

Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Gospel of Luke, Session 7, Jesus' Ministry in Galilee, Part 1, Ministry in Nazareth and Capernaum, Luke 4:14-41

© 2024 Dan Darko and Ted Hildebrandt

This is Dr. Dan Darko and his teaching on the Gospel of Luke. This is session 7, Jesus Ministry in Galilee, Part 1. Ministry in Nazareth and Capernaum, Luke 4:14-41.

Welcome back to the Biblical e-learning lecture series on the Gospel of Luke.

We have been following the early sessions of Luke, especially from chapter 1, verse 1 to chapter 4, verse 13. Today, we proceed with the lectures to look at Jesus and his ministry in Galilee. As you may have noticed following the lectures, you may have realized that we went through the infancy narratives, and then from the infancy narratives, we went on to look at the ministry of John and the preparation ministry of Jesus.

Here, as we go on to look at the ministry of Jesus in Galilee, I would like to give you some heads up so that you may keep some things at the back of your mind as we look into this material. First, we should go back to thinking about how often Luke uses the expression of the Holy Spirit or the spirit and how the spirit features. Then, the next thing to look at is another part of spirit cosmology about demonic activity, the role of evil spirits.

So, we find that in the preparation ministry, Satan or the devil tempts Jesus and Jesus triumphs. In the ministry of Galilee, we are going to begin to see that Jesus is actually going to encounter people who are demon-possessed, and because he has already demonstrated some triumph over triumph over the forces of evil, he will be able to defeat this force of darkness, which is a key part of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God does not just come to bring in or to usher in a reign of God that just takes away the sins of men and women.

The kingdom of God comes to usher us into a realm where God reigns, where the devil and his cohorts, the devil and his activities, cease to have control. As we look at ministry in Galilee, let's quickly begin to look at chapter 4, verse 14, and see how Luke phrases the transition. So, this is just after Jesus' temptation, and he triumphed over the devil after the temptation.

Luke writes that 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 the synagogues, being glorified by all. Before I proceed, let me just make some notes

from this quick quotation, some cultural, some not so-cultural. Luke is suggesting to us that news about Jesus has already gone forward.

We don't know if it is news about the baptism and the visible manifestation of the spirit coming upon him in the form of a dove or if it is about stories about his triumph over temptation. We are not sure, but there is something about the ministry of Jesus that had gone ahead of him to his hometown area or the region from which he comes, and he is going to go in there with this fame ahead of him and all the things he will be dealing with. The other thing to note here is the reference to the synagogue that I mentioned earlier on.

We are going to see in Galilee, which is far from Jerusalem, Jewish gathering places of worship and instruction, which will be synagogues. We will see Jesus visiting a synagogue in his hometown and synagogue in places like Capernaum, one of the largest cities in the region. The other thing to note is that sometimes I have problems with English translation.

Pardon me, English is not my first language. As I read the Greek text and look at how translations are made, I sometimes begin to feel as though some things are missing because of the gap between traditional Western culture, namely native English speakers' culture, and the rest of the world and the culture in which they work. For example, when Luke uses the Greek word *doxasos*, it is translated here in verse 15 of chapter 4 as glorified.

In other words, being glorified by all is something that doesn't really make sense, to me at least. In English, it may have some mystical, religious connotation. But in fact, what that word seems to connote here in the honor and shame culture is that he is honored by all.

He is someone who comes. It's not only that his reputation has preceded him, but people would embrace him with a sense of honor and respect because this has gone before him. In the same kind of expression that we will find later on, sometimes, when God is honored, we use the word God is glorified.

I tend to have some concerns about that because of what that means. My children speak English. They know other languages that are not my native language. And so sometimes we get into the living room, and we begin to explore what these things mean in English.

Often, I realize that what I think is going on makes no sense to them at all. And so the laboratory in my own home, namely interactions with my own family members, seem to suggest that some translations can be ambiguous. And I hope you have that at the back of your mind.

So, the transition here points out first that Jesus returning to Galilee will be returning in the power of the spirit. He's returning in the power of the spirit. And you want to recall some of the Old Testament motifs of those who move in the power of the Holy Spirit.

They could be in the form of judges, prophets, or people who are endowed with the power of God for the mission of God. Jesus will go to Galilee in the power of the spirit. Fame is one thing.

He doesn't like public attention, but for who he is and what he did, fame always precedes him. And so, yes, his fame was widespread in the region before he got there. The immediate context Luke gives us about his teaching will be the synagogue.

The synagogue will be the gathering place. And I will pause to explain a little bit more about the synagogue in a few minutes. But he will be teaching in the synagogue, a traditional place that Jews go to for religious instruction, and they sometimes have cultural gatherings and various activities pertaining to their culture and their religion.

We will also know more about this Jesus. As I mentioned earlier on, when we are told in verse 15, and he taught in the synagogues, being glorified by all does not mean people were raising their hands and worshipping him and all that. No, that would be really awkward.

Remember, this is Jesus who is going to be questioned later on in the same region. Is this not the son of Joseph? Is that not a guy that maybe if you were in the village area, for example, if I went to my village and I was doing something like that, which I could not do in a way, but if I were doing something like that, somebody would say, oh, is that not that guy we used to play soccer with? Sometimes, he's not even good in the left wing and all those things, and I begin to point out all my imperfections in what I do. So, to say that Jesus is being glorified to make it look like there is this majestic and worshipping component would be too much.

But teaching in the synagogue, he will be known for being good at what he was doing. He will be known for being credible for what he taught. He will be known for being authoritative or having authority or mastery over the material that he taught.

And that will command respect. That will command honor. And that is what is in question here.

Because we will be talking about synagogues a few times in the next couple of lectures, I would like to draw your attention to this whole synagogue tradition. So, recall the experience in the Old Testament when the people of God sinned, and God said he was going to punish them by surrendering them to the captivity of other

nations. If you recall, the Israelites, the ten tribes, were actually in captivity by the Assyrians.

And they were there for a while. Later, Babylon and Babylonia would come and put the rest of the tribes into captivity. Now, when the Jews were in captivity, they were far away from the temple.

If you recall that Old Testament account, under the auspices of Nebuchadnezzar and his administration, Nebuchadnezzar, the military commander in charge, and his team had already destroyed the temple. And so, going into exile, they may have memories of the religious customs and traditions in the temple back home and the things that they could do to develop their religious convictions. But in exile, they had no access to the temple.

And so, synagogues will emerge prominently especially in exile, as a way of creating a space for religious learning experiences and worship of some sort. That is not to say they perform the sacrifices they would normally perform in the temple in the synagogues. No.

But they will have all the other religious teachings and all the religious experiences. I like to sometimes liken a Jewish synagogue in exile to a diaspora church in America. A diaspora church in America, if you go to a Korean one, which I have the privilege sometimes to speak in some of those churches, it's a place where we spend all day on Sunday.

You go there, you finish service, we are going to have Korean food, and the service is going to be all Korean, and I don't speak any Korean. I just know how to say thank you and say some nice things to be able to get some nice food on my plate. That's all I can do.

But it's a Korean cultural experience. The food is authentic Korean. All the experiences of the children, even second generation who did not, who were not born or raised in Korea, begin to hear the interaction.

Everything going on is Korean. A deep cultural experience. I go to African churches, and I realize, in fact, one of the churches is from Ghana, which is my native land; whenever I went there, I would tell the leaders, can you just tone the Ghana path down a little bit so that non-Ghanaians could be welcome in this church.

But what I find is that it has become a cultural point. It's a worship place. It's a place to learn about God, but it's a place where you have all the information about your home country.

Everybody knows who in the neighborhood is going to go back home when, who is coming back from when, who can bring what, and all that. So, imagine a Jewish synagogue in the Diaspora being a place where you learn about God, you learn about culture, and especially children who have been born and raised in exile; they don't have the experience back home. But Jewish identity is all about a covenant relationship with God, and so the synagogue becomes instrumental in shaping their sense of identity as true Jews.

Religious piety in exile this way will grow in a context that had no temple, and people will learn about the Torah and learn and improve in their knowledge base about the Torah, commit a lot of Torah or Hebrew scriptures to memory to be able to have that formative aspect of Jewish life rooted in their religious conviction. Synagogue worship, as I mentioned earlier, is often attributed to an experience that was born in exile. I cannot date precisely when synagogue worship began, but we know that it was prominent in Isaac's time and will continue after the Jews return from exile.

Following exile, not all Jews will come back home, and certainly not all Jews will settle in Judea. So, in places like Galilee, which is far removed 70 miles or more from Jerusalem, much of the Jewish gatherings and religious activities in the region will be in synagogues, and they'll be coming to Jerusalem for specific rituals that need to be performed. In the same way, Jews who were in places like Egypt or in the rest of the empire between Syria, we know that there were a lot of Jews in modern-day Turkey by the first century.

All those Jews will be having their meetings and cultural experiences primarily in the synagogues and come to Jerusalem once in a while for special occasions. So, having said a few things about the Let's get back to Luke's narrative here. Jesus went with the power of the Holy Spirit, but from verse 16, Luke writes more about what happened when Jesus got to Galilee, and he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.

He unrolled the scroll and found a place where it was written. I'll get back to that passage in a minute, but while you are still looking at this passage carefully on the screen, make some observations. Jesus was raised in Nazareth, a small town. He will be teaching in a synagogue, as you can see there.

In reading in this particular context, he would stand up and read. That is the posture of someone who is reading, not someone who is teaching. When we get to the next phase, I will draw your attention to the differences we have today.

Now we are told he unrolled the scroll. Evidence from the Quran and the long scrolls we have seems to suggest that Isaiah's scroll is one of those that could be very, very

long. So, it shouldn't be surprising for us to conceive of a very long scroll of Isaiah given to Jesus, and Jesus is going to unroll, and he's going to go straight to Isaiah 61.

But before we get to Isaiah 61, which I call the Nazareth Manifesto of Jesus, before we get into that text, let me highlight a few things that are going to be unfolding there in his hometown. Jesus visited the synagogue. Don't take that for granted.

The Jesus movement was going to be rooted in Second Temple Judaism. He did so in Nazareth, a small town if you like a village, and we are told, as was his custom, that would not be the first he went to the synagogue, and that would not be the last he would go to synagogue. Luke's Acts tells us that even in the book of Acts, the disciples visit the temple to pray.

You remember when Jesus raised Peter and helped the crippled man at the temple gate. They were going to pray like average Jews. We will be observing if we were reading the book of Acts that Paul, when he went to different parts of the world, one of his first stops will be in the synagogues.

He will go there to share about the Hebrew scriptures and make a transition from the known to the unknown to let them realize that the Messiah that they may be expecting is the Messiah who has come in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath, as was his custom. Yes, we will also see that the scroll that will be given to him most probably will be the scroll of Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures that we have been familiar with.

The language of the day and the language that most people there will be using is Aramaic. We are not sure how often people were so versed in reading Aramaic, and we do not have massive Aramaic resources or manuscripts. It could be either Hebrew or definitely the Septuagint, which was very popular among Jews.

Some scholars like Howard Marshall and Achtemeyer have gone on to argue that it is even possible that Jesus actually functioned perhaps both in Hebrew Aramaic and Greek, and they even suggest that perhaps he knew some Latin given the fact that he grew up in Galilee and all the influence in that part of northern part of Palestine. So, imagine Jesus being given this scroll and we will be told that witnesses who will observe what is playing out in the synagogue will be surprised. When they get surprised, they will get surprised and not keep their mouth shut.

They will begin to question his credibility. They will ask questions like is this not Joseph's son? Please, whenever you read that expression in verse 22 of chapter 4, it is not a word of commendation for Jesus. When they say, is he not Joseph's son? These are people from Nazareth.

Nazareth is not New York City. People know each other. Everybody knows each other.

These guys were perhaps playing in the mud together sometimes. Who knows what they were doing in common? Now they come to the synagogue, and he comes in to do some profound stuff, and when people are in awe, they begin to question, this is not Joseph's son. Well, it's more of a poking into his credibility to say what he is trying to say about himself.

But you see that Jesus's reaction will actually clarify the vision, the mission of the kingdom of God. When he picked the scroll of Isaiah, Luke tells us that he goes straight to read a part of the scroll that I will call the manifesto of Jesus in Luke. And it reads from verse 18, the spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind. To set at liberty them that are bruised and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. Notice what Jesus is doing here reading this passage.

This is Jesus; I told you earlier that according to Luke, he was conceived of the Holy Spirit. To come to be baptized, the Holy Spirit came upon him during baptism. For him to even be tempted, he was led by the spirit to be tempted.

We are told in verse 14 of chapter 4 that before he even comes in order for him to come to Galilee, his own region, he was led by the power of the spirit. Now he takes Isaiah's scroll, this long scroll, and what a coincidence. Luke is trying to tell us this is not a coincidence.

He goes straight to the part of the passage that says the spirit of the Lord is upon me. Here, Jesus is claiming a prophetic mantle. He is saying I am anointed, perhaps in reference to the experience in the baptism.

And he has anointed me to preach audibly to proclaim. And notice the areas that he will be mentioning and how that will unfold in the rest of the gospel. He is mandated or anointed to preach good tidings if you like the gospel to the poor and we will see the poor named in Luke as we go on in the rest of the gospel.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives. We will not have reference to captives anymore anywhere else in the text but we are going to see Jesus setting free people who are held bound by demonic forces. Perhaps allusion to some of those experiences that are going to be part of his ministry.

He said he has also been mandated anointed to bring recovery of sight to the blind. Not only is Jesus going to heal the blind but we know somewhere in places like Acts

where sometimes reference to the blind or recovery of sight becomes illumination, a new understanding of what the kingdom of God is all about. Jesus will bring recovery of sight to the blind, and he will bring liberty to the bruised or to the oppressed, which is another word that we don't find later on in Luke but can still be associated with his ability to set free even people who are so demon-possessed and self-destructive that they are living in cemeteries.

Jesus will come and set them free. Perhaps alluding to that part of his ministry and then, of course, talking about the proclamation of the acceptable year of the Lord, which can be associated with the jubilee that we know about in the Hebrew tradition. Jesus, it pointed out what he's doing here.

It's telling us about what his ministry is all about, and if you are a 21st-century Christian following this lecture series, I pause here to challenge you to think about this. Is that how you perceive the ministry of Jesus? Is that how you perceive your place if you're already a Christian? Indeed, this is what the ministry of Jesus is all about. I know some Christians who believe that Jesus came to save me, and he gave me a passport and a visa, and he says this visa has no expiring date. The expiring date is when you die or when I come back and I'll take you to heaven and they say that's all I need.

That's all, and so everything spirit scares them to death. But Jesus' manifesto here is very different. His manifesto here is not only talking about supernatural anointing that is upon him but it's a ministry that deals with social woes as well.

Dealing with the situation of the poor, bringing recovery of sight to the blind, meeting tangible needs as well, and if you like bringing insight, illumination, understanding of the new things God is doing and even the allusion to the jubilee talking about the release that comes along with his ministry. I like it when Achtmeyer puts it this way. Drawing on Isaiah 61 verses 1 and 2, Jesus interprets his ministry as the fulfillment of the eschatological jubilee which is recorded in Leviticus 25.

A dramatic cipher of the age of salvation marked above by the ministry of release. This release is illustrated immediately in accounts of healing and esotericism. Throughout the gospel, we see Luke develop the concept and experience of release in three ways.

Release from diabolic power so that people are healed. Release from the debilitating cycle of death by which those of higher status and great means control the lives of those without power and privilege. And three, release or forgiveness of sins.

Yes, Jesus came with a ministry that has both horizontal and vertical dimensions. Relationships with God impacts what goes on in the relationships with one another. As I mentioned earlier on in this lecture series, if you conceive of or if you try to

understand the ministry of John the Baptist, you understand the practical dimension of how being in a relationship with God should affect how I deal with the average person on each day knowing that they are bearers of the image of God, deserving of the love and care respect and decency that God requires of us all in relationship to people he has made in his image.

Jesus goes on in a ministry in Galilee in a synagogue ministry. Here, he is going to make some utterances that will actually go on to cause some problems after stating the manifesto. He said, then you will undoubtedly quote me this proverb, anticipating what is going on in your mind. Physician, heal yourself.

Meaning do the miracles in your hometown like those you did in Capernaum. But I tell you the truth. No prophet is accepted in his hometown.

Of course, they were already questioning some things about Jesus's credibility, and Jesus was already anticipating and poking back at them. You see, Jesus was drawing attention to the fact that they all know these things, especially physicians. Heal thyself was a very, very common, well-known maxim in the ancient world. Jesus is trying to say, yeah, I know.

I know what you think, but I also have work to do elsewhere, and if I'm not accepted here, I will go where I am accepted. If my hometown people refuse me, if people in Nazareth refuse me, well, I know that God, who has anointed me, will send me somewhere else to do what he is calling me to do. Well, it is true that Nazareth may reject me, but if even Nazareth goes ahead and rejects me, I will not be the first person in the prophetic tradition of the Jewish people who will go through that.

There are prophets ahead who experience that same kind of pattern from their own people. Going back to physician, heal yourself, and then I'll go back to the prophetic tradition in a minute. Green writes about this well-known maxim, physician, heal thyself, and he explains that it could be employed in an argument to insist that one must not refuse to do one's own relations the favors one does to others or that one must not benefit others while refusing the same benefits to one's own relations.

Jesus could then be saying, I know that you are going to say I'm supposed to do some extraordinary things here even though you are questioning my credibility in terms of ministry. Our dear Lord and Master Jesus Christ, upon his baptism, his temptation, going back to his homeland, Luke tells us that he landed ministry right where he began, but where he began was not going to be a very smooth place as we would notice, but where he began is where he stated clearly what his mandate is. It is God who has called him into the prophetic tradition, and he said in verse 24, truly I say to you no prophet is acceptable in his hometown.

Verse 25, but in truth, I tell you there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the heavens were shut up three years and six months and great famine came over the land and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath in the land of Sidon to a woman who was a widow and there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elijah, and none of them was cleansed but only Naaman the Syrian. When they heard this, that is the people in his hometown synagogue, when they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath, they were furious, and they rose up and drove him out of town and brought him into the brow of the hill on which their own town was built so that they could throw him down the cliff but passing through the mist he went off. The people in the synagogue were so furious they were ready to kill him, and Jesus was fast sneaked out.

But what was the point of contention? The point of contention is this: Jesus was telling them that he was a prophet, and as a prophet, he would not be the first one who came to their own people and have the people deny him, and when the people deny him, he goes somewhere else and guesses what example he is going to give? That example should make people very angry. He goes on to say let's talk about Elijah when disbelief or unbelief and the problem with the people of God in the time of Abraham were going on, and God brought down this judgment upon the people that said there would not be rain, and when the people were under judgment guess what God would do? God would send his prophet to a gentile, and not only a gentile; God will send his prophet to a gentile woman. Imagine being in the synagogue and hearing this.

We are so stubborn people. That is why this man who claims to be a prophet who has the spirit of the living God upon him is going to leave this territory to Gentiles like the old prophetic tradition of Elijah, knowing that we are stubborn people even deserving the punishment of God. That evokes something in them. If you like, that triggers something in them. Guess what else he's going to do? Jesus gave a second example in that passage I read. He said let me tell you there was another prophet in other words, he is placing himself in the prophetic tradition of Elijah.

Another prophet who was also rejected by the people when God was going to use him for something extraordinary. Guess where he went? He went to a gentile land in Syria, and he healed Naaman the leper, and the people are hearing this and saying so we are Jews. We are your people, and this is what you have to tell us; please, whenever you read this text, and you see that the people were angry, understand that if you were in the plight or in their stead, you would likely be angry too. They are ordinary people like you and me who are being provoked by a 30-year-old who just came down from the south in Judea and who comes to the synagogue later on where we all knew him growing up, and he picked up Isaiah's scroll and said the spirit of the living God is upon me and now when we are raising concerns he comes in and tells us this is the situation that he is a prophet and he's not an ordinary prophet. The famous prophet known at the time in the memory of God's people is Elijah as my

friend in my former institution who was a Jewish rabbi used to say Elijah in the first century was the Santa Claus or this powerful figure in the minds of the average Jew.

So, imagine he is saying he comes in the prophetic tradition of this great guy, and when we have some concerns about it, he tells us we are so stubborn and have unbelief that God is going to use him to do things with Gentiles. In other words, open up more of his work to Gentiles. Placing himself in the prophetic tradition alone triggers something in the people, and it is part of the reason Jesus is going to have this situation with his people. The beginning of Jesus' ministry in Luke, if you take it to be that of just a great teacher, then you'll be mistaken. From his manifesto to this level, he is situating himself or placing himself firmly as a prophetic Jesus but you see the Messiah comes both in a prophetic figure and in the teacher, and he comes to save the people; in other words, he will teach people should hear the words of God from his mouth and repent he will demonstrate God's power and here he gives two instances of miracles, and he says in terms of the miracles when you guys become stubborn in the hometown he goes to Gentile territory and he will perform miracles with them there.

Anger in the synagogue is a legitimate cause of action for anyone who would like to put themselves in the place of the Jews. When they ejected Jesus, it should concern us, though, that even being in the house of worship could not restrain the people of God. They could not temper them, and their anger went down to a certain level.

Can you imagine somebody saying at church, we were worshipping, we were worshipping, and then when we finished worshipping, somebody came in and stood up teaching, and then we say we don't like the teaching and suddenly all our gracious mood and compassion flip and we are so angry that we want to kill the person in church. That would be weird, but you see, when you trigger people at the wrong place, sometimes that's what happens, but Jesus knows exactly what he's doing, and Luke tells us he knew he would sneak out anyway. He would sneak out.

It would be a visible slap in the face of saying I came to you, you rejected me, you were even ready to kill me, and I got out. So, when you hear about me later on, you should convince yourself that, in fact, you picked me out, and I got out of your hand, and God is doing these things through me that I told you back home in the synagogue. Jesus and Jesus escaped into a ministry like no other but study one, and he went to Capernaum, the largest town in the region, a city of Galilee he was teaching them on the Sabbath, and they were astonished, astonished at his teaching, for his word possessed authority.

Verse 33 and in the synagogue, there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ha! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God but Jesus rebuked him, saying be silent and come out of him and when the demon

had thrown him down in the mist, he came out of him having done him no harm, and they were all amazed and said to one another, what is this word for with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and they come out and reports about him went into every place in the surrounding region. Please pay close attention to this passage as I highlight a few things here. I get passionate and excited about Jesus' ministry here, and I wish he would show up today in America, in my world here.

First, we find out that he goes into the synagogue to teach. He had already earned enough credibility that he could teach on the Sabbath, and the people were ready to allow him to teach on the Sabbath. That is cool because back home in Nazareth, what happened was he read the scroll and said today this is fulfilled in your ears and that caused trouble, but here he comes into a bigger town, and they actually recognize his ministry, and they gave him the opportunity to teach on the Sabbath.

It is again, placing his ministry squarely in the Sacred Temple Judaism. Second, you find out that there was a demon-possessed person in the synagogue. It is very interesting topic that has come up again and again and again as we go on teaching and doing ministry around the world.

We find out that the question has come up again and again: could Christians be demon-possessed? Could demons come after God's people? I always say, I don't know how I wish I have multiple senses to be able to see what is going on in the spiritual realm and all that but one thing we know for real in Luke's account here is this. In a Jewish synagogue, in the gathering of God's people, Luke said somebody was demon-possessed in the midst, and Jesus was going to help release that person from that demonic control, that evil spirit's control in the synagogue. When he does so, they will be astonished to hear his teaching, and they'll be amazed about the power at work when he brings this deliverance to the demon-possessed.

You see when we come to this subject of spirit cosmology, increasingly, my colleagues in the New Testament scholarship, especially those in Pauline scholarship, are beginning to realize I make too much noise about this particular subject, spirit cosmology. The reason is this: because I don't think we will understand the ministry of Jesus Christ if we fail to understand that the way he views the world and the world in which he lived was perceived as a place where God is at work day to day in the lives of people in the way that evil spirits, evil spiritual powers can also interfere and influence human activity at any time. When the kingdom of God comes, God exercises his power over the forces of darkness to set those who are held in bondage by them free so that they can be released to live in freedom, to have the liberty that God alone can give so that they can live life and flourish.

Salvation in Jesus Christ, then, is not only following three or four-point steps and getting a visa to heaven; it is a total liberation from the powers of darkness. It is a total liberation from the captivity and the power of sin so that one becomes the child

of God who benefits in entirety from this ministry that Jesus offers. Jesus is launching this ministry in the synagogue and somebody who was demon possessed was going to experience this freedom.

We will see that not only would a demon-possessed be free, but many who are sick will be healed. Another dimension of the ministry of Jesus is that we don't hear a lot about in the Western world today. In verse 38, Jesus will be invited to come to Simon's house. I read the text, and he wrote it. I left the synagogue and entered Simon's house.

Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him, namely Jesus, on her behalf, and he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her and immediately she rose and began to serve again. Verse 40 when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various disease brought them to him and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. The demons also came out of many crying, you are the son of God, but he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak because they knew that he was the Christ.

Before I outline some points from this passage and close this particular session, I want to make just a brief comment about a part that I didn't highlight in my summary. Jesus laid hands on every one of the sick who was brought to him. This was not showmanship, showmanship.

This was pastoral care. He treated each one as a person deserving his personal attention. He could have spoken, and they would be healed.

He laid his hands on each one of them to bring healing to their body. Now, a quick point about the events unfolding here. Here we observe the situation that Jesus was brought to Peter's house.

The account says that it was Peter's house, and then the next line said his mother-in-law was sick with a fever. Let's fill in some cultural gaps here since we are still in a Western country. It is usual for mother-in-law to stay in the home of the couple or let me put it this way.

It was usual for a couple to stay in the home with in-laws. Now, if you are following this lecture from America, I am not a prophet, but I guess what you are thinking. You mean mother-in-law? Yes, yes.

Because in the ancient world, this is how things worked. Family units are so important as we have in most Middle Eastern countries today. Between North Africa and other Middle Eastern countries today, this is still the case up to today, 2019.

If you are a child and you are growing up and you are not married, you are supposed to live at home regardless of your age. In fact, most Arab-speaking countries still observe this to the point that today, even if you are a woman and you are 50 years old, and you are not married, and you move away from your parents, society doesn't treat you kindly. Unless you are working in another city, it makes you an irresponsible person, and sometimes it comes with some derogatory characterization, such as trying to live a very bad lifestyle and trying to run away from the sight of your parents.

Now, talk about marriage and in-laws. It is still the case that when you are in a... Now, Israel is quite different because Israel is so American for the most part. But in most Middle Eastern countries today, it is still the case that when you marry, chances are that you live with your in-laws.

If you are thinking about privacy, the greatest privacy you can get is that you are not living on the same floor. So, sometimes, a young couple may live downstairs, and the parents may be upstairs, or the parents may be downstairs and vice versa. Now, believe it or not, I teach cultural intelligence in an Arab-speaking country, and it is striking that almost every year, I will have a student who says, you know, I live with my in-laws, and you should know that I am not allowed to cook because his mother is in charge of the kitchen.

And if grandma's in-law is going to allow some room for cooking, that is a great privilege. But the privilege comes with responsibility because if the wife doesn't cook well, the father-in-law, the siblings who are living at home, and her own husband are going to point out when they are all sitting around eating that, no, the food is not as good as mom's one. So, imagine this culture.

So, here we are told in this account that this is Peter's home. But the next line says his mother-in-law is sick in the home. It is a culture that if you live in the Middle East today, it is not. It doesn't make any, it doesn't even click because it's normal.

But in America, please, people will tell me, don't ask me to move in with my mother-in-law or to ask my mother-in-law to move in with me. I'm not going there. All that I'm saying is to understand Peter's in-law's situation.

And then we were told that she had a fever. But you look at how Jesus healed the fever. Jesus rebuked the fever to get out of her.

We were told the fever got out of her immediately, and she began to serve. These experiences and what happened in the synagogue in the same town send the message around. And so, we are told that as the sun was coming down, more and more people brought others in who were sick to be healed, who were demon-possessed to be delivered.

And Jesus will lay hands on them and heal them. He will deliver those who are demon-possessed. He will rebuke demons who are trying to call unnecessary attention to himself.

Let me make a very important point here in Luke. So if you're a pastor today, you don't want to miss what I'm about to say. Luke tells us that when Jesus or the followers of Jesus show up at a place and the power of God is upon them and there is someone around who is demon-possessed, Luke consistently points out that they recognize the people and, in fact, they call them for who they are.

And then they begin to distort the message. So, in the case of Jesus, the demon-possessed person says, I know who you are. You are Jesus of Nazareth.

Of course, they know who you are. And if you're a charismatic preacher today and somebody demon-possessed is saying, I know who you are. You are the man of God.

Please don't have a swollen head. It's not a thing to go and say, oh yes, of course, I'm a man of God. Look at the gospel of Luke.

Sometimes, the demon says, we know you; you are the Most High, the servant of the living God. But the person saying that is a person who is possessed by a demon trying to detract attention from the man of God dealing with the person. In this case, Jesus was upset, rebuked the person, and dealt with the situation as quickly as possible.

And we are told those who were demon-possessed were free. As we come to the end of this session of Jesus' ministry, both in Nazareth and in Capernaum, let me summarize a few things I have said so far. He went to the synagogue in his hometown.

A scroll of Isaiah was given to him, and he read it. He outlined how his ministry would look like in the tradition that is recorded in Isaiah. It was being questioned and reacting to the questions that he was having in the synagogue.

He made references to Elijah and his ministry to a Gentile and implied that the people are disobedient, and if they go on with unbelief, God is likely to send him to Gentiles for ministry and also establish himself in the prophetic tradition. The people were angry about that and wanted to kill him, so he sneaked out. He came to Capernaum, the nearest largest city.

There he went to the synagogue and he taught. People were astonished by the artist's teaching. There was a demon-possessed in the synagogue and he delivered the demon-possessed.

Later, when he left the synagogue, they came to Peter's home, where they encountered his mother-in-law, and Jesus healed his mother-in-law. Later in the evening, news went out about what Jesus was doing, so many who were sick and demon-possessed came, and he set them free. Is this out of the ordinary of what Jesus should be doing in the kingdom of God? No.

As he read from the scroll of Isaiah, he has come to bring good news to the poor. He has come to bring recovery of sight to the blind, release the captives, and even proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. As we follow these lectures, please observe how the ministry of Jesus would unfold in the multi-dimension of human life, spiritually, physically, and socially, how he would touch people's lives with one aim and one aim alone that they might be free to flourish in the way God has made them to be.

I hope that as you go along with us, you may have such an experience as well or, at the very least, be curious to know more about this experience so that you may begin a journey with Jesus Christ, the one I call my Lord. Thank you very much.

This is Dr. Dan Darko and his teaching on the Gospel of Luke. This is session 7, Jesus Ministry in Galilee, Part 1. Ministry in Nazareth and Capernaum, Luke 4:14-41.