

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God

Dedication

Luke 2: 21-52

Introduction: As we close this chapter of Luke's Gospel we are introduced to two new aspects of the nature of Jesus. We discover the beginning of a series of actions which identify with us as sinners, even though He was without sin. We also discover that His divine nature did not obviate the need for growth and maturity while robed in His humanity; Jesus is very much the man (child) Who must grow and develop like all the rest of us.

- I. **Circumcision and Purification** (vs. 21-24)
 - A. The sign of the covenant and cleansing from sin
 - B. Naming the Child: JESUS
 - C. Ritual of Purification for Mary (and Jesus in Luke's account)

- II. **Simeon and Anna—God Always has His Faithful** (vs. 25-38)
 - A. Promise to Simeon and the anointing of the Holy Spirit in the Old Dispensation
 - B. The prophecy of Simeon and the tragedy of Israel
 - C. Mary's trouble
 - D. The prophetess Anna

- III. **The Temple Visit** (vs. 39-52)
 - A. Luke's transition and the chronology of Jesus' early life
 - B. Visiting the temple at the age of twelve
 - C. Joseph and Mary lose track of Jesus
 - D. The astonishment of the teachers in Jerusalem
 - E. Jesus is scolded ... did He do anything wrong?
 - F. Jesus grows up

Conclusion: Most of the years of Jesus' growing up are hidden from us. What we do know about Him is that, according to the Scriptures, He never sinned, but on the other hand He was not instantly mature. Jesus had to grow and mature, to learn and study the Scriptures and all the other things necessary for living life here, just as any other child. As He grew memories had to be formed, knowledge assimilated, practical life lessons processed and built into His daily habits. In all of these ways He identified with us. It is true that God did not need to become a man for Him to understand us, but He did need to become a man for us to understand Him, and to believe that He really does understand our condition. He has truly walked in our shoes.

And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was *then* called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "EVERY *firstborn* MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD"), and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, "A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS." And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation, Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Your people Israel." And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this *Child* is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed— and a sword will pierce even your own soul— to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed." And 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 seven years after her marriage, and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. At that very moment she came up and *began* giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

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