

The Second Adam (Luke 3:21–4:13)

The Man of Dust, the Man of Heaven

When the apostle Paul looked back upon redemptive history, he saw it as a tale of two Adams. In the beginning, the LORD “begot” by the Holy Spirit from the dust of the earth the first Adam, and entered into a covenant with him—and in him, with all mankind united to him by natural birth. In this covenant of creation (covenant of works), God promised everlasting life and blessing for the obedience of faith, yet threatened everlasting death and ruin for faithlessness. The first Adam violated that covenant through his disobedience, thus plunging not only himself but all mankind into death and ruin. In the fullness of time, the LORD begot by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a child of dust (Gn 3:19; Ps 103:14) the second Adam, and entered into a covenant with Him—and in Him, with all mankind united to Him by spiritual birth. In this covenant of grace, God promised everlasting life and blessing, if the second Adam would fulfill the first covenant by His righteous life and atoning death, thus satisfying both its positive command (“obey and you shall live”) as well as its negative consequence (“disobey and you shall die”). The second Adam succeeded, fulfilling the covenant in every way, thus securing for Himself and for those united to Him everlasting life and blessing. Paul outlines this redemptive framework in two extremely important passages of Scripture. In Romans 5:12–21, Paul works out this first Adam/second Adam framework in detail, concluding with this summary:

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteousness.
(Rom 5:18–19)

The trespass of Adam led to condemnation and death for all who are united to him by natural birth; the righteousness of Christ leads to justification and life for all who are united to him by new birth. By Adam’s disobedience, the many were plunged into sin; by Christ’s obedience, the many will be raised up to righteousness. Paul makes the same essential argument in 1 Corinthians 15—through the first Adam came death, and through the second Adam comes life:

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Cor 15:22)

The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. (1 Cor 15:47–49)

In Adam, all men united to him by natural birth inherit destruction and death; in Christ, the second Adam, all those united to him by new birth inherit resurrection and life. We were born into this world bearing the image (the nature and body) of the first Adam; we are born again to bear the image (the nature and body) of the second Adam. This is the way Paul conceived of redemptive history; this is how Paul conceived of the gospel.

- We are born in Adam; we are born again in Christ.
- We are condemned by Adam's sin; we are justified by Christ's righteousness.
- We are sinful in Adam; we are sanctified in Christ.
- We are dead in Adam; we are alive in Christ.

This isn't new to our members. As this was how Paul conceived of redemptive history, this is how I, too, conceive of redemptive history, and I have taught this first Adam/second Adam framework often. But I remind you of it because I think this is what Luke is doing in today's passage.¹ Remember that the apostle Paul exerted more theological influence upon Luke than any other apostle. According to reliable early church tradition, Luke was originally from Antioch in Syria, where Paul was for a time located and was teaching the church (Acts 11:25–26; 13:1). Evidently, Luke and Paul hit it off, because Luke became a travelling companion of Paul on his

¹ Edwards sees the common theme of this passage differently. "In the Third Gospel, the baptism, genealogy, and testing of Jesus in the wilderness are unified by the common theme of the Son of God. In the baptism, Jesus is addressed by God as 'my Son, whom I love' (3:22); the genealogy reveals that, although Jesus is presumed to be the son of Joseph (3:23), his true ancestry must be traced through 'Adam, the son of God' (3:38); and in the wilderness temptation by the devil the divine sonship of Jesus (4:3, 9) is put to the test. The concentration of Son of God terminology in these three pericopes is significant because the title appears only sparingly in Luke. Four of its nine occurrences are clustered in 3:21–4:13. The baptism, genealogy, and temptation unite to clarify and confirm the annunciation promises to Mary in 1:26–38. . . . These prophecies are fulfilled in Jesus' investiture as the Son of God in the baptism, they are confirmed in the divine credentials of his genealogy, and they are tested and proved in his wilderness temptations"; James R. Edwards, *The Gospel of Luke*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 115–16. I do not disagree with Edwards, but I do not see the "Son of God" and "second Adam" themes as mutually exclusive; what makes Jesus the "true and better" Adam is that He is also the Son of God.

second and third missionary journeys, as well as on his voyage to Rome (Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16; Col 4:14; Phi 24). He was likely also a companion on Paul’s fourth missionary journey, and was present with Paul during his final imprisonment in Rome (2 Tm 4:11). There is, therefore, every reason to expect that Luke would conceive of redemptive history in the same way, for he would have learned it from the apostle Paul. Thus, one would expect to find this first Adam/second Adam framework in Luke’s Gospel. And at least one of the places where it emerges is in the baptism, the genealogy, and the temptation of Christ. Thus, my thesis statement for this morning’s sermon is as follows: *In His baptism, in His ancestry, and in His victory over Satan’s temptation, Jesus shows Himself to be the true and better Adam, in whom we may have justification and life through faith.*

I. The Baptism of the Second Adam (3:21–22)

We begin with the baptism of the second Adam in Luke 3:21–22.

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, 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.” (3:21–22)

Here is our first glimpse in Luke’s Gospel of the adult Jesus. At the beginning of chapter three, Luke recorded that, “In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar...”—that is, about the year AD 28—

the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. (3:2–3)

Matthew records,

Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. (Mt 3:5–6)

Matthew emphasizes that John's ministry was attended by all Israel; this does not mean by every single Israelite (Mt 3:7–10), but by many in Israel and throughout every strata of Israelite society. John's ministry was not a fringe movement; its impact reverberated throughout Israel and beyond (Acts 19:1–7). *All* Israel came out to repent and receive baptism.

The reason I underscore this point is because Luke begins his narrative of Jesus' baptism by stating, "Now when all the people were baptized" (Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ βαπτισθῆναι ἄπαντα τὸν λαόν), Jesus also was baptized. I think Luke is emphasizing Jesus' *solidarity* with sinners. We have to ask, if John's baptism was a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (3:3), then why did Jesus receive baptism, for He had no sin of which to repent and for which He needed forgiveness? The answer, according to Luke, is that Jesus was baptized *with* all the people; *because* they were baptized, He too was baptized. We are commanded to be baptized, and so He was baptized. Philip Ryken elaborates:

[Jesus] made a deliberate decision to join with sinners in baptism for the forgiveness of sins. The baptism of Jesus was different from all the others. Luke hints at this in the way he describes it: "Now when all people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized" (Luke 3:21). Luke is drawing a distinction. All the people were baptized, but then Jesus was also baptized, and somehow his baptism fell into a different category. The difference was that Jesus did not have to be baptized for his own sins. Rather, he was identifying with sinners in *their* need of forgiveness.

This was an act of solidarity. Jesus was taking the place of sinners. So already at the beginning of his public ministry, we are reminded of the ancient prophecy that he would be "numbered among the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12). If we are amazed to see him baptized, we are all the more amazed to see him crucified. The choice that Jesus made at his baptism was the choice that ultimately led him to the cross. He was willing to be reckoned as a sinner so that sinners could be saved. And so he was baptized.²

² Philip Graham Ryken, *Luke, Volume 1: Luke 1–12*, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2009), 133. "Since Luke depicts Jesus as without sin it is not obvious why he should have undergone this baptism. But Jesus saw sinners flocking to John's baptism. Clearly he decided to take his place with them. At the outset of his ministry he publicly identified himself with the sinners he came to save"; Leon Morris, *Luke*, TNTC (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1974, 1988), 118. "The baptism of Jesus with 'all the people' emphasizes his identification with sinners, indeed his vicarious baptism on behalf of them"; Edwards, 120.

And from Matthew we find that Jesus was baptized as a *substitute* for sinners.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. (Mt 3:13–15)

Jesus was baptized “to fulfill all righteousness” (πληρώσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην). We lacked the righteousness required for justification; baptism was part of that righteousness; and so in order to fulfill all righteousness, Jesus was baptized.

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness [which included His baptism] leads to justification and life for all men. For as by one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience [which included His baptism] the many will be made righteousness. (Rom 5:18–19)

So Jesus was baptized as the second Adam, in solidarity with sinners in the first Adam, and in order to fulfill all righteousness as their substitute.

But then something extraordinary occurred. Having been baptized as the second Adam, Jesus was publicly declared to be the Son of God.

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, 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.” (3:21–22)

Earlier in our worship gathering, we sang “Christ the True and Better Adam,” which states,

Christ the true and better Adam,
Son of God and Son of man;
Who, when tempted in the garden,

Never yielded, never sinned.
He who makes the many righteous
Brings us back to life again;
Dying, He reversed the curse,
Then rising, crushed the serpent's head.

Jesus is not merely the second Adam, He is the true and better Adam. And part of what makes Him “true and better” is that He is both “Son of God and Son of man.” In earlier sermons, we spent time on the hypostatic union of the divine and human natures of Christ, that He is

at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man. . . .
recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of the natures being in no way annulled by their union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ. (Chalcedonian Definition, 451)

I don't want to retread that ground in this sermon, so I will briefly mention just three truths this event reveals about Jesus of Nazareth, the second Adam.

First, Jesus is the eternally-begotten Son of the Father, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. This is one of the clearest, most-explicit Trinitarian passages in all of Scripture, for all three Persons of the triune Godhead are present and are distinct.

- God the Father speaks to God the Son. Therefore, the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father; they are two distinct, divine Persons.
- God the Spirit descends upon God the Son. Therefore, the Spirit is not the Son, and the Son is not the Spirit; they are two distinct, divine Persons.
- God the Father speaks while God the Spirit descends. Therefore, the Father is not the Spirit, and the Spirit is not the Father; they are two distinct, divine Persons.

And yet, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one” (Dt 6:4). Furthermore, “You are my beloved Son” ($\Sigma\bar{\nu}\ \varepsilon\bar{i}\ \dot{o}\ \nu\bar{i}\bar{o}\bar{\varsigma}\ \mu\bar{o}\bar{u}\ \dot{o}\ \dot{\alpha}\bar{y}\bar{a}\bar{p}\bar{\eta}\bar{t}\bar{o}\bar{\varsigma}$) does not reflect a new relationship

initiated either at His incarnation or at His baptism, but one that has been in place from all eternity—hence, the eternally-begotten Son of God.³

Second, Jesus is the eternally-beloved Son of the Father, and is well-pleasing in His sight. This is a word of affection followed by a word of approval.⁴ God the Father loves God the Son. But when the Greek word ἀγαπητός is applied to a son or a daughter, it connotes more than love; it means “only” or “unique.”⁵ The Father’s love for the Son is unique, for Jesus is uniquely God the Son—hence, the eternally-beloved Son of God. And with His eternally-beloved Son God the Father is “well pleased” (εὐδόκησα). Of course, the Father has been well pleased with the Son throughout eternity, but the timing of this declaration suggests that it was the Son’s obedience in receiving baptism—and thus formally signifying His acceptance of His messianic mission—that the Father found particularly pleasing. Ryken explains: “By submitting to baptism, Jesus was choosing to take the part of sinful humanity. He was agreeing to carry out the great task that the Father had given him: to suffer and die for sinners. And so the Father blessed him.”⁶

Third, Jesus is anointed by the Holy Spirit; thus, the second Adam is the Servant of the LORD. Why did the Holy Spirit descend upon Jesus? It was not that Jesus was not indwelt by and filled with the Holy Spirit before. Rather, the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus signified God’s anointing of Him as the Messiah (Χριστός = Χιστός = “anointed one”), the Servant of the LORD, of whom the God said,

*Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him;*

³ “‘You are my Beloved Son’ implies a permanent status, not an apotheosis”; Edwards, 120. “God the Father said to Jesus Christ: ‘You are my beloved Son’ (Luke 3:22). This does not mean that Jesus was not the Son before this point. On the contrary, his sonship is eternal. The Father was not performing some new act of adoption, but simply declaring on earth what had always been true in heaven”; Ryken, 137.

⁴ Ryken, 136.

⁵ I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 156. Marshall adds, “In any case, it is significant that the Greek word is the one which avoids any suggestion of election or adoption to sonship but rather stresses the unique relationship between Jesus as the only Son and God as his Father”; Ibid.

⁶ Ryken, 137–38. Ryken continues: “The smile of fatherly approval rested on Jesus all the days of his life. As the Son did the work of our salvation, the Father was pleased with everything he did. He was pleased with his obedience to his parents. He was pleased with his resistance to temptation. He was pleased with his teaching and his miraculous deeds of mercy. He was pleased with his life of prayer. He was pleased most of all with the sinless sacrifice that he offered on the cross. We know this because he raised Jesus from the dead, which was the ultimate proof of his approval. The Father was pleased with all of it. He was pleased with what Jesus had done, what Jesus was doing, and what Jesus would do. He took pleasure in the person and work of his Son”; Ryken, 138.

he will bring forth justice to the nations. (Is 42:1)

The one who said,

*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor; . . . (Is 61:1–2a)*

The descent of the Holy Spirit signified that Jesus was the promised Christ, the promised Messiah, the Anointed One. Why did the Holy Spirit descend in the form of a dove? There is no biblical precedent for the Holy Spirit manifesting in the form of a dove.⁷ So why not an eagle, something more menacing, something with talons and a razor-sharp beak? I think a dove eminently represents the character of the Messiah of whom it is said,

*He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
a bruised reed he will not break,
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice. (Is 42:2–3)*

A dove is a fit symbol of the Spirit of Christ, who calls Himself “gentle and lowly in heart” (Mt 11:29).⁸

⁷ “Likening the Spirit of God to a dove is unusual in Judaism, but not wholly unknown”; Edwards, 117. Edwards cites the Talmud (Str-B 1:124–25) and Philo (*b. Hag.* 15a).

⁸ Thomas Goodwin wrote, “For a dove is the most meek and the most innocent of all birds; without gall, without talons, having no fierceness in it, expressing nothing but love and friendship to its mate in all its carriages, and mourning over its mate in all its distresses. And accordingly, a dove was a most fit emblem of the Spirit that was poured out upon our Saviour when He was just about to enter on the work of our salvation. For as sweetly as doves do converse with doves, so may every sinner and Christ converse together”; quoted in R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, 2 vols., Preaching the Word (Wheaton: Crossway, 1998), 1:125; quoted in Ryken, 135.

Let me make one application from these verses describing the baptism of the second Adam. Because Jesus was baptized as the second Adam in *solidarity with us* and in *substitution for us* in v. 21, everything God says *about* Him in v. 22 is likewise true of us *in* Him. If we are in Christ by faith,

- We are the sons and daughters of God in Him.
- We are indwelt by the same Holy Spirit, who likewise empowers us for ministry.
- We are beloved and well-pleasing in His sight.

Let me read this from Philip Ryken, and then we will move on:

The good news of the gospel is that if you believe in Jesus Christ for your salvation, then God is just as pleased with you. The Father's words of affection and approval are for his Son *and* for everyone who has faith in his Son. Jesus came to bring us into the Father's love. The things that we do are not pleasing to God. If we had to stand before God the Father on our own merit, we would never gain his approval, and we would never deserve his affection. But we do not stand before him in our own merit. As soon as we trust in Jesus Christ for our salvation, we stand before the Father on the merit of his Son. Now God the Father looks on us with the same affection and approval that he has for Jesus Christ, his worthy Son.⁹

That is why Jesus came as the second Adam. So that though in the first Adam we are the enemies of God, in the second Adam we are the sons of God, beloved and well-pleasing in His sight.

II. The Genealogy of the Second Adam (3:23–38)

Let's look next at the genealogy of the second Adam in Luke 3:23–38. Lest you get nervous, let me assure you that I am not going to work through these sixteen verses in detail, tracing the history of all seventy-seven generations listed. I'm not even going to read the passage aloud; I will leave that to your own devotional reading. Rather, I simply want to draw your attention to the beginning of the genealogy, then to the end of the genealogy, then deal with the discrepancy in the middle of the genealogy.

First, look at its beginning in v. 23:

⁹ Ryken, 138.

Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, son of Heli... (3:23)

Jesus was “about thirty years of age” (ώσει ἑτῶν τριάκοντα). Why does Luke include this detail? Well, for one thing, Luke is (as we have seen [1:1–4, 5, 26; 2:1; 3:1–2]) a stickler for the historical details. And if one does the math, it checks out. Jesus was born in 6 or 5 BC (at least a year prior to Herod’s death in 4 BC). The word of God came to John about AD 28 (“the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar” [3:1]). If we take into account that there is no “year 0,” but rather that we count directly from 1 BC to AD 1, we get somewhere between 30–32 years. Thus, any reasonable person would agree that Jesus was “about” (ώσει) thirty years old when he was baptized and began his ministry. But we know that Luke has the ability to be more precise than “about thirty years of age.” Therefore, I suspect there is something else here Luke wants us to see. Thirty years old “was the age when the Levites began their service (Num. 4:47) and was evidently regarded as the age at which a man was fully mature,” writes Leon Morris.¹⁰ Readers of the Old Testament will recall that Joseph was thirty years old when he entered Pharaoh’s service, and David was thirty years old when he began to reign as king of Israel. In other words, Luke is signaling to the reader that Jesus is fully grown, fully mature, ready to begin His ministry as the second Adam. Could it be that Adam was created in a state of full maturity, something akin to thirty years of age? Note also that Luke emphasizes that Jesus was “the son of Joseph” (υἱὸς Ἰωσὴφ), but only “as was supposed” (ώς ἐνομίζετο). Then whose Son is He? He is the Son of God... just like Adam (3:38).

Second, look at the end of the genealogy in v. 38:

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

Matthew’s genealogy begins with Abraham and moves forward through forty-two generations (three sets of fourteen generations) before ending with the birth of Jesus (Mt 1:1–17). This is in accordance with Matthew’s purpose to present Jesus as the true son of Abraham, the true

¹⁰ Morris, 120. “Thirty years old marks a ‘threshold age’ in the ancient sources. Joseph was thirty when he entered the service of Pharaoh (Gen 41:46), and David was thirty years old when he began to reign (2 Sam 5:4). The age signals to the reader that Jesus is now a mature, responsible man ready for his public career”; David E. Garland, *Luke*, ECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2011), 170.

Israelite. Luke's genealogy begins with Jesus and works back through seventy-seven generations to "Adam, the son of God." This is in accordance with Luke's purpose to present Jesus as the second Adam, the true Man. Just as the first Adam was the direct creation of God and stood in direct, unmediated covenantal relation to God, so was the second Adam the direct creation of God (it was only "supposed" that Joseph was His father) and stood in direct, unmediated covenantal relationship to God. Adam went forth and failed under temptation, thus plunging humanity into ruin and death; as we will see in the next passage, Jesus went forth and stood firm under temptation, thus raising a new humanity to life and joy.

Finally, what about the discrepancies between Matthew's and Luke's genealogies? The difference lies between David and Joseph. Matthew traces Joseph's descent through David's son Solomon and the kings of Judah prior to the exile to Babylon (Mt 1:6–11), and through the line of Zerubbabel to

Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. (Mt 1:16)

after the exile to Babylon (Mt 1:12–16). Luke (working backwards through the generations) traces Joseph's descent through "Heli, the son of Matthat" (3:23–24) to "Nathan, the son of David" (3:31). How are we to explain the difference? There are two reasonable explanations.

The first (and to my mind, less likely) explanation is that while both Matthew and Luke record Joseph's lineage, they do so in two different ways. This was the view of J. Gresham Machen, the great NT scholar in the first half of the twentieth century, who posited that Matthew gives Joseph's *legal* ancestry, while Luke gives Joseph's *biological* ancestry. Machen argued that Joseph's father Jacob (according to Matthew) was the true heir of the Davidic throne, but that he died without a son. He then adopted Joseph, perhaps a relative by marriage, as his legal heir. Thus, Matthew records Joseph's ancestry through his adopted father and heir of David's throne (Jacob), while Luke records Joseph's ancestry through his biological father (Heli). Yet both Jacob and Heli could trace their ancestry back to David (Jacob through Solomon, Heli through Nathan). This explanation makes sense, and it is rarely wise to disagree with Machen, but it is ultimately unproven. There is no evidence; it is mere speculation.¹¹

¹¹ Ryken, 145–46; Morris, 119.

The second (and to my mind, more likely) explanation is that Matthew records Joseph's ancestry while Luke records Mary's ancestry. In other words, when Luke writes "Joseph, the son of Heli," he means "Joseph, the son of Heli *by marriage*."¹² There are five reasons I think this explanation is most likely:

- First, it was the most frequent explanation put forth by the early church.¹³
- Second, this makes sense in light of Luke's emphasis upon Mary. Whereas Matthew focuses entirely upon Joseph's side of the nativity story, Luke focuses entirely upon Mary's side of the nativity story. Thus, Matthew provides Joseph's ancestry while Luke records Mary's, both uniting in David through Solomon and Nathan, respectively.¹⁴
- Third, this explanation would make even more sense if Heli had no male sons (i.e. if Mary had no brothers), and Heli adopted Joseph as his legal heir. This cannot be proven, but is perfectly plausible.
- Fourth, interestingly, the Jewish Talmud identifies Mary as the daughter of Heli.¹⁵
- Fifth, sometimes scholars complain that ancient genealogies did not trace ancestry through the female line. But, as Leon Morris writes, "Luke, however, is speaking of a virgin birth, and we have no information as to how a genealogy would be reckoned when there is no human father. The case is unique."¹⁶

All in all, this seems to me the most likely solution.

Luke's genealogy presents Jesus as the second Adam. In the beginning of time, the first Adam was created by God in the dust of the earth. In the fullness of time, the second Adam was conceived by God within the womb of Mary, a child of dust (Gn 3:19). In the beginning of time, God entered into a covenant with the first Adam on behalf of all humanity, a covenant of works, in which He promised life and fellowship for faithful obedience, yet threatened death and alienation for faithless rebellion. Adam succumbed to temptation, turned from the obedience of

¹² Morris, 119.

¹³ Edwards, 123. Alternatively, Julius Africanus (d. 250) and Eusebius (d. 340) explained the differences by means of Levirate marriage, but according to Edwards, "This solution fails to explain why such practices did not affect the generations from Adam to David, but altered them unrecognizably from David to Joseph"; Ibid.

¹⁴ Ryken, 146.

¹⁵ F. Godet, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke* (New York: I. K. Funk, 1881), 130; cited in Ryken, 146.

¹⁶ Morris, 119. "Biologically speaking, the humanity of Jesus Christ came through his mother, not his father, so Luke has given us his genealogy through Mary"; Ryken, 148.

faith, and plunged into sin and everlasting ruin all humanity united to Adam by natural generation. Yet before there was time, God the Father entered into an eternal covenant of redemption with God the Son and God the Spirit, to send the Son into the world to redeem a people for Himself. And thus it was that in the fullness of time, the eternal Son of God was born as the second Adam, born under the first covenant yet because of His supernatural conception preserved from the corruption of sin. By His righteous life, Jesus rendered faithful and glad obedience to God, thus fulfilling the first covenant's positive requirement and securing the blessing of everlasting life and fellowship with God. And by His righteous death, Jesus rendered full and complete atonement for the sins of His people, thus satisfying the first covenant's negative penalty by suffering death and ruin in their place. In so doing, Jesus mediated a new covenant between God and a new humanity, a covenant of grace whereby the blessings secured by Christ's righteousness and the atonement provided by Christ's blood are supplied freely by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, to all those united to Christ by supernatural regeneration. This is what Luke wants his readers to see; this was how Luke, following the apostle Paul, conceived of redemptive history. May God open our eyes and enlighten our minds to see the same thing and conceive of redemptive history the same way, so that we may reject the covenant of works in the first Adam and embrace the covenant of grace in the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. There are only two ways of relating to God—through the covenant of works or through the covenant of grace. The first is forever closed; the way of works was rendered impossible for us ever since we fell in Adam and thus inherited His guilt and His sin. And yet, from the beginning, like Cain who brought before the LORD his works produced by the sweat of his brow, man has attempted to relate to God by means of his efforts, his labors, his works. "If I just do enough, if I'm just good enough, God will accept me." But you can't, you're not, and He won't. You must take your cue from Abel, who brought nothing before God but faith in the promise and the blood of the Lamb, and was justified in God's sight. Beloved, make certain this morning that you are relating to God through the covenant of grace, by faith in the second Adam, receiving His righteousness, His obedience, His atoning sacrifice for your sins. The way of works is forever closed to the sons of Adam; but bless God, the way of grace is open to those who will be united by faith to the second Adam. So embrace Jesus Christ, the second Adam, as He is freely offered to you in the gospel. You will be justified before God and made an heir of everlasting life in the blessed presence of your God.

III. The Temptation of the Second Adam (4:1–13)

Finally, it is in light of Luke's presentation of Christ as the second Adam that I think we ought to understand the purpose of Christ's temptations in the wilderness.¹⁷ Having read the previous two sections through the lens of Genesis 1–3, the following scene should sound very familiar.

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days,¹⁸ being tempted by the devil. (4:1–2a)

As the devil tempted Adam in the Garden, so does the devil tempt the second Adam in the wilderness. Why the wilderness? Because that is the location to which humanity was cast after the fall. It was the sin of Adam when tempted by the devil that expelled man from the Garden of God's presence and condemned him to the wilderness away from the presence of God; it would, therefore, take the obedience of the second Adam when tempted by the devil in the wilderness to gain entrance for man back into the Garden of God's presence. Jesus, the second Adam, *had* to endure the temptation of the devil in the wilderness, and He *had* to overcome. And as we will see, that is exactly what He did.¹⁹

¹⁷ “The first man faced the first temptation in a garden, and when he sinned, our entire race was cast out. To bring us back, therefore, Jesus had to go out into the wilderness and defeat the devil who first tempted us to sin”; Ryken, 152–53. See also Michael Wilcock's comments on the same theme: Michael Wilcock, *The Message of Luke*, TBST (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1979), 60.

¹⁸ Why forty days? David Garland writes, “The number ‘forty’ is a familiar one in Old Testament lore and may be a biblical round number for a long time [Garland cites Gn 7:4, 12, 17; Jdg 13:1; Jon 3:2; Ezek 4:6; *Apoc. Ab.* 12:1–2; Acts 1:3; Exod 24:18; Deut 9:11; Deut 9:25; 10:10; Exod 34:28; Deut 9:9, 18; 1 Kgs 19:8 as examples of the uses of “forty”]; Garland, 179n12]. In the context of being tested, however, the reference to forty days can bring to mind Israel's wilderness sojourn under Moses when they were tested by God (Deut 2:7; 8:2; Neh 9:21; Ps 95:10; Amos 2:10; Acts 7:30, 36). Forty days is specifically equated with the forty years of wandering in Num 14:34 (see Ezek 4:6). As was Israel, so Jesus is tempted by hunger (Exod 16:1–8), tempted to worship something other than God (Exod 32), and tempted to put God to the test (Exod 17:1–3). Appropriately, his responses come from Deut 6:13, 16, and 8:3, texts directly connected to the testing of Israel in the wilderness”; Garland, 179–80. I am certain that Matthew intended his readers to relate Jesus' temptations in the wilderness to those of Israel; I am less certain that Luke intended the same. The theme of Jesus as the second Adam is still striving Luke's narrative.

¹⁹ Morris' comments are insightful: “Jesus had just been baptized and now looked forward to the public ministry to which he had set his hand, but first he spent time in quiet reflection in the wilderness. The story is of great interest in that it cannot have come from anyone other than Jesus himself. Clearly he faced questions like: What sort of Messiah was he to be? Was he to use his powers for personal ends? Or for the establishing of a mighty empire that would rule the world in righteousness? Or for working spectacular, if pointless, miracles? He rejected all these for what they were, temptations of the devil. That they were temptations implies that Jesus knew that he had unusual powers. ‘It is not temptation to us to turn stones into bread or leap from a Temple pinnacle’ (Barclay). But Jesus was not bound by our limitations. He knew he had powers other men do not have and he had to decide how to use them”; Morris, 120.

The three temptations of Satan relate to a question of suffering, a question of sovereignty, and a question of spectacle. Let's look at the first temptation in vv. 2–4:

And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’” (4:2b–4)

It is not impossible to fast for forty days, but it pushes one to the extremes of human endurance. “He was hungry” is quite the understatement. Jesus was suffering, with no end to His suffering in sight. He had been driven by the Holy Spirit out into the wilderness (Mark uses the verb ἐκβάλλει—“cast out,” which calls to mind Adam being “driven” or “cast out of the Garden [Gn 3:24]”), likely without any preparations or supplies. He has now been out there, alone and with nothing, for forty days. He is weak and emaciated. Where is He going to find bread? Does He even have the strength for the journey back to civilization? Then here comes Satan, who tempts Jesus to use His divine power to relieve His suffering and end His hunger. But Jesus knows that He is suffering according to the will of God; it is the Holy Spirit who has driven Him into the wilderness and put Him into this condition. In the end, this is a question of faith. Does Jesus trust His heavenly Father in His suffering, or will He sin in order to end His suffering? Jesus prevails by quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, “Man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.” In effect, Jesus responds to Satan by asserting that to starve under God's blessing is infinitely superior to eating His fill under God's displeasure. The second Adam trusted God in His suffering, and refused to relieve His suffering through sin.

The second temptation relates to the question of sovereignty. Look at vv. 5–8:

And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, “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.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written,

*‘You shall worship the Lord your God,
and him only shall you serve.’” (4:5–8)*

The question of sovereignty formed the essence of the devil’s temptation of the first Adam. “If you eat from this tree, *you will become like God*. You can rule your own kingdom, establish your own law, decide for yourself what is good and evil” (Gn 3:5). The second Adam has embarked upon a path that will lead to the death of the cross. Yes, the crown of glory has been promised to Him, but not before the cross of shame. First the cross, then the crown—that is the Father’s will. But here Satan presents to Jesus the opportunity to receive the glory of the crown apart from the agony of the cross. David Garland summarizes the temptation well:

It is a temptation to accelerate the access to power by bypassing the path of suffering and service, to achieve power for power’s sake, giving no thought to justice, to adopt satanic means of attaining power by exploiting, dominating, and crushing others. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that God would give to her divinely conceived son the throne of David and that there would be no end to his kingdom (1:31–33). The devil offers “a shabby substitute” to replace “an everlasting kingdom.”²⁰

But take note of the deception. In his temptation of the first Adam, Satan had promised Adam autonomy and self-sovereignty; he promised that Adam would rule himself rather than have to submit to God’s rule, which he suggested was cruel and restrictive. But it was a lie, and that for two reasons. First, Adam would never be autonomous—either he would serve the God of heaven or he would serve the god of this world. And second, the service of God is true freedom. By demanding freedom from God, Adam unwittingly chose bondage to Satan. The same is true in Satan’s temptation of the second Adam. Sure, Satan promises Jesus the glory of the kingdoms of the earth; but if Jesus were to bow the knee to Satan, He would never rise again. He would be in bondage to the evil one, always subservient to Satan’s will. And though He might gain the temporal kingdoms of the earth, He would forfeit the everlasting kingdom of heaven. But Jesus stands firm: “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve” (Dt 6:13).

The third temptation relates to the question of Jesus making a spectacle of Himself, and in that way gaining devotees rather than true disciples. In essence, I think this is another temptation to take circumvent the cross. Let’s read the text, then I will explain:

²⁰ Garland, 182; quoting Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 194–95.

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, for it is written,

*‘He will command his angels concerning you,
to guard you,’*

and

*‘On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.’”*

And Jesus answered him, “It is said, “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”
(4:9–12)

Scholars debate what, exactly, is meant by “the pinnacle of the temple” ($\tauὸν πτερύγιον τοῦ ἱεροῦ$). It could refer to the apex of the sanctuary, the top of Solomon’s portico, or the top of the Royal portico.²¹ Whatever it meant, it would have been a tremendous height. There is an ancient Jewish Midrash that states, “Our teachers have taught [that] when the King, the Messiah, reveals himself, he will come and stand on the roof of the Temple.”²² Satan takes that idea one step further and suggests that Jesus not only stand on the roof of the Temple, but throw Himself down from it in order to demonstrate the Lord’s divine protection over His beloved Son. Clearly, this would be a sin of presumption, for Jesus’ rebuttal to Satan’s misuse of Psalm 91:11–12 is to quote Deuteronomy 6:16 about not putting the Lord your God to the test. But as this is the temple, which was always crowded, I suspect Satan intends for Jesus to jump from the temple, in order that His miraculous preservation would be observed by all.²³ This would certainly provoke

²¹ Morris, 122. Morris writes, “The article shows that a definite pinnacle is in mind, but we cannot identify it with certainty”; Ibid. Garland translates $\tauὸν πτερύγιον$ as “the wingtip,” which, he writes, “probably refers to the pinnacle of the tower at the top of the royal colonnade that overlooked the deep ravine on the south side. Josephus refers to its dizzying height (*Ant.* 15.11.5 §§411–12)”; Garland, 183. Edwards cites Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 2.23.11), who said that James the Just was thrown to his death in AD 62 from “the wing of the temple”; Edwards, 129–30.

²² *Pesiqta rabbati* 36; quoted in Hughes, 160; quoted in Ryken, 160.

²³ “It would be a public proof of his true identity as the Son of God, because when God saved him, the people and priests who were worshiping there would know that he was their Messiah”; Ryken, 160. Garland and Morris insist that the text makes no mention of onlookers; Garland, 183. Morris writes, “The temptation may have

a stir, and surely would have convinced many that Jesus was the Messiah they had looked for. But as we will see repeatedly throughout Luke's Gospel, the Messiah that most of Israel looked for (a conquering king) was not the Messiah Jesus had come to be (a suffering servant). This is precisely why Jesus commands so many of those He healed to silence, rather than letting them speak of His miracle and His messianic identity. Faith erected upon a spectacle is not true faith; neither is a kingdom erected upon a spectacle an everlasting kingdom. First the cross, then the crown; first the groaning, then the glory. This is the gospel way. And thank God that the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Adam, overcame Satan's temptations, preserving that righteousness by which we may receive justification and life.

And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time. (4:13)

Throughout this sermon on Jesus as the second Adam, I have been emphasizing the work of Christ *on our behalf*, which must be received by faith *apart from works*. In other words, I have been emphasizing Christ the second Adam as our *representative*, accomplishing for us what we could never accomplish for ourselves. But Jesus as the second Adam speaks not only of His *substitution* for sinners; it speaks of His *solidarity* with sinners. Jesus is not only our *representative to receive*; He is our *example to imitate*. I would note that we face the same kind of temptations, and thus we ought to follow Jesus' example in overcoming those temptations (cf. 1 Pt 2:21). So before we close, let me point out that:

- You, too, will be tempted to relieve your suffering by reaching for sin. I see this in singles, for instance, who seek to relieve the suffering of loneliness or of lust by reaching for an unbiblical or immoral relationship. Let us follow the example of Christ, the second Adam, by trusting that we suffer according to the will of God, that our pain is purposed for our good and His glory, and that His grace is sufficient to see us through our suffering in righteousness. Do not try to make bread from the stones of sin; you will only break your teeth. Feed on the bread of life, and you will forever.

been to perform a spectacular, but pointless miracle in order to compel wonder and belief of a kind. But since nobody else is said to have been present the temptation may rather have been, as Jesus' answer seems to indicate, that of presuming upon God rather than trusting him humbly"; Morris, 122.

- You, too, will be tempted to establish your own sovereignty, to establish your own kingdom in which you set your own rules. Follow the example of Christ, the second Adam, by remembering: (1) that true freedom is found in submission to God; and (2) there is no real autonomy—you will either serve the God of heaven, or you will serve the god of this world. Do not bow the knee to Satan when he offers you the pleasures and treasures of this world. It is a false promise. Tolkien understood this, for when Sauron promised Saruman a share in his rule in exchange for his service, Gandalf rebukes Saruman, saying, “There is only one Lord of the Rings, . . . and he does not share power.” Worship the Lord your God and serve Him alone, for in His presence is fullness of joy and at His right hand are pleasures forever more (Ps 16:11).
- You, too, will be tempted to presume upon God’s grace and in some way present yourself as a spectacle to the world, in order to gain the world’s praise. Remember that the praise of man is as faint as it is fickle. You may impress them one day, but they will demand more and more and more in order to keep their attention. Do not trade the praise of God for the praise of man.

The first Adam disbelieved the word of God and succumbed to the temptation of Satan; the second Adam believed the word of God and overcame the temptation of Satan. Cling to the word of God, and you, too, will overcome.

“By the One Man’s Obedience, the Many Shall Be Made Righteous”

But as I said, Luke does not present Jesus the second Adam as our example to imitate; he presents Jesus the second Adam as our representative to receive. In Romans 5:19, Paul does not say that by *imitating* the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous; he says *by* the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. Jesus overcame temptation in order to establish a perfect righteousness before God, and in order to offer a perfect atonement to God. If you would be justified in the sight of God and become an heir of eternal life, you must receive Jesus Christ by faith. Through faith, you will be united to Christ in the covenant of grace. His righteousness will become your righteousness; His blood will atone for your sins. And the access into the presence and paradise of God that He won will be granted to you.