

15So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." 16And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. 17Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. 18And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. Luke 2:15-20

The shepherds that had the visitation of angels went to see Mary, Joseph and the Christ Child, the Babe lying in a manger. After this they started publicizing this, *they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child*. Luke writes, *those who heard it marveled at those things*. Mary almost seems like a innocent bystander in her own life. In Chapter one, when the angel spoke to her Luke wrote, *she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Luke 1:29* Here after the shepherds visit, *Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart*. This is true in our lives as Christians, *neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. 1 Cor 3:7* We must remember as Christians we are not our own. God is working in and through our lives, *it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Phil 2:13*

36And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, 37and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She did not leave the temple grounds, serving night and day with fasts and prayers. 38And at that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak about Him to all those who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. Luke 2:36-38

Last week we talk of Simeon an old man, waiting in the temple in Jerusalem, who was *looking forward to the consolation (comfort) of Israel*, Simeon was waiting for Israel's deliverance in the person of God's Messiah. A prophetess named Anna was there at the same time. She was a widow who *did not leave the temple grounds, serving night and day with fasts and prayers*. Luke writes she walked up to this group *and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak about Him (Jesus) to all those who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem*. This passage implies there were many true Jewish people who were waiting for the Messiah, *looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem* and as we know the redemption of the whole world, *for all the people*. The angel had announced to the shepherds, *I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10,11*

Luke then wrote that Jesus parents returned to Nazareth of Galilee (70 miles North). Luke omitted from his account the visitation of the Magi, flight into Egypt and the Herod slaughter of the infants recorded by Matthew. He gives just a brief report of Jesus growing up, *the Child continued to grow and to become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the favor (χάρις - grace, kindness) of God was upon Him*. Not much of a narrative but it is an overview of Christ's development. He adds later a similar statement, *And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature (age, maturity), and in favor (χάρις - grace, kindness) with God and people*. In Proverbs we are encouraged to *Get wisdom; develop good judgment. Don't forget my words or turn away from them. Prov 4:5* Jesus grew up under the Law and He was able to live a sinless life.

4But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5to redeem those who were under the law, that we

might receive the adoption as sons. Gal 4:4

We must consider that Jesus grew up under the Mosaic Law and was able to live His life without sin, He was born of a virgin the Holy God as His Father. Unlike Adam and Eve, who were without sin until the Fall, Jesus was able to live a sinless life, He was *tempted as we are, yet without sin*. Jesus was born like we are, *her Seed*, but He was not the seed of Joseph, descended from Adam with a sin nature but at the right time *God sent forth His Son*. This statement, *yet without sin*, makes Christ able to be our great High Priest, the one able to atone for *the Sin* of man, our sin nature. *I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel Gen 3:15*

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15 Hebrews states that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God thus we are able *come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace*. Luke states, *the favor (χάρις - grace, kindness) of God was upon Him*. That favor of God passes to us so that we can with boldness approach Holy God, we can *come boldly to the throne of grace*. Luke tells us so much about Christ without giving us the details. We are however given insight into one event of the later childhood of Jesus. It is the only mentioned in this gospel, Jesus goes to the Feast of the Passover, we remember that Christ will be Crucified during the Passover. Jesus accompanies His family but then remains in at the Temple. Luke tell us the story,

41His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42And when He was twelve years old, they went up there according to the custom of the feast; 43and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days required, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but His parents were unaware of it. 44Instead, they thought that He was somewhere in the caravan, and they went a day's journey; and then they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. 45And when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, looking for Him. 46Then, after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. 47And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. 48When Joseph and Mary saw Him, they were bewildered; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You!" 49And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" 50And yet they on their part did not understand the statement which He had made to them. 51And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued to be subject to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart. Luke 2:41-51

Why this account of all the events that happened while Jesus was growing up? Of all that happened during Jesus formative years, we have Him going to the temple in Jerusalem, and Jesus saying, *I had to be in My Father's house*. The family goes to Jerusalem for the Passover. Luke writes, *His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover*.

All males among the Hebrews were required to appear three times a year before God, to attend on the ordinances of religion in the temple, and it is probable that this was the age at which they first went up to Jerusalem. This was a journey from Nazareth of about 70 miles. Barnes' Notes

Being raised a devout Jew, Jesus, at five would have begun learning the Law, *at first by extracts written on scrolls of the more important passages and at twelve would have become*

more directly responsible for his obedience to the Law. *Elliot's Commentary* Jesus most likely went to a synagogue school and learn the Law with other Jewish children, memorizing the text of the Torah.

At the ages of six through twelve, the Jewish boys and girls would begin their education in the synagogue school, learning how to read and write. The textbook was the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) and the goal was to memorize the sacred text. The Babylonian Talmud Baba Bathra 21a:6 says, "Before the age of six do not accept pupils; from that age you can accept them, and stuff them with Torah like an ox." deurpost.wordpress.com

Now this may have been His first time to go along to the Passover Feast. *There were three major Pilgrimage Festivals in Judaism—Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Weeks or Pentecost), and Sukkot (Tabernacles, Tents or Booths)* He was going as an adult. He was now responsible for his obedience to the Law. We have this time when we become responsible for our behavior, we say we have reached the age of reason. *(Around the age of seven, give or take a year, children enter a developmental phase known as the age of reason.)* For the Jewish child this was a time of becoming an adult.

Bar mitzvah (Bas mitzvah for girls) is Hebrew for "son of commandment." When a Jewish boy turns 13, he has all the rights and obligations of a Jewish adult, including the commandments of the Torah. From that date, he will wear tefillin (phylacteries, is a set of small black leather boxes containing scrolls of parchment inscribed with verses from the Torah.) on a daily basis, participate in synagogue services and take his place in the Jewish community.

So it seems significant, Jesus becoming an Jewish adult is going to the temple. When the Bible states Christ lived without sin it means He obeyed the Law, *born under the law, 5to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Gal 4:4* It seems fitting that Jesus first work as an adult would be to instruct the leaders of the Jewish faith about the Word. He had already been instructed in the OT Scriptures but He had insight that most of these blind guides, teachers of the Law, didn't have. When Jesus considered the scriptures He realized that this was His Father talking and imparting wisdom from above. It reminds me of Peter and John before the Jewish council after the healing of a crippled man.

1While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees. 2These leaders were very disturbed that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead. Act 4:1-2 A little later Luke rights, The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. Acts 4:13

Jesus was in the Temple teaching, *Then, after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. Luke 2:46,47* When His Parents found Him He said, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. *Luke 2:49,50*

He was in the world but most were blinded to who He was. John wrote, *He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:10-13* Today He is still about My Father's business. And so must we.