and being heard by a large number of people was in the book of Exodus when God gave the Ten Commandments to the Hebrews at Mount Sinai. The Ten Commandments condemn all mankind; but Jesus saves us from our sins. How fitting that these are the two times when God spoke aloud to His people. God first condemns all mankind (as all of sinned); but then He offers up His Son to save us. Jesus, through His entire life, enjoyed the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. However, this publically associates the Lord with the Holy Spirit.</td>
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<td>Mark 1:9 <em>And it came to pass in those days, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was immersed by John in the Jordan;...</em></td>
<td>Mark immediately records the action. Arriving to where John is teaching, Jesus is baptized by him. Jesus comes out of Nazareth (only Mark mentions this). This would suggest that Jesus is living and working in Nazareth, where He was raised. Jesus would be prepared for His ministry by the Word of God, which is taught in the synagogue in Nazareth. However, He has not revealed to anyone, up to this point, that He is the Messiah.</td>
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<td>Mark 1:10 <em>...and immediately coming up from the water, He saw the heavens dividing, and the Spirit coming down on Him as a dove;...</em></td>
<td>In the book of Mark, it is Jesus who emerges from His baptism, only to see the heavens open Himself, and the Holy Spirit light upon him, as if a dove. So we see this from the point of view of Jesus.</td>
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### John Baptizes Jesus (in all 4 gospels)

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<td>Mark 1:11 ...and a voice came out of the heavens, “You are My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delighted.”</td>
<td>The voice coming out of the heavens speaks directly to Jesus at this time. Since these are God’s manifestations, I think we can reasonably suppose that all of the people there heard one thing (“This is My beloved Son...”) and that Jesus heard something different (“You are My beloved Son...”). Or, perhaps unbelievers heard, <em>this is My beloved Son</em>; and believers heard, <em>You are My beloved Son.</em></td>
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<td>Luke 3:21 And it came to pass, in all the people being immersed, Jesus also being immersed, and praying, Heaven was opened...</td>
<td>Interestingly enough, Luke gives the shortest record of this event. People are being immersed by John; then Jesus is immersed by him, and while praying, apparently. Heaven is opened up, a phrase explained by v. 22:</td>
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<td>Luke 3:22 ...and the Holy Spirit came down in a bodily appearance, as if a dove, on Him, and a voice came out of Heaven, saying, “You are My Son, the Beloved, in You I delighted.”</td>
<td>Luke records the Holy Spirit descending upon the Lord as a dove; and Luke records what God the Father said directly to His Son. Seeing the Holy Spirit, represented by a dove, coming and landing upon the Lord is a sign for the people there. There is no reason to think that Jesus did not have the Holy Spirit before.</td>
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<td>John 1:29 On the next day John sees Jesus coming to him and says, “Behold, the Lamb of God, Who is taking away the sin of the world;...</td>
<td>John, during his ministry at the Jordan River, sees Jesus coming from a distance. John knows that this is Jesus, and he tells the people, “This is the Man I have been telling you about. He is the Lamb of God, and He will take away the sins of the world.”</td>
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<td>John 1:30–31 ...this is He concerning Whom I said, After me comes a man who has come before me,...</td>
<td>Notice these very important words of John: “He was before me.” Remember who was born first? John was. We studied this in Luke 2, where John’s mother was pregnant about 6 months before Mary was. Furthermore, John’s public ministry began before the public ministry of Jesus. Here, John recognizes the eternal nature of the Lord’s Deity. This is how Jesus came before John.</td>
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<td>John 1:31  ...and I did not know Him, but that He might be revealed to Israel, because of this I came immersing in water.”</td>
<td>Interestingly enough, John also says, “I did not know Him.” This is more difficult to interpret. Did they never meet in Jerusalem for one of the festive gatherings? Or did John not fully appreciate Who Jesus was until most recently? This latter explanation makes more sense to me.</td>
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<td>John 1:32  And John testified, saying, “I have seen the Spirit coming down out of Heaven as a dove, and [that] One remained on Him;...</td>
<td>Notice the stark difference of John’s gospel here from the previous 3. John the herald (not the same as the gospel writer John) testifies as to what he saw with his own eyes. John also appears to have heard something different than Jesus heard and from what the people there heard.</td>
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<td>John 1:33  ...and I did not know Him, but He who sent me to immerse in water, He said to me, On whomsoever you may see the Spirit coming down, and remaining on Him, this is He who is immersing in the Holy Spirit;...</td>
<td>For a second time, John testifies, “I did not know Him.” Again, I think that this means that John did not fully appreciate just Who Jesus the Messiah is. There are times in the Christian life when you hear a doctrine on several occasions, but, at some point you hear it and fully understand it, as you are able to put all of the pieces together. John the Herald is now beginning to appreciate Who Jesus is. John the Herald tells us one more thing, that we do not get in the other gospels. John was told that the Son of God would be the One upon Whom he saw the Holy Spirit come down upon and remain on Him. So, the descending of the Holy Spirit like a dove upon Jesus appears to be for John’s benefit. It further confirmed Who Jesus is. Using other phraseology here, John tells us the John the Herald baptizes with water, but Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit.</td>
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<td>John 1:34  ...and I have seen, and have testified, that this is the Son of God.”</td>
<td>John testifies as to Who Jesus is. John is testifying to the true identify of Jesus; which is apparently something which he did not fully appreciate until this time. Jesus will testify as to His identity as the Messiah not too far in the future from this incident.</td>
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John, as he often does, has the most interesting or the most unusual view of the event.
On a personal note, when choosing a gospel to exegete, I made a decision to pursue the book of Luke rather than the book of John (I exegeted the first chapter of both of them to help make that decision). What drew me to John was his unique perspective and the fact that he was isolated for a time on the Isle of Patmos, which is what gave him the space and breathing room to write (which may not have been John’s natural inclination). I also knew that John’s Greek was much easier than Luke’s.

However, I eventually chose Luke because his gospel leads naturally to the book of Acts; he provides a great deal of historical background; his Greek is more complex, but then, more interesting; and there is a tremendous emphasis placed upon the teaching of Jesus more than on the acts of Jesus.

Given my age, I don’t know if I will have the opportunity to fully explore a second gospel.

What is the son of Heli?

The second half of Luke 3 begins the genetic line of Jesus, working backwards from Jesus all the way to Adam (the genealogy in Matthew begins with Abraham and moves forward to Jesus).

Dividing up the genealogy which follows is somewhat difficult (that is, how many names should be placed in each verse or in each passage?). What Dr. Peter Pett does is interesting. He divides up the genealogy into many sets of seven names. I eventually opted for dividing up the names into groups of 14 in my own chapter-by-chapter study (HTML) (PDF) (WPD). Unlike Pett, I chose to not include Jesus in the first list of 14, but began with Joseph’s name instead. In any case, Jesus is a part of this genealogy and Joseph is not (I will explain that as we go further in this study).

In this weekly e-mailed study, I will stick with the ESV text, which divides everything up verse by verse (which is what we would expect; although chapter and verse divisions were not a part of the original text).

Luke actually presents Mary’s genealogical line; so even though Joseph will be named as if he in this line. However, this is actually the line of Mary that Luke records. Although Mary’s name does not appear anywhere in this line, it is still her line. I will explain how we are able to read this into the text (it is tricky but you will understand it).

This genealogy is fascinating, because the number of names between Jesus and Nathan (the first person that I know in this line, except for Jesus and Joseph) is about the same length as a combination of the two lines which come after (David to Abraham and then Terah to Adam). I have studied these second two lines historically—I have spent much of my Christian life doing that. And yet, the names in this genealogical line that I will never study in any depth—that list is just as long. This half chapter is the only place where we
find the names of the men beginning with Heli (Mary’s father; Jesus’ grandfather\(^2\)) and going back to Nathan.

It is also fascinating the detail and the records which were kept on these men who were, insofar as we know, nothing special. Is there a David among them or an Abraham? Or a Noah? We don’t really know. My initial instinct with this first list of names is to say, \(\text{no}\). But I must quickly add, I really don’t know. There was no Scripture recorded during that period of time.

Luke 3:23a  \(\text{Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age,}\ldots\)

This marks the beginning of our Lord’s public ministry, when He is about 30 years old. It is a reasonable assumption that Jesus being baptized by John began the Lord’s public ministry. However, before we begin to study His earthly ministry (which is the bulk of the book of Luke), we will look at His genealogical past.

At first, it appears as though this genealogical line is thrown illogically into the second half of Luke 3, almost as an afterthought; but this placement is very logical. A bird’s eye view helps us to understand this:

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<td>Luke 3A</td>
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<td>Luke 3B</td>
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<td>Luke 4A</td>
<td>The Temptation of Jesus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luke 4B</td>
<td>Jesus Begins His Public Ministry</td>
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Logically, we could have placed the genealogy at the beginning of Luke 2, but that would have ruined the flow of Luke 1 to Luke 2. Placed here, after the baptism of Jesus and before the Lord begins His public ministry makes perfect sense.

Luke is saying, \textit{this is Who the man Jesus is; these are His origins}. Before beginning with the genealogy, Luke will tie this Jesus in the genealogy to the Jesus Who was baptized by John and Who will begin His ministry to the people of Israel.

Luke 3:23a  \(\text{Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age,}\ldots\) (NKJV)

\(^2\) Not to worry; I will justify this statement.
Several times, I have suggested that this takes place around A.D. 25. This is because the Lord was born 4–6 B.C. The calendar which we have accepted originally wanted to place the birth of our Lord at 1 B.C. (or at A.D. 1), but there was a miscalculation. So, many years after this calendar had been accepted and placed into general use, it was determined that it missed its intended mark by a few years.

Luke 3:23a  Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age,... (NKJV)

There are actually a couple of things happening in this verse which most readers would be unaware of. First, v. 23 begins with the kai conjunction (which properly ties it to the previous verse and previous section). This tells us that Luke, the human author, consciously added the Lord’s genealogy here. Luke as the author and editor found this to be the right place to consider the Lord’s genealogy.

The subject of this verse is the 3rd person masculine singular nominative of autos (αὐτός) [pronounced ow-TOSS], which means, he. Strong’s #846. Although this is often interpreted as being a reflexive pronoun, it is not necessarily one; and there is a reflexive pronoun in the Greek, but which is not used here. I know that it seems weird that I say that, but I mention this, because many translators treat this as a reflexive pronoun. The reflexive pronoun is heautou (ἑαυτοῦ) [pronounced heh-ow-TO], which is clearly not what we have here. Translations are split about half and half, between those who see this as a reflexive pronoun and those who do not.

V. 23 using autos as a reflexive pronoun:

Len Gane Paraphrase  And Jesus, himself, starting [his ministry] was about thirty years old...
A. Campbell's Living Oracles  Now Jesus was himself about thirty years in subjection,...
God's Truth (Tyndale)  And Jesus himself was about thirty years of age when he began,...
Israeli Authorized Version  And Y'shuw'a himself began to be about thirty years of age,...

V. 23 using autos as a simple pronoun:

Bible in Basic English  And Jesus at this time was about thirty years old,...
Bible in Worldwide English  Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work.
American English Bible  Well, Jesus came into his power when he was about thirty years old,...
Christian Community (1988)  When Jesus made his appearance, he had reached the age of thirty years.
The main verb is the imperfect active indicative of to be. What we have here are two nominatives (autos and Jesus), connected by the verb to be. Literally, this reads, He is Jesus; or [The] Same is Jesus...

What we have here in the Greek is different from the NKJV (and many other translations). The most literal translation, so far, is: The Same [one] is Jesus,... That is, Luke is tying Jesus, the man just baptized by John, to the Jesus of the genealogy which is to follow. He is One and the same Person.

The word began is the present middle participle of archomai (ἀρχόμαι) [pronounced AR-khom-ahee], which means, beginning; being the first [to do something], the one commencing (in order of time). Strong's #756.

The words his ministry are not found in the Greek, but reasonably implied.

Other translations read:

- **Analytical Literal Translation**: And Jesus Himself was about thirty years old when He began [His public ministry],...
- **Complete Apostles' Bible**: Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age,...
- **Updated Bible Version 2.1**: And Jesus was about thirty years of age.
- **Voice in the Wilderness**: And Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age,...
- **World English Bible**: Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years old,....

Even though, most of these are considered very literal translations, they did not translate these first words as literally as they could have. The most common way to translate two nominatives, X and Y, where there is the verb to be, is, X is Y.

A more literal rendering would be: And the Same is Jesus, having begun [His ministry], [being] about 30 years [of age],.... The bracketed words are added to smooth out the translation; they are not found in the original Greek text.

The intent of the Greek is to tie Jesus in the previous verse to the Jesus of this new section. This same Jesus is the One in the previous passage—the Man just baptized by John the Herald and the man at the beginning of this genealogy are the same man. This verse specifically looks back to what has come before. Luke is writing, now, this same [man] is Jesus [Whom I have been writing about]; He began [His ministry] when He was about 30 years [of age]. But, to be clear, the words His ministry or His teaching do not occur in the text of this verse.

How do we get those words, His ministry? This comes out from the present middle participle of archomai (ἀρχόμαι) [pronounced AR-khom-ahee], which means, beginning; being the first [to do something], the one commencing (in order of time). Strong's #756.
This same Jesus is beginning something; so many translations have inserted, at this point, *His ministry, His teaching*. Interestingly enough, this was not inserted by the KJV (which has a powerful influence on Bible translations, even to this day). The other interpretation is, *Jesus...is beginning [at] about 30 years of age*. Even though what He is beginning is open to interpretation, given what comes first (His baptism) and what comes after (His teaching, which makes up the bulk of the book of Luke), we may reasonably insert the words *His teaching, His ministry*.

**Luke 3:23a**  
And He [even] He was Jesus, beginning, about years thirty,... (Kukis slavishly literal translation) or...  

**Luke 3:23a**  
And the Same [One] is Jesus, beginning, about thirty years [old]... (Kukis moderately literal translation)

What is Jesus beginning at this point?  His public ministry.  What we will study from this point forward (that is, *after* we complete His genealogy) is His public ministry, which is the time frame of the Lord’s life that we are most familiar with.

We know that Jesus, for nearly all of His life, has studied the Scriptures (these would have been the Old Testament Scriptures, as there was no New Testament at this time), and is prepared to launch His ministry.  Jesus, in His humanity, did not automatically know everything that He needed to know.  Spiritual knowledge was developed in his soul over this period of 30 years.  In other words, Jesus learned Bible doctrine as a child and as a young adult.  We are told this in Luke 2:40  

> And the Child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor [= grace] of God was upon Him.  

Also Luke 2:52  

> And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.  

This *must* refer to Jesus’ humanity.

God’s knowledge never increases.  God does not learn something new every day.  Let’s say that we do something out of the ordinary; do you think that God then looks down and remarks, “Well, I’ll be doggoned; I did not see that coming!”?  God knows every single decision that we will make.  He knew this in eternity past.

Jesus is God, but in His humanity, Jesus did not access the perfect, complete knowledge which God possessed.  This is the doctrine of kenosis, where Jesus, in His humanity, voluntarily restricted the assets which He had as God.  It would be quite a theological discussion to determine whether Jesus ever accessed His divine attributes.  I would lean towards our Lord *never* accessing His Divine nature throughout His entire life to His death during the crucifixion—however, this is not a theological position which I have fully developed.  Obviously, at specific times when He is glorified, the physical representation of this could have been done by God the Father and not by Himself as God the Son.

For the Doctrine of Kenosis, see lesson #069 or Luke 2.
So far, in the genealogy, we have covered a third of a verse.

Luke 3:23a  And the Same [One] is Jesus, beginning, about thirty years [old]... (Kukis moderately literal translation)

Let’s move to v. 23b:

Luke 3:23b  ...being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph,...

Unlike v. 23a, 23b is translated quite literally.

*Joseph means let him add.*

Jesus is not said here to be the Son of Joseph, but He is *supposed* to be the Son of Joseph, meaning that others simply assumed that relationship between Joseph and Jesus. Given that Luke carefully documents that Jesus is not the actual Son of Joseph in the previous chapters, this is exactly in line with that.

At this point in time, and throughout most of the Lord’s public ministry, people who knew Jesus, met Him or knew of Him did not fully appreciate the virgin birth; and would have simply assumed that Joseph is the father. People did not come up to Jesus, at various intervals of His ministry, and say, “So, You are not really the Son of Joseph?” This doctrine is fundamental to Christology; but not necessarily one which was explained or discussed during the Lord’s public ministry. Jesus did not, in the middle of a teaching session, look at those in His periphery, and remark, “By the way, do you know that I was born of a virgin!”

Luke, who probably never met Jesus in person, understood very well the importance of the virgin birth. Matthew, who tied Jesus very carefully to the Old Testament, also understood the importance of the virgin birth.

It is likely that very few people truly appreciated the virgin birth of the Lord until after His death, burial and resurrection. Remember, understanding in the Christian life is a process; it does not happen all at once. You yourself did not believe in Jesus, and then, 2 seconds later, understood everything that you should know about Jesus. It is a process. I was saved in 1972 and am writing this in 2020; yet I am still learning.

Luke 3:23b  ...being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph,...

There are two verbs in this phrase. The first is the present participle of Strong’s #1510: ὄν/ousa/on (ōv/ōusal/ōv) [pronounced own/OO-sah/on], which means, *being, be, is, are; come; have.* Strong’s #5607 (some specific verb forms have their own Strong’s # at times).

The second verb is actually the main verb, even though it appears to be incidental to this phrase. It is the 3rd person singular, imperfect passive indicative of nomizô (νομίζω)
[pronounced nom-IHD-zoh]. It means, to suppose, to think; to do by law (usage); to deem, to regard. Strong’s #3543.

Here is how many translators dealt with v. 23a-b:

Complete Jewish Bible          Yeshua was about thirty years old when he began his public ministry. It was supposed that he was a son of Yosef...

Israeli Authorized Version     And Y'shuw`a himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was regarded legally) the son of Yosef,...

An Understandable Version      And Jesus was about thirty years old when He began to teach. (It was assumed that) He was the son of Joseph,...

The Expanded Bible              The Family History of Jesus
                                    When Jesus began his ministry, he was about thirty years old. People thought that Jesus was Joseph’s son... [“they were unaware of the virginal conception].

Far Above All Translation      Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old, beginning his ministry, being, as was reckoned by law, the son-in-law of Joseph,...

This is the only place in this genealogy where we have the words, the son of (in the Greek, this is actually one word). No matter how your English translation reads, the words the son of occurs nowhere else in this line or in any subsequent verse.

Interestingly enough, the only place where we find the actual word son in the Lukian genealogy, is the only place where there is not an actual father-son relationship being stated.

Before we go any further into this genealogy, we need to consider Greek names and Hebrew names.

We have proper names in the Old Testament which do not exactly match their counterparts in the New Testament (depending upon the translation which you use). There are reasons for this.

When we translate from the Greek to the English, we try to find an English word that means the same thing. When we transliterate from the Greek to the English, we try to find a word that sounds the same.

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<tr>
<td>1. The Greek and Hebrew both have different alphabets; and these alphabets are both different from the English. There is no one-to-one correspondence between each and every letter in these 3 alphabets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Even though we can find similar sounds in the Greek, Hebrew and English and match some of these up with their corresponding letters, there is not an easy</td>
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</table>
Greek and Hebrew Names in Genealogies

3. For instance, there is no \( j \) in the Greek or the Hebrew, despite the many English Bible names which begin with a \( J \), such as Jacob, Judah, Joshua, Jesus.

1) The Greek name which we transliterate as Judah is Iouda (\( \text{\`i`ou\d{a}d\a} \)) [pronounced ee-oo-DAH].
2) In the Hebrew, this is, \( Y`\text{h\text{"u}wd\a}h \) [pronounced yahoo-DAW].
3) For most of you, when you read your Bibles, you do not see the names Iouda or Y`h\text{"u}wd\a; you see Judah.
4) In the Greek, Jacob is Iakôb (\( \text{\`i`ak\o`b}\ )) [pronounced ee-ak-OBE].
5) In the Hebrew, Jacob is Ya`\text{"a}qôb (\( \text{\`y`\text{"a}q\o`b}\ )) [pronounced yah-\text{guh}-KOH\text{"e}V].

4. Some common names in the Hebrew end up with some significant differences when transliterated into the Greek; so that our English transliteration potentially gives us two very different-looking names. Most English Bibles try to retain some consistency and either use the English transliteration of the Hebrew (or the English transliteration of the Greek) consistently.

5. Here are some areas in which these two languages do not synch up:

1) The \( h \) sound in the Greek is a rough breathing which occurs almost exclusively at the beginning of a word. It is not found in the middle of a word or at the end of a word (if memory serves, there are a few exceptions to this).
2) So, from the Hebrew, we transliterate Shêm (\( \text{\`u`Åí}\ )) [pronounced shame] as Shem. The same name in the Greek is Sêm (\( \text{\O`\text{"i}á\text{"a}}\ )) [pronounced same], transliterated, Sem (as there is no \( sh \) sound in the Greek). Most Bibles transliterate this man's name as Shem, whether in the Old or New Testament, even though this is not a correct transliteration from the Greek.
3) Similarly, there is no \( h \) at the end of a Greek word. The Hebrew name Nôach (\( \text{\`o`n}\ )) [pronounced NOH-akhh], we know as Noah. The Greek noun Nôe (\( \text{\`o`e}\ )) [pronounced NO-eh] is properly translated Noe; however, most English Bibles are going to have Noah in both testaments.
4) Very often, when a name which ends with an \( h \) from the Hebrew; that same name is transliterated (from Hebrew to Greek) with an \( s \) at the end in the Greek.

1) Let's look at the well-known name Elijah: the Hebrew is 'êliyâh (\( \text{\`e`liy\text{"a}h}\ )) [pronounced ay-lee-YAW] (there is another spelling as well). Strong's #452  BDB #45. Elijah is the most common transliteration from the Hebrew.
2) The Greek version cannot have Elijah, as there is no \( h \) at the end of a Greek word. So, their transliteration is, instead, Hêlias (\( \text{\`h`\text{"e}li\`\text{"a}s}\ )) [pronounced hay-LEE-ass], which is variously transliterated, Elijah, Elias; Helias. Strong's #2243.
3) Transliterating from Hebrew to English, the most direct transliteration would be Eliyah; and from the Greek, the most direct transliteration would be, Helias. You may not even realize that this is the same name, if you view the closest English transliterations.
Greek and Hebrew Names in Genealogies

However, most Bibles try to be consistent, so we usually read *Elijah* in the English translation of both Old and New Testaments (even though that is *not* the proper transliteration from the Greek).

There are others like *Judah/Judas, Uriah/Urias*, etc.

6. The meanings are not always the same in the Greek as in the Hebrew. The more famous names will have the same meanings; the less famous names sometimes will not.

1) In the Greek, *Judah* means, *he shall be praised*. In the Hebrew this means, *to praise, to be praised*. These are quite close in meaning.

2) In the Greek, *Jacob* means, *heel-catcher or supplanter*. In the Hebrew, it means, *supplanter; insidious, deceitful*. The similarity of obvious.

Most translations try to maintain some sort of consistency, so that when you study one person in the Old Testament, you are not confused by a different name for him in the New.

Back to the genealogy:

Luke 3:23c ...the son of Heli,...  [I continue to use the ESV; capitalized in this study, so the words *son of* will continue to be used, even though the word *son* is not actually found here.]

Even though the names in this line are not declined (many proper nouns are not declined), there is a definite article before each name, indicating the declension of the proper noun. These proper nouns are in the ablative (because each of them is preceded by a definite article in the ablative case), meaning *of* ___.

Whereas *Joseph* is supposed to be Jesus’ father, that language is not used of any of the names which follow. Since this line does not match the line of Jesus in Matthew, we know that we must, therefore, be viewing the line of Mary. Jesus is the actual son of Mary and Jesus is a descendant (or *son*) of Heli. Again, the definite article is in the ablative case, so we understand this to read, *Jesus...of Heli*. Since Jesus is not said to be the actual son of Joseph, but there are no such qualifier placed upon Heli, Jesus would be his son (or, more accurately, descendant). It is reasonable to suppose that Mary’s father is named *Heli*, since Jesus is said to be his son (or, *descendant*).

The genealogical line of any person is actually two lines: the line of one’s father and the line of one’s mother. Since we have a whole different set of names in Matthew, which is clearly Joseph’s line, by process of elimination (and by the wording), this is Mary’s line.

It would be reasonable to suppose that Jesus (not Joseph) is *of Heli*. Or, as is inserted by the ESV (and many other translations), *the son of Heli*. 
There are not many translations which get this, and so, most of them sound as if Joseph is the son of Heli; but he is not. The translations which follow actually translate this part of v. 23 incorrectly.

**Christian Community (1988)**

When Jesus made his appearance, he had reached the age of thirty years. He was known as the son of Joseph, whose father and forefathers were: Heli,...

**Free Bible Version**

Jesus was around thirty when he began his public ministry. People presumed he was the son of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Heli,...

**God’s Truth (Tyndale)**

And Jesus himself was about thirty years of age when he began, being as men supposed the son of Joseph: which Joseph was the son of Heli:...

**The Heritage Bible**

And Jesus himself was beginning to be about thirty years, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, who was of Heli,...

\[23\] 3:23 as was supposed, nomizo, to do or be by the law. We have translated this word supposed, that which you would suppose since by law that is what is normally done; here its meaning is by law, because by law Jesus was the son of Joseph; but we have used supposed in order to be consistent with its use in all of its other 14 places where it clearly is suppose.

**Complete Jewish Bible**

Yeshua was about thirty years old when he began his public ministry. It was supposed that he was a son of Yosef who was of Eli,... [Take note of the more accurate transliterations of the names Jesus and Joseph in the CJB.]

**The Expanded Bible**

The Family History of Jesus

When Jesus began his ministry, he was about thirty years old. People thought that Jesus was Joseph’s son \[^C\] they were unaware of the virginal conception\].

Joseph was the son of Heli \[^C\] “son” in Hebrew can mean “descendant,” so there may be gaps in the genealogy].

If I have named the Bible which you use most often, you may be confused by this passage, simply because the translation you use is misleading at this point. These versions, which are generally good translations; are offered as examples which fail at this point.

There are a number of translations which could be understood to go either way. That is, maybe it is Jesus Who is of Heli and maybe is it Joseph who is of Heli.

**20th Century New Testament**

When beginning his work, Jesus was about thirty years old. He was regarded as the son of Joseph, whose ancestors were--Eli, Mattith, Levi, Melchiah, Janna, Joseph,... [I have included v. 24 for context; obviously, this could be taken in two different ways]
Len Gane Paraphrase

And Jesus, himself, starting [his ministry] was about thirty years old and was (as was commonly thought) the son of Joseph, who was [the son] of Heli,...

There are only a handful of translations which try to give us the actual sense of what is being said in this line. It is Jesus, and not Joseph, Who is the son of Heli. The translation below either make this point clear, or they are ambiguous enough so that it could go either way.

Wilbur Pickering’s New T.  

Mary’s genealogy  

(Beginning His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (so it was supposed) a son of Joseph, Jesus Himself was of Eli,... [Pickering’s footnotes at this point are quite extensive, and, therefore, not included here; however, they may be found in Luke 3 (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).]

Far Above All Translation

Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old, beginning his ministry, being, as was reckoned by law, the son-in-law of Joseph, who was the son-in-law of Heli,...

Modern Literal Version

And he was approximately thirty years old, when beginning to teach, (as it was supposed, the son of Joseph). Although Jesus, himself was a descendant from Heli,...

Both Pickering and the MLV give us perhaps the best translation/interpretation of this passage.

At the point of Heli, we begin to follow the line of Mary. Examining the genealogy of the mother is a very rare thing in ancient history. In fact, it is so unusual, this the line takes some work to figure out that it is Mary’s that we are reading.

Luke 3:23 Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli,... [I continue to use the ESV; capitalized throughout; the ESV is ambiguous at this point.]

We are not quite finished with this verse.


We left off last time with v. 23, and the subject matter was, whose line is this? Let’s take the ESV and add a few additional words to it:

Luke 3:23 Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, [Jesus is] the [actual] son [or, descendant] of Heli,... [the ESV, capitalized; with some supplementary text designed to clarify the relationships]
Jesus is not the biological son of Joseph; however, He is the biological son grandson of Heli, who would have been Mary’s father.

Heli’s name is only found here in this verse.

There are two genealogical lines for the Lord: here and in Matt. 1; and these lines are different. So, how do we determine which is Joseph’s and which is Mary’s? Joseph would be Jesus’ legal father, but not His biological father. Mary would be Jesus’ biological mother. Therefore, those in one line are directly related to the humanity of Jesus; and those in the other line are Jesus’ legal, but not biological, ancestors.

Let’s approach this in another way. The way that this is written is Jesus was assumed to be the son of Joseph, the son of Heli. There are two ways in which this can be interpreted. Either Jesus is the son (descendant) of Heli or Joseph is. This can be understood either way in the Greek. Although usually, the closest noun would be taken, this is not a hard-and-fast rule. Generally speaking, if Jesus is the son of Joseph, then He is automatically the son (descendant) of Joseph’s father. But the line differs from a normal genealogical line from the very beginning….Jesus is the supposed son of Joseph. So Jesus is not the son of Joseph nor is He the grandson of Joseph’s father.

When we come to the name Heli, there is no phrase as was supposed. We have a binary choice here: Jesus is of Heli or Joseph is of Heli. One of those things must be true; and the other false. Since there is no Heli in the line of Joseph (given in Matt. 1)\(^3\), then Jesus must be the son or descendant of Heli. Therefore, Heli would be Mary’s father (possibly grandfather, but I would suggest father).

Let’s take this in points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons why Luke 3 the line of Jesus through Mary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. There are two lines which lead to Jesus—the line of His mother and the line of His (supposed) father. Since the line to his legal father is found in Matthew, then this line must be that of His natural mother. Matt. 1:1–17  Luke 3:23–38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Either Joseph is the son of Heil or Jesus is the son of Heli—an option from the Greek text itself. Since Joseph is the son of Jacob (Matt. 1:16), and because there is no Heli in the line of Joseph in Matt. 1, by process of elimination, Jesus (not Joseph) is the actual son (or, descendant) of Heli.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. If Jesus is the actual son (descendant) of Heli (there are no qualifiers in the Greek), then this would mean that Mary is the daughter of Heli and Jesus is her biological Son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Jesus is fully human and fully divine, so His humanity or human nature comes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\) Although there are a few names which are the same, there is no way that these lines could be assumed to be identical.
Reasons why Luke 3 the line of Jesus through Mary

through Mary. Rom. 5:12, 14 1Cor. 15:21 1Tim. 2:14–15

1) This is why Jesus is called, simultaneously, the Son of Man and the Son of God. 


6. As an aside, because Jesus is born without a human father, He does not inherit the sin nature; nor is Adam’s original sin imputed to Him. Every child, male or female, inherits his (or her) sin nature from his (or her) father. Heb. 4:15 9:28 

7. The gospel of Matthew very much focuses upon Jesus as the fulfillment of many prophecies; the book of Luke focuses upon the Man Jesus (He is often called the Son of Man in the book of Luke). So, we would expect the genealogical line which reveals the fulfillment of Old Testament promises to be found in Matthew; and the genealogical line which emphasizes His human nature to be found in Luke. 

1) Although both Joseph and Mary are spoken of in Matt. 1, it is clearly Joseph who is focused upon. Many things are seen from his point of view in this first chapter. Matt. 1:19–24 

2) Similarly, Luke 1–2 focus upon Mary and her experiences, even though Joseph is mentioned. 

3) For these reasons, we would expect to find the line of Joseph to be found in Matthew and the line of Mary in Luke. 

Now, this may seem as if I am beating a dead horse here, but the issues here are directly related to a fundamental understanding of the Person of Jesus Christ. 

Knowing all of these things, many translations should have done a better job indicating that the genealogical line found in Luke 3 is the line of Jesus through Mary, as I have done below: 

Luke 3:23 Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, [Jesus is] the [actual] son [or, descendant] of Heli,... [the ESV, capitalized; with some supplementary text] 

Heli means, elevation, ascending; climbing up. 

With that, we have complete one entire verse of the Lukian genealogy. 

We have been studying Luke 3:23, making many references to the line of Christ in the book of Matthew. The genealogical line in Matthew is unequivocally the line of Joseph (that is, we do not have the words as was supposed anywhere in the Matthew record). We will take a break from the Lukian genealogy and take an abbreviated look at Matthew’s record. 

We begin in Matt. 1:1–2:
Matthew gives the highlights of the Lord’s genealogy: Jesus, David, Abraham. These men are legally the Lord’s ancestors through Joseph. They are also genetically the Lord’s ancestors through Mary (as we will see, the line from Abraham to David is identical and intact for both Joseph and Mary. Matthew does not completely distinguish between two lines here, but we will. The line given in Matthew is Joseph’s line. There will not be another way of interpreting it.

Matthew is a book of fulfilled prophecy. He continually quotes the Old Testament and relates it to the events that he records in his biography of Jesus. He focuses upon both Abraham and David in v. 1 because a number of promises were made to each man, by God; and many of these prophecies are fulfilled in the Person of Jesus Christ.

With v. 2, Matthew begins to tell us exactly how Jesus is legally a descendant of Abraham and David. However, in the book of Luke, we will see that Jesus is the actual descendent of Abraham and David.

Everyone who is a descendant of Jacob is a true racial Jew (by genealogy). All of the sons of Jacob are specifically descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and as such, they are God’s chosen people. All people descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are God’s chosen people. Every person descended from the 12 sons of Jacob is considered a Jew by genetics. At this point, at the end of v. 2, we are in the line of Judah, Jacob’s 4th son.

Do not panic; we are not going to cover the entire genealogical line in Matthew and then do the same in Luke. There is a very important consideration for us to consider in Matthew’s genealogical record.

We proceed through a list of names, and then we come to...

Notice that Jacob ben Matthan fathers Joseph—it is hard to understand this in any way other than Jacob (son of Matthan) being Joseph’s actual father (or grandfather). But notice how Jesus is placed in this line: Joseph is identified as the son of Jacob and the husband to be of Mary. It is from Mary that Jesus is born (not from Joseph and Mary). Jesus is clearly born of Mary, but Joseph is simply listed as the future husband of Mary (they had not yet consummated their marriage). There is no direct genealogical connection stated between Joseph and Jesus.
The Two Genealogies and the Coniah Curse:

There is a very important difference in these two genealogies. From Abraham to David, the genealogies recorded by Matthew and Luke are the same; however Joseph’s genealogy (in Matthew) picks up with Solomon and follows the royal line to Joseph; but Mary’s genealogy (in Luke) picks up with Nathan (presumably Solomon’s younger brother) and follows his line to Jesus.

Luke 3:31b –32a  ...the son of Nathan, the son of David, the son of Jesse,...

Matt. 1:6  ...and Jesse fathered David the king. And David the king fathered Solomon out of her who had been the wife of Uriah,...  (Green’s literal translation)

This is where the two lines diverge. The book of Luke presents the line of Heli to Nathan (Heli being the Lord’s genetic grandfather) and the book of Matthew presents the line as going forward from Solomon to Joseph (called the future husband of Mary in Matt. 1:16 and called the supposed father of Jesus in Luke 3:23). Joseph is never tied genetically to Jesus; Joseph is the legal father of Jesus; and throughout his life, he was presumed to be the father of Jesus (even though he wasn’t).

There are two different lines leading to Jesus—the line of Abraham to Jesus, through Solomon, found in Matt. 1:1–16. This is the legal line of Jesus, going from Abraham to Joseph, who is Jesus’ adopted father, but not genetic father. The line in Luke 3 is the actual line of the humanity of Jesus, which goes through Nathan, the son of David, proceeding eventually to Jesus Himself. Both of these lines are identical between Abraham and David; but Joseph and Mary are descended from different sons of David. They are 25th cousins, give or take.

In the line of David, we come down to Josiah, one of Israel’s last good kings; whose son was Jehoiakim; whose son was the father of Jechoniah (1Chron. 3:16  Matt. 1:11). Jechoniah was cursed by God.

In the book of Matthew, Joseph’s genealogy goes through Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah or Coniah). This line reads:

Matt. 1:10–12  ...and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,...  (ESV)

Jechoniah was evil, as was his generation, so that God caused them all to be deported to Babylon as a national punishment (also known as the 5th stage of national disciple or the 5th cycle of discipline). For Israel to be forced out of the land, things had to get pretty bad. Very often, when a nation reaches such a stage when maximum discipline is applied by God, both the leaders and the people are in maximum reversionism (or maximum negative volition towards the plan of God). Whereas, I believe that Coniah was (or eventually
became) a believer in the Revealed God, we do not know about the people of Israel. No doubt many were; but it appears that believers in Israel did not grow spiritually during Coniah’s reign.

The Coniah curse is found in Jer. 22:24, which will present in a fuller context:

Jer. 22:24–27  "As I live, declares the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet ring on my right hand, yet I would tear you off and give you into the hand of those who seek your life, into the hand of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. I will hurl you and the mother who bore you into another country, where you were not born, and there you shall die. But to the land to which they will long to return, there they shall not return."  (ESV; capitalized)

God says, if Coniah were a signet ring on His hand, that He would tear that ring off. Does this sound like the line of the Messiah?

Jer. 22:28–30  Is this man Coniah a despised, broken pot, a vessel no one cares for? Why are he and his children hurled and cast into a land that they do not know? O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the LORD: "Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah."  (ESV, emphasis mine)

Because of the evil done by Coniah, if he were a signet ring on God’s hand, God would tear him off. There is no future for the line of Coniah. God calls for this man to be childless, and that no man will succeed him in his days. None of his children will follow him in sitting on David’s exalted throne. Nevertheless, Coniah’s line continues, as testified to in both the Old and New Testaments. Jeconiah is the father of Shealtiel and Shealtiel fathers Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel, as some of you might know, would be the leader to return to Jerusalem, to build up the walls of the city once again.

The phrasing found here is interesting. This does not read, Let this man be childless; it says instead, Write this man down as childless... The Hebrew word for write is kâthab (קַתַּב) [pronounced kaw-THAHB]. In the Qal imperative, it means, write, write down, record [chronicle, document], direct or decree in writing, proscribe; describe. Strong's #3789  BDB #507. Jeconiah is childless by decree or childless by record; but he is not in fact childless, as he does sire children. So, how do I explain the difference? A king may have bastard sons—sons who are genetically his through an affair (or even by a long-standing relationship), but children who are not heirs to his throne (as they are not sons of the wife of the king). As far as many are concerned, these are not his children; and they are not recorded anywhere as being the king’s children. They will never be royalty. This is the way in which Coniah is childless; he is decreed in writing to be childless. He is childless in the way that is most important to a king—particularly as a king on the throne of Judah. His line would no longer yield a royal son and his line would not lead to David’s
Greater Son. Jeconiah’s son (s) would never sit on the throne of Judah (which is the remaining southern kingdom).

If Jesus were descended from Coniah, then He could not sit upon the throne of David, as per this curse. Jeconiah had a son (or sons) but they would not sit upon the throne of Israel (actually, Judah).

Jehoiachin’s reign is described in both 2Kings 24:8–16 and more briefly in...

2Chron. 36:9–10 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. In the spring of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, with the precious vessels of the house of the LORD, and made his brother Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

Nebuchadnezzar did not besiege Judah for a few months, but waged a campaign that apparently went on for many years. After 3 years, the removal of the people of Israel was begun (Daniel 1:1–5); and after 8 years, nearly all were removed (2Kings 24:8–12). With that, the royal family and nearly all the people of Israel were removed from the land (only the poorest remained behind—2Kings 24:14).

Whatever Coniah did was so bad, that the people were removed from the land for 70 years (obviously, the people had turned cold towards God as well, as God is not going to remove an entire people simply because their leader is evil). Coniah was the appropriate leader for the people of Jacob. Coniah was the leader that the people of Israel deserved at that time.

Application: I write this in October of 2020, with a presidential election on the near horizon. Always remember that, a people get the leader they deserve. It does not matter how much politicking that you do, or how many articles you splash on your fb page, the leader which God has determined, the leader who is appropriate, that is the leader that we will get. This may help to explain why we have had so few great presidents in this nation.

Application: The United States is a client nation to God, just as Israel was. Because of this, there is great blessing, but also great scrutiny and, sometimes, great punishment. There are dozens of memes out there portraying 2020 as an horrendous year. However, if our nation is on the downhill slide, 2020 will seem like a picnic to subsequent years. We need to
turn around spiritually as a nation, if we expect to continue in the great blessing that we have enjoyed.

Don’t Ever Go To 2020 (a meme); from Know Your Meme; accessed October 23, 2020.

Back to our topic, which is the Coniah curse.

Surprisingly enough, after 37 years in prison, the next Babylonia leader Evil-merodach, set Coniah free and dined with him, giving Coniah an allowance to live off of. The graciousness of Evil-merodach was no doubt representative of the graciousness of God; which suggests that Coniah had a change of heart towards the God of his people. Yet the Coniah curse still stands.

Again, the curse is: Jer. 22:24, 30 "As I live, declares the LORD, though Coniah were the signet ring on my right hand, yet I would tear you off Thus says the LORD: "Write this man down as childless, a man who shall not succeed in his days, for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah."

Although Coniah was not literally childless, the complete independence of nation Israel along with its kingly throne had come to an end. Coniah’s genealogical line continued down to Joseph, but, because Joseph was not the real father of Jesus, Coniah’s line did not lead to the Eternal King. It was cut off, so to speak, with Joseph. There were no more royal sons in the line of Coniah; in that way, he is written off as childless.

But there is another line of David, through his son Nathan, which leads us to Mary (that is the line that we are studying here in Luke 3), and this becomes the true royal line, culminating in the Greater Son of David.

Lesson 105: Luke 3:23–29 The Line of Mary continues

We now return to the line of Mary, the line that Coniah is not a part of. There is no Coniah curse in Mary’s line.

Luke 3:23 Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, [Jesus is] the [actual] son [or, descendant] of Heli,... [the ESV, capitalized; with some supplemental text]

Luke 3:24a ...the son of Matthat,...

There are two Matthat’s in this line (vv. 24 & 29) and two men with the name Mattathias as well (vv. 25 & 26). It is possible that Matthat is a shortened version of Mattaththias. There are also two Levi’s in this line (vv. 24 & 29). And there are two Joseph’s (vv. 24 & 30). These are all very common names taken from famous Jewish figures.

4 Not to imply that Joseph and Mary lacked other children; but the royal line would end with Jesus.
Matthat is both the son of Levi, in the genealogy of Christ and the grandfather of the Mary (assuming no gaps in the genealogy), and the great grandfather of Jesus.

His name means gift of God, very apropos to the Messiah genealogy.

Luke 3:24b ...the son of Levi,...

His name means joined.

This Levi is the son of Melchi.

Levi is the great, great grandfather of our Lord.

Levi’s name is taken from the third son of the patriarch Jacob by his wife Leah, the founder of the people of Israel who bear his name. Jacob was born Jacob; he was given the name Israel by God.

Luke 3:24c ...the son of Melchi,...

Melchi means my king; apropos to the Messiah.

Melchi is the son of Janna right here in the genealogy of Jesus; and there will be another Melchi, the son of Addi in the genealogy of Jesus.

Luke 3:24 ...the son of Jannai,...

Jannai means flourishing.

Luke 3:24 ...the son of Joseph,...

Joseph means let him add.

Luke 3:24 ...the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,...

Famous well-known names abound in this line: Levi, Joseph, Amos, Nahum, Zerubbabel, Joshua, Simeon, and Judah. These ancient names were revered by the Hebrew people because of the men who originally had them.

Illustration: Similarly, freed Black slaves often took upon themselves the names of presidents (Washington, Jefferson, Jackson); because these names to them represented freedom from slavery to them. Many understood that their freedom and humanity was guaranteed in the Declaration of Independence and in the Bill of Rights, despite being born slaves in America. Therefore former slaves took on these names to themselves, proud of this heritage.
Including the name of Heli going back to Jannai, what this line of names means is: *ascending, a gift of God, joined [to] my king, a flourishing [gift from Y*howah]*. I included the next name in this translation of names.

Luke 3:25a  ...the son of Mattathias,...

His name means *gift of Y*howah*.

Luke 3:25b  ...the son of Amos,...

His name means *burden*.

Luke 3:25c  ...the son of Nahum,...

His name means *consolation*.

Luke 3:25d  ...the son of Esli,...

His name means *reserved of Y*howah*.

Luke 3:25e  ...the son of Naggai,...

His name means *illuminating*.

Luke 3:25  ...the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,...

It is likely that vv. 23–25 or 26 cover the inter-testament period. The verses which follow, down to v. 31 would be the period of the kings from David to Coniah. There are no royal sons descended from Nathan following his line as far as Mary. David is the last man of royalty in this particular line. David had many, many sons; but only one of them (Solomon, who is not in Mary’s line) would be the next king. However, David’s Greater Son, will occupy the throne. He (Jesus) is in David’s line, but through Nathan (and not Solomon). This is the line which would lead to Mary.

The men named between David and Mary are only mentioned here in Scripture; and therefore, are unknown to us, apart from the meanings of their names.

So far, if we replace the names of these men with the meanings of the names, that would give us: *let him add [the] ascending gift of God joined [to] my king, flourishing; a gift of Y*howah [both] a burden [and] a consolation, reserved of Y*howah illuminating*. (I have included Joseph, husband of Mary in this list of name meanings. All the way from Joseph going backward to Haggai give us this marvelous sentence, which clearly points to the Messiah.
At this point, we are at the end of the Old Testament canon era. The Old Testament was completed around 400 B.C. The names found here would go back to around 400 B.C., which is the approximate close of the OT canon of Scripture.

Luke 3:26a  ...the son of Maath,...

His name means *small*.

Luke 3:26b  ...the son of Mattathias,...

Another man in this line with this name, meaning *gift of Yhwh*.

Luke 3:26c  ...the son of Semein,...

His name means, *my report*.

Luke 3:26d  ...the son of Josech,...

This name appears to be another form of *Joseph* and means, *let him add*.

It is not clear that we should understand this as another form of *Joseph*, although many translations do. Strong does not assign a separate # to this name, although it is not spelled exactly the same as Joseph. Strong's #2501.

*Joseph* was a very common name among the Jews, which is what we should expect, given the extraordinary character of the Joseph ben Jacob from the final chapters of Genesis.

Luke 3:26e  ...the son of Joda,...

This was a different take to a very common name among the Jews. The spelling here is iωδα; so it is not clear to me whether this is another form of *Judah* or if this is a different name. The transliteration would be *Joda*. Strong does not offer a different Strong’s # for this name (#2455).

If this is simply another form of *Judah*, then it means, *he shall be praised*.

This should not be shocked to find a different spelling for the same name. In the English, we have Aaron and Erin, Allen and Alan, Jacob and Jakob, etc. It was apparently James Strong’s strong opinion that this is how we should understand those two names.

Luke 3:26  ...the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda,...

These are probably men from the end of the Old Testament era (around 400 B.C., the time when the Old Testament Scriptures were being completed).
Stringing the names of v. 26 together, we have: small, the gift of Yehowah [is] my report; let him add [the Lord and] he shall be praised.

Luke 3:27a  ...the son of Joanan,...

His name means, grace or gift of God.

Luke 3:27b  ...the son of Rhesa,...

His name means, head.

Luke 3:27c  ...the son of Zerubbabel,...

His name means, born at Babel (Babylon), seed of Babel. This would be a common name given to the first generation of children born in Babylon. There was a leader who brought back many Jews into the land whose name was Zerubbabel. However, these men are very likely different men. This name is so specific and fraught with meaning that many sons born in Babylon were likely given this name.

The Zerubbabel in the line of Joseph is also a son of Shealtiel. However, the rest of the line does not match up. Trying to make these people into the same person would be just about impossible. Furthermore, it would violate the Coniah curse.

Luke 3:27d  ...the son of Shealtiel,...

His name means, I have asked of God.

If these are the same men as named in the line of Joseph, we are left with the problem of Shealtiel’s father, who here is Neri; but in the Matthew text the father is Coniah. This gives us two distinct solutions: (1) Neri is a step-father, or the mother of Shealtiel (I am having a difficult time coming up with a first option that makes sense); or (2) Zerubbabel and Shealtiel are not the men named in the Matthew text (which is the cleanest and easiest solution). It is just a happy coincidence that we have a father and a son with the same names in both lines.

It would certainly be difficult go backwards and make sense out of these men being the same as those named in Matthew. It is not difficult to go the other way, as a man can have but one father, but he can have many sons. One son of Zerubbabel can be named in Matthew and a different son named in Luke.

The biggest problem with these men being the same is, the Coniah curse would not mean anything, as Coniah is the grandfather of Zerubbabel in Matt. 1:12. How could you change your grandfather for the line given in Luke? That is, if Zerubbabel is the same man in both lines, then he is under the Coniah curse in both lines (which would make no sense).
On the other hand, if a proud Jewish people are whisked off to another land, and they begin to have children born to them in a foreign land, then Zerubbabel would seem to be a very common name (again, it means, *a seed of Babel; born in Babylon*).

Luke 3:27e  ...the son of Neri,...

His name means, *Jehovah is my lamp*.

Luke 3:27  ...the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,...

In this portion of the line, we have a parallel to the line found in Matthew (Zerubbabel and his father Shealtiel). However, for reasons already cited, it is unlikely that these are the same men as found in Matt. 1:12. It is just an odd parallel; or an odd coincidence.

This verse is more difficult to pull together a coherent meaning: *the grace (or gift) of God, a head, born in Babel (Babylon); I have asked of God; Jehovah is my lamp*. Maybe Zerubbabel is the ideal dividing point here.

Beginning with someone in v. 27, we are in the land of Canaan and it is around 400 B.C. The men in this list which follows are all in the land of promise. However, we know nothing about them, going back as far as Nathan.

Luke 3:28a  ...the son of Melchi,...

His name means, *my king*. I believe this is the second man in this line with this name.

Luke 3:28b  ...the son of Addi,...

His name means, *ornament* (an odd name for a dude).

Luke 3:28c  ...the son of Cosam,...

His name means, *divining*.

Luke 3:28d  ...the son of Elmadam,...

His name means, *measure*.

Luke 3:28e  ...the son of Er,...

His name means, *watchful*.

Luke 3:28  ...the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,...
The Hebrew people maintained excellent genealogical records, even of men who were virtually unknown, historically speaking.

Going back to the name after Zerubbabel, we have: *I have asked of God; Jehovah is my lamp [also] my king [and] ornament; a divining measure [and] watchful.* That makes a little more sense.

Luke 3:29a  *...the son of Joshua,*...

His name means, *Jehovah is salvation.* This could be transliterated *Jesus* (*Joshua* is the Old Testament version of *Jesus*).

Luke 3:29b  *...the son of Eliezer,*...

His name means *God is his help.*

Luke 3:29c  *...the son of Jorim,*...

His name means *whom Jehovah has exalted.*

Luke 3:29d  *...the son of Matthat,*...

His name means *gift of God.*

Luke 3:29e  *...the son of Levi,*...

His name means *joined.*

I believe that this is a second time that this name occurs in this list.

Luke 3:29  *...the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,*...

This is another list of names of people. Stringing them together, we get: *Jehovah is salvation; God is his help, whom Jehovah has exalted [as] a gift of God joined [to us].*


So far, we have covered the generations living around 500 B.C. up to the time of Jesus. The line which we are studying is Mary’s genealogy, going backward from her father.

The people who we will study in vv. 30–33 span many significant epochs in the time of Israel. This might be best seen in a chart, which I will put together at the completion of v. 34.
Luke 3:30a  ...the son of Simeon,...

His name means *harkening*.

Luke 3:30b  ...the son of Judah,...

This is transliterated from the Hebrew (Strong's #3063); and 10 men have this name in Scripture; as well as one plot of ground. This is a very popular name (1) because this is the name of one of the original tribes of Israel and (2) the tribe of Judah became the most identifiable tribe after the destruction of the northern kingdom. (3) Judah became the royal tribe (that is, all of the kings, after Saul died, were from the tribe of Judah (beginning with David). (4) The region where Judah lived was called Judah. (5) The line of Judah would be expected to have many men in it named Judah (in both Matthew and Luke, these are lines of Judah ben Jacob that we are studying).

Here, in the Greek, we have *Judas*, rather than *Judah*. The Greek language has no provision for ending a word with an *h*; there is no letter *h* in the Greek; however, there is the sound of an *h*, not as a separate letter, but as a *rough breathing* at the beginning of a word. In the Greek, the word *art* with a soft breathing is pronounced *art*; and the same word with a rough breathing is pronounced *hart*. This breathing is indicated in the Greek with a small apostrophe type symbol at the beginning of the word (affixed to the first letter): ’’.

Judah means *he shall be praised*.

Luke 3:30c  ...the son of Joseph,...

Joseph is also a very popular name, given the great reputation and background of the son of Jacob named Joseph. This man is, of course, not the same person as we have in the book of Genesis.

His name means, *let him add*.

Luke 3:30d  ...the son of Jonam,...

His name means, *Jehovah is a gracious giver*.

The name found here is actually *Jonan*.

Luke 3:30e  ...the son of Eliakim,...

At least two men have this name: 1) the eldest son of Abiud or Judah, bother of Joseph, and father of Azor Matt. (1:12–13); 2) son of Melea, and father of Jonan (Luke 3:30).

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5 If there are two vowels, this is affixed to the second vowel.
Eliakim means raising up by God.

Luke 3:30  ...the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,...

These names strung together mean, Listen, he shall be praised; let him add Jehovah, a gracious giver, raised up by God. This certainly does appear to have a coherent meaning to us.

Luke 3:31a  ...the son of Melea,...

Melea (or, Meleas) means my dear friend; an object of care.

Luke 3:31b  ...the son of Menna,...

The name as found above means soothsayer: enchanted.

In the Westcott-Hort text, this reads Menna. In the Scrivener Textus Receptus this name is Mainan (Μαίναν) [pronounced mahoe-NAN]. Interestingly enough, they are both given the same Strong's #. Strong's #3104.

Luke 3:31c  ...the son of Mattatha,...

Mattithjah means givingness.

Luke 3:31d  ...the son of Nathan,...

Nathan means gift, giver. King David had 5 sons total by Bathsheba, one of them being Solomon (he was the second child; the first child died). The prophet Nathan braced David over his affair with Bathsheba and the killing of her husband. David recognized the wrongness of his actions and confessed this sin to God.

Nathan by his unflinching assessment of David’s sin endeared himself to David. David recognized that he was not the highest authority in the land, but that God was; and Nathan was God's prophet.

As a result of this respect, David named one of his sons by Bathsheba Nathan. This shows wonderful grace orientation on the part of David. Many kings, when reproached by a prophet, try to destroy the prophet. David recognized how wrong he was in his actions and he respected the role of the prophet.

Nathan here is quite significant. Both Joseph and Mary are descended from King David (the next name on the list). Mary is Jesus’ actual mother, by birth, by blood; but Joseph is not the Lord’s genetic father. This has great theological significance in what is known as the Coniah curse. We have already studied the Coniah curse, but we will review it and consider one thing in this study that we did not consider before.
The Coniah curse is a reference to Jechoniah, also known as Coniah, is stated in the book of Jeremiah. Jer. 22:24–30 "As I live," says the LORD, "though you, Coniah son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, were a signet ring on My right hand, I would tear you from it. In fact, I will hand you over to those you dread, who want to take your life, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Chaldeans. I will hurl you and the mother who gave birth to you into another land, where neither of you were born, and there you will both die. They will never return to the land they long to return to." Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered pot, a jar no one wants? Why are he and his descendants hurled out and cast into a land they have not known? Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD! This is what the LORD says: Record this man as childless, a man who will not be successful in his lifetime. None of his descendants will succeed in sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah. (HCSB; emphasis mine) Jeconiah was a king in the line of David and Solomon. That line leads to Joseph, who is the legal but not biological father of Jesus (Matt. 1:11–17). Mary is the actual mother of Jesus (Luke 1:26–33); and her line comes through Nathan rather than through Solomon (Luke 3:23–31). So there is no cursed Coniah in Mary’s line.

There is more to the Coniah curse, than the idea that Messiah cannot come from the line of Coniah (Jeconiah). Think of this curse as being the sin nature, which is the genetic curse passed down through the man. Every child with a father has a sin nature, that sin nature is passed down by his father, who got it from his father. That is our Coniah curse. Every person born from a human father carries this curse—the sin nature—within him.

This goes back to the original sin. When Eve sinned, she had been deceived; but when Adam sinned against God, he did so knowingly. Adam knew that he was disobeying God and that this would change his relationship with God powerfully (Adam chose his woman over God). So, there were different punishments meted out for each gender, which punishments have followed mankind down through the centuries. Eve would be the child bearer; but with that responsibility came the promise. God, in speaking to the serpent, who had deceived Eve, said, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her Offspring; He [= the woman’s Offspring] shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." (Gen. 3:15, ESV; capitalized) Throughout the Bible, the offspring (literally, seed) is always spoken of as coming from the man; but here, in this one instance, God speaks of the woman’s seed. Her Seed is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus will deliver the death blow to the serpent (He will bruise your head); but the serpent would bruise the heel of her Seed (that would be the cross).

So, somehow, the woman will produce the Seed Who will defeat and destroy Satan, despite being bruised by Satan. This is a forward reference to the virgin birth of our Lord, Who is the Seed of the Woman. The sin nature is removed from the equation because that is passed along to all the children by the father (because Adam sinned knowingly against God; he is, in that way, responsible). The woman has a sin nature (as we all know and can testify to\(^6\)), but she does not transmit her sin nature genetically. The sin nature is passed along from only the father to his offspring (male or female).

\(^6\) Ask any man who knows a woman. Really.
There is a weird doctrine in Catholicism about Mary being sinless. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is a real person with a sin nature which she got from her father Heli. She was very clearly a mature believer, based upon what she says in Luke 1; but she is still like all of us: a fallen creature. Nevertheless, because there is no human father involved in the conception of Jesus, there is no sin nature which is passed along to Him. The woman does not pass along her sin nature to her sons or to her daughters. The sin nature only is passed down by a human father.

The problem with the idea that Mary is sinless is three-fold: (1) Mary had a father (Heli). Because she has a father, she has a sin nature. (2) Adam’s original sin in imputed to her. Adam’s original sin is imputed to every person, its natural target being the sin nature (which every person, save One, has). (3) Finally, Mary committed personal sins (as all people do). We may not know what those sins were, but that is sometimes the case with some believers named in Scripture (like John the Herald, for instance).

The idea that Mary was sinless, came from someone recognizing that Jesus is sinless, but that He has a human mother. Well, how can Jesus be sinless if He has a mother? Therefore, she must be sinless. Obviously, the big flaw in that argument, besides #1 & #2 above is, how was Mary sinless? If Jesus needed a sinless mother in order to be sinless (based upon that faulty theology), then how did Mary get born without sin? Wouldn’t she have required a sinless mother (and an immaculate conception) as well, who would then require a sinless mother before her? Accepting the premise, still leads us to an untenable position.

Furthermore, all Mary adoration ignores the concept of a sin nature. We all have a sin nature which is a part of our being from birth. We do not become sinners the first time we sin; we are sinners from birth. Denying that concept denies a huge amount of Scripture.

And while I am on this topic, I should also lay to rest the notion that Mary is the mother of God. She is not! That is absurd. She is the mother of the humanity of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the Father (so to speak) of the Lord’s Deity. The same argument applies. If Mary is somehow in someway sort of deified; and that made her the mother of God, then how did she become deified? Was she somehow born from perfect parents as well? These false doctrines do not stand up to scrutiny. They are both illogical and unbiblical. Furthermore, we are right in the midst of studying the line of Mary, and the people we know in this line are not sinless.

There is nothing in the New Testament which ever suggests that Mary is somehow a 4th member of the Trinity; or pretty close to that, or way up there; or that we all should pray to her. Nothing like that is suggested anywhere in the New Testament. The doctrines of the Church Age are found primarily in the epistles. How many times is there any doctrinal information related to Mary in the epistles? Never! Paul, Peter and John do not write about Mary being divine, or sinless, or a intermediary? They do not tell us any such thing, because those concepts are false! Mary plays absolutely no part in the believer’s life today. Nowhere in Scripture are we told to have some sort of relationship with Mary. And she is nowhere called the mother of God.
The concept that Mary is divine or, at the very least, way better than us, who somehow plays an active part in our lives today? This is faulty doctrine which is based upon faulty doctrine (that she has some sort of divinity within her, in order to given birth to Jesus and impart to Him His Deity).

Let me try to approach this from an analogy. Let’s say that I marry an Asian woman, and we have a child, and that child has jet black hair and “Asian eyes.” Would it make sense for me to say, “She gets that from me. See those almond eyes? That is from my side of the family!” That would be nonsensical. People would think I was an idiot to suggest such a thing. It is equally idiotic to somehow think that Jesus’ Deity came from Mary.

I have gone pretty far afield here. We were last speaking about Nathan (which led us to Coniah and what he represents as a type; which led us then to the weird and false doctrines of Mary worship). I have recently spoken to someone about this absurd doctrine, so it happens to be on my mind.

Let’s go to Nathan’s father, who is David.

Luke 3:31e  ...the son of David,...

His name means, beloved.

Now, no matter what your Bible says, the words the son are not found here. Literally, this reads, ...Nathan of David...

This is a reference to King David. David is not called a king in this line, because he is just a man, like any other man. The only true king in this line is Jesus who is David’s Greater Son (Mark 12:35–37  Psalm 110:1). Because this line emphasizes the humanity of Jesus (it is Mary’s line that leads to Jesus), we reference David without a title. On the other hand, the full kingly line is found in Matthew. Matt. 1:6 ...and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah,...

Luke 3:31  ...the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,...

The names of this line strung together mean, my dear friend, an enchanted giving of a gift, the Beloved.

I have checked and recheck the numbers of this grouping—and it appears that we have 14 generations which begin with Abraham and end with David, two very significant figures in the Hebrew people.

There were 4 sons born to King David, by Bathsheba, who grew to adulthood.7 In the Old Testament, we only know Solomon’s name. From Luke 3:31, we know that Solomon’s

7 In all, there were 5 that we know of; but the first son died as an infant.
younger brother was named Nathan, no doubt named after Nathan the prophet, who braced David for his sinful behavior with Bathsheba (David took the wife of one of his soldiers, while that soldier was out on the field, a sin that David paid dearly for). Interestingly enough, when all the dust settled—and David received a lot of discipline for what he did—he was still with Bathsheba, and they had 4 sons, and two of those sons have a genealogy which leads to Jesus.

Interestingly enough, we know nothing about Nathan, apart from being born a son of David by Bathsheba. We know nothing about Nathan’s descendants, with the exception of Mary (and we know about some of her sons by Joseph).

Luke 3:32a  ...the son of Jesse,...

His name means, *extent*.

Jesse is the father of David the king.

Jesse, as the father of David, is found in the Old Testament. He had 7 sons, and the prophet Samuel came to him and told him that one of his sons would become king. Jesse then began to bring out the first 6 sons, one after another; very proud of these boys. However, Samuel rejected every one of his sons. It never occurred to Jesse that his youngest son, David, who was out with the sheep at that time, would become king. He did not recognize that there was any potential for greatness in David.

Jesse’s attitude was not just a matter of overlooking David; he really saw no potential in David. So, when David went to bring sandwiches to his older brothers, and this loudmouth Philistine Goliath was bellowing at Saul’s troops, David’s older brothers were also dismissive of him. When David expressed an interest in what Goliath was saying—taking it to be a great national insult—his older brothers also disregarded what David had to say him (which is something that they probably learned from their father, Jesse).

Luke 3:32b  ...the son of Obed,...

We know little about Obed’s life.

He is the grandfather of king David.

His name means, *serving*.

Luke 3:32c  ...the son of Boaz,...

His name means, *in him is strength*.

The book of Ruth is all about the romance between Boaz and Ruth. Ruth is a gentile woman who decided to align herself with the Hebrew people. She had married a Hebrew man, who died, and Ruth was left with her mother-in-law. Rather than cast her mother-in-
law aside, the younger woman, Ruth remained with her. They both went to Israel; despite being very poor and having no resources in Israel. For a time, they survived in this way: Ruth would harvest the produce remaining in the corners of Boaz’s field. The Torah required farmers to not harvest everything in their land, but to leave a portion unharvested for the poor of the land (the poor would be allowed to come to the fields and harvest this produce for themselves). This is how Ruth and Naomi survived. However, after seeing Ruth, Boaz took her as his wife in the book of Ruth.

Boaz was a kinsman of Ruth (meaning, they were related through Ruth’s deceased husband). Boaz became her second husband. As a result of all this, Boaz is the great grandfather of King David. And Ruth, a gentile, is in the line of Jesus as well.

Luke 3:32d ...the son of Sala,...

His name means, *sprout*.

There was a Salah (Shelah, Shelach) who occurs much earlier in this line. He is the son of Arphaxad, and father of Eber. This is obviously not the same person.

Luke 3:32e ...the son of Nahshon,...

His name means, *diviner*.

He was an Old Testament guy who was a chief of Judah whose sister was the wife of Aaron. So he takes us back to the Exodus generation.

Luke 3:32 ...the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon,...

These name meanings string together to make: *extent serving in him is strength, a sprout, a diviner*.

Luke 3:33a ...the son of Amminadab,...

His name means, *one of the prince’s people*.

In Westcott-Hort, the first name in this verse is αδμιν (see below). There is no αμιναδαβ. It is possible for these to be the same name. In another manuscript, it is Ἀδείβ. They are both listed as Strong’s #284 in the interlinear texts to which I refer.

Luke 3:33b ...the son of Admin,...

The primary text I use for this translation is the English Standard Version (ESV). It lists both Aminadab and Admin. Interestingly enough, I only found both names together in the Greek NT with variants. I have 4 Greek texts in my E-sword; two have Aminadab only; one has Admin only; and the Greek text with variants has them both.
There is just too much evidence that this name does not belong here. Therefore, I did not even put him in my own set of translations (HTML) (PDF) (WPD), not even in brackets.

In the Old Testament, the text of Ruth 4:19b–22 reads: Perez fathered Hezron, Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.


I had to re-order the text from Luke, since its genealogy goes in the opposite direction of the Hebrew text. You can see how all of these names pair up, with the exception of Admin. Therefore, we cannot match this up the Hebrew text with the variant text. The line from Abraham to King David is very well-established by the Old Testament.

Remember when I gave reasons why the Hebrew does not transliterate directly into the Greek? These names are examples of that.

Luke 3:33c ...the son of Arni [probably, Aram],...

Arnam name means, high.

The Westcott Hort text has Ἀρνί (Arni). The Scrivener Textus Receptus has Aram (᾽Αράμ) [pronounced ar-AM]. This is transliterated Aram, Ram.

Luke 3:33d ...the son of Hezron,...

His name means, enclosed.

Luke 3:33e ...the son of Perez,...

The birth of Perez:

Perez has a very unusual background. Judah had 3 sons, and the eldest of them married a woman, Tamar. But, because of the young man’s negative volition toward God, he died the sin unto death. Judah’s second son then married Tamar, as was the custom. Part of that custom would be that he raise up a son to his deceased brother; as if his deceased brother had a son by Tamar. However, he refused to do that (I believe he refused because this would have resulted in a cut to his personal inheritance8). So he died the sin unto...
death for that. It was customary that, if you married the wife of your deceased brother, that
you would raise up the first child as the heir of his deceased brother. Therefore, this first
son was to be considered his brother’s son. However, the second brother did not do this
(even though his wife was willing).

Judah did not appreciate what actually happened. What I mean is, he did not understand
why his eldest two sons had died. He believed that it was, somehow, the fault of this
woman, Tamar. So Judah promised Tamar marriage to his 3rd son, but never followed
through, thinking her to be a black widow of sorts (that is my hypothesis). So, their
marriage never happened. This put Tamar in a state of limbo. She was un-marriageable,
because she had already been married. It was very difficult for a woman to remarry in that
era. Furthermore, she was expecting to marry Shelah (Judah’s 3rd son), so it was as if they
were married, but they were not. Tamar was betrothed to Shelah, so she was completely
off the market, so to speak. So, she—a young, fertile woman—had no options, at this
point. She had to simply wait on Judah to give the go-ahead for the consummation of her
marriage to Shelah. Judah never did.

At some point, she realized that this was never going to happen.

Meanwhile, Judah had his own life. From time to time, Judah would check on his livestock
investments and sell his wool. One time when Judah went out of town to tend to these
matters, Tamar pretended to be a prostitute in a town that Judah stopped off at. Judah
had sex with Tamar, the wife of two of his sons—both deceased—but he did not recognize
her and he took her to be a prostitute). It was very likely that Judah was known for
occasionally consorting with prostitutes, otherwise, what Tamar did here would have made
very little sense.

As a result of this union between Judah and Tamar, she becomes pregnant. Judah did not
know who she was when he had relations with her. However, he certainly finds out that
Tamar is pregnant (not realizing that he is the father). He calls for her to be executed. As
she was promised to his third son and this liaison that she had would have been
considered adultery. If Tamar is executed, then that eliminates a whole host of problems
for Judah, who still does not realize that she is the prostitute with whom he had relations.

Judah then calls for the execution of Tamar; so Tamar reveals that Judah is the father and
that she has irrefutable proof.

Judah, having had relations with someone who he believed was a prostitute, had to back
off of his claim that Tamar was unfit to live. If she should die for committing adultery, then
he should die as well. He is just as guilty under the Law. That certainly did not appeal to
Judah. His out was this: because they had relations, Judah took her in as his own wife.
Then neither of them could be executed, and he could take her as a wife, as he is a near
relative of her deceased husband(s). However, Judah never had relations with her again.
She bore him two sons, twins. The second of the twins, he named Perez.
Perez is in the royal line of Jesus.

His name means, a breach.

Luke 3:33f  ...the son of Judah,...

Judah’s name means, he shall be praised.


We are following Mary’s genetic line. The men in v. 33 would have been living in Egypt.

Luke 3:33  ...the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,...  [I continue to use the ESV (capitalized) as my primary Biblical text; but not many translations have both Aminadab and Admin.]

We have studied Judah in the book of Genesis. Possibly the high point of his early life is, he talked his brothers out of killing Joseph (their second youngest brother) and convinced them to sell Joseph into slavery instead. We have just talked about his sordid story with Tamar, making their marriage to be one of the weirdest marriages in the Word of God.

We are following a particular line (Mary’s) through a particular set of men (Abraham -> Isaac -> Jacob -> Judah -> Perez). Jacob, of course, had 12 sons, which made up the 12 tribes of Israel (actually, there were 13 tribes, as Joseph received the double portion, and his two sons became two tribes instead of just one).

Given the fact that we have Jacob and his 12 sons; and that we have a fascinating narrative in Genesis about many of them, it may be apropos to suggest the following theory:

How we got the book of Genesis (a theory):

Judah is one of the 12 patriarchs, a son of Jacob. Although he is the 4th son born to Jacob, he became the royal line (normally, the primary and royal line and double portion would all belong to the firstborn son, who was Reuben). But Reuben, Simeon and Levi all disqualified themselves from being preeminent in one way or another.

Judah himself was a very flawed man; the incident of his consorting with prostitutes9 is but one example of this.

9 Although we have only one instance where Joseph believed himself to be with a prostitute, Tamar, the woman who fooled him, apparently chose that approach according to Judah’s predilections.
The final portion of Genesis is devoted primarily to Joseph (Judah’s much younger half-brother). There are many narratives at the end of Genesis where Joseph would be the only son of Jacob who knew all the details of those particular events. Private experiences and thoughts are recorded. Therefore, Joseph would be the logical person to recount said events (which is most of the final chapters of Genesis).

However, there is one chapter in Genesis known only by Judah; and there are bits and pieces of Genesis 40–50 that the 11 sons would have had firsthand knowledge of, but Joseph would not. Yet, the narrative is very well integrated, so that those with first hand knowledge change, but the narrative seamlessly progresses. In fact, this narrative in Genesis marks an important place in literature, establishing the 3rd person omniscient point of view (which makes up the bulk of our literature, movies and television).

I believe that the following things took place. Jacob’s family would gather and give thanks to God and offer up sacrifices; and this was particularly important after they had moved to Egypt (a move that God allowed for). It is also important to note that, when Jacob died, his funeral was well-attended by his sons as well as by many Egyptians (this is a related piece of the puzzle).

Based upon this little evidence, this is how I see things as happening while Jacob’s family was living in Egypt. Periodically, they would have celebrations to Y’howah (Jehovah). There would be animal sacrifices and a reading of the Scriptures, which would have been the book of Genesis and possibly the book of Job (which books were not written down at the time but memorized). As the patriarch of the family, Jacob would have recited the Scriptures down to his own life in history, and he would then tell about his life as well. This means that Jacob, like his father and grandfather before him, memorized most of the book of Genesis (that was their Scripture at this time). They would have known Genesis word-for-word; although the book of Genesis had never been written down.

At some point, Jacob would stop speaking this book (from memory) and his eldest son, Reuben, would stand up and he would continue. Levi and Simeon may have stood up and told their brief story (which was quite ghastly); and Judah would tell about his background as well. All of these narratives are found in the book of Genesis; and it would have been logical for the person who experienced these events firsthand to be the person who stood up to say what happened. So, what we know as the first 38 chapters of Genesis would have been recited from memory by Jacob, Reuben, Simeon and/or Levi, and finally Judah.

Then, suddenly, we jump ahead in the brothers’ order, going from Judah (son #4) to Joseph (son #11). Nearly all of Genesis, from chapter 39 to the end, is about Joseph. However, there are portions in the Joseph narrative that he was not a party to—that is, there are a few scenes in the final chapters of Genesis, which take place without Joseph being there. Therefore, Joseph had no direct knowledge of certain incidents which took

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10 We do not know when the book of Job became a part of the Old Testament.
place, which events are, nevertheless, seamlessly integrated into his own narrative. So, Joseph would tell about his life as a slave in Egypt and his rise to great authority; but when he came to one of those situations where he was not actually there, one of the older brothers (probably Reuben) would stand up and briefly tell what happened. These incidents are the interactions between the 11 sons and Jacob in Canaan, while Joseph is back in Egypt.\textsuperscript{11}

What I am postulating here is, Jacob speaks, from memory, Genesis 1 down to his own life and he tells about his own life as well. All of that would have been memorized, word-for-word, by Jacob. It would have been the job of the patriarch of the family to know all of Genesis down to his own life. But, at some point in the Genesis narrative, things took place to which only Reuben, Simeon and Levi knew about (Jacob was not a party to these events). Therefore, those sons would stand up and speak. What I am suggesting that, while in Egypt, as a part of their \textit{Y}\textsuperscript{h}owah celebration, Jacob and many of his sons (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah and Joseph) would speak (from memory) nearly all of the book of Genesis. This is speculation on my part, but it fits in very well with Jewish history and tradition.

What this speculation does is, it gives us a good explanation as to why the final 12 or so chapters of Genesis are so well-edited. A casual reader would not notice this about the end of Genesis. In fact, almost no commentator remarks on this, probably not even realizing it (in fact, because of the editing, most theologians think that Moses wrote the book of Genesis). Many intense students of the book of Genesis have never noticed and commented on the perfect editing of the final 10 chapters. The editing of these different narratives is actually quite remarkable and perfectly chronological. No one person could have stood up and talked about the final chapters of Genesis, because no one person was a part of every event that took place. In the early years in Egypt, much of the family would stand and present these events to their audience (which probably included many Egyptians).

This is my approach and theory of how the book of Genesis came about, and, insofar as I know, this is a unique perspective, as well as being the most accurate.\textsuperscript{12} I am unaware of anyone laying out this particular theory, and offering up evidence as well.

For various members of Jacob’s family to stand up at various times and pick up the narrative and to move it forward would result in the very well-edited version of Genesis which we enjoy today. The final 10–12 chapters would be spoken mostly by Joseph; however, there are sections integral to the narrative when he was not there. Therefore, Judah mostly likely stood up and filled in those gaps. Let me explain that in more detail:

\textsuperscript{11} Insofar as we know, Joseph never returns to Canaan after being taken to Egypt as a slave.

\textsuperscript{12} In my opinion, of course.
Joseph, as the prime minister of Egypt, knew all about his own responsibilities; he recognized his brothers when they came to him (but he disguised his voice and he looked Egyptian). So, all of this narrative is logically known to Joseph first hand—including his feelings and his asides (which are a part of the Genesis narrative, suggesting that it came from Joseph directly). But, at some point, the sons of Jacob—sans Joseph—would leave Egypt and return to Canaan with the grain that they bought. Joseph is not there, so he has no firsthand knowledge of what happens along these trips to and from Egypt; nor does Joseph know what his brothers said to one another. When Joseph’s brothers all arrive home and find that the silver they took to buy grain with was somehow placed back in their bags, that was very problematic for them and it is discussed at length in the book of Genesis. That information is integral to those chapters of Genesis and could not be left out. Joseph, of course, was not there for that.

Every one of the brothers (except for Joseph) knew about the things which took place after leaving Egypt; so one of them—probably Reuben or Judah—would stand up and take up the story from Egypt to Canaan. This is very artfully done in the book of Genesis, so we seem to be, as readers, hovering over the action taking place, able to hear the thoughts of Joseph at one point, but then also hearing the private conversations between Jacob and his sons which take place in Canaan. Although this appears to be 3rd person omniscience which is taking place, it really is not. What is really taking place is, Joseph is telling the story from his point of view; and then Reuben (or Judah) picks up the story from there. When the sons all leave Egypt to return to Canaan, then someone from that caravan would speak. That would have been Reuben’s point of view (actually, any of the 11 sons could have told this portion of the narrative).

I am very jazzed about this interpretation of how the book of Genesis organically came to be, with its strict chronological approach throughout the final 12 or so chapters.

Given the great mourning which took place when Jacob died—a mourning which extended to the Egyptians—I would also propose that these services (if you will) were not just attended by the ever-growing family of Judah but also by many Egyptians as well, who were on positive signals at that time towards the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

When the entire family of Judah moved to Egypt, they were very warmly received; and I believe that this also indicates widespread positive volition towards the God of Abraham among the Egyptian people. Remember, God’s message has to go out to any place where there is positive volition. If there is a person interested in the True Creator, then God cannot simply ignore that person. He must bring His good news to them. The evidence that the Egyptians received the Hebrew people warmly is (1) their relationship with Joseph; (2) God brought the Hebrew family of Jacob to Egypt (which suggests blessing by association); and (3) the great mourning which took place in Egypt when Jacob died. All of this suggests close interaction between the family of Jacob and some of the people of Egypt, despite the fact that the family of Jacob were more or less segregated by area from the Egyptian people (except for Joseph, who was Egypt’s prime minister).
Again, portions of this are conjecture, but I believe that there were many times when Jacob stood up and spoke the Word of God (that is, the first two-thirds of Genesis); and this would be followed by 5 of his sons standing up and telling what happened next. Because their words were the Words of God (the very same words which we study today), they moved the people of Egypt who were on positive signals and also attended. Egyptians would hear these words and believe the God of Genesis, and become saved by believing in the Revealed God of Genesis. I suspect that there may be even millions of Egyptians in heaven because of this.

Although some of what I have presented is conjecture, I believe that this perfectly explains how the book of Genesis was written (so, actually, it was not written, but memorized and repeated many times each year; and passed down to the next generation orally). At some point, this book was written down (we do not know by who, but it could have been Moses). Whoever wrote it down, did not simply allow the Spirit of God to move his hands and fingers; he wrote down what he had memorized after hearing these words so many times in his life.

This understanding of the origins of the book of Genesis are fully congruent with the following things:

1. This would easily explain the preservation of the book of Genesis over hundreds of years, going back to a time before writing existed.
   1) I would suggest to you that there was a lengthy period of time when writing was not really required. That is, people heard and remembered everything that they heard and saw.
   2) All contracts could have been done on a handshake deal prior to Abraham, because people simply lived for a very, very long time.

2. Most of the book of Genesis is biography; so it is most logical that those lives we find in Genesis are the ones who recorded this history.

3. This theory would explain the perfect editing of Genesis 39–50.

4. This approach would explain the great sadness felt by the Egyptians when Jacob died (recall that Jacob, for the most part, was not a very loveable person). Somehow, Jacob became close to the Egyptian people in order for them to react as they did to the death of Jacob.
   1) If Egyptians heard the Word of God spoken by Jacob (and by his sons), they would have been very well-disposed towards that family.
   2) A loss in that family would be taken very personally by Egyptians who heard these men speak the words of God.
   3) You may personally understand the importance and comfort gained from hearing the Word of God taught. If you understand that, then Jacob speaking these words to Egyptians would have endeared him to the Egyptians (despite his flaws).  

13 Let me suggest that R. B. Thieme, Jr. is an excellent example of this.
5. The traditions of the synagogue, which are not specifically laid out in Scripture, have various men standing up and reading the Scriptures of God. This is not done like the typical church service, where the pastor-teacher teaches from the Word of God. This would be mostly local people who would come and read the existing Scriptures. This tradition had to come from somewhere. If the family of Jacob regularly worshiped God by standing and speaking aloud *The History of Man and God* (a tradition which probably predates Jacob), then the traditions and function of the synagogue would have naturally grown out of this.

1) Readings from the synagogue would have been directly from the Scriptures.
2) One man would read the Scriptures, sit down, and another man would read them, picking up where the first man left off.
3) If the Scriptures were preserved as I have suggested, then we would have precedence for this long-lived tradition.

Luke 3:33 ...the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,...  

[I continue to use the ESV (capitalized) as my primary Biblical text; but not many translations have both Aminadab and Admin.]

Judah entered into Egypt with his son, Perez (who was a twin); and the other 3 or 4 men named in this verse were likely slaves in Egypt (we do not know exactly when the Egyptians enslaved the Hebrew people). It is likely that Hezron or Arni would have been in the first generation that was enslaved by the Egyptians.

There are only two sets of twins named in the Old Testament: Jacob and Esau; Perez and his brother. They are separated by a single generation.

Judah is one of the heads of the 12 (13) tribes of Israel. Judah, his son Perez, and his father Jacob were all born in the land of Canaan. The other men in this verse were born in Egypt.
If we follow Judah’s line down to David, and then to Solomon and Rehoboam (this is the line of Joseph, the legal father of Jesus), we get this:

The Line of Judah through David, Solomon and Rehoboam (a chart); from Bible-codes.org; accessed November 1, 2018.

Notice what it says: One who praises the Lord breaks open a way [into] an area surrounded by a wall of great height. O my people [to] whom belong the Prince, a prophet clothed with strength, who serves [God] is here! One well-loved, peaceful, and Who sets the people free. Pretty amazing, is it not?

Unlike the line in Matthew, which begins with Abraham and then proceeds to Jesus, the line of Mary starts with Jesus and goes all the way back to Adam.

Luke 3:34a  ...the son of Jacob,...
Jacob is a twin. He was a Hebrew by race, but his twin brother, Esau, was not. Jacob, for much of his life, was a poor excuse for a believer; and as a result of his actions, he ended up having to leave the Land of Promise (something which Abraham kept Isaac from doing—see v. 34b-c). However, when he returned some 20 years later, and he had two wives, two mistresses, 11 sons, and at least 1 daughter. Despite his behavior (which was mixed), God blessed him and brought him back into the land. Furthermore, all of the Hebrew people—apart from those who chose to adopt into the Jewish family—are from the loins of Jacob. All of Jacob’s sons were in the line of promise; none of Esau’s were. Jacob did not have any descendants who were not racially Hebrew.

Jacob was given the name *Israel* by God; and the nation of Hebrews is identified with Jacob’s God-given name. These people are identified by that name even to this day.

The name *Jacob* is used when speaking of his weaknesses or when emphasizing the grace of God. It is clear that Jacob did not deserve the great honor and blessing bestowed upon him by God. However, it is also likely that he turned things around in the final decades of his life, having received great honor from the Egyptian people when he died. The people of God moved to Egypt with Jacob as their patriarch, and the Egyptians developed a strong fondness for Jacob. There had to be a set of reasons why this happened, as Jacob was not inherently a loveable person.

It is Jacob who gives many of us hope. When we study men like Abraham or Moses or David, we marvel at their faithfulness to God. None of these men were perfect—not by a long shot—but do I want to set my life next to theirs and compare? No way! But compare my life to that of the scheming, double-dealing, self-centered Jacob? Now, there is a man I can relate to. I might not like him very much, but I must admit that I am much more like Jacob than I am like Abraham.

I know that God in Whom I have believed; and I also know the sorry person that I am as well. Jacob, like his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham, was saved because he believed in the Revealed God. I am saved because I have believed in Jesus Christ. I certainly have no claim to salvation based upon my own life or upon personal merit (no one does).

The people lived in Egypt for 400 years, before God brought them out, as per the book of Exodus. They went into Egypt as a free people, invited by Joseph and led by Jacob. However, at some point, the Hebrews were enslaved by the Egyptians. Eventually, God brought the people of God out of Egypt, freeing them from their slavery.

Luke 3:34b  *...the son of Isaac,*...

Isaac was the second of two sons born to Abraham. The first was Ishmael, who was the son of a mistress—a mistress chosen by Abraham’s wife. Abraham’s mistress was an Egyptian slave girl, and her son, Ishmael, (by Abraham) was not the promised seed. Isaac, was born 13 years later, to a much older Abraham and Sarah. He was the son of God’s promise.
One of the most amazing types found in Scripture is when God asks Abraham to offer up his son, his only son, the son whom he loves, as a sacrifice to God. See the parallel? Abraham was willing to offer up his son and God recognized this. At the last moment, a ram was revealed, to die as a substitute, instead of Isaac. It is an amazing set of parallels, clear to us today. However, these parallels were not originally understood as such until sometime after the crucifixion. At the crucifixion, God the Father offered up His Son, the Son Whom He loved, on the cross as a substitute for us. Once some time passed and perspective on these two historical incidents took place, then Christians could see the relationship between the two events. Abraham offering his son was a type; this act illustrated God offering up His only Son, the Son Whom He loved. The substitution Abraham was able to offer up was also a type; the ram illustrated the substitution that Jesus is for us.

Although typology is mentioned in the New Testament, with some examples given, a great deal of work has been done on this subject, long after the completion of the New Testament, with some amazing parallels being drawn between Old Testament events and people matched to events surrounding the life, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. Typology extends even outside of the realm of Christology. One of the types which we recently studied was Coniah, who represents the sin nature.


Luke 3:34c  ...the son of Abraham,...

God called Abraham to come to a new land, the land of Canaan, to a land that God would give to him and to his seed. A significant portion of the book of Genesis is about the life of Abraham. His story begins in Gen. 12 and continues to Gen. 25.

**Why God chose Abraham (Part I):**

Interestingly enough, Abraham lived during the time when the ancients from sons of Noah began to die. Every person having a direct genealogical connection to any of Noah’s sons all died out during the life of Abraham. No longer would there be actual witnesses to the post-deluvian world (the world immediately after the flood). If so-and-so was not an actual witness, his father, grandfather, or great grandfather was. There were actual family members alive during the time of Abraham who either stepped off the Ark after the flood; or were born in that first generation after the flood. There were people alive who had actually been at Babel when the languages were confused. There were people alive who witnessed with their own eyes the separation of the peoples, when men went off in all directions from Babel (Genesis 10–11). However, given their decreasing lifespans, most of them—we are talking quite a number of generations here—died out during the life of Abraham.
I believe that the act of Abraham being chosen by God to be the father of His people (the Hebrew people) is directly related to the deaths of those who witnessed the ark, the immediate postdiluvian world, and who had direct contact with Noah or his sons.

Here is what I believe that connection was, although this is conjecture on my part and not stated in the Scriptures in these same terms. At this point, there were no Scriptures. People knew the things which make up the history in the early chapters of Genesis, and this information was universally known (to those with positive volition). That is, everyone who wanted to know, knew about the creation of Adam, the restoration of the earth, the mixing of man and angels, the flood, the tower of Babel, and the separation of the peoples. If the interest was there, any man living prior to Abraham could know these things. They could actually speak to any of the 4 men who lived in the world prior to the flood. During Abraham’s life, this information was universally known (that is, it was known by those who wanted to know it). There were either eyewitnesses to these events or people who knew eyewitnesses to these events (again, I am speaking of potential here—not every person would have been interested in the history of man or in God).

When Abraham died, this would all be gone—completely and totally gone. All of this history would remain, but it would be in the hands of thousands of different people, and, as we would expect, it would be distorted. Even today, we have the remnants of the early history of man, with many parallels to what we read in the early chapters of Genesis—distorted though that history might be. We have ancestor worship in parts of Asia; we have flood narratives in nearly every ancient history; we find the mixing of man with angels in virtually all of the mythologies.

Abraham had a knowledge of this period of time. He probably knew Shem and heard about the pre and postdiluvian worlds directly from Shem (Shem is Abraham’s 7X great grandfather). During the life of Abraham, there was access to the true history of God and man, because there were people alive who had actually lived through it.

In some way, Abraham would be the definitive link between the true history of man and God and the people who would be born to him.

I went online to find a genealogical chart, and see that the makers of this chart made the very same points that I have been making—about when all the patriarchs died.

Using the numbers given in the book of Genesis, virtually every patriarch who lived before Abraham would die out during Abraham’s life. I believe this to be very significant and tied directly to God’s changing plan for mankind. Abraham lived in Mesopotamia. I believe that he carried in his head the entire book of Genesis up to his life; and that he brought this book with him to Canaan. Most of Abraham’s ancestors died out during this time that Abraham was in Canaan.
The Longevity of Man (a chart); from Omniology.com; accessed October 9, 2020. This chart is originally from an online book by Walter Brown, Jr., entitled In the Beginning. It is found online (just click on the book) and may be ordered as well.

These notes were on the same page as the chart above.

Notes on Longevity of Man Chart (from Omniology.com)

1) All ages are based on the Hebrew (masoretic) text. The Greek text (the Septuagint) and the Samaritan texts differ slightly.

2) The very careful and detailed use of mathematics and language in these chapters firmly links the chronology into one continuous family record. Notice that the age of each patriarch is given when the next patriarch (probably a son, but possibly a grandson) is born. Thus the time between the creation of Adam and the life of Joseph is established. The possibility of gaps in the genealogy would have no effect on this time interval.
### Notes on Longevity of Man Chart (from Omniology.com)

3) Noah's son Shem, who was born before the flood, almost outlived Abraham and very possibly had conversation with Isaac. [Since Isaac did not ever leave the land of Canaan, we know that he never spoke with Shem—GK.]

4) Each of the first nine patriarchs had "other sons and daughters." (See Gen. 5) in other words, each had at least 3 sons and 2 daughters. Statistically this implies that they all had large families—probably averaging nine or more children. If these were typical family sizes for that day, then the world population before the flood was very large—probably in the billions.

5) Notice that the lifespans of Adam, Methuselah, Shem, and Abraham successively overlapped.

6) The best estimates of the year of the flood are between 3398 and 2348 B.C.

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I made some minor corrections to these notes and I inserted one corrective comment.

Notice how Abraham potentially spoke to Shem, who potentially spoke to Methuselah who potentially spoke to Adam. Abraham would have been the last person in his line who potentially spoke to Shem (who lived prior to the flood). Isaac was born in Canaan and never left Canaan, so he did not speak to 8x great grandfather Shem.

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One thing not mentioned on this page was, how the length of life for the people listed in Gen. 11 began to decreased logarithmically. For most people who read these words, that means nothing. But, all life, as it grows, is related to the exponential function. All life when it dies or decays is related to the logarithmic function (which is the inverse function of an exponential function). A great deal of work was done on the concept of the exponential function in the 18th century (focusing on the value e—Euler’s number). Logarithms appear to have been discovered in the 17th century, when tables for logs began to be developed. Interestingly enough, we have what amounts to a logarithmic decay function revealed by the decrease of ages of these men, 3000–4000 years before people had any idea what logarithms were. If you look at that graph with the blue background, that is a logarithmic curve. How would someone have known how to fake that?

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### Why God chose Abraham (Part II):

The theological understandings of the people of the earth at this point in time had a similar sort of connection to Noah and his 3 sons. What they knew and understood about God (and Noah spoke with God) was universally known at that time. This does not mean that the people of the earth completely understood God and what He expected; but that option

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14 When I began to take mathematics in college, we used tables when dealing with logarithms. After a few years of teaching mathematics in high school, we began to use calculators.
of knowledge was open to them (bear in mind, positive volition is tied to actually knowing the truth\textsuperscript{15}).

My assumption is this: Abraham had a knowledge of these things and he knew about the pre and postdiluvian worlds. He could have actually spoken directly to Shem (we don’t know whether or not he did), who actually lived in the antediluvian world (that is, prior to the flood). Anyone during this time period could have known all about the history of man going back to the creation of man by God. Shem, Ham and Japheth were all alive and they all lived before and after the flood.

With all of these men dying out—most of them during the lifespan of Abraham, this information needed to be recorded and standardized. By \textit{recording}, I don’t mean written down on something, but recorded in Abraham’s mind. Abraham knew—possibly by personal contact with Shem—\textit{The Early History of God and Man} (the alternate name which I have given to the book of Genesis).

When Abraham was sent to Canaan, he carried one very important item, which is not specifically alluded to—he carried in his mind the Bible up to that point in time (the first portion of Genesis and possibly the book of Job\textsuperscript{16}). Abraham added to the Scriptures the various incidents which took place during his own life, incidents which he believed to be significant, and which information has been preserved now for some 4000 years.

People of this era may have chosen to distort this history, but someone could always say, “You are lying about this,” and there were men who lived during the postdiluvian era (Shem, Ham and Japheth) who could potentially separate fact from fiction. However, at their deaths, this information would have been more easily subject to distortion.\textsuperscript{17} Therefore, God needed to preserve this history accurately. So God chose Abraham to accomplish that purpose. On that point, I am speculating, but it makes far more sense than there being all of these oral traditions floating around, which Moses eventually read and thought about and then standardized. That is roughly the prevailing thought of theologians today, \textit{and it is a theory (without Scriptural support) and nothing else!}

The exact reason why this had to take place at this time (when all the patriarchs were about to die) is logically deduced from the information which we have of that era. The fact of all these men dying during the lifetime of Abraham is actually given to us in Scripture, allowing man, even up to this day, to organize this information as Walter Brown, Jr. did (I don’t know if he put the chart together or appropriated it from someone else).

\textsuperscript{15} This is true in any realm of knowledge.

\textsuperscript{16} We have no idea when the book of Job became a part of the Old Testament Scriptures; but its events appear to predate Abraham.

\textsuperscript{17} In today’s world, I have known of events 4 or 10 years ago which are distorted; even though there is video evidence of what actually occurred.
Isn’t Moses said to be the author of Genesis?, you may ask. He is not. He is called the writer of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy; but never of Genesis. It is possible that he committed the book of Genesis to writing; but it is most likely that the book of Genesis already existed in its completed form prior to Moses being born (whether as an orally transmitted book of a book committed to writing by the time of his birth, we do not know).

When Abraham arrives in Canaan, there will be no family with him, apart from his nephew Lot (and their respective wives). A significant portion of Genesis is about Abraham (actually, Abram) and his nephew Lot.

This information which is in Abraham’s head (this is conjecture again), will become the Scriptures. He will tell all of this to his son Isaac, who will tell it to his son Jacob. When we study Genesis, we are reading an English translation from the exact words of Abraham which he spoke to his son (and grandsons).

I believe that this began the tradition of this information be spoken aloud from memory among a family during their worship of Y*hwh. Abraham, the patriarch, would have said everything from the creation of man to his own life. Then Isaac would stand up and tell about his life; and, finally, Jacob would stand up and tell about his life. This is conjecture on my part, and that I cannot point to some verses in Genesis which confirm my theory, but it would very handily explain the preservation of the book of Genesis throughout the lives of Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (and Joseph). It would also explain why God chose Abraham at the time that He did.

Who, other than Abraham and his family, would have preserved these traditions? Furthermore, does it not seem the most logical for this family to have preserved their own family history (which is actually the bulk of the book of Genesis)?

Also—and I want to emphasize this—the commonly accepted notion that Moses wrote the book of Genesis is also a theory. It may be the most popular theory, but, it is still just a theory. In my opinion it is a theory with less Scriptural support than mine.

Now, in case the book of Genesis seems like too much memorization, let me say that if you or I chose to, we could memorize the entire book of Genesis, front to back; and we could recite it. The minds of the patriarchs, I believe, were much better than ours. Therefore, I think that, after a few hearings, they actually knew and could repeat, the information found in Genesis. If pressed, most of us could memorize the book of Genesis in a week possibly; and clearly, within the period of a year. I believe that Abraham, for much of his life, heard The Early History of God and Man recited, and knew it by the time he left Mesopotamia. He may not have appreciated it at the time, but this was the most important possession which he brought with him.

Knowledge is a common yet strange possession. Abraham may not have thought to include these words in the book of Genesis: and I traveled to Canaan, yet still in possession of the knowledge of my ancestors. I traveled from California to Texas, with a
knowledge of Euler’s number and logarithmic functions. This is the first time I have shared that fact with anyone.

I believe that, from Abraham and forward, whoever was the oldest patriarch in the Hebrew line (Abraham ▶ Isaac ▶ Jacob ▶ Jacob’s 12 sons), during religious ceremonies, would stand up and recite the book of Genesis up to his life, and then others present might stand up and add to this information (as I have previously suggested).

I believe that this tradition has been preserved, to some extent, in the synagogues today.


We are still in the genealogical line of Mary.

Luke 3:34c ...the son of Abraham,...

Luke 3:34 ...the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why God Chose Abraham (a doctrine)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Abraham lived during a unique time in human history. Although Noah died at about the time that Abraham was born, Shem was still alive. Shem lived in both the antediluvian and postdiluvian worlds. He and his brothers were eyewitnesses to the civilization which existed before the flood. If there was any question about what had happened before the flood, during the flood and after the flood, there were 3 men who were there who could testify to exactly what happened. They saw all of it with their own eyes. Despite it being a fantastical story, there were 3 witnesses to that same story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. No doubt, these men told their sons all that happened; and their grandsons; great grandsons, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. These men would have been like gods to the people; who could confirm or refute anything reported about the flood or the world before the flood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Once these men died, all of this historical information which they lived through would have been subject to the whims of whomever told the story of what happened. There would be no existing standard by which these stories could be judged. What God did and God’s relationship to this world could be easily distorted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The 3 men who witnessed the actual flood and the world as it had existed before the flood would all die out during Abraham’s lifetime. Their sons, grandsons, great grandsons, etc. would also all die out during Abraham’s lifetime. That is all 3 witnesses, all of their sons, all of their grandsons, all of their great grandsons, etc.—would all die out in one generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. God wants the events that we know in Genesis to be accurately recounted, as God is truth. He does not want a false version of the flood to be recalled; He</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why God Chose Abraham (a doctrine)

does not want false views of the corruption of the human race to be perpetuated.

7. I would suggest that the remembrance of these things was passed along from Shem to his sons and grandsons; and eventually, to Abraham.

8. Logically, God would have chosen Abraham because of Abraham’s adherence to the correct narrative handed down from his ancestor Shem (who, again, was still alive at this time).

9. Nothing is more important to man on earth than the Word of God. Therefore, we should expect God to preserve it, in one way or another. I am suggesting that the Word of God was preserved in and by Abraham (that is, in his memory and by his choice).

10. There is a theory that Moses wrote down the book of Genesis. However, despite this being the most popular theory among conservative theologians, there is actually no evidence for it. No Bible verse attributes the book of Genesis to Moses (although he is specifically credited with writing Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy).

1) If Moses wrote the book of Genesis, then he either had a record or records from which to construct it or God the Holy Spirit simply told him what to write (or some combination of these two things).

2) We have a record of God speaking directly to Moses when it came to writing down portions of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy; we have no record of God speaking to Moses and telling him, “This is what I want you to write for the first book of the Bible.”

3) If Moses wrote the book of Genesis from existing records (which did not necessarily need to be written records), then why suggest that Moses be due any sort of credit for this? If he copies the words down from an existing record, he is not actually the author, is he?

4) Why would there be more than one record? Why would the very chronological view presented in the book of Genesis necessarily come from 2 or more records?

5) There are very different writing styles to be found throughout the book of Genesis. The man who wrote Gen. 24 did not write Gen. 25. The way that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph recount their personal lives is very different. One can easily perceive different styles of writing, when going from one patriarch to the next. There is nothing to suggest a consistent Mosaic style of writing in the book of Genesis.

6) Could Moses have recorded a document which already existed (and by document, I do not necessarily refer to something which was written). If Moses recorded a document previously written, then he is not the author but a copyist.

11. Most of the book of Genesis (Gen. 12–50) is about Abraham, his sons, his grandsons or his great grandsons. The bulk of Genesis is the biography of a family, beginning with Abraham and including very personal stories about Isaac, Jacob, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah and Joseph. Who would be the most likely people to preserve these records? Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and Reuben,
Why God Chose Abraham (a doctrine)

Simeon, Levi, Judah and Joseph. To suggest that someone else kept these records is absurd. There are certainly things written about these men—including their thoughts—that no one else would have been aware of. Now, if they kept the history recorded in Gen. 12–50 and if Abraham actually lived during the time of Shem and his descendants (of which, Abraham was one), who else would be the most logical person to retain a mental record of Gen. 1–11? The correct answer would be, Abraham.

12. Therefore, it is my assertion that Abraham, when he left the Babylon area, took with him the memorized words of Gen. 1–11. Then he added to this; and his son added to it, etc. This record became the book of Genesis—exactly the words which we study today (albeit, translated into English).

13. In whatever family worship service that Abraham led with his family, he would, as the family priest, do more than simply offer up animal sacrifices to God. He would also read the words of Gen. 1–11 and add to that whatever life he had led up to that point in time. It is logical to think that, early worship of Yahweh involved more than animal sacrifices. I suggest that there was a reading of the Word of God, as it existed in that day, along with animal sacrifices.

Logically, this family, with such a close relationship to God, would have gathered at various intervals and the patriarch of the family would speak, from memory, The Early History of God and Man (my name for the book of Genesis), down to his lifetime; and then his son would pick it up from there.

When in Egypt, it is very likely that Jacob, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah and Joseph all stood up to present the Word of God to their family and to any Egyptians would were positive toward doctrine and interested. Let me suggest that this would have been one of the most marvelous events to take place in human history (and it was probably repeated at least 3x a year or more—in fact, it could have been weekly).

I have previously explained why it makes sense for Jacob to have led such services in Egypt. He was not a very likeable person, even after he returned to the land of Canaan. Yet, at his death, he was a very beloved man in Egypt, by his family and by many Egyptians. How would a man ingratiate himself to a foreign nation in such a way as to become beloved? The logical answer to me is, he spoke to them the words of God. He worshiped the True God, he spoke the words of God, and he allowed Egyptians to join the services. If Jacob did this, the great sorrow of his family and of the Egyptians makes perfect sense.

I would suggest that the tradition of the synagogue was the logical outgrowth of this great recurring event.

Luke 3:34c  ...the son of Abraham,...

Abraham is the first Hebrew (OT term); or, Jew (NT term).
The name *Abraham* means *father of a multitude*. He had 2 sons, one of whom was a Hebrew and the other remained a gentile.

Luke 3:34d  *...the son of Terah,...*

Terah was Abraham’s father. Abraham was to separate from his family and move west to Canaan. He got about halfway there and stopped. It appears that his family—his father in particular—held him back from completing his assigned task (God told Abraham to separate from his family and to go west).

*Terah’s* name means, *station*.

Luke 3:34e  *...the son of Nahor,...*

There are two Nahor’s in Abraham’s family. This Nahor is his paternal grandfather. The other one is his brother, if memory serves. He was snoring (asleep) when God brought salvation to Abraham.

His name means, *snorting, snoring*. It is not out of the question that some of these names were assigned to them later in life—a nickname or a play on their given name.

Luke 3:34  *...the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,...*

Here we have the people of promise: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; along with Abraham’s father and grandfather.

Terah and Nahor are both gentiles. Abraham is Hebrew, which is a new race of man. Prior to this, there were 3 basic races: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Luke 3:35a  *...the son of Serug,...*

Serug is the son of Nahor. *Serug* name means, *intertwined*.

Luke 3:35b  *...the son of Reu,...*

His name means, *associate you: feed you*.

Luke 3:35c  *...the son of Peleg,...*

His name means, *division*.

Many believe that his name here signifies the division of the languages, causing the people to spread out from one another (that is, *to become divided*). Because the languages were divided (Gen. 11), the people then separated themselves from one another.
Luke 3:35d  ...the son of Eber,...

We actually do not know for certain where the designation Hebrew is from, although many theologians tie it to Eber. Hebrew is actually this word in the Hebrew: ‘יִבְרִי (ירבי) [pronounced ʤiˈbri-VREE]. It is first used of Abraham in Gen. 14:13; but, apart from that usage, it is found multiple times in the narrative about Joseph in Egypt, where this word is specifically applied to Joseph by Egyptians (Gen. 39:14, 17  41:12). For all of Genesis and in the first 15 chapters of Exodus, this word is specifically applied to the Hebrew people in Egypt (and nearly always by Egyptians). That this designation is applied to Joseph strongly suggests that this word ultimately has an Egyptian origin (or the Egyptians appropriated a word and applied that to some groups of foreign peoples).

Some believe that Eber is from where we get the general name Hebrew. In the Hebrew, Eber is ‘ieżer (זֶבֶר) [pronounced ʤeˈver]. His name means, the region beyond. This, or a very similar name was how the Egyptians referred to some of settlers from the northeast (which region included Canaan). Since there were so few Hebrew people at the time that this name is applied to them (only 70 or 75 who were descended from Jacob and their respective wives), it would be odd for the Egyptians to have a word to apply just to them. The name was originally applied to Joseph when he was the only person descended from Jacob who lived in Egypt.

Clearly, the Egyptians would not have had a specific name for a group of people this small; particularly not one which would have applied, for many years, to a single individual. However, they came from the region beyond, so the name Hebrew eventually stuck to Jacob and his descendants. Such a name was consistent with the name of their common ancestor, Eber.

For that reason, the actual origins of the name Hebrew are unclear, given that the designation may have gone way back to the early descendants of Eber; or it may be a name applied by the Egyptians to the Hebrew people. At some point, this became a word applied specifically to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and to their descendants. No doubt that particular designation took place while they were living in Egypt.

As an aside, the term Jew is a later designation. I have mostly used the word Hebrew when working in the Old Testament and Jew or Jewish when working in the New.

Luke 3:35e  ...the son of Shelah,...

Shelah is the Great X5 grandfather of Abraham and grandson or great grandson of Shem. His name means, sprout.

Luke 3:35  ...the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah,...
String these names together and we get: *Intertwined an association [with] you, divided [so that in the] region beyond [they will] sprout.* This seems to be describing the intertwined family of Abraham, which moves, but is divided; yet Abraham moves to a region beyond where his family sprouted. Most of Abraham’s relatives will remain behind (which is at God’s insistence).

There are several instances recorded in Scripture where one might be led to understand that God is anti-family, and that believers ought to, after being saved, move away from their families. This is not the case; and, at no time, should you allow a cult-like organization to separate you from your family and friends. It is true that the people in church are people with whom you will spend eternity; but that does not mean that you dump all of your previous relationships and only develop new ones from the church. That is cultic behavior and if you get that sort of direction from the church you go to, then you should separate from that church—immediately.

On the other hand, there are times in Scripture and there are times in real life where separation from family is going to occur. That is true of many people who begin to grow up and go off to college or off to work or who get married. This as a normal process as fine; this as something socially applied by your church in order to control your behavior is something entirely different.

**Application:** My point is, sometimes God may lead you away from your family. However, if there are noted people at the church that you attend who are trying to separate you from your family and friends, then you are in the wrong church. In fact, you are not in a church; you are in a cult.

**Illustration:** I moved from where I was raised to the Houston area. I moved chiefly for work, and I considered Houston, simply because Berachah Church was there. It was the exact right move for me to make. However, at no time did anyone in Berachah Church said that I needed to be separate from my family and old friends; nor has there ever been any teaching from the pulpit which stated or implied that separation from family and friends was what every member of the church should do.

Some of the family of Abraham moved with him as far as Haran in Mesopotamia (chiefly, his father). From there, Abraham (actually, *Abram* at that time), his wife, Lot and his wife moved to Canaan.

Unrelated to the land of Canaan is this next man:

**Luke 3:36a** …*the son of Cainan,*...

This name is quite significant, as we do not find it in the Old Testament. This suggests that there were records of such a one, but that his name dropped out of the Hebrew text at some point. Someone with this name occurs later in this line as well.
I can only recall two instances where there is any problem with this particular line, and this is one of them. Interestingly enough, this does not do any damage to the Hebrew time line based upon the ages of the men which are given. It may add an extra 20–40 years into the line, which is rather insignificant.

His name means, *their smith.*

Luke 3:36b  *...the son of Arphaxad,...*

His name means, *stronghold of Chaldees.*

Luke 3:36c  *...the son of Shem,...*

His name means, *name.*

Shem, like his brothers and father, lived on both sides of the flood. Shem helped his father build the ark and gather the animals to take on the ark.

Shem is a son of Noah. Many of the men in this genealogy—Shem, Arphaxad, Cainan, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, and Serug—were alive during the time of Abraham; and they died out during his lifetime.

Luke 3:36a-c  *...the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem,...*

**Shem ⇒ Eber ⇒ Terah** (a genealogical chart); from [Bible Names Code](https://www.biblenamescode.com); accessed May 24, 2019.

Notice that with this chart, the order is reversed from what we read in Luke. I have not yet experimented with the Greek meanings and keeping the names in the same order as we read in the Greek.
Notice what it says: The fame of Babylon’s fortress and sorrow [wil] extend like a plant beyond the place of division. A friend branches out, enraged with fury! This seems to be less significant to me. But this seems to give a brief history of what took place during these 8 generations.

Luke 3:36d ...the son of Noah,...

His name means, rest.

Noah was the tenth in descent from Adam. Noah is the second father of the human family (Adam being the first). Every person alive today is descended from Noah (and, quite obviously, from Adam).

Noah and his sons were the only witnesses to the antediluvian (before the flood) civilization. The events which preceded the flood were quite spectacular.

All of the men named next are from the antediluvian civilization. They lived and died during that era.

Luke 3:36e ...the son of Lamech,...
These sets of definitions are somewhat confusing, as those listed from the Greek can differ from the Hebrew. It seems that the Hebrew meanings would be the important ones, being that these are mostly Hebrew names.

His name means, *powerful; why thus with you?; to bring low.*

Luke 3:36d-e  ...the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,...

Noah lives on both sides of the flood; his father, Lamech, died prior to the great flood.

Luke 3:37a  ...the son of Methuselah,...

He was the son of Enoch, grandfather of Noah. Methuselah lived longer than anyone else—969 years.

His name means, *man of the dart; when he dies, there shall be an emission.*

Luke 3:37b  ...the son of Enoch,...

God took this Enoch into heaven without him physically dying.

His name means, *dedicated.*

Luke 3:37c  ...the son of Jared,...

Westcott Hort has *laret.* Bear in mind that, despite the surfeit of English Bible names which begin with *j,* there is no *j* in the Greek or Hebrew.

His name means, *descent.*

Luke 3:37d  ...the son of Mahalaleel,...

His name means, *praise of God.*

Luke 3:37e  ...the son of Cainan,...

Westcott-Hort has *Kainam* (*καίναμ*) instead.

His name means, *their smith.*

Luke 3:37  ...the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan,...

Bear in mind that all of these people are related to you and I. Even though I am probably descended from Japheth, these are my ancestors (and yours).
We will put these names together further on down.

**Lesson 113: Luke 3:38  Enos to Adam; The Genealogy Gospel**

**Luke 3:38a**  ...the son of Enos,...

His name means, *mortal man*.

**Luke 3:38b**  ...the son of Seth,...

Seth was the third son of Adam and the father of Enos. We do not have any idea exactly how many sons and daughters that Adam and Eve had.

His name means, *compensation*.

**Luke 3:38c**  ...the son of Adam,...

Jesus is often called the *Son of Man* in the book of Luke. Perhaps this is why. This line goes all the way back to Adam, whose name means *man*. *Son of Man = the Son of Adam*.

*Adam* name means, *the red earth*. Adam’s body was made out of the chemical elements of the earth (as ours are).

**Luke 3:38**  ...the son of God.

Adam here is called a son of God. He was created directly by God without sin. He was created in God’s image. This is one of the fundamental places where the Bible differs from what has come to be accepted science today. We are not evolved creatures; we did not begin as half-ape, half-man, evolved from some sort of animal primate.

Adam, who would be perhaps alive 5000 or so years ago, would be indistinguishable from us, apart from looking a lot better and having a much greater mind. You may or may not be surprised to know that, when the population of man is traced out mathematically (using exponential growth curves), man’s population today is far more consistent with a 5000 year old Adam than it is with man being evolved about 1 million years ago. The latter opinion of science is inconsistent with the mathematics of human growth.

This does not mean that the earth itself is only 5000 years old. The Bible implies that the creation of the earth could have occurred far, far earlier. It may be millions of years old or even billions of years old. Neither would conflict with the Biblical record. But man being on this earth a million years ago? No, that did not happen. Mathematically, that would be impossible (unless, of course, all mankind except for one couple died off about 5000 years ago).
I believe in what is known as the Gap theory—that God created the earth and the universe and that, it became a disorganized mess, and eventually it was frozen. It was apparently a playground of sorts for the fallen angels. Exactly what the relationship was between God, the elect angels, the fallen angels and the earth is unknown (apart from God being the Creator of the heavens and the earth). What we study in the first chapter of Genesis (after v. 2), is not the creation of the earth, but the restoration of the earth.

Luke 3:38 ...the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

God → Adam → Seth → Noah (a genealogical chart); from Bible Names Code; accessed May 24, 2019.

This list of names is often known as the Genealogy Gospel. Beginning with Adam, we have: Man is appointed, a mortal man of sorrow is born. The Glory of God will come down, teaching that His death will bring those in despair comfort and rest! That is the gospel message and it is quite amazing, is it not?
Although some of these—particularly the gospel genealogy—are quite amazing, we should be careful not to find too much hidden meaning in this or that thing related to the Bible. What we need to know is generally stated outright, without having to be clever about it. However, that genealogy is pretty damned clever.

The Passion Translation (Luke 3:23–38) is used below:

### Matching Names to Israel’s History (Luke 3:27–34)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names in Mary’s Genealogy</th>
<th>Historical Events and Epochs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jesus, assumed to be Joseph’s son, was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. Here are the names of Mary’s ancestors, from her father traced all the way back to Adam: Eli,</strong>...</td>
<td>Jesus was born 6–4 B.C. This does not coincide with A.D. 1 because a there was an error in the development of the calendar which attempted to place Jesus in the middle of human history. Mary was perhaps 18 years old or so at the Lord’s birth. Eli is Mary’s father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Matthat, Levi, Melki, Jannai, Joseph, Mattathias, Amos, Nahum, Esli, Naggai, Maath, Mattathias, Semein,...</td>
<td>These ancestors of Mary’s stretch back to about 400 B.C., when the Old Testament canon was completed. No Scripture was written after the Old Testament was completed. However, Jewish people continued to write and record events after the OT was closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Josech, Joda, Joanan, Rhesa,...</td>
<td>Rhesa may have returned to the land of promise; and these men lived in Canaan from 516–400 B.C. Rhesa, Joseph and possibly even Joda were born in Babylon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Zerubbabel, Shealtiel,...</td>
<td>Zerubbabel means a seed in Babel, indicating that this person was born in Babylon (586–516 B.C.). His father, Shaltiel, would have been forcibly taken into Babylon from Canaan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Neri, Melchi, Addi, Cosam, Elmadam, Er, Joshua, Eliezer, Jorim, Matthat, Levi, Simeon, Judah, Joseph, Jonam, Eliakim, Melea, Menna, Mattatha,...</td>
<td>These men lived in the land—the southern kingdom—between the time of Solomon’s reign and the attack by Babylon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Nathan, David, Jesse, Obed,...</td>
<td>David lived around 1000 B.C.; Nathan was his son; Jesse was his father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Boaz, Salmon,...</td>
<td>These men would have lived in the newly conquered land of Canaan. Boaz is the husband of Ruth from the book of her name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names in Mary’s Genealogy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Nahshon, Amminadab, Admin, Arni, Hezron, Perez, Judah,...</td>
<td>These men all lived in Egypt, some of them as slaves. Nahshon and Amminadab, freed from slavery, perhaps walked out of Egypt with Moses (circa 1450 B.C.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Jacob, Isaac, Abraham,...</td>
<td>These are the 3 patriarchs of the Hebrew race. A racial Jew is genetically attached to all of them. These men lived around 1000 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Terah, Nahor, Serug, Reu,...</td>
<td>These men lived in the Babylon area. Terah moved west with his son Abram (Abraham). Abraham had been instructed by God to go all of the way to Canaan. They stopped about halfway there in Haran. Abraham remained there until his father passed away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Peleg, Eber, Shelah, Kenan, Arphaxad,...</td>
<td>Peleg was probably born around the time that God confused the languages at the tower of Babel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Shem, Noah,...</td>
<td>Both Noah and his son Shem lived on the earth before and after the flood. The names between Terah and Shem would have been very significant to Abraham. He would have known all 10 generations of these men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...Lamech, Methuselah, Enoch, Jared, Mahalaleel, Cainan, Enos, Seth,...</td>
<td>These men all lived on earth prior to the flood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...and Adam, who was created by God.</td>
<td>Adam was created directly from the hand of God; he was created sinless and without a sin nature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These early names in this genealogy were not backwards cavemen, but some of the most brilliant men who have ever lived. They probably all had exceptional memories and reasoning power.
Let’s go back and take an abbreviated look at all of Luke 3. Sometimes, our study goes into so much detail, that it is helpful to stand back and to see a more concise version of what we have studied. The ESV; capitalized will be used below):

Luke 3:1–2  In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

Israel at the Time of Jesus (a map); from Conforming to Jesus; accessed July 10, 2020.

As an aside, when I use a graphic from another webpage, I am not necessarily endorsing that webpage. On the other hand, if I feature a doctrine written mostly by someone else, then I am indicating that I have a reasonable amount of trust in that person’s ministry.

Luke, more than any other biographer of Jesus, sets the secular historical stage. These are the political leaders—the men with power, if you will. They are the movers and shakers, according to the popular thinking of that day. But they really were not. Meanwhile, out in the desert-wilderness, is John, son of Zechariah, and the Word of God comes to him. People so often focus upon the wrong things. A small percentage of people today know about these significant rulers from this ancient era, and mostly knowledge of them comes from the Bible. But, far more important than any of these political leaders is John, the son of Zechariah, who is out in the desert-wilderness. This is the man that we know as John the baptizer or John the Herald (he is not John, the gospel writer).

In modern-day churches, there are sometimes a whole lot of things going on; but what should be fundamental to every church is the Word of God. Obviously, the good news of Jesus Christ must be known and believed by most of the congregants—but even that most
fundamental doctrine is taken right out of the Word of God. The Word of God should always be front and center of any Christian church.

**Application:** At the time that I write this (January 1, 2021), the American election of 2020 still remains hotly contested, with nearly all of the media, most of Hollywood, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, along with most politicians (from both parties) all allied up on one side. For example, YouTube regularly removes videos which cite voter fraud; Facebook shadowbans posts from the few websites and media outlets which continue to speak of voter fraud (interestingly enough, a huge number of Americans have begun to get their news from Facebook). Nothing seems more important to many of us than this past election. The stakes for America seem monumental, as many believe that this past election was riddled with fraud. There are many who believe that this will be the end of a democratic United States; particularly if either candidate takes the oath of office. This does not mean that there will be no elections; it simply means that they will be meaningless. So, for many, the political reality of this day and time seems tremendous.

**Application:** What we learn from these first few verses of Luke 3 is, the politics, the politicians and the future political structure of the United States—they are not as important as we think they are. What is far, far more important is the Word of God; and the accurate teaching of the Word of God. In the era we are studying—the time when Jesus was an adult—the government was far more oppressive; and the political leaders were far more dangerous. Groups of people who fell into disfavor with the government might find themselves persecuted and killed in large numbers. Yet, what is important at this stage of the history of man? A very odd man who speaks to random groups of people out in the inhabited regions around the Jordan River; who proclaims himself as the herald to the King—and that King being the Living Word of God.

**Application:** We may see dramatic changes to the United States; and no matter what happens over this next month, there will be very large groups of people who will believe that this election was stolen. But what is far, far more important than that, is the teaching of the Word of God in our local churches. It is the Word of God by which we all, as believers, grow spiritually. What is happening at your local church? Are you being taught the Word of God? Is that the thrust of the church that you attend? That is far more important than the political strife occurring today (and I am fully aware of the political circumstances and what could happen to the United States as a result of the events of this coming month).

**Application:** Always more important than the historic events taking place is the teaching of the Word of God; and the spiritual growth of the individual believer from taking in the Word of God.

As we will study in this and future chapters of Luke, we will find out that the people of Israel—God’s people—are accepting a religious system far removed from the Scriptures which have been delivered to them. In fact, when some of these Scriptures come to life, as it were—and are fulfilled, the reaction of the people is very contrary to the Word of God.
The very Son of God will come unto His Own (to the Jewish people), but they will, as a whole, reject Him (there is a significant portion who will believe on Him as well). What ought to be the center of great celebration—Jerusalem—to receive her King, is not. And what will come upon Jerusalem in particular is great disaster for rejecting the Son of God, Who is the Living Word of God. About 40 years from the time that we are studying, Jerusalem will be crushed by the Romans, for their recalcitrance. However, the fundamental reason that so many hundreds of thousands of people would die is, they refuse to believe God’s truth. They continue to follow a corrupt religious system. Therefore, serious national discipline is their future.

Simultaneously, during that same period of 40 years, throughout the recently conquered Roman world, the gospel of Jesus Christ and the teaching of the Apostles will spread like wildfire. But where this good news should have taken root, in the ancient city of Jerusalem, it has not. The Jewish people did not universally believe in Jesus, despite how closely He lined up with their Scriptures, as the promise of their Messiah-King. Jesus presented Himself to His people; and yet, they rejected Him. As a result, the Jewish people of that era will suffer the dire consequences of their negative volition.

**Application:** Do you realize that, in some nations today, they have known nothing but war for dozens of years? There are children who grow up, and for a considerable amount of their lives, know nothing but war. Why is this happening, for instance, to the people of Syria or in other middle eastern nations? The people of these nations live in almost a daily Islamic revolution. These are Muslim countries, who have not only rejected the teachings of Jesus Christ, but they persecute the few who are in their country and believe in Him. These Muslims often seek the death or conversion of people who want nothing more than to quietly learn about Jesus. And so they suffer despotic leaders and constant strife. These are the consequence of their negative volition.

**Application:** The fundamental reason why this tiny island known as England was able to conquer perhaps a fifth of the entire world is, they brought both law and order and the gospel of Jesus Christ to the places where they went. People all over the continent of Africa worship Jesus Christ because of British Empire. On the other hand, the United States has been in the nations of Iraq and Afghanistan for the past 2 decades, with little to show for the money and blood that we have spent there. Have we brought the gospel of Jesus Christ to them? Did we at least bring them freedom of religion? We did not! As a result, these nations are not much better off than they were when we first entered into them with our armies. After spending trillions of dollars in these two nations, we did not bring them the most important thing—the message of Jesus Christ and the redemption that He offers. This is why tiny Great Britain was successful throughout the world; and we cannot tamp down what appears to be a constant struggle between various factions of Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan, despite having the greatest military in human history. The key solution which we have abandoned as a nation is the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the teaching of the Word of God. That should have been a part of our mission in these foreign lands, but it was not. And so, we have nothing to show for the time we have spent there.
What I am trying to do is to show you the parallels between the world which we are studying, circa A.D. 30, and the world that we live in today. The key is always Jesus Christ and the Word of God. Leave these things out of the picture, and we, as the most powerful nation on this planet, can do nothing right.

Let us return to our narrative:

Luke 3:3 And he [John] went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

The Jordan River runs north-south in the middle of nation Israel (which was broken up into 5 regions at this time). The Jordan River goes as far up as the Galilee region—where the bulk of the Lord’s public ministry would take place—and it feeds into the Dead Sea, which is a natural border for Judæa.

The Repentance spoken of here has nothing to do with feeling sorry for sin or feeling badly that you are a sinner. You may have feelings about that, and you may not. Repentance means a change of mind; it is not a subjective emotional reaction—that is, it is not an intense feeling of regret for being a sinner. This change of mind, which John is speaking of, is directed towards the religious philosophy of that day, where one earns favor with God based upon personal merit. We cannot earn God’s favor. We come to God as sinners, as unworthy of Him, seeking His forgiveness. The religion of the Jews had become a man-centered, works-based religion; and John is proclaiming that they must change their mind about that.

Luke 3:4–6 As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

We already studied how the gospels treat this quotation from Isaiah. Luke throws it in as somewhat of a descriptor of John’s ministry; the book of John has John the Herald quoting this verse himself and applying it to himself.

John the Herald is the voice calling out from the desert-wilderness. He is acting as a herald for the Lord Jesus Christ. He goes before the Lord just as a herald would go before a king, announcing the king’s presence.

Luke 3:7–8 He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.

Luke, at first, does not differentiate between the various groups of people who show up to hear him, many of whom choose to be baptized. This specific quotation from John sounds
particularly harsh. We find elsewhere that there were religious types showing up to check John out, perhaps with an interest in shutting him down. The Jewish people were a particularly God-centered (or, religion-centered) people. Their dedication to their system of religion was fundamental to their life and beliefs. But they had been leaning more and more towards legalism and dead works than they were towards God’s mercy.

There were several groups within Judæa who had religious power, and this was quite important in a nation where YHWH worship was central to the lives of most people. Having a man unaffiliated with any of them, who has this ministry out in the desert-wilderness, is certainly a curiosity. John also appears to pose a potential threat to them, as he is not teaching the tenets of the current Jewish traditions.

Despite their difference in demeanor, both John and Jesus spoke very harshly to the religious types of that era. These words of John in particular castigate the religious types of his day (and their followers).

Luke 3:9 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

John’s warning is that the people of Israel are not productive; they are not really doing God’s work. This statement is rather dramatic. “If you are not producing the fruit that God expects from you, you will be cut down and thrown into judgment!” he warns.

Luke 3:10 And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?"

There were many who showed up to hear John who were not getting what they needed from their synagogue and Temple. They knew something was wrong, even if they were unable to put their finger on it exactly.

It is difficult when you are born into something, and you know that there is something amiss, but you do not really have anything to compare it with.

John began to provide them with an alternate way of seeing things.

Luke 3:11 And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."

Israel was about to go through a very transformative time. Some people would be financially ruined and far worse. John is not telling them, “What you need is a socialist government.” (We discussed this at length in our study.) He is telling them that they will need to voluntarily share their own blessings with others (socialism is anything but voluntarily sharing\(^{18}\)). There would come a time when those hearing John would need to share their own basic necessities with others.

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\(^{18}\) The actual practice of socialism is that the government knows better how to spend your money than you do, so they appropriate a great deal of it.
Luke 3:12  Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"

Several groups of people come to John and pose questions to him. Both sets of people specifically mentioned here were apparently rejected by the religious types in that day, but both sets of people sought acceptance by God.

It was legitimate for a Jew to be a tax collector in that era. There is nothing in the Word of God which would forbid a Jewish person from performing that function. However, the Jewish religious class has rejected them; and many fellow Jews have rejected them. So they ask John, what should we do?

Luke 3:13  And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do."

John tells them, simply, do not overtax. Their jobs are legitimate; the taxes are legitimate; what is not allowed is for them to tax the people more than what their taxes are. Some tax collectors became quite rich by overcharging people on their taxes, and keeping the difference in their own pockets.

Luke 3:14a  Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what shall we do?"

I believe that this a detachment of Jews who are soldiers in Judæa; possibly under the authority of the governor of Judæa. They are also despised by the religious classes and by some of their fellow Jews. They also ask John, “What should we do?”

Luke 3:14b  And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages."

As soldiers, they are told not to abuse their authority or their power; and to be content with their wages (so that they would not use their position to extort money from others).

Luke 3:15  As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ,...

Quite a number of people, during that time, believed that this was the era of the Messiah. I would suggest two reasons for this (1) There is actually a complex timetable laid out in the book of Daniel, which appears to take them to around A.D. 30. (2) There was the birth of the Messiah, which was a pretty big event about 30 years ago. Many of the people who saw the baby Jesus are, at this point in history, dead. But they would have enthusiastically spoken about what they saw.

Now, even though Jesus had been, as an infant, identified by several groups of people (who we studied in the first couple chapters of Luke), they apparently lost track of Him (or they passed away over the past few decades). But they would have spoken to their own families about seeing the baby Jesus. Therefore, the people were in expectation [of the Messiah].
Clearly, based upon the history that we are studying, the people did lose track of Mary, Joseph and Jesus. You may remember that shortly after Jesus’ birth, the family relocated, for a few years, in Egypt. When they returned to their own city, they appear to have kept a low profile (there is only a single story about Jesus between the age of 1 and 30\textsuperscript{19}).

Here, according to Luke, the people are thinking about this in their right lobes (= hearts). That means, they were closely observing John, listening to the words that he spoke, and then comparing that to the prophecies of the Messiah that they knew.

At this point, the people in the crowd are wondering if John is the Messiah. At other times, they will ask John this question directly.

John seemed to sense what they were thinking. He may have been asked this question directly before.

Luke 3:16  ...John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but He who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of Whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Jesus is the One Who John is speaking about. John knows that he is the messenger for the Messiah; John knows that he is not the Messiah. John has no illusions about his own place in the plan of God.

John says that he is unworthy even to untie the sandals of Jesus. This means that John is grace oriented. He understands that he is a sinner in the eyes of God, and, as such—despite his commission as herald to the King—is no greater than anyone else. We are all sinners before God.

John tells those who have come to him what Messiah will do. For those who believed in the Lord, Jesus would give them the Holy Spirit; and for those who would reject Him, Jesus would bring judgment down on them (represented by fire).

Luke 3:17  His winnowing fork is in His hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

Throughout the Bible, there is always this separation of two sets of people. Some will be the wheat and some will be the chaff, which is the waste. The wheat is preserved by God and the chaff is placed under judgment (chaff is often burned up).

Luke 3:18  So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people.

\textsuperscript{19} Mary very likely was the one to tell Luke about Jesus, when He remained in Jerusalem as a youth, to discuss the Scriptures with the learned experts. My point being, there were not dozens of stories floating about concerning the youthful Jesus.
Many people asked John many questions; and he had a great deal to say; but not all of it is recorded in the gospels.

John also proclaimed the good news, which is the news of the coming Messiah.

We do not know the length of John’s ministry. I suspect that it took place over a period of perhaps 6 months (or less). If Jesus is the Messiah and His public ministry is 3 or 4 years in length; then John, His herald, should be in front of the public for a much shorter period of time (I would not be surprised to find that his desert ministry was only 1–3 months long).

John’s purpose was limited. He had things to teach those who did not believe that they were getting an accurate assessment of the Scripture through their Temple worship. People understood—or at least suspected—that there was something wrong with the religious class. Some groups of people were simply rejected by the religious class, so they had nowhere else to go. They came to John for guidance. But John’s primary purpose was to inform the people of the coming of their Promised Messiah.

Illustration: The protestant movement, known as the Reformation, rebelled, in part, against the religious class, which was a powerful and entrenched class in the Catholic Church. The established Catholic church, at that time, taught a great many falsehoods (which they do even today).

Vv. 19–20 take place near the end of John’s public ministry:

Luke 3:19–20 But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

That Herod the tetrarch was reproved by John is fascinating to me. Did John suddenly riff on Herod before a crowd of people? Or did John have some sort of face to face with Herod? The latter seems likely to me. The religious crowd clearly went out to see John; did Herod do that as well?

We saw in this chapter how various men stood up before John and asked, “What should I do?” I believe that Herod came out to see what all the fuss was about, heard people stand up and pose that question, so he did the same. “I am Herod, I rule over Galilee and Perea. What should I do?” He may have even spoke these words in jest, but he was not prepared to hear an actual answer from John. Most people cowed before such a cruel ruler; but John did not. John publically reproved Herod for these things that he did. No doubt, he took this public rebuke very personally. Although this is not recorded in Scripture, I believe that this is the circumstance behind how Herod came to be reproved by John.

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Although the Catholic Church today is much better than it was during the Reformation, they have yet to repudiate doctrines related to Mary and to the pope.
That John was put into prison is found in the 3 other biographies (Matt. 4:12  Mark 1:14  John 3:24), but without letting us know what transpired right before that. I have given you what I believe happened above.

Vv. 19–20 are an aside. These verses take a quick look into the future. We return to the present (the present of the narrative) with v. 21. With v. 21, we are back with John the herald, baptizing people; and Jesus has come before John and John baptized Him.

Luke 3:21  Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened,...

John is baptizing a number of people; but then, Jesus appears before him. John baptizes Jesus (Whom he recognizes from afar\(^{21}\)), and the heavens open up. I believe that the statement, the heavens were opened is defined by the next verse:

Luke 3:22  ...and the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased." (NKJV, capitalized)

The people there see something like a dove descend upon Jesus—this was the Holy Spirit manifested in a form which could be seen. There was a voice from the sky. I can recall God speaking the Ten Commandments in the hearing of all the people; and then there is this particular statement, heard by the people watching Jesus being baptized. I cannot recall any other time when God spoke to a group of people.

At this point in Luke 3, we examine the genealogy of Jesus, starting with Jesus and going all the way back to Adam, through His true mother, Mary. All people have a genealogy on the father’s side and on the mother’s side. Jesus had on a true human genealogy on His mother’s side. Jesus is fully man by birth; but this genealogy goes back only through Mary, as He is virgin-born (the other genealogy in the book of Matthew is the genealogy of his legal father, Joseph).

One might, in the middle of this narrative, ask, now, just exactly Who is this Jesus again? Whose Son is He? Luke answers such a question by presenting the genealogy of the Lord.

The House of David (a genealogical chart); from RedeemingGod.com; accessed November 21, 2018. This presents both lines leading to Jesus (the legal line and the bloodline).

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\(^{21}\) According to other gospels.
Luke presents Jesus (primarily) as the Son of Man; that is, Luke emphasizes Jesus’ humanity. Therefore, Luke emphasizes Jesus’ human birth and human origins. Jesus is fully and completely human; the doctrine of Kenosis tells us that He voluntarily sets aside His Deity in order to accomplish His work on earth. I believe that it is entirely possible that Jesus did not rely on His divine attributes to do anything during His life on earth (including the Transfiguration). However, I am not yet ready to defend that position.

The Two Genealogies of Jesus (a chart); from Medium.com; accessed May 7, 2020. I do object to the image of Jesus presented in this chart, as He did not have long hair.
Defining the concept of Kenosis is squaring the true humanity of Jesus Christ with His Deity. How is it possible for Jesus to be truly a man and yet the God of the Universe?

**Kenosis (from Theopedia)**

The term kenosis comes from the Greek word kenoô, translated "emptied" in chapter 2 of Paul's letter to the Philippians:

"Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but **emptied** Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men." (Philip. 2:6-7 NASB)

What has come to be called "Kenotic theology" attempts to understand the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity in light of the kenosis alluded to in Philippians 2:7. Its aim is to solve some of the supposed paradoxes arising from Jesus having both a divine nature and a human nature. For example, how could an all knowing God become a baby, how could God be tempted, or how could Jesus (being God) not know the time of His return?

The danger comes when it is concluded that in the incarnation, the second person of the Trinity took on human nature and gave up or lost some of the divine attributes -- so that
Kenosis (from Theopedia)

Jesus was not fully divine. The doctrine of the two natures of Christ (known as the hypostatic union) maintains that Jesus possessed a full undiminished human nature and a full undiminished divine nature, which were not combined or confused into some new nature but were added to each other forever (yet remaining distinct) in the one person Jesus Christ.

The question regarding the kenosis comes to this -- What does it mean when Scripture says Christ "emptied" Himself? Did Jesus cease to be God during His earthly ministry? Certainly not, for deity cannot stop being deity or He would never have been true deity to begin with. Rather, the "emptying" is satisfactorily explained in the subsequent words of the verse, taking note of the two participles which grammatically modify and explain the verb: He emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. This emptying, in fact, was done as the man Christ Jesus, and neither of these ideas necessitates or implies the giving up of divine attributes.

Christianity maintains that Jesus did not "empty" himself of any of his divinity in the incarnation, although it is true that his divine attributes were veiled. When the Kenosis theory concludes that Jesus is or was less than God (as has been the case in the past), it is regarded as heresy.


Two links to outstanding studies on the Doctrine of Kenosis: Charles Clough; Robert McLaughlin.

We might understand that the humanity of Jesus Christ set aside His Deific nature or chose not to access it.


Luke 4 picks up right where chapter 3 left off, where Jesus has made His first public appearance, before the disciples of John the baptizer. This public appearance, during which the Lord was baptized by John, began the Lord’s public ministry. He would remain in front of the people of God for the next 3 or 4 years.²²

It should not be lost on us the brevity of the Lord’s actual public ministry; or the limited region wherein He taught. Just as we should not have any historical knowledge of many people named in the Scriptures (such as Abraham, a shepherd-traveler); it is surprising that we know, 2000 years later, about the very short ministry of a teaching prophet which took place in a very small region halfway around the world.

²² The book of John records 3 Passovers which the Lord attended.
In Luke 3, we got a pretty extensive view of the ministry of John the baptizer. At the end of that narrative, John then baptizes Jesus, and the heavens open, and the Holy Spirit descends upon Him like a dove, and God the Father, from heaven, said, “You are My Beloved Son in Whom I am most pleased.” (Luke 3:21b–22).

Interestingly enough, we do not know how many people were there. 10? 15? Perhaps even 50 or 100—but John baptizes Jesus, and John’s ministry is thus eclipsed. As John himself said, “I must decrease and He will increase.” John’s very unusual ministry out in the desert-wilderness would no longer be the focal point of dynamic spiritual happenings. What John had been promising his followers out in the desert-wilderness, had come to pass. The Messiah, Jesus, had come.

With that, Jesus began His public ministry. Jesus, when He began His ministry, was about thirty years of age... (Luke 3:23a; ESV; capitalized)

No doubt you have heard the expression, cannot see the forest for the trees. That is, there are so many trees all around you that you have no real appreciation or overview of the entire forest. It might be an acre; and might be 100 sq. miles; there may be mountains, it may all be flat; there may be several rivers running through it. But there are just so many trees all around you that you cannot see anything but the trees in your immediate vicinity.

This expression describes much of Luke 4. There are many complex doctrines to be found here; and there will be times that, I explain what is going on in so much detail that you lose track of the narrative and/or the context. Therefore, periodically, I will stop and regroup, and remind you of the narrative itself.

Two doctrines occur to me immediately: the doctrine of intercalation (a doctrine many Christians know nothing about) and demonology. Many great and not so great books have been written about the latter doctrine.

Jesus will proclaim His Messiahship in this chapter; but He will also prevent demons from speaking of this. There will be other times when people want to talk about Him, and He will indicate that He would rather that they didn’t. What is going on here? A false modesty? Since Jesus is only on earth for a very short time, does He not want every human being to know about Him? Does Jesus not believe that, all publicity is good publicity? If we have something that we want others to know about, we might say to those in our periphery, and spread the word; tell your friends, neighbors and family. But Jesus did not do that. At no time is Jesus recorded saying, “I want you to tell 5 friends and I want each of them to tell 5 friends.”

My point is, there is a lot to explain and unpack in this chapter. For those of you who have to feel as if you are moving forward in any biography of Jesus; you will feel at times in Luke 4 as if your boots are in deep mud. But, for me as it should be for you, we consider the journey as every bit important as the destination itself.
In this chapter, Jesus will face the temptations of Satan; and then He will formally begin His Galilean ministry. I have pointed this out before—the Galilean region, historically, was not known for its positive volition towards God and His plan. This is up in the northern region; and, even though there are many Jews living in this area, it is not even seen as being Israel (the region to the south, called Judæa, is more properly considered the successor to ancient Israel). However, Jesus spends the majority of his public ministry right here in the north. It is to this region that Jesus will primarily minister. He will not spend a lot of time in Judæa; He will not spend a lot of time at the Temple (He will go there on several occasions, but the majority of Jesus’s ministry will occur in Galilee).

About midway through this chapter, Jesus will go to a synagogue in Nazareth and He will make the most powerful public statement that a man has ever made, clearly claiming to be the Messiah, upon Whom is the Spirit of the Lord. The response of the people is far different than we might expect—they will attempt to kill Him for blasphemy.

Throughout the remainder of the chapter, Jesus will heal and proclaim the Kingdom of God.

Right after being introduced to John’s disciples as the Messiah of God—which is confirmed by Luke’s genealogy—Jesus then is led into the desert-wilderness by God the Holy Spirit. Interestingly enough, in the middle of Luke 3, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus; and here, at the beginning of Luke 4, the Spirit leads Jesus into the desert-wilderness. What makes this interesting to me is, even though the first two chapters of Luke mention the Holy Spirit; Jesus is not associated with the Holy Spirit until He is baptized by John.

This certainly suggests the question, was Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit prior to John’s baptism? Let’s consider this logically. Jesus has grown spiritually throughout His life. We know that because of Luke 2:40, 52. Was the Spirit a part of His life in some way prior to John’s baptism. It seems logical that He must be, since He grew spiritually (by studying the Word of God). So, what occurred before the disciples of John in chapter 3 was actually for their benefit. They were able to see a physical manifestation of the power of God being given to Jesus, the man.

There is a different sort of relationship between the Spirit of God and man in the Old Testament economy. I believe that it is referred to as enduement. I do not know that I could adequately distinguish between the filling and the enduement of the Holy Spirit. However, it seems fairly clear that Jesus sending the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) is far superior (perhaps what is far superior is the fact that all believers receive the Spirit?).

In any case, Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit at the beginning of Luke 4. I believe that we are told that for our benefit, as the audience for Luke’s biography of Jesus. I do not think that Jesus being led by the Spirit is something new that had never happened before.

Luke 4:1a  And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan...
Jesus had been in the Jordan Valley being baptized by John. This is what we studied in the previous chapter.

Whereas, John has a full-blown ministry in the desert-wilderness—which ministry continues on at this point—Jesus begins His public ministry. However, His public ministry does not begin as we might think it would. There is a crowd, gathered there to see John, but Jesus does not take it over. Jesus did not look out over John’s disciples and say, “You have been following John; now you will follow Me.” The herald announces the King and the King is before His people; but, at a point where we might expect an inspiring inauguration speech—nothing is recorded by any of the disciples. In fact, for a short time, Jesus will disappear from the public’s radar for 40 days.

Luke 4:1b  ...and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness...

Jesus is said to be filled with the Spirit; and here, He is led by the Spirit. This is all true, but the information is given to us for our benefit.

I mentioned the doctrine of kenosis at the end of Luke 3. What we read here helps us to better understand how the Lord’s ministry operated. Jesus did not, by means of His omniscience, decide, “Next on My agenda is going off to the desert-wilderness to be tested.” Instead, He is being led there by God the Holy Spirit. As God, Jesus would have had direct access to the plan of God. He would know, this is #1 event, #2 event, etc. And he would go wherever based upon God’s plan. However, as a man, Jesus has this understanding only through the doctrine in His human spirit combined with the guidance of God the Holy Spirit. Just like you and I.

Jesus was very much like us, inasmuch as, He did not know what was going to happen over the next day, week or month. Now and again, this is going to explain His words or behavior. Because Jesus voluntarily functioned within the confines of His humanity, setting aside His access to His Own Deity, exactly what the future held for Him on any given day was not known to Him. Where He was to go next was not known to Him, except when guided by God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is here in the desert-wilderness being led by God the Holy Spirit. One of the remarkable things regarding Jesus—and I rarely see any of these being emphasized—He spent a considerable amount of time alone. He took time out to get away from the crowds. I can totally relate to that.

At this point in time, there were no crowds, apart from those who were gathered to see John. Jesus was a part of that crowd; but He was then baptized by John. Interestingly enough, Jesus does not say to John, “What you did was great; now I will take it from here.” and then He turns to teach the crowds. Jesus did not do that at all. Insofar as we know, He exchanged a few words with John and did nothing else. Interestingly enough, Jesus did not stand before the crowd and begin to speak (insofar as we know). John baptized Him, told the people Who He was; but I do not believe that Jesus even addressed the people there. He does not appear to have even lifted His hand in a friendly gesture, as if
to say, “Hey, how’s it going?” With no real commentary in between, we go from Jesus’ baptism out to the middle of the desert-wilderness to being led by the Spirit, even further into the uninhabited regions of Judæa.

He was being guided at this time, by God the Holy Spirit.

One of the many doctrines developed by R. B. Thieme, Jr. is, Jesus Christ test-drove the spiritual life for the believer in the Church Age. The spiritual life which you and I live was first lived by Jesus (not by Abraham, not by Moses, not by David). At the second birth, we are given the same resources that the Lord had. Even though He was minus a sin nature, we function without sin during the periods of time that we are filled with the Holy Spirit. This time may be 5 seconds, 5 minutes, and even, for some people at some times, 5 hours (at least until the time you have to enter into rush traffic).

What appears to be the case is, Jesus had the enduement of the Spirit from birth to around age 30—thus having exactly the same spiritual assets as the Old Testament saints; but, at the beginning of His public ministry, he is filled with the Holy Spirit, having the same spiritual assets of the Church Age believers. Was there a difference between Jesus prior to His public ministry and Jesus during His public ministry? I don’t know that there was exactly; and, at this point, I don’t believe that I could quantify this difference in any way. We can differentiate between believers in the Church Age and believers in the Age of Israel; but I don’t know that I can do that with Jesus.

Luke 4:1  And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness...

Jesus is relying upon the Spirit of God to guide Him. We do not know the mechanics for this, exactly; apart from Jesus Christ being in fellowship and being steeped in the Word of God. Jesus Christ grew spiritually in His humanity (And the Child grew, and became strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom. And the grace of God was upon Him. —Luke 2:40; LitV)

We do not know if Jesus knows that He is going out in the desert-wilderness in order to be tested by the devil; but that is what is about to happen. It is my opinion that He does not know what is about to happen.

Jesus, in His Deity, was omniscient; however, in His humanity, His knowledge was limited. The doctrine of Kenosis tells us that Jesus set aside the use of His divine assets, and He used only that which Church Age believers will be given. Again, He test-drove the spiritual life for us believers in the Church Age. In my opinion, He understood where the Spirit was guiding Him; but He did not know what would happen next.

Lesson 117: Luke 4:1–2  Jesus Fasting in the Wilderness

We have just begun to study Luke 4. We have completed the first verse:
Luke 4:1  And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness...

We do not know exactly where Jesus returned to. Given that particular word (*returned*) and given what He will do in the second half of this chapter, it appears that Jesus returned to His home (or hometown) in the Galilean region.

Luke 4:2a  ...for forty days, being tempted by the devil.

This will be the topic of the first 13 verses of this chapter; Jesus will be tested by Satan while in this state of hunger. This would represent Jesus at His weakest, humanly speaking.

What appears to be the case to me is, Jesus is tempted/tested for 40 days by Satan—we do not know how or with what; and we read about the final temptations on the 40th day. The text does not state this specifically, but idea of just 3 temptations over a period of 40 days seems rather light.

Satan is a genius; so we may trust that, having been given to go-ahead, was able to tempt the Lord for a long period of time. If you are familiar with the book of Job, and Satan appearing before God and asking to be able to take a number of liberties with Job—let me suggest that, as Jesus grew older, Satan continually petitioned to become a stumbling black in the life of the Lord. Just as God allowed some access to Job by Satan; God will grant some access to Jesus by Satan.

Interestingly enough, this appears to be the only direct interaction between Jesus and Satan. God appears to have given Satan some specific parameters to remain within, with the warning (apparently), “I will allow you to test My Son; but You may not physically harm Him; and you will have no direct contact after this time.” (This is speculation on my part.)

There will be 3 temptations recorded here and in Matthew (a parallel passage); and based upon the language, these were not the only tests; they were just the final 3 on the final day.

Luke 4:1–2a  And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil.

This first verse + 2a gives us the setup for the first 13 verses of this chapter.

Luke 4:2b  And He ate nothing during those days.

In the Greek, this reads, *and He did not eat nothing*... In the English, a double negative is a positive; but in the Greek, a double negative means, that the negative is emphasized much more than a single negative.

Jesus, in His humanity, has gone for 40 days without eating. For you or I, this would be impossible. However, for Jesus, this is not impossible because His body is without sin.
Recall that Adam lived for over 900 years. This is because his body, even though he had sinned, was closer to the perfect state of a physical body. As mankind continued in life, his length of life decreased, because of sin's effects on our genetics. Jesus, because He lacked a sin nature, had perfect genetics.

Personally, I am a very healthy guy. God has greatly blessed me with wonderfully good health. But there will come a time when my body begins to fail due to aging. This may occur a few days from now; or a few years from now. Obviously, at age 70, I have noticed some changes and have found there to be some restrictions as to what I am able and not able to do (I used to be able to easily run 3 miles without stopping; now it seems to be a greater effort to run those same 3 miles—and sometimes, I find myself running and walking them). But in terms of serious aging problems, I have been blessed not to suffer those things yet. But it will happen. There is no doubt about that.

Personally, I have fasted before, in my secular life; and, if memory serves, I went for 3 or 4 days without eating. I am not sure what the physical limitations actually are, but my guess is, after about a week or so, fasting could lead to death.

Jesus, even though He has a human body just like ours, His body is not corrupted by sin. His body could not only live for a long time (indeed, actually); but he is able to withstand, in His human body, great physical punishment without succumbing. So, His body is able to endure 40 days of fasting. No one else, apart from Adam (and others from the antediluvian era) perhaps, could do something like this. However, there is no doubt that the Lord, in His humanity, was very hungry.

Luke 4:2c And when they were ended, He was hungry.

This verse is literally translated, and completing them, He was hungry. Completing them means that Jesus had come to the end of these 40 days of prayer and fasting. Jesus is about to begin His public ministry and He is preparing Himself for it.

Many believers do not understand the concept of fasting and they often see the act of fasting as the focus of that spiritual experience. We do not necessarily set aside a day or a few days and decide, now, I am going to fast. Fasting is not an end in itself. Fasting is not you testing yourself and your control over your body. Fasting is where you set time aside for spiritual matters so that you do not have time to eat. You are setting aside a normal non-sinful activity in order to engage in spiritual growth or to do something related to the plan of God.

No doubt, you have worked on a project (for work or school) and you either skipped lunch or put off your lunch for an hour or two. That would be fasting—not a spiritual fast, but it is still a fast. People for their work, have forgone meals and sleep in order to complete whatever task is set before them. They have to complete a project before they are done for the day, and everyone continues to work on it until it is complete—sometimes forgoing their dinner (or putting it off for a few hours). That is a form of fasting.
The point that I am making is, fasting is not an end to itself. Fasting is not all about skipping a meal or three; but fasting is all about what is being done during that time instead of eating (or sleeping or whatever).

R. B. Thieme, Jr. used to have as many as 9 classes a week at church, and some people attended all of them or most of them. I can guarantee you that, during any one of those classes, 50 or 100 or more people had missed a meal to be there. Some did not have time to eat before class, and were starving—but they understood that spiritual food was more important; and so they showed up to class hungry, in order to take in spiritual food. Then, after class, they went home to enjoy some physical food. That is spiritual fasting. You set aside normal human activities, which are not sinful or forbidden, and use that time in order to achieve a spiritual goal (such as, taking in doctrine for an hour or more in Bible class). Something might be very important to you and you pray for it. For me, although I pray, I don’t tend to go on for very long. Typically, I might pray for a few minutes and name some specific things, and I am done. On occasion, I will speak to God for a longer period of time. But a 15 or 20 minute prayer? However, there are people who have very specific concerns and they will speak to God about these concerns, putting off a meal because they believe their concerns to be more important.

I write this in 2021 and we have witnessed the first change of presidency in the United States where it is clear that the voting was rigged; and that the person who did not actually win the election is now serving as president. I can guarantee you that many people (including myself), took this to God in prayer. Christians should be able to recognize that life in the United States has been unlike life anywhere else in the world; and that God has greatly blessed us in this. However, what has taken place is also a clear sign of discipline (along with the COVID disease). I would not be surprised if hundreds, if not thousands of people, prayed fervently to God over this, missing or putting off a meal to let their petitions be known to Him.

Personally, I don’t miss many meals. I will not win any awards as a great faster; but, in the mornings, I am hungry, but I will spend 30 minutes or an hour studying and writing first, and then I take my morning meal. That is fasting. Eating is legitimate and not sinful; but I am setting it aside—momentarily—and devoting myself to exegeting a passage and then explaining that passage. That is fasting, albeit limited to a very short period of time.

Luke 4:2c And when they were ended, He was hungry.

Jesus felt hunger, even as we all do. His body was telling him that it needed nutrients. This is clearly the humanity of Jesus which is functioning.

Luke 4:2 ...for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, He was hungry.

Jesus goes out in the desert-wilderness and He is fasting and being tempted by the devil. Was He tempted by Satan for the entirety of those 40 days? It is not clear; I would guess that the Lord had interactions with Satan perhaps several times each day. But what else
occurred during that 40 days? My only logical guess would be that Jesus was considering the Scriptures. Perhaps He was reading them from memory. Perhaps He was praying to God the Father. Obviously, in the desert-wilderness, if you are not eating (and, therefore, not looking for food), there are a very limited number of things that you might do. Jesus apparently concentrated on the Word of God during this time.

The text sounds as if Jesus is out in the desert-wilderness and the devil is tempting/testing Him while He is there, apparently fasting.

Or is Jesus there, fasting, but the testing does not occur until after 40 days?

One of the things which I learned under the ministry of R. B. Thieme, Jr. is, the action of the aorist participle precedes (or is coterminous with) the action of the main verb. There are actually 2 aorist participles in v. 2 and two main verbs. The problem I have seen with most translation is, they continue v. 1 into v. 2, which confuses the issue. In order to show this in English, a translator would have the first aorist participle followed later by the main verb, and the sentence would be ended. The second sentence would be the second aorist participle and it would be followed by the main verb. I looked over about 60 translations and, do you know how many actually followed that pattern? None. Two of them came close: the Contemporary English Version (which is know more for it paraphrasing and thought-for-thought translation) and the Douay-Rheims Bible (the Latin translation from the Greek; which Latin is then translated into English).

So, if our interest here was establishing a timeline, we would adhere to this pattern of two separate sentences in v. 2. The other approach would be to have a compound sentence, where these two sub-sentences are separated by a semi-colon:

He was tested [for] 40 days by the devil, but had not eaten anything [lit., nothing] in those days; and, completing them, He was hungry. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

More accurately, this would read: Having been tested [for] 40 days by the devil, He had not eaten nothing in those days; and they being completed, He was hungry. I have bolded the participles and underlined the main verbs. The action of the aorist participle (the bold text) occurs prior to (or coterminous with) the main verb (in both phrases, I have underlined the main verbs).

The first participle has Jesus being tested for 40 days. After that or coterminous with that, Jesus is not eating nothing. So, while being tested by the devil, Jesus is not eating. Whether these temptations continue constantly, several a day; or whether Satan shows up every few days with a new temptation, we do not know. Logically, God has limited Satan (but to what degree, we do not know).

But the testing took place over 40 days; and Jesus fasted during the testing. I would suggest to you that Jesus filled up whatever time was open to Him with prayer and the study of the Scriptures (Jesus did not need to have a physical Bible with Him; He would
have heard and remembered the words of God; so let me suggest that was thinking Scripture this entire time).

The second participle refers to the 40 days, which are completed. After these days are completed or during the time that they are coming to their completion, Jesus is hungry. Does Jesus think about this? Although this is purely conjecture, I would suggest that the temptations combined with the prayer and consideration of Scripture are so intense that, for the most part, He does not. As the 40 days come to a close, Jesus begins to realize that He is hungry. Let me suggest that this is more of a pressing concern to Him at this point.

In any case, we should understand what fasting is all about. Fasting is where you set aside normal and non-sinful activity in your life, in order to do something else—specifically to engage in spiritual activity. Although we are not told what else Jesus was doing, let me suggest that He was spending this time studying (or meditating upon) the Scriptures. And when I said meditating upon, what I mean is, He is thinking about passages which He has memorized and He considers what they mean.

Did Jesus, in His humanity, read the Scriptures, and immediately understand them? Or, did He add Scripture upon Scripture, precept upon precept, advancing spiritual and He learned more?

In order to follow the plan of God, Jesus was able to turn off or set aside His Deity. By choice, he kept His Deity and humanity separate. In some way, that had to happen. We have Him speaking sometimes from His humanity (I thirst; the Father is greater than Me); and sometimes He speaks from His Deity (Before Abraham lived, I existed eternally). It should be clear that, these sets of statements clearly proceed from His humanity or His Deity, specifically.

Jesus setting aside the attributes of Deity is known as kenosis. An illustration that occurs to me is, you are playing football with your young daughters, and you are carrying the ball, and you are running, but they grab you and pull you down. Quite obviously, if your daughters are under 10 years old, then you have the ability to smash right through them, and take that football wherever you want to, leaving those little girls lying on the field. But you don't do that; you would never do that. You withhold whatever skills, power and strength that you have, and you let them enjoy taking you down. This is how a normal father behaves. He sets aside his prowess as a football player and adjusts himself to the situation at hand.

Lessons 118–119: Luke 4:1–4 Why Didn't Jesus Make the Stones into Bread?

Jesus is about to begin His public ministry. Let me suggest that He is, so to speak, preparing for the exam. He is clearly well-taught up to the point; and now, He spends time in concentrated study, out in the wilderness.
Another reason to take the position that Jesus is studying the Word of God that is, every time that Jesus is tempted by Satan, He has the same response. He quotes the Word of God. That suggests to me that study of the Word of God occurred prior to these temptations. Jesus does not need to have a written Bible with Him, or a book or two of commentary with Him. Although Jesus is fully a man, let me suggest that He is perfect and without sin. Therefore, He could hear a verse, once or twice, and it would be committed to His memory.

Let’s consider the three temptations of this passage. Did all of the temptations occur at once? Did Satan tempt the Lord throughout the 40 days? Are these 3 instances of many? We simply do not know the answer to these questions. Even though the parallel passage in Matthew has the exact same 3 temptations, that is not proof positive that there were only 3 temptations. Luke may be referencing the book of Matthew right here. That book has 3 specific temptations, so Luke records the same 3.

If we consider the literal translation of this passage, it appears that Jesus was tempted throughout those 40 days. We have gone over the exact translation of v. 2, which seems to indicate that Satan continued tempting and testing the Lord for those full 40 days. Therefore, we will read about three temptations; but there were, very likely, far more than just those three.

Luke 4:1–2  Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan Valley, being led by the Spirit in the desert-wilderness. He was tested for 40 days by the devil, but had not eaten anything in those days. As a result, he was quite hungry.

There is another topic which is generally left undiscussed and, that is, how did Matthew or Luke know about this? This testing probably took place before all angelic creation; but there do not appear to be any people there besides the Lord. Therefore, we may only speculate. Jesus would have had to have revealed this and I suspect that He revealed these temptations either to His disciples or directly to Matthew. Another alternative is, Matthew was given this information directly from God the Holy Spirit (which is not my position on this matter). Luke, very likely, read this in Matthew’s account and recorded it here. It is quite a phenomenal thing that, the first thing that Jesus does after being baptized by John is to fast and face temptation. It does not appear that He did any teaching between these two incidents.

Before discussing this narrative any further, let me deal with a more trivial matter. Let’s say that Luke is writing his gospel, and he refers back to Matthew and to this parallel passage. Why doesn’t Luke say, “Matthew has already written about this, so I won’t”? You may not realize this, but that is an excellent question. If Luke reads the book of Matthew, why does he repeat this series of events in his own gospel?

The writers of the biographies of Jesus did not think, these biographies will be gathered up and placed into one big book, and that book will be distributed all over the world! These writers did not think this because they had no idea that was going to happen to their writings. I don’t believe that most of them thought of their writings as being inspired or as
the Scriptures (as we do). Luke was sending this information to a friend (and, I am sure he expected it to be shared with other believers). However, Luke did not necessarily think, “Well, these people have already read Matthew, so I don’t need to repeat it.” Luke did not expect for a believer to read both his and the other gospels. The person Luke was writing this to may even have been completely outside the circle of the Jewish disciples. Remember, Luke is a gentile; and Theophilus (to whom this is written), is certainly a Greek name.

Whatever the reason, Luke sees this event as being quite noteworthy; and so he includes it in his gospel. That is likely because the recipient of his gospel is not the same group as the recipient of Matthew or Mark’s gospels.

Along these same lines, recall that John writes a gospel (biography of Jesus) long after the other three have been published and sent throughout the world. We don’t know how widely that they were distributed, but my logical guess is, John was aware of the other 3 gospels before he wrote his. Furthermore, by this time, it is clear to John that these writings which will make up the New Testament are widely distributed. Matthew, Mark and Luke would not have known this.

John’s gospel, however, is a different story. It is my opinion that John felt that were some topics and incidents which needed to be explored logically. John knows what writings exist out there, and I believe he just sees a place for the things which he remembers. Therefore, when he writes his gospel, it is the least derivative of the others. His gospel narrative is the most complementary to the others. That is, if you are going to study two gospels, make one of them the book of John.

Luke 4:1–2 Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan Valley, being led by the Spirit in the desert-wilderness. He was tested for 40 days by the devil, but had not eaten anything in those days. As a result, he was quite hungry.

I want to suggest something else which took place in the desert-wilderness at this time, during these 40 days. Fasting is not about not eating. Fasting is all about what you do instead of eating. Fasting is taking time from doing legitimate things and devoting that time to spiritual activity. What spiritual activity was Jesus involved in at this time? Did Satan tempt Him nonstop? Or, was Jesus doing something else? Let me suggest that Jesus had the Scriptures with Him in the desert-wilderness. Now, He may not have had the scrolls physically in His possession, but He is a man very much like Adam, born without a sin nature.

Let me suggest that Jesus was capable of things that we would find to be impossible for us. What we read about here is, He fasted for 40 days. We know that man cannot survive without food. I don’t know the time frame, whether it is a week or two, but no other man could physically endure going 40 days without food.

I believe that Jesus not only prayed, during this time, but he spent this time going over the Scriptures in His mind. I believe that Jesus was capable not only of reading and
understanding the Word of God; but also that He was capable of remembering all of it. I need to emphasize that this is conjecture on my part; but I believe that the mentality of created man was far greater than we could imagine today. Even after man had fallen, even after the flood, let me suggest that many people learned and could recite the book of Genesis—even the genealogies.

Today, there are people who remember every day of their lives. There are people who are unable to forget much of their lives. People put up with me and I put up with other people because our memories fade. When I recall my childhood, I recall primarily pleasant memories. However, I know in my youth, there were times when I was very unhappy. I know that intellectually, but not emotionally. My emotions from that period of time have been smoothed over.

Now, there were interactions that I had with other people which were quite bad. But, because my memories have faded over the years, all of that is in the past and mostly forgotten; and I hold no one responsible for anything that was done to me (and I hope that they feel the same way about me). As normal human beings, our life is like that. Our past fades and we are able to forgive people that we thought, at the time, we could never do. But, there are people who cannot do that. If you have ever had someone who has done you wrong, it is hard to forgive them right then and there; and it is even hard to forgive them a day later or a week later, because the memory is so fresh in your mind. A year or two or five, and that memory fades enough for you to let bygones by bygones.

Surely you have known of estranged families. It is not unusual for two sisters to have a falling out, or a father and son; and this may continue for a period of several years. However, there will come a point when, whatever set this off, fades from memory; and so family members are able to reunite (despite being at odds with one another for years).

However, do you know that there are people who cannot do this? Their memories of 5 years ago are as fresh today as they were the day that it happened. It is a bizarre mental condition (I saw a special on 60 Minutes on this\(^2\)). So, you can give these people a date—December 27\(^{th}\), 1992—and they can remember what happened on that specific day, what they did, what the weather was like and how they felt about it. They also know who they interacted with that day, and if it was an emotional interaction, they remember the situation and emotions as if it were yesterday. And this is with them their entire lives. For me, at this time in my life, upon walking into a room, the first thing that occurs to me is, “Why did I just walk into this room?” But the people with hyper-memory—their memories are much more cogent.

I say this because I believe that man has mental capabilities that would almost seem like super powers to us—one of those capabilities being a perfect memory. Let me suggest to you that Jesus had a perfect memory and that, by this time in His life, He knew the Scriptures thoroughly. In his mind, He could mentally google anything in the Scriptures, and instantly come up with the pertinent Scriptures and what they mean. Therefore,

\(^2\) The link is to an Australian version; but there is also a 60 Minutes story on this same thing.
considering all of the Old Testament is what I believe that Jesus was doing in the desert-wilderness for those 40 days. In between times, He was praying and being tempted. This is speculation on my part, but I believe it to be fundamentally accurate.

There is one more thing to be discussed, and that is the doctrine of Kenosis. This is where Jesus voluntarily restricts His Divine Nature. Although there were times when Jesus was in touch with Himself as God (at least, theoretically); most of the time, it appears that He was not. How do we explain this? How does God stop being God, even for a second? Or, how is it possible, if Jesus is God, for Him to set that Essence aside for a period of time (I believe this could have been for His entire earthly life)?

The best I can do here is to propose an analogy. Your body does a massive number of things that you are unaware of, but these things are programmed by your brain. You breathe, your heart beats, your blood flows, your food is digested; and these things all take place without you actually thinking about it. At no time in the day do you say, “Okay, for the next minute, my heart will beat 50 times and for the next minute, it will beat 70 times.” We can’t do that. At most, we can exercise vigorously and increase our heart rate. But, even though our brains in closely involved with the beating of our hearts, this is not something that we consciously determine and will. You may be able to hold your breath until you pass out, but, your brain will take over and restore your normal breathing function after you are passed out.

So, let me suggest that the Godly qualities of Jesus—His Divine Nature—are sort of placed on auto-pilot. He may access these things from time to time, as per the Father’s plan; but His Divine Functions are carried out but somehow separate from His conscious mind. Much as our physical functions occur throughout the day, every day, without our having to contribute any conscious thought to them (and there are a huge number of things which our brain seems to direct throughout the day which bypasses our volition). Throughout most of Jesus’ life, He functions with the same mind and the same bodies that we have; subject to similar limitations. His lacking sin allows Him to be able to do some things which we cannot (having a complete memory; being able to go long periods of time without food); but we should also bear in mind that, these things are not necessarily better, in the strict sense.

If you or I had a perfect memory, then there would be people that we could never forgive (possibly every person we have known). The wrong which they did to us would always be fresh in our minds. We could not let go of it. I know someone who had an event take place in his past, and he could not let go of it; and eventually, he took his life as a result (combined with, in my opinion, taking psychotropic drugs at the same time).

My point being, having a perfect memory is not necessarily an asset. If our memories were perfect, we might not forgive anyone at anytime for what they have done to us. We might not ever get over love that is lost. I have lost a few girlfriends; but in retrospect, the emotion and the friendship are things which I remember without actually having the emotion affect me. There is a point at which, the highly charged emotional aspect of a lost
relationship is filtered out of my conscious mind. I cannot even bring a re-experience of those emotions, if enough time has transpired.

Jesus, on the other hand, could not do this. When He heard something, He could not un-hear it; nor was He capable of forgetting it. Throughout His entire life, people said mean and hateful things to Jesus—and these are people for whom Christ would die—and unlike problems we have had in interactions with other, Jesus could not simply set these things aside and forget them. I believe that these things stayed with Jesus all of His earthly life (and probably still).

Again, I am speculating here; but I believe that these are reasonable and logical conclusions which we can make about our Lord in His humanity.

At v. 3, we look at the first temptation:

Luke 4:3a  The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God,...

Satan is right there with Jesus, aware of His hunger, and he challenges Him. “If you truly are the Son of God...” is the first half of the devil’s challenge.

This is a 1st class condition, which means that the speaker is either is recognizing the truth of his own statement or is simply assuming the truth in order to make a point. I believe this to be the 1st class condition of a logical argument. A translation could convey this with the words given, truly or really. Those words are implied. Some translators did not use the word if, but the word since. Wilbur Pickering translated this verse: So the devil said to Him, “Since you are Son of God, tell this stone to become bread!” Satan understood Jesus to be the Son of God as a reality, and he began with that as his assumption.

Luke 4:3b  ...command this stone to become bread."

The devil provides a simple solution: “You are hungry and You are the Son of God; so just command this stone to become a loaf of bread. Obviously, You are able to do that.” And Jesus is. How do I know that He is capable of doing that? The first miracle that Jesus does in the book of John is turn water into wine. He is actually turning one element into another element (I know that is not the proper usage of the word element).24

Now, all of this is true. Jesus is the Son of God and He is able to command that stone to become bread so that He might eat it. Surely, there is no sin in that! That is Satan’s argument.

Question: why can’t Jesus just do this? He has the power, so why not exercise this power? What is the big deal?

24 Jesus turns a compound into a mixture; and it is a completely different combination of ingredients.
1. Is this some sort of a contest? Since Satan is the first to suggest, “Make this stone into a loaf of bread” is that why Jesus cannot do it?
2. Is there a problem that Satan suggests this? Is there a sin involved with doing this?
3. Not exactly; not exactly is the answer those questions.
4. However, we ought not think that this is some sort of a contest where Satan says, “Do this,” and, therefore, Jesus cannot do that thing. The situation is far more subtle than that.
5. Recall that Jesus is executing the spiritual life; the same spiritual life that we will execute. He is test-driving the Christian life. So, Jesus must remain within the boundaries of that spiritual life. He cannot step outside of these boundaries. God has a plan for His life, and that plan cannot include starvation. Therefore, Jesus does not depend upon His Own Deity to resolve this situation (since we are unable to do that). Jesus, instead, depends upon God the Father.
6. We are related to God and God has given us the ability to pray to Him. Does this mean that we can pray to God when we are hungry and then, suddenly, there will be a perfectly cooked meal sitting before us?
   1) People confused about the Christian life think that, with enough faith, this could happen.
   2) So, either the problem is with our faith or God’s ability, right?
   3) But in the modern-day Christian life, we do not pray for miracles when this is something that we are able to do ourselves.
   4) I may not be in the mood to cook tonite, but God has provided me with money, with food (which I purchased with that money) and everything necessary in order to cook it. How arrogant would it be of me to tell God, “Make the food for me!”
   5) Much of the Angelic Conflict is all about making decisions and doing things. Our daily life, which includes eating and drinking, is the result of us making decisions and us doing things.
   6) At the same time, we can be in a hopeless situation where we have nothing that we can depend upon except for God’s grace and power; and then, prayer for some sort of divine intervention is legitimate. I am praying about one of those things right now. I know, if it is in God’s plan, He can answer my prayer. I am also aware that it may not be a part of His plan to answer my prayer.
7. Jesus cannot use His relationship with God to do a miracle simply to benefit His Own pleasure or need.
8. Jesus cannot choose to access His Own Deific nature; that would be outside of God’s plan for Him.
9. Since Jesus is test-driving the Christian life, He cannot, under duress decide to turn stones into bread. We are not capable of doing this; therefore it would be wrong for Jesus to do this.
10. If Jesus did what Satan called upon Him to do, He would be telling us, “It is good and wonderful to follow the plan of God; but, there are times where you cannot
Why Can’t Jesus Simply Command the Stone to Become Bread?

11. Jesus cannot act outside of the plan of God, which is what this would be doing. God the Father has made provision for all that Jesus would need; so going *ahead of God* like this would be outside of God's plan.

12. Remember, even though Jesus has access to His omniscience, He is not accessing it either. He certainly knows that He is hungry; and He also knows that God will provide for Him when that becomes necessary. He does not know when this is going to happen or in what form it will happen; but He trusts that it will happen.

13. There will not be a situation where God forgets to feed one of His Own.

14. The NET Bible explains this far more succinctly than I have: *Jesus will live by doing God’s will, and will take no shortcuts.*


I send out a Bible lesson each week. That involves a great deal of study and writing—much more than the recipients realize. My choosing to do this—whether or not anyone actually reads the lesson—is part of my divine production during my life. If I were to pray to God, “You do the lesson this week and email it out,” that would be short-circuiting the plan of God. God made us so that we take part in His plan.

I do not close my eyes, start typing, and decide, that’s good, and then send that lesson out. There are times when I may go back and rework a lesson 5 or 10 times. Once and awhile, the day before I sent a lesson out, I may do a wholesale change on the lesson itself. My point is, my mind is at work considering the material that I have before me, and how best to communicate what it says.

A quarterback works out a play with his coaches; and during the big game, the coach tells him, “Now, it’s time to run this play.” Does the quarterback say, “Why not let Charlie Brown run this play?” Of course not! As a team member, the quarterback is called to do a job, and he goes out there and does it. He might be hurting in ways that we cannot even imagine, and yet he will get out there and execute that play flawlessly (or very nearly so). That is what he has been trained to do.

Similarly, as believers in Jesus Christ, we have been prepared to run various plays; and some of these are mundane and some of them are rather exotic; but God expects us to do what we have been trained to do. If God steps into the picture and does thus and so, then our volition is set aside, and our purpose for being alive is set aside.

If you are a new believer, this may be hard to understand, but, when you are functioning within the plan of God, it is a great thing. That is, it is something that you will enjoy doing, whatever it is that God has planned for you.
If there is a sport or some sort of legitimate activity that you are good at, then you often enjoy doing that thing. This is what we are allowed when functioning within the plan of God.

Luke 4:3  The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."

Quite obviously Jesus is the Son of God and He is capable of turning the stones before Him into bread, that He might eat.

This temptation is interesting to me because Jesus has probably not performed any miracles yet to this point in His life. He is able to do this, but Satan has never seen Him do anything that is amazing, as far as miracles are concerned. But Satan knows enough that He understands Who Messiah is and how powerful Messiah is.

Is it possible that Satan is just curious; and he would like to see just what the Messiah can do? I would think that Satan’s purpose is more nefarious than that. After all, if Jesus uses His Deity to do something He feels is necessary, He has stepped outside of the plan of God; and He has just proven that the plan of God combined with the power of the Spirit and the Word of God is not sufficient.

Luke 4:4a  And Jesus answered him,...

Jesus speaks directly to Satan. There is no doubt that there are millions of angels watching this interaction take place.

Luke 4:4b  "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"

As men, our life is not dependent upon the food that we eat (or the clothes that we wear). All men have a spiritual side—for some, it is completely dormant—and our lives are incomplete without the spiritual side. For the unbeliever, that requires him to believe in Jesus Christ. For the believer, that requires him to listen to and obey the Word of God.

The full quotation comes from Moses, speaking to the people prior to their entering the land. And he is reminding them all of what they have learned along the way. He is also making application of some of their experiences to the reality of the spiritual experience. Deut. 8:3  “And He [God] humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.” (ESV; capitalized) He refers to God the Father Who made provision for His people out in the desert-wilderness. They had no food; they had no way to grow good; and God provided them with manna each and every day, regardless of how many times that they reject Him; and regardless of their sorry mental attitudes. God is still faithful. Almost every
person in Gen X\textsuperscript{25} died in the desert from the sin unto death; but God fed them each and every day up to that point. That is grace!

It was not the bread that fed the people of Israel in the desert, but God and God’s logistical support.

Even though the final words \textit{but by every word of God} are in question (the Westcott Hort text does not have these words); similar words come from Deuteronomy (\textit{but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD}); so, it is not out of the question to accept those final words in Deuteronomy to complete the thought here. Also, we find these additional words in Matt. 4:4: But He answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' " (ESV; capitalized; my color code)

Luke 4:4 Jesus answered him directly, saying, "It stands written that man cannot live by bread alone."

Taking into consideration the parallel passage in Matthew; and the quoted text in Deuteronomy 8:3, we know that, even more important than the food that He eats, is the Word of God. I have suggested that what Jesus was studying in the desert-wilderness is the Word of God. He does not need the manuscripts; he can have these words memorized; He is able to know the text perfectly by memory. Jesus is in the desert-wilderness not living on physical food but living on the Word of God.

If Jesus’ response to the devil is the Word of God; if that is how Jesus directly confronted temptation, should we not consider becoming immersed in the Word of God as well?

Luke 4:4 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.' "

Jesus answers all 3 temptations with Scripture.

Let’s look at another translation of the passage which Jesus refers back to.

Deut. 8:3 [Moses is speaking to the congregation of Israel; and he is reviewing their interactions with God.] "And He [God] has humbled you, and caused you to hunger, and caused you to eat the manna, which you had not known, and your fathers had not known, in order to cause you to know that man shall not live by bread alone, but man shall live by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of Jehovah." (Green’s literal translation)

God gave Israel manna, when they lived out in the desert-wilderness; as a demonstration of His love and faithfulness.

Jesus knows that He can depend upon God the Father and His plan to provide Him with food. This is a specific example from the Word of God which indicates that this is true.

\textsuperscript{25} These are the adults who walked out of Egypt, following Moses.

We have previously studied the first temptation of Christ, where Satan suggested that He turn stones to bread, in order to satisfy His great hunger. Jesus responded to Satan by quoting Scriptures ("Man does not live on bread alone," he said, "But man [is sustained] by the Word of God."—quoting Deut. 8:3).

Luke 4:5a  And the devil took Him up...

We have a variety of manuscripts upon which we base our New Testament text. I begin my studies with the Westcott Hort text, which simply reads, and he brought Him. However, I also examine other texts. The 1894 Scrivener Textus Receptus reads, instead: The devil brought Him to a high mountain...

Sometimes, when copies of the manuscripts were made, there might be some portions which were unreadable; or the copyist simply left a portion of the text out (by mistake). It is likely that all this text was in the original (as it is more common for text to drop out than for text to be added in).

The text in the parallel passage in Matthew certainly speaks of a mountain (or something akin to a mountain?). Matt. 4:8  Again, the devil takes Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and shows Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. (VW).

Interestingly enough, having mentioned the Matthew narrative, this temptation is the second one recorded by Luke; the third one in the book of Matthew. I do not have an explanation for this, apart from, perhaps, Luke choosing to put these in chronological order (and that is a guess on my part).

Luke 4:5b  ...and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,...

A moment of time is three words in the Greek. The first is the preposition en (ἐν) [pronounced en], which means, in, by means of, with; among when used with a dative/locative/instrumental case (I believe that this would be the locative case). This is followed by the feminine singular noun stigmê (στιγμῆ) [pronounced sithg-MAY], which means, an instant, a moment of time, a point in time. Strong’s #4743. Although this word only occurs here in the New Testament, it is paired in Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (enhanced) with a Hebrew noun which means the same thing. This is affixed to the genitive/ablative of the masculine singular noun chronos (χρόνος) [pronounced CHROHN-oss], which means, time; time as a succession of events. Strong’s #5550. The literal translation is, in a moment of time. Although that is the most common translation, it is also translated, in a flash, in an instant.

We do not know exactly how this was done.

26 Compare Strong’s #G4743 with Strong’s #H6621.
Some have made the assertion that this is proof that the writers of Scripture thought that the earth was flat. That is silly. We do not know how this happened in a moment of time; and we do not know how all of the kingdoms could be seen. Most of us have been in a plane, and the pilot might direct our attention to this or that thing. If flying over Denver, CO, the pilot does not direct our attention to the large estate of the richest man in the region, he says, instead, “We are now flying over the Rocky Mountains.” Even from a plane, we cannot see the rich and/or powerful; we can only see a very large geological wonder. My point being, what exactly was Jesus able to see and from where?

In any case, in some way, the Lord was made aware of all the kingdoms of the earth; and this may not have been something which He previously knew in His humanity. We do not know what Jesus saw exactly. The Lord, in His omniscience, could see all the kingdoms of the earth, but, as we have discussed, He does not operate in the sphere of His Deity. Given that the Lord was not encumbered with a sin nature, what was He able to see?

It is interesting that the text speaks of this as taking place in a moment of time or in an instant. I would have thought, instead, that, Satan might want to linger on these various kingdoms.

We may reasonably suppose that Satan is able to quickly travel throughout the world; perhaps he can go from New York City to Tokyo in a few seconds. He Satan has his minions scattered throughout the earth, exerting whatever influence they are allowed to exert. How this can help us understand how the Lord to see these kingdoms in an instant, I do not know.

Today, in this era, we have camera crews, and we can see things happening throughout the world all simultaneously on 5 or 10 or 20 screens at the same time. Or, a video clip can be put together where, in a second, one can be exposed to 24 different pictures. I am not saying that there is any sort of technology like that; but there may be ways that angels could make such things happen. We are rarely privy to what takes place on the angelic realm. A limited amount of information has been revealed to us (such as, the first 2 chapters of the book of Job).

Here, what we are told, leaves us with far more questions than answers.

Luke 4:5 And the devil took Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,...

We do not know exactly how this was accomplished. How exactly does the devil take a hold of Jesus? Is he given permission to have normal physical contact with Jesus?

Secondly, how does he show Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time? Obviously, if they are both standing over the earth, can they really see all the kingdoms of the world? Are they able to see many established kingdoms with their palaces? Or is there some other way that Satan is able to do this?
Or, am I thinking of the palaces and estates, whereas Satan was showing Jesus the
amazing extent of the world? The mountains, oceans, rivers, deserts, greenery.

Perhaps you have seen Google maps, where we take a very specific place on earth (a
street, a home, etc.), and we move to a vantage point far away, in just a few seconds.
Perhaps Satan brings Jesus to a place where He is sort of zooming out, but taking in what
a great, vast expire the world is. If I were to make a guess, I believe that this is the sort of
thing that we are talking about.

Given the Lord’s genius (not His omnipotence, but His human genius), He is able to
process all of this in a very short period of time. Man would have a very small picture of
the world—and there is nothing to suggest that Jesus in His humanity had a perception
which went beyond where He had lived. If He is somehow pulled way up over the earth,
where He can take in all of Asia and Europe—simply as a massive piece of real
estate—perhaps that is how it was conveyed to Him to extent of Satan’s domain.

Obviously, others have their opinions:

Dr. Dan Hill suggests this: *Now you cannot see the whole earth from one
mountain so this is a vision. We can thus see that Satan can induce visions
in people as he does so here is the humanity of Christ.*

H. Leo Boles: *Jesus was given a vision of the inhabited world, "all the
kingdoms of the world"; he not only saw Palestine, but also the heathen
world, over which Satan exercised spiritual dominion; from the lofty elevation
the kingdoms or tetrarchies of Palestine and adjacent regions could be seen,
and the more distant empires of the world might be suggested by the
tempter. There was something supernatural in this act which enabled Jesus
to see these in a "moment of time"; the suddenness of the view added much
to the power of the temptation.*

Now and again, we simply have to accept the Scriptures at face value, without having any
idea as to the exact process or methodology. Satan took Jesus to a very high mountain
(*why and how?*) and he showed Him the kingdoms of the world in an instant (*how?*). Now
and again, we will follow a passage as far as we possibly can, but there are times when
that still leaves us with many unanswered questions.

Luke 4:6a ...and said to Him,...

After showing Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, then Satan speaks to Him, making Him
an offer.

Luke 4:6b ..."To You I will give all this authority...

Satan is the ruler of this world. He would give the authority of the world over to Jesus.

Satan is not the permanent ruler of the world; but he usurped the authority of man when man sinned. But perhaps his power might be more permanent, if there is no redemption for man? After all, if man cannot be redeemed, why would he have any more of a right to rulership than Satan?

It is also worth noting that this is a unique temptation. If this is a valid offer—and I assume that it is—the length of Jesus’ reign would have been considerable, given His unique physical nature.

In the Old Testament, there is considerable prophecy concerning the future Messiah (David’s Greater Son) reigning over the earth. Satan may or may not have known what Jesus was there to do, but Satan offers the Lord all of that right then and there. The Bible indicates that He would get it eventually; but Satan says, “It’s Yours right now.” Satan’s offer seems to be, “Whatever You think You have planned, let me simply give it to You right now!”

On the other hand, can Jesus step outside of the plan of God in His humanity and what exactly would that look like? So far, the best explanation has been the Latin phrase Posse Non Peccare, non Posse Peccare (which means, He was able to not sin and He was not able to sin). In the Lord’s humanity, He could choose not to sin. In His Deity, He was unable to sin.

From man’s point of view, it would have been a tragic decision indeed for Jesus to accept Satan’s offer.

We should not simply consider Jesus in this situation, but Satan as well. He is willing to give up everything in his power to bring God to a stalemate.

Luke 4:6c  ...and their glory,...

The glory of this position and this power would belong to Jesus as well.

Jesus has come from very humble means, as we have studied. There is reason to assume that the glory or splendor of these kingdoms might have had some appeal. Nevertheless, I am not suggesting that Jesus is swayed by it.

Luke 4:6d  ...for it has been delivered to me,...

Satan, when man sinned, became ruler of the world. In many places in Scripture, Satan is called the ruler of this world. He confirms this right here.

Both Adam and the woman did the bidding of Satan, giving him this authority. God originally gave Adam the authority over the world; but Adam knowingly sinned against God. Adam may not have appreciated all of the consequences of his sin, but he did do the one
thing which God told him not to do. Satan deceived the woman; but Adam sinned knowingly.

Luke 4:6d  ...and I give it to whom I will.

If Satan desires to give all or a portion of this authority to someone else, he has that ability to do so. If he has the authority in the first place (which he does), then he also has the ability to delegate this authority to someone else.

Elsewhere, Scripture tells us that Satan is the ruler of this world (John 12:31) and he is the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2). These are the kingdoms of Satan, as God has given Satan considerable authority over the earth (which man gave up in the fall).

Luke 4:6  ...and [Satan] said to Him [Jesus], "To You I will give all this authority and their glory, for it [this authority] has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.

Satan has dominion over the earth. The earth is his to deal with (within whatever restrictions God has put upon him). So Satan can give Jesus control of all these countries and each and every kingdom; and over all of the land and water that Jesus could see from a high place.

Jesus, if He goes to the cross, will be given rulership over all mankind and over all the earth. Satan is telling Him, “You don’t have to go through that pain and suffering. I can give You all of that without the pain.”

Satan, at some point, knew that Jesus was going to the cross (or to a time of terrible suffering). Jesus, during His earthly ministry, will reveal that time of suffering would be by crucifixion. Satan knew Psalm 22 and he knew Isaiah 53, but I don’t believe that he fully appreciated the consequences of the cross. I find myself being at two minds concerning this: (1) Satan understood, somehow, that sins would be forgiven on the basis of the cross, yet he seems to encourage and inspire Jesus’ enemies; or (2) Satan did not fully appreciate what the crucifixion would mean. He did not understand what would happen when Jesus was on the cross.

I lean towards the latter explanation. That is, despite all that Satan knew (and he knows Scripture far better than we do), he did not fully appreciate what was coming. He perhaps understood that he would be given the opportunity to inflict great pain and suffering upon the Lord, but I do not think that he understood that, during this time, God the Father would lay upon His Son all of our sins.

Regarding these things, Jesus will tell Peter (and the other disciples) about His impending crucifixion, and Peter says, “May this not happen!” And Jesus then says to Peter, “Satan, get behind Me!” Did Jesus say this because Satan did not want Him going to the cross; or did Jesus say this, knowing that this should have been Satan’s position? Satan, although the most brilliant creature to come from the hand of God, was possibly flummoxed
by some things which the Lord said. (You will notice the many qualifiers that I have scattered throughout these last few paragraphs—I am essentially thinking out loud).

This sort of approach may help us to better understand the Old Testament Scriptures. Despite all that is in the Scriptures by way of prophecy, we do not find in the Psalms or in the book of Isaiah, “The Son of God will be born to Mary in Bethlehem. He will have two natures, human and divine. Nevertheless, He will set His Deity aside and represent God on this earth as fully human. In the end, He will be crucified and pay the penalty for our sins during that process. Then God will raise Him up from the dead.” Even though, we can go to a number of Old Testament Scriptures and piece much of that together, we are able to do that because we have a full historic perspective of these events. But prior to the cross, the full meaning of this information is still hidden from Satan. He was unable, in his great genius, to put all of it together. Primarily, he did not seem to realize that, on the cross, God the Father would pour out our sins onto Jesus.

Perhaps you have heard of the elephant parable.

From Wikipedia: It is a story of a group of blind men who have never come across an elephant before and who learn and conceptualize what the elephant is like by touching it. Each blind man feels a different part of the elephant’s body, but only one part, such as the side or the tusk. They then describe the elephant based on their limited experience and their descriptions of the elephant are different from each other...The moral of the parable is that humans have a tendency to claim absolute truth based on their limited, subjective experience as they ignore other people’s limited, subjective experiences which may be equally true.29

This very much describes the prophecies of the Old Testament, where the psalmist perceives one thing; the prophet Isaiah sees another, and Ezekiel sees something else. Now, when you put all of these together, we potentially, from the Old Testament, are able to speak about the Messiah to come (I am looking at this from a pre-incarnation view). But no one was able to take all of this information and put it all together—not even Satan. Yet, in retrospect, it seems so very clear (if you know about the many Old Testament prophecies of the Lord). See the Chart of Jesus in the Old and New Testaments (HTML) (PDF) (WPD).

Luke 4:7a If You, then, will worship me,..."

This is what Satan requires. “Worship me,” he tells Jesus.

There is an intervening word which I have left out (along with many other translators). That word is enòpion (ἐνώπιον) [pronounced en-OH-pee-on], and it means, before, in front of, in the sight of, in the presence of. I don’t think that we could understand that Satan wants

to watch Jesus worship in front of him; but that he wants Jesus to direct His worship towards Satan.

It would seem that, whatever Satan knows or does not know about Jesus dying for our sins, having the humanity of Jesus bow before him would be reason enough to throw the world into chaos. I believe that Satan has theorized this much.

**Application:** Considering what Satan is offering here, this helps us to distinguish an anti-establishment person from the divine establishment person. Do they want law and order; do they want controlled environments; do they want a careful balance of freedom and safety? That would be a person who favors divine establishment. Do they want to be lawless? Do they want to destroy some building? Do they want to cause chaos and damage? Do they want to do whatever they want to do? That is a person who is anti-establishment. The anti-establishment type is unable to truly articulate how they can go from damage and chaos to some better world that they believe they are ushering in. Yet, that is what they do.

Luke 4:7b  *...it will all be Yours.*

This may seem like a lot for Satan to give away; but if Jesus completes God’s plan, that means that Satan will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Satan would do anything to avoid that. He would even give up his kingdom, earth.

If Jesus chooses not to fulfill God’s plan (and I don’t think that even Satan fully appreciates what that plan is at this time), then Satan might retain his reign over the earth; and he might stay his own execution.

Luke 4:7  *If you, then, will worship me, it [the authority over all the earth] will all be Yours.*

Satan suggests that Jesus bypass the cross (or whatever His future holds). There is great pain and suffering in the cross, and Satan is making a legitimate offer to Jesus. Satan is the ruler of this world. He tells the Lord, “Prophecy tells me that you will come to a point where you can reign over the world. Well, I am willing to give that to you right now.”

Satan does not know or fully appreciate what Jesus has planned. But Satan recognizes Jesus as far more than a man and even more than a prophet. Given all that has happened, does Satan understand that Jesus is the divine Son of God? It is difficult to come to some conclusions, when our questions involve what are the actual thoughts and motivations of another creature.

Luke 4:8a  *And Jesus answered him,...*

Despite being extremely hungry, Jesus has an immediate answer for Satan.

Luke 4:8b  *"It is written, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God,...* (Deut. 6:13)
The first verb, found here in the perfect tense, means, it stands written in the past with the result that it keeps on being written and meaningful for today.

We do not worship anyone apart from the Lord our God. This immediately makes the request of Satan a non-starter. It does not matter what Satan has offered; it does not matter what Satan's motivation is. The only thing that matters here is, this is in opposition to the clear statement of the Word of God. Jesus can only worship God the Father.

Luke 4:8c ...and Him only shall you serve.' (Deut. 6:13)

Our service is directed only to the Lord as well.

Jesus goes back to Deut. 6:3 to quote from. This is fascinating because, throughout Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, we have the words of God, spoken directly to Moses. But, instead, for a second time, Jesus goes to the words spoken by Moses to the people of Israel (prior to them entering into the land). Deut. 6:13 It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by His name you shall swear. (ESV; capitalized) The context of this quote is Israel entering into the Land of Promise and being warned by Moses not to worship the gods of the conquered peoples there. We are not even to worship the angels (Rev. 19:10 22:9), as they are servants just as we are.

By quoting Deuteronomy as being authoritative, Jesus is giving it the same authority as the words spoken directly by God. So, even though the verbal plenary view of Scripture is one theory of many regarding the inspiration of the Scriptures, Jesus, by quoting this verse, is extending the authority of the Bible to all portions of it.

You will notice that Jesus takes the Old Testament word fear and replaces it with worship; because the two are interrelated. The Old Testament concept of fear meant that the Lord was to be obeyed, feared and thought about. That does, in many ways, define what worship is.

Deut. 10:20 is a very similar passage.

Luke 4:8 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.' " (Deut. 6:13)

Again, as Jesus did with regards to the first temptation, He responds with Scripture. Our worship is not to be towards man; and not even towards any angel; but to God alone.

God’s plan involves many interactions between man and other men. We interact with dozens of people each week—in some cases, hundreds. Some of these men are very influential. For me, the teaching of R. B. Thieme, Jr. was fundamental to my spiritual growth. But, obviously, I respect him; I do not worship him. I write this in 2021. At this time, the greatest President of my lifetime is stepping down. I respect him, but I do not worship him. Obviously, the most important man in my life, my father, is the man for whom I have the greatest respect and appreciation; but I do not worship him. In these three
examples, I am speaking of men who left the stage of my life before I was ready for them to; but I recognize behind this is the will of God. God knows the end from the beginning, and God knows that there is a perfect time associated with all of these events (of these men stepping away, so to speak, from my own life). In two cases, I understand fully and completely why it happened; and in one case, I can only speculate.

God has a perfect time for each person to exit from the stage of life; and there may be those who even, to some degree, depend upon them. God uses the people in our lives for a variety of purposes, but ultimately to His Own glory. And, ideally speaking, despite our many personal imperfections, God wants us to reflect His glory.

Luke 4:5–7  And the devil took Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and [Satan] said to Him [Jesus], "To You I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be Yours."

Luke 4:8  And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.' " (Deut. 6:13)

Because we are human, we often personalize such a passage, however unintentionally we might do that. That is, we view this as a temptation of Jesus. However, bear in mind, this all takes place as a part of the plan of God. Therefore, we might better understand this to be a demonstration, both to angels and man, of the perfect character of Jesus.  


We have come to the third and final recorded temptation of the Lord.

Luke 4:9a  And he [Satan] took Him to Jerusalem...

The movement herein described is quite fascinating. Jesus has apparently submitted Himself to some of the actions of Satan; and I would guess that Satan has well-defined limits as to what he is allowed to do. You and I will never see Satan, even if we are so important that he believes he needs to involve himself in our lives (highly unlikely). But there are limitations. We won’t be able, in this life, to be able to see him or hear him. He cannot touch us.

However, here, clearly, Satan is visible to Jesus, he is speaking to Jesus, and he is able to move Jesus from point A to point B. This movement appears to be instantaneous and there does not appear to be subject to the limitations of gravity and distance. It is reasonable to assume that all of this is done by specific permission of God the Father.

Let me add that, Jesus, in His humanity, cannot do these things by Himself. He cannot move Himself from here to there (like from a high mountain to the pinnacle of the Temple). Throughout His public ministry, He walks from place to place; or He rides in boats. He will never say to His disciples, “Listen, guys, I need to be in Jerusalem for a bit, but I am coming right back,” and then, suddenly, He is in Jerusalem. If Jesus needs to be in Jerusalem, then there is an actual journey which is required.

Angels have some pretty amazing abilities; Jesus, in His humanity, does not have these same abilities. However, in His resurrection body, that will change.

Luke 4:9b ...and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple...

Jesus was on a high mountain; and, in the next instant (apparently), He finds himself upon the pinnacle of the Temple.

There is quite a difference of opinion as to the height of the pinnacle of the Temple. In one portion of the Bible, it appears to be amazingly high (in the hundreds of feet, if memory serves); but so many people have thought, that is way too high; that must be a misprint. It would look way out of proportion to the Temple itself, which is about 30’ high (again, from memory).

The real question about the height of the pinnacle boils down to one of proportion. If we are expecting it to be proportional to the Temple itself, then the pinnacle might be 30–50' high. However, if this is built without consideration of proportionality, then it could be 100–200’ tall.

I lean toward the extreme height as being accurate; perhaps with the idea that people from a far distance away could see the Temple’s pinnacle, and know which direction to travel. However, we should bear in mind that this is Herod’s Temple, so we do not know all that he modified. (Exactly what Herod did, by way of building or modifying, is another topic altogether. I rarely see Jewish histories cite or refer specifically to Herod’s Temple.)

On the other hand, models of Herod’s Temple do not have some sort of a tower; so the highest point is simple to the roof of the Temple itself.

Model of Herod’s Temple (a photo of a model); from a YouTube video; accessed January 29, 2021.

Luke 4:9c ...and said to him,...

Each time Satan has tested Jesus, Jesus has responded with Scripture. So, this time,
Satan will make his challenge using Scripture.

In Matthew, the order of these temptations is different. The final two are switched. I lean towards Luke’s as being in chronological order, given that he will quote Scripture to Jesus now.

Luke 4:9d  ..."If you are the Son of God,...

Back in v. 3, Satan said the exact same thing. “If You are the Son of God,” Satan says, using the first class condition. Here, he is assuming the truth of this statement in order to make an argument. This statement could be expressed, Since You are the Son of God; or If You are the Son of God [and You are].

Luke 4:9d  ...throw yourself down from here,

Many translators insert the word then, as we commonly use if---then... statements in the English language. The Koine Greek does not require there to be a specific word that means, then.

“Listen,” Satan says, “You can simply drop down to the ground (whether that drop happens to be 30' or 200'). There is no harm in that; there is no problem with that.” Satan will back this claim up with Scripture.

Luke 4:9  And he took Him to Jerusalem and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here,...

In front of the Temple, there was possibly a tower (although I have not seen a tower in the models of Herod’s Temple). If there was a tower, then there are disagreements as to its height. Some believe it to be higher than the Temple (which originally was 3 stories high); and some believe it to be much, much higher than the Temple.

It is fascinating that Satan is able to do this; to take Jesus to the pinnacle of the Temple. We know from Gen. 6 that angels, at one time, could have physical contact with man. Although that seems to have been limited today; here is an instance where that limitation does not apply. In general, there appear to be strict limitations when it comes to any sort of human contact with angels.

It is also fascinating that Satan can take Jesus to this great height. I am not aware of a way to get up there (again, this is Herod’s Temple, so I don’t know for certain). This seems to be, by the text, almost an instantaneous thing. Whatever angelic limitations exist were set aside for this temptation.

Luke 4:10a  ...for it is written,...

This is Satan speaking to Jesus. Satan will quote Scripture in order to bolster his argument. Satan is alleging that Jesus can simply drop down from this great height.
Luke 4:10b "He will command His angels concerning You,...' (Psalm 91:11a)

God the Father has given the angels orders concerning Jesus. There are, no doubt, clear orders given to Satan and given to all angels, fallen and elect, concerning Jesus and concerning us. What we are reading about are temptations strictly limited to Jesus.

When these limitations are exceeded, as we had in Gen. 6, the angels and their half-human offspring are confined forever with thick chains of darkness. All they can see in their future is the Lake of Fire; but, until that time, they have no freedom of movement. It is my educated guess that, these angels being confined is an example which keeps the other fallen angels in line.

Luke 4:10c to guard You,'... (Psalm 91:11a)

The angels are given the responsibility of protecting Jesus. Whether this is all angels or a specific subset is not really at issue here.

It is from a passage like this that we might reasonably surmise that we each have guardian angels as well.

Luke 4:10 ...for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning You, to guard You,'... (Psalm 91:11a)

Jesus has quoted Scripture to him; so Satan quotes it back to Jesus. No one on earth knows the Bible better than the devil (other than Jesus). Satan is telling Jesus, “You can throw Yourself to the ground, because God has given His angels the responsibility to watch over you.”

Satan is a genius creature. Satan has had centuries to learn and absorb the Scriptures (but strictly for the purpose of furthering his own ends). Jesus, in His humanity, has had fewer than 30 years to learn the Word of God (the Old Testament).

Their knowledge is different, even though we are talking about the same set of books. For Jesus, the Old Testament is the Word of God; and it is the basis of His spiritual growth (Jesus did grow spiritually in His humanity). Satan has spent centuries learning the Scriptures, but only in such a way as to benefit himself when disagreeing with God or with the Son of God.

Luke 4:11a ...and "On their hands they will bear You up,...' " (Psalm 91:12a)

No matter what the situation, Satan asserts to Jesus, the angels will bear You up. Since Jesus is the Son of God, Satan says, there is nothing for You to worry about; Your safety is always assured.

Luke 4:11b ...lest you strike Your foot against a stone.' " (Psalm 91:12b)
Satan says, “See, you won’t even hurt Your foot...the Bible says so.”

Luke 4:11 and "'On their hands they will bear You up, lest you strike Your foot against a stone.' " (Psalm 91:12)

“You don’t need to worry,” Satan says, “You cannot even stub Your toe on a rock. The angels will see to that.”

Again, Satan is trying to get Jesus to depend upon divine provision which, Satan would like to show, is greater than what is given to other men.

No matter how important your life is in the plan of God, if you willingly jump off a 3-story building (or higher), you will suffer severe physical repercussions.

We do not know exactly how precarious the Lord’s situation is, where He is; but we know that, if He slipped or lost His grip or whatever, and fell from this place, then Satan could certainly allege that He is receiving preferential treatment (assuming that angels would save Him).

Satan is quoting Psalm 91:11–12. It appears that the writer of the psalm may be speaking of himself as a child of God; but this clearly is prophetic statement about Jesus Christ. Psalm 91:9–12 Because You, O Jehovah, are My refuge; You make the Most High Your habitation, no evil shall happen to You, nor shall any plague come near Your tent. For He shall give His angels charge over You, to keep You in all Your ways. They shall bear You up in their hands, that You not dash Your foot on a stone. (Green’s literal translation). This passage clearly outlines the provisions which God the Father has made for God the Son.

So, can’t Jesus simply jump down from the Temple pinnacle—certain death to the average person—yet, without worry?

Besides tempting Jesus (and God), perhaps Satan is testing the limits of Jesus as well, our of curiosity. There is no reason for Satan to know exactly what Jesus will or will not do; or what God the Father will or will not do. What Satan would like to do is show that there is some sort of contradiction within the character of God.

Jesus, the Word dwelling among us (John 3:1–3, 14), has never been before. His being born into the world is a new thing in the world. Satan may have been given specific limitations with regards to his contact with Jesus (similar to what we read in the first 2 chapters of Job), but no doubt, Satan has some interest in the limitations that might be placed upon Jesus as well.

Satan is probing Jesus for some weakness or some sort of contradiction of character.

No doubt that Satan has observed Jesus throughout His entire life, but without being allowed to make any sort of contact (that would be my assumption). But here, out in the wilderness, Satan will be given at least 3 opportunities to test Jesus.
Jesus responds to Satan’s incorrect application of the Scriptures.

By quoting Moses directly, Jesus is again affirming the inspiration and authority of the entire Old Testament. In the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, there are many direct quotations from God the Father. However, Jesus chooses to quote Moses as authoritative, as these are Moses’ own words.

You do not get to test God. You do not get to jump off a 2 story building, claiming, “God will catch me.” God may determine that it is time for you to come home; or that you might better do His work from a wheelchair. But we are not allowed to act in this life with impunity. This does not mean that Christians must live without risk, because remaining in your house with the door locked is a risk; and stepping outside is a risk. But you do not get to simply test God, under the pretense of wondering, “I wonder what God will do if I do such and such.” You may not like the answer to that question.

The general context of Deuteronomy is, Moses is running several teaching sessions for the people of Israel before they enter into the land of promise. Moses, speaking to the children of Israel, told them: You shall fear Jehovah your God, and you shall serve Him, and you shall swear by His name. You shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples who are around you, for Jehovah your God is a jealous God in your midst, lest the anger of Jehovah your God burn against you, and He destroy you from off the face of the earth. You shall not test Jehovah your God as you tested Him in Massah. (Deut. 6:13–16; Green’s literal translation) At Massah, the people were without water and they were angry at Moses, saying that he or God led them out into the desert to cause them all to die of thirst. On many occasions, the children of Israel tested God out in the desert; and, as a result, one entire generation died the sin unto death there.

For Jesus to throw Himself down, He would be unnecessarily testing God. We do not know how Jesus found His way back to the ground. My assumption would be that, as Satan took Jesus up to that point, so Satan returned Jesus to the ground.

I find this statement to be quite fascinating. We do not know if Satan tested Jesus just those 3 times and that they are simply representative of Satan’s tests; or if these were the final 3 tests that Satan tried. However, we certainly know that no test given to Jesus resulted in Jesus giving in to Satan. And, by giving in, I mean resorting to the use of His Own Deity or to a supernatural event which would satisfy Satan’s curiosity.
If these are the only 3 tests (and Matthew only lists these), then Satan—who is a genius—came up with 3 tests which fully tested/tempted the Lord (at least, to his own satisfaction). We may hypothesize that Satan did not repeat any tests; and that these tests, although unsuccessful (in Satan’s view), told him what he needed to know at that time.

There is the possibility that God limited Satan (“I will let you test My Son three times”), but I suspect that, even if God limited Satan in this way, that still allowed Satan to gain what he wanted from this.

As mentioned earlier, the text of the narrative suggests that Satan tempted the Lord throughout the 40 days of fasting. This suggests to me that there were more than these 3 temptations.

The ultimate goal was for Jesus to be tested before the billions of angels, both fallen and elect, who observed this. This was God putting forth His Son as the Messiah—something which He reveals even more spectacularly right here. Satan was attempting to put the Lord in a position to fail these tests before all angelic creation; God allowed these tests to revealed His Son’s traits and character.

Satan would have had his own purposes; but God the Father ultimately had His Own purposes to accomplish here as well. God achieved what He wanted; Satan did not fully get what he wanted.

Let me try another approach. Let’s say that we were able to test Jesus at the beginning of His ministry, to determine just Who He is. Whatever set of tests that we would come up with would not be as ingenious or as complete as these tests by the devil?

As an aside, I would like you to consider this:

**What Satan did or did not know:** Even though Satan is a great genius who knows the Scriptures in far greater detail than you or I ever will, I do not believe that he understood what would happen during the crucifixion. I don’t think that Satan was working at cross-purposes with man prior to the cross—evil men trying to take Jesus to be crucified as against Satan trying to keep Jesus from the cross. I do not believe that Satan realized what would happen at the cross. It is very likely that Satan expected Jesus to be filled with mental attitude sins as a result of being crucified.

Have you ever seen a great murder mystery (like an Agatha Christie novel/movie); and the murderer is right there, right in front of you the whole time, and all the clues were there. And yet, you are still kept in suspense until the final chapter of the novel (or the last act of the movie), when you find out, who the true criminal is. And the beauty of it is, you should have known the whole time, but you did not.

Let me hypothesize that Satan, despite his great genius, despite having access to the Scriptures (the Old Testament at the point), did not fully understand what was to take place
and what Jesus was going to do. Even when Jesus tells His disciples that He would be taken and crucified, I don’t believe that the disciples knew or the devil understood that this is where the sins of mankind would be paid for. And yet, Satan has observed literally millions of animals being offered up for the sins of the Hebrew people throughout their history.

Let’s approach this from a different angle. God knows the end from the beginning. He could have devoted one chapter in the psalms or in Isaiah describing to the last detail Who Jesus would be, how He would come to be. God could have told us exactly what would happen and exactly what all of this means. For instance, “In the year 6 B.C., when Herod the Great is still presiding over the land of Israel, the Messiah will be born to Mary; she will give birth to Him as a virgin. Her husband Joseph will contribute nothing to this birth. The Son born to Mary will be named Jesus. He will die by Roman crucifixion, but during that time of that crucifixion, God His Father will take all of the sins of the world and cause Him to pay the penalty for these sins.” God knows all of this; and God could have seen to it that a prophet tell us these things (or God could have spoken these words directly to someone). But God chose not to do that. Even though all of the prophetic Scriptures concerning Jesus now make sense, it is only after Jesus lives (and dies and then is resurrected) in His first advent that we fully appreciate what the Old Testament Scriptures say about Him. The prophecies make complete sense; the millions of animal sacrifices make sense; the Tabernacle and its furniture all make sense. Things which were abstruse before now make perfect sense.

*Why? Why do it this way?*

I believe that God the Father revealed this information to Satan at the proper time, as these things took place in time, and not before (despite the prophetic nature of the Scriptures). The truth of Who Jesus is and why He is walking among us is revealed in God’s Own time. The end result is, that Jesus goes to the cross—no doubt with Satan helping to move things along, but without Satan realizing that the sins of mankind would be settled at the cross.

In other words, Satan participates in condemning himself and in setting the events in motion whereby Jesus would save mankind.

Luke 4:13b  *...he departed from Him until an opportune time.*

Satan and his minions have been tempting mankind for perhaps 4000 years prior to this. I do not doubt that, when given the opportunity, that Satan and his demons are so smart that, they can come up with a test to knock a regular person down first try. But, with all his great genius combined with his experience, Satan was unable to tempt the Lord.

Luke 4:13  *And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.*
Satan was given specific limitations within which to tempt/test the Lord. Being a genius, Satan both learned what he needed to learn through these temptations; and he was given the opportunity to test the Lord.

However, Satan was unable to get Jesus to act outside of human abilities. Nor did Jesus take advantage of His Deity in order to deal with Satan. In the end, Jesus answered every temptation with the Word of God; and that was always enough. The fact that Jesus responded to every temptation of Satan with Scripture, should indicate just how important Bible doctrine is to our lives.

At this point, we have completed the temptations of Jesus.


The next two verses read:

Luke 4:14–15 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about Him went out through all the surrounding country. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. ESV (capitalized)

This is a deceptively short passage. It is easy to read through your Bible, one or two chapters a day, read these two verses, and think nothing of what you read. You think to yourself, Jesus walked around to different cities; He taught in the synagogues in those cites; and people liked what He was teaching. If you gave this passage this much thought, you are way ahead of the game. You know more than most people about this passage; but you do not really know what is happening here.

There are two ways to understand this passage (vv. 14–15): (1) it describes in two verses a ministry of the Lord that is otherwise unknown. This ministry continues for a few months or possibly as long as a year. This is a teaching ministry, not found in the other gospels. (2) This passage gives us an overall view of what is coming next. Vv. 14–15 give us the big picture; and vv. 16–44 focus in a a number of incidents which took place during His Galilean ministry. It is not uncommon for a summary to be given before the entire narrative is developed.

I believe that option #1 is the correct way to understand what is to follow, and I offer one primary reason for this: vv. 14–15 describe a very successful teaching ministry. He was glorified by all. That sounds quite successful, does it not? Vv. 16–30, on the other hand, represents a colossal failure—not of Jesus' teaching but on the part of the people of Nazareth who are filled with negative volition. Jesus’ teaching is always excellent; our rejection of His words reflects upon us, not upon Him.

The way Jesus’ teaching is described in vv. 14–15 stands in stark contrast to what follows in vv. 16–30. For that reason, I see these as distinct events, simply listed in chronological order. That is, Jesus had a teaching ministry in the Galilee area; after which, He returned
to Nazareth, where He was raised, which event is given considerable attention in this chapter.

My point of view here is that there is a considerable amount of time when Jesus taught without His disciples, which teaching ministry is not actually preserved in any of the gospels, apart from these two verses. However, this ministry was powerful and insightful to the people of Galilee.

I believe that what is being described in this passage is a ministry where Jesus taught for a few months or more the Old Testament; but without revealing Who He was to the people. He simply taught the Law of Moses; and He taught other portions of Scripture. His teaching was insightful, accurate and interesting.

I have listened to good, bad and so-so Bible teaching throughout much of my life. When I was first saved, I worked nights as a janitor and listened to perhaps three dozen different pastors (probably more) on Christian radio while working (this was over a period of 7 years).

When I began listening to R. B. Thieme, Jr.—which began sometime in the first year that I was saved—I did not particularly like him as a person, but I was intrigued by his teaching. Throughout the years, there were times when he would teach a passage, and it was clear to me that he understood and correctly explained that passage. I may have heard a passage read and explained before, but when he covered that passage, I fully understood and appreciated what he was teaching.

There was a marked difference between the way that Bob taught and the various pastors taught, whom I heard on the radio. My point being, the people of Galilee had heard the Scriptures read and taught before; but Jesus' teaching was particularly revelatory.

I believe that is what was taking place in the Lord’s ministry: He would walk into a synagogue, read when it was His turn, and then explain just what He had read. I should add that, Jesus did not walk into a synagogue with a prepared sermon; He was assigned a passage to read (a chapter or two from whatever book was being read at the time), and He would first read it, and then explain it.

Now that we have been set up for this passage, let’s look at it, phrase-by-phrase:

Luke 4:14a  And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee,...

In the very beginning, Jesus went down to the Jordan Valley and was baptized by John the Herald. After this, He was tempted by the devil; and, after that, Jesus began His very short public ministry. What I mean is, Jesus taught only for 3 or 4 years total. For any religious figure of any sort, this is unusually short.

John’s function as a herald is far more important than his baptizing people. I find it surprising that more commentators do not refer to him in that way.
I mentioned R. B. Thieme, Jr. He taught for 10 years before he really got warmed up. After 15–20 years, his ministry actually began to take shape. This is true for many teachers. Personally, I have been writing for 25 years, and I am still not happy with my output and the balance that I am trying to strike. But Jesus’ entire public ministry took place in only 3 or 4 years. It is not unusual for any other person, designated as a religious teacher, to have a ministry 10x as long.

This very short passage before us describes a period of time of His public ministry which is virtually unknown to us and rarely commented about.

Jesus has lived in the Galilee area most of His life; principally in Nazareth. So, when it says that He returns, Jesus is returning to the general area where He was raised up and where He worked (presumably with or for His legal father). He had been down in the Jordan Valley; but now He has returned. He had been in the uninhabited wilderness, being tempted by Satan; but now that was over. So Jesus begins to actively teach the Word of God. I do not believe that this was accompanied by any signs or wonders (the passage speaks only of teaching). He had no disciples at this time. Insofar as the people were concerned, He seemed to come out of nowhere.

Much of our Lord’s public ministry takes place in Galilee, which, at one time, was the northern kingdom. He was further away in Galilee from the religious hierarchy which was concentrated in Jerusalem. They would later develop a strong dislike for Jesus for a variety of reasons. However, these religious types are not a factor in His ministry at this point. He is completely unknown to the religious power structure in Jerusalem.

Luke 4:14a  And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee,...

That Jesus is empowered by the Holy Spirit is quite important. We have the same power system that Jesus employed. Now, this does not mean that we can walk into hospitals and heal the sick. Nor can we walk on water. Jesus did those things later on in His ministry in order to establish His authority as the Son of Man and as the Son of God. We do not need to establish our own authority; teaching the Word of God (or evangelizing) does that for us. We are able to establish our authority by teaching the Word of God; Jesus was going to establish more than His being a great teacher. However, at this point, He was simply moving from synagogue to synagogue, teaching whatever passage was put before Him.

Luke 4:14b  ...and a report about Him went out through all the surrounding country.

People began to talk about Jesus. As many said, “Never have I heard a man speak like this,” or similar such things. Many of the people had heard the Scriptures read in these synagogues, but they had a great many questions and the exposition by the rabbis of the past was not very helpful. I work with a great many sources, and what has been preserved of ancient rabbinical teaching is generally unhelpful. Sometimes it is interesting, but not much else. The people of this region had heard a lot of rabbinical teaching, and public often had the feeling that they were not really understanding what was being taught.
When the public traveled to Jerusalem, all the pharisees of their day offered to them was a considerable amount of legalism. Jesus explained the Scriptures correctly. It was if He was shining a light into a dark place. People were beginning to understand the Scriptures, and this was an incredible thing.

There was some positive volition in Galilee and Judea. That is, there were people interested in the teaching of the Word of God (this would have been the Old Testament at this time). Jesus provided this teaching as the public had ever heard before from any previous teacher. People would come home and tell their family and friends, “You need to come to the synagogue and hear this guy!”

Now, I don’t know if you have had this experience, but if you have read a passage and did not get it at all; and then someone explains it to you correctly, it is as if a light goes on in your head. “Oh, snap, that’s what that means!” you might say. Except, I realize, probably no one says, oh, snap anymore.

Quite frankly, when I understand the thrust of this passage, it was a great feeling and, quite honestly, I could not wait to share it.

Luke 4:14  And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about Him went out through all the surrounding country.

Jesus Christ, in His humanity, was led by God the Holy Spirit. This was the power that He depended upon. We, as believers in the Church Age, are given that exact same power. We all have the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was teaching Bible doctrine; He was teaching the Word of God. However, in this teaching, He is leaving out one incredible fact: He is the Living Word of God. He is allowing the teaching of the Word of God to stand on its own.

What I suspect is happening is this. Jesus is not choosing the Scriptures to read and teach. When He walks into a synagogue, He comes there as a reader/teacher; and He is assigned a section to read. Today, if this happened, the person in charge might say, “Kukis, today, you are going to read Jeremiah 25.” And while other men are reading aloud Jeremiah 20–24, I can either look at my Bible or find a Bible sitting in the pews somewhere and read Jeremiah 25 first, in order to get the rhythm and meter and vocabulary of it.

In the historical era that we are studying, Jesus does not get a chance to choose the Scriptures that He will read aloud; nor is He given, in advance, the scroll with that passage on it, so that He might review and read it to Himself first. He was assigned a passage, a chapter, whatever; then, when His turn came, He would stand up and read it. There was someone in charge of locating the scroll or scrolls necessary for that day’s reading, and those scrolls would be handed to the person as he came up in front to stand at the podium (or whatever) and read. Nevertheless, Jesus did not just read a passage. He read it and then He explained what He was reading (I am going to assume that reading and then saying a few things about what was read, was not out of the ordinary).
There is a passage in Isa. 36–37; and perhaps, you read through your Bible every five years and you have read this passage before. I will guarantee you that you did not know a tenth of what was going on. In fact, if you understood 10% of what is found here, you might be able to classify yourself as a spiritual genius. I listened to this passage taught twice by R. B. Thieme, Jr. in the Assyrian Crisis series and was just amazed. The second time that I heard this series, I began to appreciate that there is no modern teacher who could have taught this as Bob did. It was amazing and eye-opening.

This is what Jesus was doing. The Jewish people for years had heard these Scriptures read; and sometimes there were be a little teaching on what was read. But what Jesus was doing was extraordinary. It was so good, people went home and told their friends and relatives.

Luke 4:15a  And He taught in their synagogues,...

This is quite fascinating. I do not know exactly how a synagogue was run in that era. It appears that many different men would stand up and read from the Scriptures (this was the Old Testament).

Perhaps rabbis stood up and explained further some details about what was being read. Here we are told that Jesus taught. So, no matter what protocol was, Jesus, at some point—maybe in the midst of reading or after completing His section—then explained the Scriptures and their meaning. These synagogues had so many people inside of them, and these have attended synagogues for years; but now, Jesus is bringing some fresh insights to the table. They are hearing His words and understanding them, probably for the first time. Many people had lights going on in their heads as Jesus spoke.

What would seem logical is this: Jesus would stand and read the passage before the people; and then He would explain just exactly what He had just read. And the people there were quite moved by the experience, as they began to understand what it was that Jesus was reading. They knew that this was the Word of God; but never had they heard it explained correctly.

Luke 4:15a  And He taught in their synagogues,...

Jesus is teaching here, throughout the Galilean region; but notice a word that we do not find here in this passage: euaggelizô (εὐαγγελίζω) [pronounced yoo-ang-ghel-EED-zo]; which means, to announce [speak, declare, bring] the good news, to evangelize, to proclaim the gospel; to bring [declare] glad [good] tidings [news, information]. Strong’s #2097. Jesus is going throughout this region and He is teaching, but He is not proclaiming the good news; He is not proclaiming the gospel. We will come to this word in v. 18; and we will examine it in more detail then.

When Jesus first announces the good news, that is a game-changer in His ministry.

Luke 4:15b  ...being glorified by all.
Because people were impressed by His teaching, they would tell others about this new, young teacher in the synagogues (Jesus was about 30 years old, which would make Him a very young teacher in that era).

When it says that Jesus was glorified, this does not mean that people came and listened and then bowed down to Him. They heard the Scriptures correctly presented and explained, and this was very pleasing to the general public. They told others about this teacher. That is how He was glorified.

“You have to come to the synagogue. Jesus is teaching! You must hear Him.”

No one knew much else about Jesus. No one thought that He might be the Messiah; they simply believed that He was an excellent teacher.

Luke 4:15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

I have had a parallel experience. I took the course Differential Equations, which I thought was a pretty difficult class, and it was taught by a Polack whose English was not very good; he had a thick accent. So, even though he may have understood this material, he was not very good at teaching it to people who spoke English.

The teacher required his students (which included me) to do problems on the board from the previous lesson; and then explain them. I would do a problem every day and explain it. I had fellow students come up to me after class and thank me, telling me that this was the only time that they understood anything about what was going on in class. They had the book; they had the teacher; but it did not make any sense to them. It took someone to explain exactly what happened step-by-step in an assigned problem; and then it made sense.

In a way, this is what Jesus did. The people had the Scriptures (although they were, for the most part, confined to the synagogues) and they had the teachers (the rabbis), but none of it made complete sense to them. They understood, to some degree, Israel's unique relationship with God. They knew that these were the very Scriptures of God that were being read; but they did not really understand what was being read.

Then Jesus stood before them, read the Scriptures and explained what they meant. People would be thinking, okay, I get it now. They would fetch their friends and relatives and tell them, “You need to hear this new rabbi. He explained this psalm to the point where I completely understood it!” (This is what is meant by, Jesus was glorified by all.)

Although we primarily associate synagogues with the reading of Scripture, this indicates that He also explained the Scriptures (which suggests that others may have done some teaching as well).
That was not the response to Jesus throughout His entire ministry; but He apparently got quite a good reputation from His early teaching ministry in the synagogues. Apparently, there were many synagogues throughout the Galilee area. He traveled about, from one synagogue to the next. He possibly got to know this area through working with his step-father; or perhaps He just walked from one town to the next.

It appears to me that Jesus was a solo act at this time. Nothing is said about His disciples. I have made the assumption (which I believe to be correct), that the book of Luke is presented in chronological order, as best that he could (there are a few narrative exceptions to this).

Let me suggest that Jesus always went to the synagogues and we don’t know if He was involved in a trade (as a carpenter) or not (He is called a carpenter’s son). I have found myself in a variety of churches, sometimes as a result of where I was working at the time.

Whether Jesus went on some sort of a circuit or whether He worked with His father in various places, we don’t know. But, at this point in time, He went to many synagogues in the Galilee region and He became known at these synagogues.

There are a great many details left out. I believe that I have supplemented this passage with the most important information.

Luke 4:14–15 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit. News about Him went out throughout the region of Galilee. He kept on teaching truth in their synagogues and was glorified by all who heard Him teach. (Kukis paraphrase)

In reviewing this passage and what is to follow; it appears that Jesus, for a limited time, had a teaching ministry throughout the Galilee area, where His teaching was accepted. His teaching was so remarkable that people kept telling their friends about Him. “You need to come to the synagogue and hear this guy teach!” Now, I believe that Jesus taught the Old Testament Scriptures accurately, but that He did not reveal Himself to be the Messiah. I believe this happens for the first time in the narrative which follows these verses.

What I am saying is, there is this period of time when Jesus taught in the synagogues in the Galilee area—perhaps for a few months perhaps as long as a year. I don’t believe that He had any of His 12 disciples at this point; and I suspect, there is little recorded history of this time period (which would be logical, as His disciples are not there to hear Him). This is why this narrative is not found in Matthew, Mark or John. Jesus simply taught, and the people were amazed. Who was this Man who seemingly came out of nowhere and taught as no one had ever taught them before? Some people actually heard Jesus teach during this period of time, and it still stayed with them. Some of those people later told Luke about it. All that is preserved of this ministry are these two short verses.

Matthew, Mark and John wrote their gospels based upon what they saw and heard (Mark depended upon Peter, for what he said that he saw and heard).
This short narrative is quite fascinating to me. Jesus is not performing any miracles; He is not doing any healings; He is not traveling with an entourage. He simply goes from synagogue to synagogue, teaching the Word of God.

The reason that we do not have a fuller explanation of this period of time is, those who wrote down His biographies—His disciples—were not with Him at this time. Perhaps some of them heard Him; but likely not.

Despite His insightful and careful explanation of the Scriptural texts, no one fully appreciates that they are witnessing amazing history being made at this point.

**An addendum to Luke 4:14–15:**

Luke 4:14–15  Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Holy Spirit. News about Him went out throughout the region of Galilee. He kept on teaching truth in their synagogues and was glorified by all who heard Him teach. (Kukis paraphrase)

Out of curiosity, I decided to see what others have said about these two verses. That led me to consider whether or not there are parallel verses in the other gospels. The first passage cited as a parallel passage is Matthew 4:

Matt. 4:12–13  Now when He [Jesus] heard that John [the Herald] had been arrested, He withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth He went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali,... (ESV; capitalized)

It is easy to confuse these events, so let me insert the events of Luke into Matthew's narrative.

Matt. 4:12–13  Now when He heard that John had been arrested, He withdrew into Galilee [This is Luke 4:14–15, the passage that we have been studying]. And leaving Nazareth [Jesus will leave Nazareth after Luke 4:16–30; this is where Jesus will reveal Who He is to the people of Nazareth] He went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali,... (ESV; capitalized)

There is also a parallel passage in Mark, but Mark skips over a great deal of narrative:

Mark 1:14–15  Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

The region of Galilee is fairly large (it is all of the area surrounding the Sea of Galilee). It takes in such cities as Nazareth, Cana, Tiberias, and Capernaum. So, when Mark speaks of the ministry of Jesus in Galilee, he is taking in all of Luke 4:14–44, which includes Jesus withdrawing from Nazareth (Luke 4:30).
What is happening is, in that general period of time, John is arrested, Jesus then goes to the Galilee region; and also, Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom of God and the gospel. He will proclaim the Kingdom of God and the gospel in the Galilean region; but this will take place after the ministry of Jesus which we have just studied.

You will notice Mark then speaking of Jesus choosing His disciples:

Mark 1:16–17  Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

Mark 1:16–17 parallels Luke 5, where Jesus will call His disciples. Therefore, these 4 verses in Mark are parallel to almost all of Luke 4–5.

Galilee and Nearby Areas (a Map); from O.quizlet.com; accessed March 5, 2021. You can see that Galilee takes in a great many important cities (important in the ministry of the Lord).

Afterwards, the next incident happens. This is the incident which changes everything. I believe that the narrative which follows this short passage is one of the most important events in human history.