

Luke part 4 – Luke writes the gospel of LUKE

So far in this study we have discussed many aspects of Luke's life, and have studied about some of the people Luke wrote about, who otherwise are not mentioned in scripture. And Luke was able to do this because of his association with the Apostle Paul. Most recently we indicated how that during the so-called two silent years when Paul was held prisoner in Caesarea in governor Felix's prison that Luke was free to come and go, for Luke was not held prisoner. And since Jerusalem was in close proximity to Caesarea, Luke could have made numerous visits between Jerusalem and Caesarea. We talked about how Luke could have spent hours interviewing Philip the evangelist during these two years. And besides that, while in Jerusalem Luke could have interviewed the Apostle Peter, the Apostle John, the other Apostles, including James the Lord's brother that Paul mentioned in GALATIANS 1:19. Not to mention the hours of inquiry that Luke also had with the Apostle Paul, which filled in the gaps in the time-line found in ACTS. The gospel according to LUKE came from the many interviews he had with the eyewitnesses he mentioned in LUKE 1:2 as he wrote his friend, and a prominent man of Antioch, Syria, O Theophilus about the life of Jesus Christ from the birth of John the Baptist, until His ascension. The ACTS of the Apostles continues where LUKE left off until the time frame when Paul had been held prisoner at Rome for two years. So about sixty years of time are chronicled in Luke's two books of scripture. And again Luke writes about many people whom we otherwise would know nothing about. Also Luke writes about many events, which we wouldn't know anything about either.

We will get back to some other unique things in scripture that Luke wrote in ACTS a little later in this study, Lord willing, but for now let's consider what only Luke wrote in The Gospel According to LUKE. In LUKE chapter 1 we learn the name of John the Baptist's parents, which are Zacharias and Elisabeth. Luke tells how the same angel Gabriel, who appeared unto Daniel, had now appeared unto Zacharias, who was a priest, and announced that he and Elisabeth would become the parents of John the Baptist. LUKE 1:7 tells us: *And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.* Then LUKE 1:18 records: *And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.* {Consider this from NUMBERS 4, in order to be in the ministry as a priest one had to be between the ages of thirty and fifty. So how well stricken in years were Zacharias and Elisabeth? Somewhere between thirty and fifty, and probably closer to fifty than thirty}. Zacharias didn't believe the words of angel Gabriel, and LUKE 1:20 tells what Gabriel said next: *And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.* It wasn't until after John the Baptist was born that Zacharias spoke again. And LUKE 1:64-79 tells of the prophecy Zacharias gave, and how he was filled with the Holy Ghost to give this prophecy. Luke was the only writer of scripture to tell this story, and the only eyewitness he could have interviewed to get the facts about this story is Mary the mother of Jesus. This will become more apparent as we continue examining what else was said in LUKE 1.

In LUKE 1:26-38 we find the unique story of the angel Gabriel appearing unto Mary, the future mother of Jesus. We could spend hours covering these amazing verses, but note these highlights. In LUKE 1:26 & 27 we read: *And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.* Note here that the same angel, Gabriel, who had recently appeared unto Zacharias the father of John the Baptist, was now appearing unto Mary for the purpose of telling her she was going to be the mother of Jesus! And Luke writes that it was the sixth month, which is explained in LUKE 1:36. LUKE 1:36 *And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.* This is the angel Gabriel speaking, who is telling Mary that her much older cousin, Elisabeth, John the Baptist's mother, is six month pregnant with John the Baptist. So when Elisabeth is six month pregnant with John the Baptist the angel Gabriel appears unto Mary to tell her: LUKE

1:30 ...*Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* And prior to saying that the angel Gabriel had addressed Mary in verse 28 with these words: ...*Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.*

Now let me ask a question, how is it that only Luke mentions all these facts? Why didn't the other gospel writers tell this same story? And the only answer has to be because Mary told Luke about this event for she again is the only eyewitness he could have interviewed to get these facts about this story. When did Luke, who seems to hail from Antioch, Syria have the time to interview Mary the mother of Jesus? Mary the mother of Jesus is never noted to visit Antioch, Syria. And if you study LUKE 1:26-38 real close it is apparent that Mary the mother of Jesus was from a city of Galilee called Nazareth. But at the time of Paul's arrest in Jerusalem in ACTS 21, Mary the mother of Jesus was living in Jerusalem. We know this because while Jesus was on the cross in JOHN 19 we find that Mary the mother of Jesus was there too. And the Apostle John wrote in JOHN 19:25 *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.* The Apostle John's home by the time frame of ACTS 21 is Jerusalem as we previously noted in ACTS 8:3, and ACTS 15. So if Mary the mother of Jesus was still under the care of the Apostle John by the time frame of ACTS 21, she would have been living in Jerusalem. And if she had since been under the care of James the Lord's brother, she still would be in Jerusalem by the time Paul was arrested in ACTS 21. So we must realize that Mary the mother of Jesus was living in Jerusalem when Paul was arrested there about 58 A.D., and in the next two years while Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea, Luke had the time, and the opportunity to interview her, which he did. This is how he got the eyewitness accounts we have been reading about. Mary would have been in her seventies at least by this time.

Consider for a moment the incredible salutation the angel Gabriel spoke to Mary, which are words she never forgot. LUKE 1:28 *And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.* The Greek word translated "highly favoured" here is charitoo {khar-ee-to'-o}, number 5487 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, a word only used twice in New Testament scripture. It literally means: "one having received grace." The literal Greek translation of LUKE 1:28 reads like this: "And entering the angel said unto her, Hail (one) having received grace! The Lord (is) with you. Blessed are you among women!" Wow, what a greeting! And Mary told Luke how this greeting startled, and troubled her. LUKE 1:29 *And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.* And we all too would be troubled by such a declaration from an unexpected angel visiting us. What troubled Mary's mind was that she had never heard such language spoken before. Gabriel was speaking heavenly language, and Gabriel was excited as he made this proclamation. Then in LUKE 1:30 we read: *And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.* The Greek word translated "favour" here in verse 30 is charis {khar'-ece}, number 5485 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, meaning most commonly "grace." It's the same word found in EPHESIANS 2:5 ...*by grace ye are saved.* Again in EPHESIANS 2:7 we find charis explained like this: *That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.* Again in the next verse charis is used again: EPHESIANS 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.* Now back up a chapter to EPHESIANS 1:6 where we find both charis, and charitoo in the same verse: *To the praise of the glory of his grace, (charis) wherein he hath made us accepted (charitoo) in the beloved.* Our take away from this is that down deep we all would really like to have been "highly favoured" like Mary was, but as the Apostle Paul told us, we are this "highly favoured" ...*To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* Mary was "highly favoured" so that Christ

Jesus should grow up in her until He was revealed unto the world. Those in the Bride of Christ will be the one's, who allow the Holy Ghost to work in their lives, to the point that they will be grown up in Christ, a fully mature wife, who has made herself ready. It took Paul one hundred chapters to fully explain what was revealed unto him on how we can ...*grow up into Him in all things...* (EPHESIANS 4:15). Highly favoured (charitoo) Mary in simple faith stated in LUKE 1:38 ...*Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.* Likewise those highly favoured (charitoo) found in the Bride of Christ will be of the same heart as Mary, who by faith proclaim ...*Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.*

Yes Luke got to interview Mary the mother of Jesus, and Mary told Luke these incredible stories, which only Luke wrote about. LUKE chapters 1 & 2 are the stories Mary told Luke. Mary was the eyewitness Luke interviewed to get these stories of LUKE 1 & 2. And even though it had been about sixty or so years since John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ were born, Mary remembered it like it was yesterday. Note what is said in LUKE 1:35 by the angel Gabriel to Mary: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* When did "the power of the Highest" ever leave Mary? When did the "the power of the Highest" ever leave you once you believed? The answer is never, for HEBREWS 13:5 tells us: ...*for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* And on top of that we find Mary the mother of Jesus mentioned in ACTS 1:14 there in Jerusalem with the hundred and twenty, who days later were filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost in ACTS 2! ACTS 1:14 *These all (Jesus disciples) continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.* Mary was the Holy Ghost filled mother of Jesus that Luke interviewed in Jerusalem while Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea, and the Holy Ghost helped Mary remember the vivid details of her life with Christ Jesus that Holy Ghost filled Luke recorded.

I pondered in my mind what it would have been like to interview Mary the mother of Jesus like Luke did. What would have been the questions I would have asked her? You might want to go through that exercise in your own mind and see what you come up with. Now think about this, on a daily basis you can interview Jesus Christ Himself in prayer! What kinds of questions do you ask Him? On a daily basis you can also study His word, and by doing so He is further revealed unto you in a deeper measure. Recently Sue and I were told about a woman, who used to come here, and is now in her high nineties', who daily searches the Word of God until she comes up with her daily priceless gem. She wants Christ revealed unto her in a deeper measure. We will say more about this measure in a few moments.

Again by the time Luke got to interview Jesus' mother, she would have been somewhere near eighty years old, plus or minus. And she would have by this time told her story about her first born son many times. And I know the Holy Ghost guided Luke in his interviewing Mary the mother of Jesus, and gave him the proper wisdom just to sit back and listen to her tell these stories, which for us are recorded in LUKE 1 & 2. I don't think Luke knew he was going to be the gospel writer of the book that pictured Jesus as a man, yet he was. How would you describe the Man, Christ Jesus? Mary had an anointing upon her from the day the angel Gabriel appeared unto her, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, and helped her on a daily basis the rest of her life. Mary experienced and witnessed first hand the growth of the Man Christ Jesus from the day of her immaculate conception until His cruel death upon the cross. How about in your own life, from the day you were born again how much has Christ Jesus grown in your own life? In 1 CORINTHIANS 3:1 Paul addresses the Saints at Corinth as "babes in Christ." Paul also has much to say about the children of God writing in 1 CORINTHIANS 14:20 "*Brethren, be not children in understanding.*" Paul wanted us to grow up in Christ, from babes, to children, to fully mature sugkleronomos joint-heirs with Christ, a co-inheritors as of a wife with her husband! Paul explained this in ROMANS 8. ROMANS 8:16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that*

we may be also glorified together. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Paul wrote and taught such truth that was revealed to him because the Lord Jesus Christ wants us to grow up into Him in all things, which is why He sent us the Holy Ghost to guide us into such spiritual perfection. We will read that scripture in a moment.

Luke was inspired by the Holy Ghost to write of the inner qualities of the man Christ Jesus without mentioning His manly outward physical attributes. Mary perfectly described Jesus' inner qualities because as a woman she thought with her heart. Women think with their heart, and men think with their heads because that is the way God made us. However men, like Brother Hawkins taught in his couple's retreat, we have to learn to think with our hearts also. The Bride of Christ will be like Him having grown up in Him in all things to full measure. *EPHESIANS 4* says it like this starting in verse 13: *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.* The perfect man spoken of in verse 13 has perfect love, which referenced in verses 15 & 16. Such perfection can only happen by yielding to the good working of the Holy Ghost in you until the day of Jesus as is told in *PHILIPPIANS 1:6*.

One more point found in *LUKE 1:35* that ties in with what we have been discussing before we move on. Gabriel told Mary in *LUKE 1:35* *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* We just discussed the Power of the Highest overshadowing all believers. The reason we can confidently state this has to do with "that holy thing" implanted in the heart of all believers. Brother Hawkins wrote in his *LUKE* study book: "As Mary carried that Divine Seed within her, so Christians carry within them the Life of Christ, feeding and nurturing that spiritual life, even as she did humanly. It is sad so many of God's people never go beyond this first stage of development. While they are, indeed, born again and possess that holy, incorruptible Seed, spiritual fruit is never seen. This is not God's purpose." {End of quoting Brother Hawkins.}

Mary then told Luke the following, which is not recorded in the other gospel records: *LUKE 1:39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; 40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. 41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. 43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. 46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. 50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. 51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. 53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. 54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; 55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. 56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.*

Note in verses 46 & 47 that Mary said: *My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.* This was the heart attitude of Mary before the birth of Jesus Christ, and she was still of this same spirit by the time Luke interviewed her. Truly the power of the Highest remained upon her the rest of her life, as we mentioned previously.

In LUKE 1:56 we read that Mary stayed with her cousin Elisabeth about three months before returning to her home in Nazareth. Brother Hawkins notes in his LUKE study book that even though the writer Luke doesn't mention it, "it is difficult to imagine that a woman, pregnant with her own child, leaving the scene where another woman is due to deliver at anytime." I certainly agree, because it had to also be Mary the mother of Jesus who told Luke of the birth of John the Baptist, and what is recorded in LUKE 1:57-80. LUKE 1:68-79 records the words of the prophecy of Zacharias, John the Baptists father after John the Baptist was born. No doubt these words echoed over, and over again in Mary's heart also. Let's read Zachariah's prophecy. We will start with LUKE 1:67 *And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, 68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; 73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, 74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. 76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.* Verses 68-75 pertain to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Verses 76-79 speak to the ministry of John the Baptist. Again only Luke recorded this in scripture.

Luke ends chapter 1 with verse 80 *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.* There is no indication that Jesus ever met John the Baptist before Jesus began His own ministry. So it would be about thirty years before Jesus met John the Baptist. Study LUKE chapter 3 verses 1-23 to see this.

In LUKE chapter 2 the writer Luke tells more stories he learned from the mouth of Mary the mother of Jesus about some things no other author of scripture writes about. LUKE chapter 2:1-7 tells of the Birth of Jesus. LUKE 2:1 *And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.*

Note that Joseph went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, where he lived, and came unto the city of David called Bethlehem. Recall also from LUKE 1:26 and 27 that Mary also was from Nazareth, for *the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth.* It is plain to see that Joseph and Mary lived at Nazareth, a city of Galilee. Jumping ahead in our story of Luke for a moment, note what Luke writes in LUKE 2:39 at the conclusion of this trip: LUKE 2:39 *And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.* Since Nazareth was where Joseph and Mary lived, we would expect them to return to Nazareth after performing all the things according to the law of the Lord concerning Jesus, and LUKE 2:39 confirms that Joseph and Mary returned to Nazareth with baby Jesus. Where do you think the wise men were led by the star in MATTHEW 2 to find Jesus? MATTHEW 2

doesn't say, so piecing the complete story together from LUKE 2 we know that the wise men a couple years later in MATTHEW 2 were led by the star unto Nazareth. Nazareth means "the guarded one."

To us it would seem logical to pay your taxes where you live, and, in fact, that was the usual Roman method of collecting taxes. However, the Jewish custom was to pay taxes at the city of ones extraction. Both Joseph and Mary came from the royal line of David, and Joseph would have been enrolled by Jewish custom according to the tribes and families of Israel, and since his family had its land inheritance near the city of David, which was Bethlehem, and that is where they went to be taxed.

The distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem is around 85 miles. Now think about this for a minute. How in the world did Joseph convince nine-month-pregnant Mary that she needed to take a 85 mile (one way) journey, by either foot travel, stubborn mule, or by whatever other inconvenient means they had to make such a journey? First of all it isn't fun to pay taxes. Second, it isn't fun to travel 85 miles, probably by foot, just to pay taxes. Third, it really isn't any fun to travel 85 miles, probably by foot, when you are nearly nine months pregnant, or with someone who is nine months pregnant, just so you can fulfill your civic duty of paying taxes. Who would tolerate such activity? Newlyweds. So Joseph and Mary take this trip, and finally arrive at Bethlehem, where we find Mary *...being great with child.*

We read in MICAH 5:2 that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. MICAH 5:2 *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.* Whether Joseph or Mary knew this scripture we are not told. The point being they didn't choose where Jesus would be born, but God foreordained that Jesus Christ would be born in Bethlehem, and centuries before the word of the Lord came to Micah the Morasthite to write about it. The Lord also knows every detail about our lives, and has before ordained that we should walk in them according to EPHESIANS 2:10. EPHESIANS 2:10 *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

In LUKE 2:7 we read the fact that there was "no room" for poor Joseph and Mary, and the infant Jesus "in the inn." The world still has "no room" for Jesus Christ, *"Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen..."* 1 TIMOTHY 6:15 & 16. Thank God if you have confessed with your mouth, and believed in your heart that the Lord Jesus Christ is your risen Saviour, for in so doing you have made room for Jesus.

Next in LUKE 2:8-20 we read of the shepherds who were in the same country watching over their flocks by night, on the very same night Jesus was born. No other writer of scripture mentions the shepherds. Let's read some of this story. LUKE 2:9 *And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.*

Again how is it that none of the other gospel writers tell of the shepherds? First of all the Holy Ghost didn't inspire them to write about this. But the Holy Ghost did inspire Luke to write this eyewitness account. And how did Luke get these facts? Again it was from Mary the mother of Jesus herself. And do you know why we can say this? Because of what we just read in LUKE 2:19 that *...Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.* How long did Mary keep these things, all these things in her heart? Until she felt comfortable discussing them with others, because at the time this was another wonder she didn't yet fully comprehend. How did Luke know that Mary pondered these things, these incredible things in her heart? There is no way any of us can figure out what someone is pondering in their heart unless that person tells us what it is they are thinking. Mary told Luke that she had kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart, and now Luke knew what it was she pondered about, because Mary told Luke these events of what took place at the birth of Jesus, and how the shepherds came because they were told of Him by the angel of the Lord.

Let's ponder some things about the shepherds ourselves here for a moment. The shepherds being part of this story of the birth of Jesus told in LUKE 2 give us plenty to think about. The shepherds were part of God's plan in spreading the good news of a Saviour being born. The reason these shepherds were watching their flock by night was that it was lambing season, and the beasts of prey would be out in force at night during this time of year. No doubt it was during the spring when Jesus was born. Now consider these tender compassionate shepherds as they protected their sheep, and especially these new born lambs, and realize what was about to happen to them: God was going to see to it that they were the very first (besides Mary and Joseph) to see that most precious, and tender baby Jesus, **the Lamb of God**. Some thirty years later John the Baptist would announce to the world "**Behold the Lamb of God,**" (JOHN 1:29 & 36), but on the night of our dear Saviour's birth, the shepherds of Bethlehem got to be among the first to **Behold the Lamb of God!**

Why were the shepherds thus privileged? Have you ever thought about it? Pastors are sometimes referred to as shepherds, but more correctly they are overseers of the sheep, much like a shepherd. They are to feed their little flocks. True Pastors always point their "sheep" to **Behold the Lamb of God**, which taketh away the sin of the world. {JOHN 1:29}. What did Jesus Himself tell Peter in JOHN 21? Peter, who himself went on to become probably the greatest kingdom Apostle, was told three times by Jesus in JOHN 21 to "Feed my lambs," "Feed my sheep," and again to "Feed my sheep." {See JOHN 21:15-17}. Back here in LUKE 2, what were these shepherds names? How many shepherds were there? How many sheep did they have? Note that this information is not given to us, because the focus is not to be upon the shepherd, who he was, what he was wearing, what kind of books he read, or what kind of books he wrote, or how many sheep he had; no, the focus for these shepherds was to be upon Jesus, and then to spread the good tidings of great joy, which shall be preached to all people, that there is a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord! Jesus should always be the center of attention, the focal point of all Pastors!

Some more things about the shepherds that Luke wrote in LUKE 2:12 *And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. ...16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.* The shepherds were very familiar with stables, and had no second thoughts about going to this manger scene. The shepherds were told by the angel of the Lord what they would see when they got to the manger: LUKE 2:11 *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* It is interesting to note that the word "Saviour" is found exactly thirty-seven times in our King James version of scripture. Thirty-seven is the number associated with THE WORD OF GOD, and THE WORD OF GOD is one of the many names for Christ the Lord. {Study again REVELATION 19:13.} These shepherds of LUKE 2 were the first (besides Mary and Joseph) to lay eyes upon our Lord and Saviour, Christ the Lord! They certainly didn't know what we know from COLOSSIANS 1 about Christ the Lord. COLOSSIANS 1:14 *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him,*

and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. The Apostle John decades later wrote in 1 JOHN 4:14 *And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* Imagine the Creator of all things becoming the Man Christ Jesus, the Saviour of the world, and spending His first nights in a lowly manger! The Man Christ Jesus, the Saviour of the world, humbled Himself from the throne of glory to be born in such humble surroundings! What a wonder the shepherds witnessed that night! Had you been one of these shepherds, what would you have done? LUKE 2:17 *And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.* 18 *And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.* Who did they tell? Luke tells us that these shepherds ...*made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.* Did Luke these nearly sixty years later find anyone, whom these shepherds had talked to? We are not told this in scripture are we? LUKE 2:18 states that ...*all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds,*... but did they believe the shepherds? Two years later King Herod in MATTHEW 2 had the opportunity to find out who knew about the birth of Jesus. King Herod sought his answers to these questions about Jesus from the chief priests and scribes of the people. Supposedly they would know the answers to his questions, after all they were the educated ones. Instead the answers Herod sought were given to the lowly shepherds, the keepers of the sheep, and Herod never consulted the shepherds. He wouldn't have listened to them any way, for they were shepherds, who he thought didn't know anything. It goes to show us that you can have all the education in the world, and surround yourself with so called smart people, and be totally ignorant of the most important thing in life, that being ...*a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

Again it was only Luke who wrote of the shepherds at the manger on the night of Jesus birth. At Christmas time you will find a lot of manger scenes complete with shepherds, and sheep, wise men, and camels, but the wise men didn't come until Jesus was two years old according to MATTHEW 2, and the Holy Ghost didn't have Luke record that part of Jesus' life. But in their own way the shepherds too were wise men. Remember what the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:1 *But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.* 2 *For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.* 3 *For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.* 4 *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.* 5 *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.* 6 *Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.* In LUKE 2:8 the shepherds were awake at night, watching, and they got to be among the first to see, and be with Jesus at His first coming. May we be like the shepherds, awake at night and watching, so that we will be in that first rank to see Jesus, and be with Jesus at His second coming.

Luke continues writing what Mary the mother of Jesus told him about Jesus in LUKE 2. Before we read LUKE 2:21 let's read some background information from LEVITICUS 12 that will help us understand what Luke writes next. In LEVITICUS 12:1-4 we read the following commandment of Moses spoken unto the children of Israel. LEVITICUS 12:1 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,* 2 *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean.* 3 *And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.* 4 *And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.*

LUKE 2:21 *And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.* In this verse we find Jesus is eight days old, and if you study the above verses closely you will notice that Mary and Joseph were still in Bethlehem. The number eight has several meanings, one of which is NEW CREATION. In his study book on LUKE Brother Hawkins notes symbolically "...that God can only accept that which is eight days old, or that which is of the new creation." Another way of

looking at this too is that Jesus Christ came into this world in part to put an end to the law, and He was the only one who could fulfil, to bring to a close, to finish, to end the age of the law. There is a Greek word, which describes this completion, "teleo," which Jesus cried out on the cross in JOHN 19:30 when He said: *"It is finished."* ROMANS 10:4 tells us: *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* So Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day symbolizing NEW CREATION. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 states the thought of NEW CREATION like this: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: (NEW CREATION) old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* Later in GALATIANS 6:15 the Apostle Paul also writes: *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.* Believers are a NEW CREATION in Christ Jesus.

Study again LEVITICUS 12:1-4 and see that forty-one days (eight plus thirty three) were required to pass after the birth of Jesus before the days of Mary's purifying would be fulfilled. Then we read: LUKE 2:22 *And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; 23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) 24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.* The distance from Bethlehem to Jerusalem is about ten miles, a distance which could easily be traveled in one day.

To find out what kind of sacrifice is required according to the law of the Lord we go back to LEVITICUS 12. LEVITICUS 12:6 *And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: 7 Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female. 8 And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.* So we see the law of the Lord plainly states that when a mother bares as son, after forty-one days are completed she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and, in addition a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering. However, in the event that the mother was too poor to afford a lamb of the first year, then the mother could bring two young pigeons, or two turtle doves, and use one for the burnt offering, and the other for the sin offering. In the case of Jesus' mother Mary, she could only afford the latter sacrifice, ...*a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.* Jesus was the only One who could ever choose His parents, and He chose to come into this world poor, among the poorest of the poor. 2 CORINTHIANS 8:9 *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*

"The law of the Lord" mentioned in LUKE 2:23 is found in EXODUS 13:2 *Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.* One more thing about "the law of the Lord," which is mentioned in LUKE 2:23, LUKE 2:24, and LUKE 2:39, and that is the phrase "the law of the Lord" is only found twenty-one times in scripture.

We are going to do a little numbers study review here for a few minutes that will augment what Luke wrote in scripture, and add more meaning to us. When we did our meaning of the Bible numbers study, we learned that the number twenty-one was the number that has to do with SIN. Webster's Dictionary even tells us that the word sin, a noun in the Hebrew, is "a variant of the twenty-first letter of the Hebrew alphabet." Recall also that the ancients used their alphabet in their numbering system, assigning a numeric value to each number. Isn't it interesting that the twenty-first letter of the Hebrew alphabet points to sin? So what we find revealed here in LUKE 2 with this phrase "the law of the Lord" is the Holy Spirit showing us that Christ Jesus came into this world to deal with the SIN question once and for all. Now as Christians we should know that Jesus Christ was

without sin, as explained in HEBREWS 4:15 -- *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* Furthermore we are told in 1 CORINTHIANS 5:7 that Christ our passover willingly was sacrificed on the cross. We also know from JOHN 1:29 & 36 that Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour was announced by John the Baptist as the Lamb of God, who was without blemish and without spot according to 1 PETER 1:19. This sinless man, the Man Christ Jesus, God the Father ...*made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him...* according to 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3 also tells us ...*how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.* Why did Jesus Christ do this? ROMANS 3:23 tells us: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God...* . Again in ROMANS 5:12 we read: *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:...* . 1 TIMOTHY 1:15 *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;...* .

One more thought about the number twenty-one having to do with SIN. Sin itself speaks of “corruption.” The Holy Ghost also saw to it that the word “corruption” was used exactly twenty-one times in scripture, the number associated with SIN. The Holy Ghost also saw to it that fourteen of these “corruption” scriptures point to the DELIVERANCE or SALVATION of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and fourteen is the number of DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. Peter in his first sermon on the day of Pentecost was inspired by the Holy Ghost to talk about “corruption,” as was Paul in his first Holy Ghost inspired sermon to those in Antioch in Pisidia in ACTS 13! And both Peter, and Paul years later quoted PSALMS 16:10. PSALMS 16:10 reads: *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.* ACTS 2:14-36 records Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost, which you can read, and study on your own, but let’s read a few verses starting in ACTS 2:22. This is Peter speaking: ACTS 2:22 *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. 25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: 26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: 27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. 29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; 31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*

Now to Paul’s sermon in Antioch in Pisidia in ACTS 13, which you can also study further on your own by reading verses 16 through 41. We will start in ACTS 16:30 where Paul says: *But God raised him from the dead: 31 And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. 32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, 33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. 34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. 35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. 38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the*

forgiveness of sins: 39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

We have just seen in this review that Christ Jesus was without sin, He knew no sin, and neither was He corruptible. Paul also discussed this in 1 CORINTHIANS 15. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:39 *All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. 40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. 46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

We got into this numbers review because the phrase “the law of the Lord” is found mentioned twenty-one times in scripture. Additionally the phrase “the law of the Lord” is only found mentioned three times in The New Testament, all here in LUKE 2 in association with the young infant Christ Jesus. Between LUKE 2:22 and LUKE 2:39 we find Mary, and Joseph, and the baby Jesus in the temple in Jerusalem for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of “the law of the Lord.” We find “the law of the Lord” in these three verse of LUKE 2; LUKE 2:23, LUKE 2:24, and LUKE 2:39. The number three has the following familiar meanings: TRINITY; RESURRECTION; and THE HOLY SPIRIT. There is another meaning for the number three that I didn’t mention in my Meaning of the Bible Numbers Study, because at the time of that study I thought this meaning I am about to give you was just about the same as TRINITY, which indeed is true. The number three is noted by some Bible scholars to be a number, which points to DIVINE PERFECTION. The thought of DIVINE PERFECTION brings together the actions of God the Father, God the Son, and God The Holy Spirit as the Trinity works together in unity bringing about DIVINE PERFECTION. Luke had no way of knowing his letter to most excellent Theophilus would become scripture, nor did Luke realize that he would be the only author of New Testament scripture to use the phrase “the law of the Lord,” but he was. And the Holy Ghost had Luke be the only writer of New Testament scripture to use this phrase “the law of the Lord” because He was underlining in our hearts the fact that DIVINE PERFECTION was made flesh, and dwelt among us full of grace and truth (JOHN 1:14). The shepherds got to be the first to adore Christ the Saviour’s DIVINE PERFECTION. Simeon got to hold baby Jesus, and realized he was holding DIVINE PERFECTION. Anna the prophetess also witnessed DIVINE PERFECTION as Simeon gave thanks unto God for the fact that his *...eyes have seen thy salvation...* in LUKE 2:30, and she too *...gave thanks likewise unto the Lord...* in LUKE 2:38. So make a note that the number three also points to DIVINE PERFECTION.

We see DIVINE PERFECTION amplified in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Previously we have detailed how the Apostle Paul is the only gospel writer to refer to the “*God of peace*,” and he does so in the following five scriptures: ROMANS 15:33; ROMANS 16:20; PHILIPPIANS 4:9; 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23; and HEBREWS 13:20. The phrase the “*God of peace*” references The Holy Spirit. Thus we find the

Trinity here in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 *And the very God of peace (The Holy Spirit) sanctify you wholly; and I pray God (God The Father) your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ....* (Jesus). The DIVINE PERFECTION amplified in this verse has to do with the working of the Trinity in these three parts of a man: spirit, soul and body. This DIVINE PERFECTION is kind of a hard concept to define, but can be easily detected with the help of The Holy Spirit.

Another scripture in which we see DIVINE PERFECTION manifest is JOHN 14:6 *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* Here we see DIVINE PERFECTION in Jesus; ...*the way, the truth, and the life.* There is no way we could possibly define Jesus, but He gave us these three things to remember in order to get to God the Father. Sister Bodie noted three things here: that Christ “is the Course, the Creed, and the Character.”

There are many other three's that help us see a little better Jesus DIVINE PERFECTION. Jesus says in REVELATION 1:8 *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* The DIVINE PERFECTION here is noting how Jesus equates to these three: past, present, and future. His past (which was), His present (which is), His future (which is to come). The full overcomers acknowledge His DIVINE PERFECTION, saying in REVELATION 4:8...*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* This phrase ...*Holy, holy, holy...* is found twice in scripture, here in REVELATION 4:8, and also in ISAIAH 6:3 where it is the very same group of full overcomers, bridal Saints who are seen. Why don't they just say “holy?” Why say “holy” three times? The first “Holy” is capitalized in both verses because this “Holy” is directed towards God the Father. Thank you Father God for sending us your Son Christ Jesus to be our Saviour! The second “holy” is directed to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who gave Himself for me, and for you on the cross of Calvary where He died for our sins! Thank you Jesus for such indescribable love! Thank you Jesus for eternal life! The third “holy” is directed at the third person of the Godhead, that being the Holy Ghost. Jesus said in JOHN 14:16 *...I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* The Comforter is the Holy Ghost who was given to us from God the Father on the day of Pentecost for the express purpose of teaching us all things, and to guide us into all truth, and to give us an inheritance among all them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus! In short, for us of this church age, the Holy Ghost was sent to get us ready to be the Bride of Christ! Thank you Holy Spirit for your wonder working full overcoming enabling power! Truly ...*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come...* You are certainly more than worthy to receive glory, and honour, and our thanksgiving.

One final example of where DIVINE PERFECTION is illustrated is found in 1 TIMOTHY 6. 1 TIMOTHY 6:13 *I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; 14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: 15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.* Here in verse 13 we find again DIVINE PERFECTION by the mention of (1) God the Father, (2) the Holy Spirit who quickeneth according to JOHN 6:63, and (3) Christ Jesus. In verse 15 we find the three fold DIVINE PERFECTION of Christ Jesus, ...*who is the (1) blessed and only Potentate, (2) the King of kings, and (3) Lord of lords.*

Now back to the scriptures in LUKE 2 where Jesus is brought to the temple by Mary and Joseph to accomplish the things required according to “the law of the Lord.” We just discussed one meaning of the number three pointing to DIVINE PERFECTION. The word “temple” is found three times in LUKE 1, and three times in LUKE 2 showing the DIVINE PERFECTION of the plan of God in sending Christ Jesus to this world to be our Saviour! Additionally the word “temple” is found

nineteen times in total in The Gospel According to LUKE. Nineteen is the number associated with FAITH. ROMANS 10:17 is our go to scripture on FAITH, which reads: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* According to Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words FAITH in God has three (DIVINE PERFECTION) main elements, which are; (1) a firm conviction, producing a full acknowledgement of God's revelation of truth; (2) a personal surrender to Him; and (3) a conduct inspired by such surrender. There is truly DIVINE PERFECTION in the word of God. And always remember that REVELATION 19:13 tells us this about Christ Jesus, that ...*His name is called The Word of God.*

Again next in LUKE 2 we find that Mary and Joseph bring Jesus for the first time to the temple in Jerusalem to accomplish the things required according to "the law of the Lord." And according to LUKE 2:41 the temple in Jerusalem was a familiar place visited every year by Mary and Joseph. And before we study LUKE 2:25-38 a little closer realize that Mary and Joseph, and forty-one day old Jesus were only at the temple in Jerusalem for a fairly short period of time, perhaps not even twenty minutes! How long were the important moments of your life? Ponder that thought in your free time. It only took a moment of time to get saved; to pass from death unto everlasting life! In JOHN 5:24 Jesus said: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* That was the first most important moment of all our lives. The moment we are filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak in tongues as the Holy Spirit gave us utterance was another most important moment in our life. The moment an important truth was revealed unto us by the Holy Spirit was equally important. How many such important moments have we all had in our lives? And then we all should be looking for the following most important moment recorded in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:52 when we shall be changed: *...In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.* All of these unforgettable important moments in our lives define who we are in Christ Jesus. Learn to treasure your important moments, which He brings to us each day. Learn to treasure each other. Most importantly learn to treasure Him. Interestingly the word "treasure" is found thirty-seven times in scripture, and the number thirty-seven is the number that points to THE WORD OF GOD, who is Jesus.

So when Luke interviews Mary the mother of Jesus, she recalls these import moments that were highlights, and the treasures in her life. And the information we have been studying about in LUKE chapters 1 & 2 discuss some of these early highlights in Jesus life here on earth. His important moments were also the important moments Mary pondered in her heart for the rest of her life. And Mary also told Luke the following important moments recorded next in LUKE 2.

LUKE 2:25 *And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.*

Simeon means "hearkening," and he was hearkening unto the voice of the Lord, and was called to this scene at this exact most important moment in time. Verse 25 also tells us that Simeon was looking for the soon coming of Jesus, called "the consolation of Israel" in this verse. Simeon was in rare company, for not many in his day were looking for the soon coming of the Messiah. Not much different today is it? How many today are looking for that moment of the soon second coming

of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Only a small rib portion company out of the body of Christ have open ears of hearing that are “hearkening” to that trumpet call! The Greek word translated “consolation” is paraklesis {par-ak'-lay-sis}, number 3874 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance; a word only used by Luke and Paul in scripture. Paraklesis is found in twenty-eight verses of scripture. Twenty-eight is the number associated with ETERNAL LIFE. ROMANS 6:23 informs us: *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* In fourteen of the twenty-eight verses where we find the Greek word paraklesis it is translated “consolation.” Fourteen is the number having to do with DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. Simeon was giving special attention unto the voice of the Lord manifest by the Holy Ghost, which was upon him, and the Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon who baby Jesus was. Simeon prophesied this: LUKE 2:30 *For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.* In verse 30 Simeon knew Jesus was the Saviour. In verse 31 Simeon knew Jesus was the Saviour of all people. In verse 32 Simeon references some verses from ISAIAH 42. We read this in ISAIAH 42:6 *I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; 7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.* Years later on the road to Damascus the risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, and spoke similar words, which are found in ACTS 26:16-18. ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* Mary and Joseph already knew Jesus was the Saviour, and so they marveled at the Holy Ghost inspired words of Simeon, which are a prophecy found in verses 29-35 above. Simeon, with eyes of faith, saw a time way beyond his own life-time, and knew the tender infant Jesus he was holding was the Saviour, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. In verse 34 Simeon also prophesied of Jesus death (...*the fall...*), and His resurrection (...*rising again...*). Simeon under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost also prophesied unto Mary in verse 35 *...(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,)...* . We know this came to pass as she stood before the cross some thirty-three years later.

There was another very devout person who also was looking for the coming of Jesus named Anna, whom we read about in verses 36-38. LUKE 2:36 *And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; 37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 And she coming in that instant (at the exact moment in time) gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.* Some translations have Anna living eighty-four years after her husband died, making her over a hundred years old! Anna means “grace,” and when you think about it, how ageless is grace? God’s grace is ageless, and endless, and reaches down to the lowest of the low, and to the most helpless of the helpless, and brings salvation. TITUS 2:11 expresses it like this: *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,...* . Furthermore HEBREWS 7:25 states in part: *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him,...* . Anna saw this salvation in the infant Jesus, and *...gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.* So we see that several people now knew that Jesus was born, Mary, Elisabeth her cousin, Zacharias the husband of Elisabeth, Joseph, the shepherds, those whom the shepherds told, the old man at the temple in Jerusalem named Simeon, and Anna the eighty four year old prophetess.

LUKE 2:39 *And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.* Jesus grew up in Nazareth, and LUKE 4:16 also points out that Jesus grew up in Nazareth, and Lord willing, we will get to that exact most important

moment in time a little later in this study. LUKE 2:40 *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.* In LUKE 2:40 we find what I will call a Lukeism, that is a statement unique to Luke. The phrase “*And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit,*” is only used by Luke, and he does so in one other place that being in LUKE 1:80 as he finished introducing John the Baptist. LUKE 1:80 *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.* With this statement Luke was summarizing what he had just written, and was showing a break in time as he ended this paragraph.

LUKE 2:40 is just too rich in content to pass over lightly, though we usually miss the value of what is being said here in a casual reading. LUKE 2:40 *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.* The subject of this verse is of course Jesus, and Luke was skipping over years of Jesus life as the Holy Ghost inspired what he was to write. We just mentioned that the phrase “*And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit,*” is only used by Luke, and the word “strong” here is the Greek word *krataioo* {krat-ah-yo'-o}, number 2901 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, a word only used four times in New Testament scripture. *Krataioo* is a verb meaning to be strong, or to be made strong; to be strengthened; to increase in strength; and to grow strong. The Apostle Paul uses *krataioo* in a prayer of his found in EPHESIANS 3:16, which also best defines it’s meaning. EPHESIANS 3:16 *That he (God) would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened (krataioo) with might by his Spirit in the inner man;... .* His Spirit is a reference to the Holy Spirit by whom we are strengthened in the inner man. Besides LUKE 1:80; LUKE 2:40; and EPHESIANS 3:16, we find the Greek word *krataioo* in one more scripture, and that being 1 CORINTHIANS 16:13, which reads: *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.* One translator records that this means to continue to grow in strength, and it is the Holy Spirits job to strengthen us (*krataioo*) in the things of the Lord. The scriptural reference Paul seemed to use here comes from DEUTERONOMY 31:6, which the Lord gave to Moses to speak unto the children of Israel: *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* So back here in LUKE 2:40 we find that the young child Jesus ...*grew, and waxed strong (krataioo) in spirit,...* the Holy Ghost growing Him up to manhood.

LUKE 2:40 *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.* Note the phrase “**filled with wisdom,**” it is only found three times in scripture. Remember the number three references the TRINITY; RESURRECTION; the HOLY SPIRIT; and as we learned earlier DIVINE PERFECTION. The wisdom referenced here is the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, and we will see this as we examine the next scripture with the phrase “**filled with wisdom**” found in EXODUS 31.

EXODUS 31:1 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: 3 And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, 4 To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, 5 And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship. 6 And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee; 7 The tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the tabernacle, 8 And the table and his furniture, and the pure candlestick with all his furniture, and the altar of incense, 9 And the altar of burnt offering with all his furniture, and the laver and his foot, 10 And the cloths of service, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest’s office, 11 And the anointing oil, and sweet incense for the holy place: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do.*

This man Bezaleel mentioned in EXODUS 31:2 for the first time in scripture was given wisdom and understanding during the time of Moses to make the items of the tabernacle. Bezaleel’s name means: “in God’s shade,” or “in the shadow (i.e. protection) of God.” This particular man Bezaleel is mentioned by name exactly eight times in scripture. Bridal Saints should take note of this

fact, and see what we can learn by studying what is written about him. Note also in verse 3 that the Lord told Moses that He, the Lord *...have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, 4 To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, 5 And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.* Bridal Saints know that it is the Holy Ghost that was given us during this church age to work in us all manner of His workmanship to bring us to the spiritual perfection required of the Bride who hath made herself ready! Note also in verse 6 that Bezaleel was give an aid, a man named Aholiab, whose name means “the tent of the father.” Interestingly we find Aholiab’s name mentioned in scripture exactly five times, a picture again of GRACE, the GRACE of God! For a second recall the last part of LUKE 2:40 *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.*

We next read of Bezaleel in EXODUS 35. EXODUS 35:30 *And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; 31 And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; 32 And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, 33 And in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work. 34 And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. 35 Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.* In EXODUS 35:35 we find the phrase “**filled with wisdom**” for the first time in scripture. Also note from EXODUS 35:34 that both Bezaleel and Aholiab were not only given by God this wisdom and understanding and knowledge in all manner of workmanship, but that they were also give the ability to teach others also what they had been taught of God.

Study EXODUS 36-39 to see how Bezaleel and Aholiab accomplished this work. EXODUS 38:22 & 23 sums it up this way: *And Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD commanded Moses. 23 And with him was Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and fine linen.* The end result was the tabernacle in the wilderness, built to perfection by following the wisdom, and guidance of God, who gave them the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, to be inventors, and makers of something that represents Christ from about every aspect down to the most intricate detail! Many devoted Bible students have spent their lives exploring the details of what the tabernacle in the wilderness represented, and how perfectly Christ was pictured by it. Bezaleel and Aholiab additionally were given the wisdom on how to engrave the names of the children of Israel (twelve names) in the precious stones, which were part of Aaron’s breastplate, the garment worn closest to his heart! {Study EXODUS 28:15-29, and EXODUS 39:8-14.} How close are you to Jesus’ heart? SONG OF SOLOMON 4:9 tells us: *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.*

While we are here in EXODUS let’s look at one more marvel that Bezaleel was “**filled with wisdom**” to make, and that being the two cherubims found on the mercy seat. EXODUS 37:6 *And he made the mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half was the length thereof, and one cubit and a half the breadth thereof. 7 And he made two cherubims of gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of the mercy seat; 8 One cherub on the end on this side, and another cherub on the other end on that side: out of the mercy seat made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof. 9 And the cherubims spread out their wings on high, and covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another; even to the mercy seatward were the faces of the cherubims.* Recall what we read a moment ago in EXODUS 35:34 about Bezaleel, that God *...hath put in his heart that he may teach...* In our day it is the Holy Spirit who is our teacher, our guide into all the truth, the same one that filled Bezaleel with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship. Bezaleel too is representative of the Holy Spirit. Out of a single

solid piece of pure gold Bezaleel fashioned the mercy seat with a cherub on each end. This was in accordance with the instructions given of God in EXODUS 25:18 *And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat.* Gold is an emblem of purity, a metal least tarnished, and speaks to us of deity (the divine nature of God), divine life, and Godly perfection. The beaten gold is representative of the suffering of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, of whom Paul said this before King Agrippa in ACTS 26:23 -- *That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.* In HEBREWS 2:9 Paul writes again: *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.* The joint-heirs with Christ, His Bride, those that will rule and reign with Him, have learned that the only way they can be joint heirs with Him is to also suffer with Him. ROMANS 8:17 *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* 18 *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* 2 TIMOTHY 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* 2 TIMOTHY 2:12 *If we suffer, (with Him), we shall also reign with him:...*

EXODUS 37:9 states that *...the cherubims spread out their wings on high, and covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another...* . The wings speak of heaven, and heavenly beings. The cherubim facing each other shows that their focus is always upon Him in the center. Their facing each other with wings lifted heavenward also pictures that the cherubim are in total agreement with the will of God. The Bride of Christ has made herself ready we are told in REVELATION 19:7, and a part of this getting ready is being in agreement with the will of God.

The third scripture where we find the phrase “**filled with wisdom**” Is in 1 KINGS 7. We find here in 1 KINGS 7 how Solomon was in the process of building the house of the Lord, and he fetched a man named Hiram out of Tyre to help complete this work. 1 KINGS 7:13 *And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre.* 14 *He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was **filled with wisdom**, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.* Back in EXODUS 35:3-33 we learned that Bezaleel was filled with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; to devise curious works, in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work. Here in 1 KINGS 7 Hiram was **filled with wisdom**, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass, not in any other material. Bezaleel and Hiram were different in that God filled Bezaleel with the wisdom in all manner of **workmanship**. We find the word “**workmanship**” only seven times in scripture. Seven is the number pointing to SPIRITUAL COMPLETION or SPIRITUAL PERFECTION. SPIRITUAL COMPLETION and SPIRITUAL PERFECTION will be attained by the Bride of Christ, but how? The Old Testament worthies of faith also attained SPIRITUAL COMPLETION and SPIRITUAL PERFECTION by faith! The New Testament full overcomers found in the Bride of Christ will be found to have achieved SPIRITUAL COMPLETION and SPIRITUAL PERFECTION by faith also. Enoch and Noah were two Old Testament worthies of faith who walked with God according to GENESIS 5:22 & 24, and 6:9. Now let's turn to EPHESIANS 2:10 and read exactly how we can too can achieve SPIRITUAL COMPLETION and SPIRITUAL PERFECTION. And this should be a familiar scripture that each of us has read numerous times. EPHESIANS 2:10 *For we are his **workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* Now read 2 CORINTHIANS 5:7 *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:).* Stated another way, none of us will ever be in the Bride of Christ by our own efforts. Rebecca never would have been bride to Isaac without following her guide Eliezer, who brought her unto Isaac. Our guide during this church age is the Holy Ghost, which is the agency of the Godhead to work in you both to will and do His good pleasure according to PHILIPPIANS 2:13. The Holy Ghost is **filled with wisdom** to give you individually God's best!

One more point found in LUKE 2:40 before we move on. LUKE 2:40 *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.* This is the first time we find the phrase “**the grace of God**” in scripture. The phrase “**the grace of God**” is found in twenty verses of scripture, all of which are written by both Luke, and the Apostle Paul. Twenty is the number pointing to REDEMPTION. There are also exactly twenty verses where the word “redemption” is found. ROMANS 3:24 informs us: *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* Let’s now conclude this section by reading 1 CORINTHIANS 1:30, which brings all of the above thoughts together in one verse. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:30 *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* Do you think the Bride of Christ, (that select rib portion company of full overcomers from this church age), His co-equal, will be **filled with wisdom** like He was? In COLOSSIANS 1:9 our Apostle Paul answers this question writing: *For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.* Also study EPHESIANS 4 where you will also find this statement in EPHESIANS 4:15 concerning our spiritual growth: *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.* The Bride of Christ will be **filled with wisdom** like He was.

Let’s read again LUKE 2:39 & 40 -- *And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. 40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.* Twelve years pass before Luke tells of Jesus as a twelve year old in LUKE 2:41-52. The gap in time between Jesus as an infant in LUKE 2:1-39, and Jesus as a twelve year old is somewhat filled by what Matthew wrote in MATTHEW 2. If MATTHEW 2 is studied carefully, one will note that it tells the story of when Jesus was two years old, and called a young child, not a baby, and the wise men came to visit Him bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. No other writer of scripture tells this story. MATTHEW 2 also tells how the angel of the Lord twice appeared in a dream unto Joseph, Mary’s husband. The first time was after the wise men’s visit telling Joseph to take Mary and the young child Jesus, and flee to Egypt to avoid the wrath of King Herod, which they immediately did. The second time the angel of the Lord appeared unto Joseph in a dream was after King Herod’s death a couple of years later telling him it was now safe to return to the land of Israel, which they also did, and they returned to Nazareth. When Luke got the opportunity to interview Mary the mother of Jesus during the time frame of when Paul was in prison in Caesarea for two years, Mary apparently didn’t mention any of what is told in MATTHEW 2. Perhaps because the book of MATTHEW had already been written. But the events recorded in LUKE 2:41-52 when Jesus was twelve years old were very impressionable to Mary. And the story of Jesus as a twelve year old is only recorded in LUKE. And as we will read in these verses, Mary tells on herself.

Before we get to this story of Jesus as a twelve year old, which you are no doubt familiar with, there is an important lesson emphasized in these remaining verses of LUKE 2. The lesson revolves around who is the center of attention in our lives. Simply put, the point the Holy Ghost inspired Luke to write about in both of his letters to Theophilus was the certainty of why Jesus Christ is to be the center focal point of our lives, and why He is the One, who brings us joy unspeakable and full of glory. In the first part of LUKE 1 we are introduced to the parents of John the Baptist, who in their old age conceived John the Baptist, the anointed prophet, who when he was thirty years old introduced to the children of Israel, Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, the beloved Son of God, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Jesus Christ was the center of attention in the ministry of John the Baptist. In LUKE 1 Mary was also visited by the angel Gabriel, and told she would be the mother of JESUS, the Son of God. And LUKE 1:32 & 33 tells us: *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* In other words He shall be the center of attention forever. In LUKE 2:1-20 we find the

story of the birth of Jesus, the Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. He was the center of attention on that night of His birth, and JESUS was the center of attention when he was first brought to the temple in LUKE 2:21-39, which we just studied. To both Mary and Joseph Jesus was the focal point, and highlight of their lives at this time. Everything they did at that time revolved around baby Jesus for He was the center of their world. In MATTHEW 2 when the wise men came from the east bearing gifts, and worshipping the two year old young child Jesus in Nazareth, where He was still the center of attention, and the focal point of Mary and Joseph's lives. Now as we get to the story of Jesus as a twelve year old here in LUKE 2:41-52 please note that Jesus was no longer the center of attention, and the focal point of Mary and Joseph's lives! Though He was very important to them, the cares of this life distracted them from the most important person in their life, that being Jesus Christ. And when Jesus no longer stays number one in our lives we miss what we should have treasured, and find ourselves being the one falling short of God's best. This is an empty feeling, one which Mary and Joseph felt in "sorrowing" according to LUKE 2:48. We do not want to find ourselves dwelling in this place of no longer running the race that is set before us, and no longer looking unto Jesus the Author, and Finisher of our faith. Thus the Apostle Paul encourages us to set our affections, our focus, and our center of attention upon our precious lovely heavenly Saviour Jesus Christ, and one place he writes about this is in COLOSSIANS 3. COLOSSIANS 3:1 *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

Now back to the story only Luke wrote about of Jesus as a twelve year old. And further note as we read each verse from LUKE 2:42 through 52 that Jesus is mentioned at least once in every verse! Jesus was the center of attention in this story. And spoiler alert, Jesus remained the center of Mary's attention from this point forward, but it took the shocking revelation of Jesus words as a twelve year old to bring her focus upon who is most important.

LUKE 2:41 *Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.* This portion of scripture takes place when Jesus was twelve years old verse 42 tells us. The occasion was the feast of the Passover. This feast of the Passover was a Jewish custom ordained of God for the children of Israel to set their minds in recollection of the events recorded in EXODUS 11 and especially EXODUS 12 of the time when the Lord passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered Israel out of the land of Egypt. NUMBERS 9:1-5 helps explain where this Jewish tradition started: NUMBERS 9:1 *And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, 2 Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season. 3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it. 4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover. 5 And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.* Here in LUKE 2 we find Jesus parents went to Jerusalem every year for the feast of the Passover, so no doubt Jesus also went every year to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. The book of JOHN records three consecutive Passover's Jesus attended. On the third one Christ Jesus became our Passover as the Apostle Paul wrote us in 1 CORINTHIANS 5:7 ... *For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.*

So we note in verse 41 of LUKE 2 that every year Mary and Joseph went from Nazareth to Jerusalem to celebrate with the Jews from all over the world the feast of the Passover. By this time Joseph and Mary had started a family that they could call their own. Jesus, of course, was the oldest, so the children of Joseph would be younger, and Joseph and Mary had several children. MATTHEW 13:55 and 56, and MARK 6:3 tells us that Jesus was ...*the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon,...* and that He had some sisters. By the time frame of LUKE 2:40-52, Mary and Joseph probably had their hands full raising all of these children that had been born unto them at this time.

Jesus, being the oldest, and the best twelve-year old son any parents have ever had, or ever will have, didn't need any real adult supervision, so Joseph and Mary spent their energies with the younger children. As you parents know, younger children require an enormous amount of attention. This helps explain some what of what happens next, which we read in LUKE 2:43 *And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. 44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. 45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.*

Let me put this in my simple terms. Jesus, who knew no sin according to 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21, remained behind in Jerusalem. He didn't run away, nor was it His responsibility at that age to keep track of His earthly parents. Mary and Joseph lost our most precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom God had entrusted to their care. They had misplaced Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us, our Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel, the King of the Jews. They had gotten so caught up with some real good things, and the cares of this life, and had forgotten to put Jesus, Mary's firstborn, first. This doesn't speak too well of Joseph and Mary, does it? But it should also speak to our hearts the responsibility that we as Christians have to also pay attention to Jesus. Actually we are to pay the closest attention to ...*Christ, who is our life...* according to COLOSSIANS 3:4. We too can get caught up with things, and stuff, and events, and distractions that seems real important to us at the time, and one day (hopefully) we wake up and realize that we have lost precious time, which we could have better of spent with Jesus. Who is your first love? In a moment we will read that it took three agonizing days for Joseph and Mary to once again find Jesus. These three days without Jesus being with them left an everlasting impression on Mary, and I doubt in my own mind that she could have recollected these three days without once again shedding a tear. Luke must have also noted her emotions as she recalled this event, one of the high water marks of her life with Jesus. Mary of course knew who Jesus was, but she didn't yet truly appreciate who Jesus really was to her. Luke may have asked Mary a question like: "when did you first appreciate who Jesus was?" And the answer she gave would have been what we have read about Him thus far in LUKE chapters 1 and 2. But when Jesus was twelve-years old I think Mary truly got to appreciate for the first time who Jesus really was, and from that time on she paid the closest attention to Him.

And as a little aside to this, as Mary paid the closest attention to Jesus in the proceeding years, how did the rest of her younger children respond? I don't think Mary and Joseph in any way neglected them, but as they learned who Jesus was, there was some animosity felt against Him by His brothers and sisters. The Apostle John wrote about this in JOHN 7:5, where we read: *For neither did his brethren believe in him.* The word "brethren" here means children of the same mother. It wasn't until after Jesus death and resurrection that Jesus brothers and sisters believed in Him. How do we know this? Let's review some facts of scripture that help point this out. While Jesus was dying on the cross he entrusted the care of his mother Mary to the disciple whom He loved, whom we know was the Apostle John. JOHN 19:25 *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.* This transferring the care of His mother Mary to the Apostle John was no doubt a low blow to Jesus brothers, who should of had the care of their mother, but at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus they were not yet believers in Him, and Jesus wasn't about to turn the care of His own mother over to unbelievers. So when did the Lord's brothers become believers? It was after the resurrection of Jesus. Let's follow the scriptures on this. When the Apostle Paul wrote GALATIANS, he mentioned in GALATIANS 1:17-19 that after he was saved on the road to Damascus, he went up to Arabia, and returned after three years unto Damascus. From there Paul went to Jerusalem, and we read in GALATIANS 1:18 *Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem*

to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. When did James the Lord's brother become a believer? 1 CORINTHIANS 15 gives us this information. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3 *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.* How did the Apostle Paul know that Jesus appeared unto James the Lord's brother after His resurrection? By interviewing James during this first visit to Jerusalem after he was saved as he explained in GALATIANS 1 above. So after His resurrection Jesus appeared unto James His brother, and James became a believer in Jesus much the same way the Apostle Paul did. Furthermore Jesus other brothers became believers also, and ACTS 1:14 helps point this out. Starting in ACTS 1:9 *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.* These mentioned in verse 13 were the remaining eleven Apostles of Jesus. ACTS 1:14 *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.* The word "brethren" here again means the children of the same mother, and the reference is to Jesus brothers, and no doubt His sisters. So Jesus brothers may not have been believers at the time of His crucifixion, but they certainly were by the time of Pentecost some fifty days later. And Jesus brothers, and sisters were among the hundred and twenty who got filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. And after being filled with the Holy Ghost, Jesus then became the focal point, the very center of their lives too. Then they understood why when Jesus was alive that their mother Mary spent her time paying the closest attention to Jesus. And Jesus brothers and sisters went on to become prominent in the early church founded upon the day of Pentecost.

We just mentioned about Jesus brothers and sisters becoming believers after Jesus resurrection. But while here on earth the verse we read earlier in JOHN 7:5 applied: *For neither did his brethren (children of the same mother) believe in him.* Let's read another statement found in MARK 6. MARK 6:1 *And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. 2 And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. 4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. 5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. 6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.* This same story is told in MATTHEW 13:54-58, and MATTHEW 13:58 also states: *And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.* Jesus could not do His mighty works because of unbelief, and Jesus marveled because of unbelief. The Greek word translated "unbelief" here in MATTHEW 13:58, and MARK 6:6 is *apistia*, number 570 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and is the opposite of *pistis*, number 4102 in The Strong's Greek Concordance. *Pistis* is most frequently translated "faith," so we see that "unbelief" is the exact opposite of "faith." Our take away from all of this is that Jesus was, and still is, taken aback by a lack of faith. Unbelief is an absence of faith! This is exactly what is stated in MARK 6:6 as He was astonished at their lack of faith. Unbelief does

not exist in Christ Jesus. Yet Jesus grew up in a house with brothers and sisters, who were unbelievers, ...*For neither did his brethren (children of the same mother) believe in him...* JOHN 7:5! As we will read in a moment, Jesus knew what it felt like to be surrounded with unbelievers.

Furthermore we know Jesus is without sin. We read this in HEBREWS 4:15 *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* Christ Jesus is without sin. ROMANS 14:23 ends with this fact: ...*for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* Unbelief is not faith, thus unbelief is sin, ...*for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* Over the years we have constantly heard, and read, and reread the following scriptures penned by the Apostle Paul, quoted from HABAKKUK 2:4. ROMANS 1:17 *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.* GALATIANS 3:11 *But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.* HEBREWS 10:38 *Now the just shall live by faith:...* . After this statement in HEBREWS 10:38 the Apostle Paul writes a whole chapter on faith, showing how the Old Testament full overcomers lived, and how they became full overcomers was living by faith. The Apostle Paul defined faith in HEBREWS 11:1-3, which reads: *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders obtained a good report. 3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* In other words, faith is not sight. This was the universe Jesus came from, and this was the world Jesus lived in; His world, which He created. No wonder He marveled at unbelief! The Apostle Paul then makes this statement about faith in HEBREWS 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please him: (God) for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Now let's read what Jesus Himself said in JOHN 8:29 *And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.* In the portion we are studying in LUKE 2 when Jesus was twelve years old He already knew that He was to please His heavenly Father, which we just read ...*for I do always those things that please him.* Jesus came to earth because it pleased His Father, ...*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life...* JOHN 3:16. 1 JOHN 4:9 *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* As Jesus began his public ministry we read this statement in LUKE 3:22 *And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.* God the Father was always well pleased with Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, and Jesus always did those things, which pleased His Father, and He did so from eternities past, and He did so while here on earth even before he was twelve years old. Mary and Joseph didn't yet fully comprehend this fact until after this event recorded in LUKE 2 when Jesus was twelve years old.

Now that's a lot of thoughts that take us back to LUKE 2 where we consider Jesus at the time when he was twelve years old. Let's read these verses again. LUKE 2:41 *Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. 43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. 44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. 45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.*

We now know a little better His mindset, and His thought process, and His focus. Jesus wasn't a problem child, and had never done anything wrong, and as we read above in HEBREWS 4:15 we know that He was without sin. He didn't do anything wrong at this time either, but had only stayed behind at Jerusalem as LUKE 2:43 tells us: ...*the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem...* . A twelve year old is still a child this scripture tells us. It was His parents who had lost track of Him. He must have been a rather quiet child, otherwise Mary and Joseph would have missed Him sooner.

Jesus was a very responsible twelve-year old, and no doubt a great help to others. In other words He didn't demand a lot of attention, nor was He trying to be the life of the party, so to speak, He was just a quiet, and unnoticeable picture perfect twelve year old. Let's read something here found in JOHN 8:23, which are Jesus own words. JOHN 8:23 *And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.* Jesus knew He was not of this world, and Jesus knew He was from above, and He knew this as a twelve year old. Mary, and Joseph too also knew this, but they could not really comprehend the full magnitude of who He was. Look at what we are told of Jesus in JOHN 7:46. JOHN 7:46 *The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.* Mary and Joseph must have already had an inkling that even as a twelve year old, never spake any child like this child. This incident we are reading about in LUKE 2 certainly got Mary and Joseph's undivided attention. No one of the company of Joseph and Mary missed this responsible twelve year old until they had been gone from Jerusalem a day's journey. Almost unbelievable, yet those of you from large families have similar stories. Consider this from LUKE 2:44 also, that even though Jesus was entrusted to Joseph and Mary's responsibility, they were somewhat irresponsible, for they assumed that others of their friends and acquaintance would take their responsibility, and watch Jesus for them, without even being asked to: *But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.* I am sure that Mary and Joseph must have felt irresponsible when they had to turn back to Jerusalem to seek The Son of God.

Verse 45 states: *...they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.* This is kind of an ironic statement for LUKE 19:10 states: *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* The Apostle Paul, when in Athens, made this statement in his sermon on Mars Hill: ACTS 17:24 *God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:* And Jesus parents, where were they seeking Jesus in Jerusalem? Every place but where He was. They should have known Jesus well enough to know where He would most likely be, but they didn't. This is a sad commentary; they didn't know Jesus well enough to know where to look for Him! Jesus wasn't playing hide-n-seek with His parents, in fact he wasn't playing any games with them at all. If they would have known Jesus better, and really known what He was about, and who He really was, they would of known where to find Him. It took them three days of diligently and tearfully searching to find Him, (one day to get back to Jerusalem, and two days of searching). He wasn't out on the playground if they had one. He wasn't shooting hoops. He wasn't in the park. He wasn't hanging out at the mall. He wasn't staying with friends. He wasn't chasing girls. And He wasn't wasting His time while here on earth. In other words He wasn't where they were looking, for they were looking in all of the wrong places.

Let's read a couple of verses from ISAIAH 55 that describes the Lord's thought process. ISAIAH 55:6 *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Mary and Joseph quickly learned this as they were looking for Jesus in Jerusalem, for He wasn't where they were looking, for they were looking in all of the wrong places. This is evident in the first part of LUKE 2:46 *And it came to pass, that after three days they found him... .* Joseph and Mary must have had little comfort for three days looking for Jesus. Where did they think He was? Shouldn't they have known where to find Him, the Son of God? Yes, they should of known Jesus better than they did, a lot better, and they knew Jesus better than anyone else alive at this time, didn't they? So where was Jesus when they found Him? He was in the last place they looked, for once you

find that which was lost you no longer need to look for it, and they found Jesus where they should have first looked for Him, in the temple. PSALMS 27:4 *One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.* It took them three days to find Jesus in Jerusalem, again almost unbelievable. It just goes to show that Mary and Joseph didn't know Jesus very well, even though he was growing up right under their noses, and I think verses 46-48 bring this thought out further.

LUKE 2:46-48: *And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. 47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. 48 And when they saw him, they were amazed... .*

Let's consider Jesus in the temple in verses 46 and 47 where twelve-year-old Jesus of Nazareth was *...sitting in the midst of the doctors*, (the Rabbinical scholars, who were the teachers) *both hearing them, and asking them questions. 47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.* Note in verse 46 that Jesus was a good student, for He first listened to what the teachers had to say, and then He asked them pointed questions. This is how learning takes place. One of the most powerful tools of learning is the question. When a teacher asks a student a question, it forces the student to think, and hopefully come up with an answer. When a student asks a question of the teacher, it forces the teacher to come up with an answer, which better be a correct answer. And, of course, Jesus was asking some very pointed questions to these Jewish teachers, questions which really made them think, *...and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding*,... partly because He was only twelve years old, but mainly because He was asking them some questions which they could not properly answer, and He could. Please note that even though Jesus was only twelve years old He was still the Master Teacher. Jesus is referred to in scripture forty times as Master, (with a capital M), forty being a number of perfect testing, a Master Teacher being the one who can give the perfect tests.

Closely note what is stated in LUKE 2:47: *And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.* The literal Greek translation of this verse reads: "And all those hearing Him were amazed at His intelligence and answers." Realize as we read this that is the very same Jesus, who is spoken of in the following verses of COLOSSIANS 1. COLOSSIANS 1:16 *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* Words cannot define His understanding, nor can we fathom His intelligence, for His genius is beyond what we can comprehend. Christ Jesus is not only before all things, which statement we just read, but He is above all things, in all things, and by Him all things consist. His genius was on display here at the temple, *...And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.* They that heard Him were astonished because Jesus had full understanding of the questions asked, and gave correct, and deeply thought out answers to the questions asked. But whose questions was He answering? First of all Jesus was answering the doctors of the law questions, and giving answers which provoked deep thought of these doctors. Further, no doubt, Jesus was answering their questions with questions of His own; questions, which the doctors of the law couldn't properly answer, but questions, which Jesus could answer like no one before or after ever could. Think of some of the questions Jesus later asked, and you can see how this would challenge the hearts of anyone who heard the questions: *He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? Why reason ye these things in your hearts? What did Moses command you? For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? Why go ye about to kill me? Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?* And one more question that Jesus asked after His resurrection that launched the career of the Apostle Paul: *...Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* One gospel researcher found 307 questions Jesus asked during His time on earth. JOB 38-41 records 83

questions Jehovah God asked Job. Each question we have recorded for us in scripture should also challenge our own hearts too.

So back in LUKE 2:47 it was by twelve year old Jesus' questions that these scholars, *...and all that heard him were astonished at his understanding...* of the law, and it's teaching. Furthermore when Jesus was asked questions of these rabbinical teachers they were astonished at His answers. Consider this, there has never been a question asked of the Lord, which He could not answer, and each answer He gives is the correct answer. He would be a straight A student, the very top of any class you could put Him in. Also consider this, would Jesus ever see these doctors of the law again while here on earth? Probably yes. Thus we find that Jesus starting to reveal Himself as the Master Teacher, which He is, and yet it wasn't His time to be manifest to the world, thus He left everyone in attendance amazed, including Mary and Joseph who had just found Jesus after three days of searching. It seems as if Joseph and Mary must not have spent as much time before this as they should have with Jesus, and asking him questions about the things of God, but the reality of the whole situation is that they really didn't fully grasp who He was either. The Word of God in the form of man was growing up with them, yet they didn't, at this time, fully appreciate their unique opportunity. I believe after this time Mary got her eyes opened to who Jesus really was, for by the time we read of Him performing His first miracle in JOHN 2, Mary knew who Jesus really was, and what He could do, for she had thirty years of experience pondering in her heart, and witnessing things of Him by the time of this statement found in JOHN 2:5 *His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.*

Back in LUKE 2:46, when Jesus was twelve years old here on earth, Mary and Joseph finally come to the place where Jesus has been for the last three days *...in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions*, and the first part of verse 48 tells us that when Mary and Joseph saw him, *...they were amazed...* astonished verse 47 states. For the first time in their life Joseph and Mary realized that they were raising a genius, if I can irreverently make such as statement, for genius doesn't even begin to describe the creator, *...All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made...* JOHN 1:3. We must note that when Joseph and Mary finally found Jesus *...in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors...* they didn't immediately interrupt what was going on, but paused long enough to find out what was going on, and they were both *...amazed and astonished...* at what was taking place. Finally when the right opportunity presented itself, Mary *...his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing...* verse 48. One translation of this portion reads: *...your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety...* and another translation reads: *Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.* Still another translation reads: *Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere.* We can only imagine the relief and joy that Mary and Joseph must have felt after finally finding Jesus after three days of frantic searching. Then, as we humans often do after being in a trial, Mary asks Jesus *...why hast thou thus dealt with us?* Jesus wasn't trying to be hurtful to His mother Mary, or Joseph, but rather He was trying to reveal Himself to them, and isn't that the main reason God allows any of us to have a trial, so that He can better reveal himself to us? I PETER 4:12 *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.* As for Joseph and Mary they should have known who He was by now, wouldn't you think? But the next portion of scripture shows us that they, His parents, Mary and Joseph didn't really know who Jesus was.

In LUKE 2:49 we find Jesus first recorded words here on earth, where He continues doing what He had been doing for the last three days or so, and that is *...hearing them, and asking them questions.* LUKE 2:49 *And he said unto them, (His mother Mary, and Joseph) How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* The only questions we have recorded for us that Jesus asked here in the temple were the two questions directed at His parents: *How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* (verse 49). These

are not questions asked of a smart mouthed twelve year old, but pointed questions asked to someone who should have known the answers better.

We will consider these questions one at a time. First, *How is it that ye sought me?* This is an ironic question, for we later learn in LUKE 19:10 *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* Did Mary seek to become the mother of Jesus? No. Did Joseph seek to become the caretaker father of Jesus here on earth? No. *How is it that ye sought me?* I loved you, and chose you before the foundation of the world. I am the Son of God. I am with you always. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So tell me, *How is it that ye sought me?* (Now we know Jesus didn't make all of these statements at this time, but I think you get the drift of what he was trying to show Mary and Joseph at this time.) The second question Jesus asked His mother Mary and Joseph, *...wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* In other words, Mary, my mother, and Joseph, you should know that I am here on earth on a most important business trip, sent from God the Father. My Father has not been seeking me, for I have been with him all this time. I am come into the world to save sinners. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. You should know that I am not of this world, and yet I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. (Now again we know that Jesus didn't make all of these statements at this time either, but Jesus asked them this question to get them to think about Him, His purpose, and His job here on earth, for He was on a business trip). Again, *...wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* So when Jesus was twelve years old He leaves us with His first recorded words: *... How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* (LUKE 2:49). (As a side note to this, consider Jesus' first words recorded for us in JOHN, which occur in JOHN 1:38 *What seek ye?* Another question).

Before moving on to LUKE 2:50 let's pause for a moment, and ask ourselves, how would we have answered twelve year old Jesus' questions He just asked Mary and Joseph? He was simply asking them to consider Him. The answers to His questions could be gained by just considering Him. He had already given them the answers to His questions. The angel Gabriel had told Mary back in LUKE 1:31 *And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.* 32 *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:* 33 *And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* The day He was born Mary and Joseph were told by the shepherds that this Jesus who was born, was the *...Saviour, which is Christ the Lord...* in LUKE 2:11. Mary and Joseph had heard Simeon proclaim this about Jesus in the temple in Jerusalem in LUKE 2:29 *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:* 30 *For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,* 31 *Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;* 32 *A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.* Simeon had already answered the questions Jesus as a twelve year old asked in LUKE 2:49. The answers to Jesus questions could be gained by just considering Him first above all other things. The Apostle Paul wrote much about considering Christ Jesus first. For example let's read a few verses in HEBREWS 3. HEBREWS 3:1 *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;* 2 *Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.* 3 *For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.* 4 *For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.* 5 *And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;* 6 *But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.* The Apostle Paul did a lot more considering as he continued to write his letter to the HEBREWS, and devoted a whole chapter, chapter 11 to the Old Testament worthies of faith. Then he wrote the following in HEBREWS 12 for us all to consider. HEBREWS 12:1 *Wherefore seeing we also are*

compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, (the Old Testament worthies of faith), let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, (unbelief), and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him (The Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus) that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. The Greek word translated “consider” in HEBREWS 12:3 is unique, and only found this one time in scripture. Here “consider” is the Greek word analogizomai {an-al-og-id'-zom-ahee}, number 357 in the Strong’s Greek Concordance, and it means: to think over, consider, and ponder. We are to consider Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith above all other things. We are the joy that was set before Him as he endured such a contradiction of sinners against Himself upon the cross. What a thought to ponder. And as we discussed previously in our HEBREWS 12:1 & 2 study, the ultimate joy that was set before Him narrows down to His Bride, the Bride of Christ, potentially you and me! She considers Him first in all things, and in everything! Is that you?

Back to Mary and Joseph in LUKE 2. Jesus had just asked them some pointed questions to bring their attention to the fact that they hadn’t yet considered Jesus as they should. Stated another way, they hadn’t put Jesus first as they should. He wasn’t their first love anymore. They couldn’t answer His two questions, and in fact we read in LUKE 2:50 *And they **understood not** the saying which he spake unto them.* This has got to be one of the most spiritually sad statements in scripture: *And they **understood not** the saying which he spake unto them.* We won’t get into this today, but note that there are eleven “**understood not**” statements in scripture. Eleven is the number of INSUFFICIENCY, and in our text of LUKE 2:50 the phrase “**understood not**” expresses the thought that Mary and Joseph were deficient in their spiritual **understanding**. Consider this, none of us can fully **understand** what the Lord tells us and has told us without our spiritual eyes being opened. In other words the Holy Spirit must show us, and teach us, and bring **understanding** to our hearts. The Apostle Paul prayed this prayer in EPHESIANS 1:17 & 18 -- *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your **understanding** being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,...* . If your spiritual eyes of **understanding** have been enlightened then praise the Lord. Be thankful, for not all Christians have such **understanding** because it takes the enlightening of the Holy Ghost to open our spiritual eyes of **understanding**. Furthermore Paul makes these statements in his writings to us: *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant... ROMANS 11:25; ...Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant... 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1; ...Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1 ...For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant... 2 CORINTHIANS 1:8; But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren,... 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13.* Joseph and Mary were not ignorant, but they were spiritually ignorant. Jesus could open their **understanding**, and I am sure from this point forward He tried to enlighten them as to who He was. Consider the different perspectives of Jesus, and man. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:44 *...There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.* In the span of time Jesus had come from the eternity's past from a spiritual realm, which the natural body of man cannot **understand**. Mary and Joseph were from a natural body, and Jesus, even though he took on Him the form of a man, came from a spiritual body. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:46 *Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.* Jesus was here on earth talking a heavenly language, which the natural man could not fully **understand**. Joseph and Mary in LUKE 2:50 *...understood not the saying which he spake unto them,* but I imagine as time went on, as they asked questions of Jesus, that *...Then opened he their **understanding**, that they might **understand**...* just like He did for the disciples in LUKE 24:45.

In LUKE 2:50 we read that Mary and Joseph ...***understood not the saying which he spake unto them.*** Then we just read in LUKE 24:45 that after His resurrection Jesus when He appeared unto His disciples: ...***Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand...*** . The words “understood,” “understand,” “understandest,” and “understanding” are fundamental to our comprehension and learning. The word “understood” is found thirty-seven times in scripture. Thirty-seven is the number that points to THE WORD OF GOD, and REVELATION 19:13 plainly tells us that Jesus Christ is THE WORD OF GOD. Joseph and Mary in LUKE 2:50 ...***understood not...*** THE WORD OF GOD, twelve-year old Jesus, whom they were raising. He had to open ...***their understanding, that they might understand...*** Him. And what Jesus told them there at the temple in Jerusalem when He was twelve years old began to open ...***their understanding, that they might understand...*** Him. The Greek word translated “understanding” in LUKE 24:45 is nous {nooce}, number 3563 in The Strong’s Geek Concordance, and this Greek word is used twenty-two times in New Testament scripture. Twenty-two is the number associated with LIGHT. JOHN 8:12 and 9:5 (plus many other scriptures) tells us that Jesus is the Light of this world. Mary and Joseph when they took Jesus to the temple to dedicate Him when He was still an infant heard Simeon, under the unction of the Holy Ghost, tell them this about Jesus in LUKE 2:32 ***A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.*** Did they then **understand** what was being told them? We will answer this in a moment. The Greek word translated “understand” in LUKE 24:45 is the same Greek word translated “understood” in LUKE 2:50. This Greek word is suniemi {soon-ee'-ay-mee}, number 4920 in The Strong’s Geek Concordance, which is found twenty-five times in New Testament scripture. Twenty-five (GRACE times GRACE) is the number associated with THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

Now for a moment go to ACTS 8 where we read about the time Philip the evangelist, a man full of the Holy Ghost, was lead by the angel of the Lord to a man of Ethiopia, who was a eunuch of great authority under queen Candace of Ethiopia. Let’s read two verses. ACTS 8:30 ***And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readeest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me?*** How is it that we have the eyes of our **understanding** enlightened that we read about in EPHESIANS 1:18 above? We need a guide to open the eyes of our **understanding**, much like the Ethiopian eunuch requested a guide to open his **understanding**. The Lord sent the eunuch, Philip the evangelist, a man full of the Holy Ghost to open his **understanding**. On the day of Pentecost Jesus sent us the very same Holy Ghost, for the very same purpose, to open our **understanding** that we too might **understand** all of THE WORD OF GOD. Study the following scriptures from JOHN to see the importance of receiving the Holy Ghost. JOHN 14:26 ***But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*** JOHN 15:26 ***But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.*** JOHN 16:13 ***Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*** Our guide, the Holy Ghost, is the agency of the trinity that opens the eyes of our **understanding** into all truth, THE WORD OF GOD. Furthermore, and I know you all have heard this before many times, the Holy Ghost is a necessary element in the preparation of the Bride of Christ. Not all Christians will be in the Bride of Christ, a doctrine that is commonly taught today, but those who teach this lack the proper **understanding** of what only Holy Ghost enlightened eyes can see. Furthermore not all who are filled with the Holy Ghost will be in the Bride of Christ either! Bridal Saints **understand** this.

Let’s get this kind of **understanding**. REVELATION 19:7 tells us this: ***Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*** How does the Bride of Christ make herself ready? It’s a several step Christian lifetime process. The first step is to believe on Jesus and accept Him as your personal Saviour. That puts one in the body of Christ, but the wife of Adam was made from one of his ribs. Likewise the Bride of

Christ will be made from the rib portion of the spiritual body of Christ. The second step of His wife making herself ready involves yielding unto His plan for your life. 1 TIMOTHY 2:3 *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.* How Christians truly come to the knowledge of the truth? The third step in this getting ready process is following the guiding of the Holy Ghost, our guide into all truth. Without following the guiding of the Holy Ghost, one will not be in the Bride of Christ. *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?... ACTS 19:2.* Step four, in order to be in the Bride of Christ one must first must fall deeply in love with Him. 1 JOHN 4:19 is a statement that all Christians can claim: *We love him, because he first loved us.* But to the Bride of Christ He has become more than just the one who first loved her. He has become the first love (first in value, the top priority) of her life. The Bride of Christ becomes a racecourse runner with the goal of winning Him as Bridegroom. Two verses in PHILIPPIANS highlight this point: PHILIPPIANS 3:8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,* and PHILIPPIANS 3:14 *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Do all Christians have this mindset? Do all Christians have this kind of **understanding**? No, but racecourse running Bridal Saints **understand** these truths. There is a fifth step of growth that the Bride of Christ must take in order for her to make herself ready, and that involves her going through manifold trials, and sufferings with Him. These are the steps of faith we **understand** that please God. In order for the Bride of Christ to be glorified together with him, ROMANS 8:17 tells us that she must be willing to suffer with Him, and 2 TIMOTHY 2:12 re-emphasizes this fact stating: *If we suffer (with Him), we shall also reign with him...* The beginning of reigning with him will take place on that day of the marriage of the Lamb as stated in REVELATION 19:7 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* And let me add this one thought, is Christ Jesus reigning in your life right now?

So what does all of what we just said have to do with LUKE 2:50 where we read this of Mary and Joseph: *And they **understood** not the saying which he spake unto them?* This is a true statement, which Mary relayed to Luke, for at that time when Jesus was twelve years old they (Mary and Joseph) truly did not **understand** what He was saying unto them. But by the time when Mary told Luke this story, she truly did then **understand** ...*the saying which he spake unto them.* The eyes of her **understanding** was enlightened by the power of the Holy Ghost, which she received on the day of Pentecost. She was there in that upper room as ACTS 1:13 & 14 plainly state. ACTS 1:13 *And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.* The things she previously could not **understand** of Jesus before being filled with the Holy Ghost were then made clear unto her, and she felt comfortable telling Luke about these most precious times of her life with Jesus.

LUKE 2:51 *And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.* There are a lot of thoughts contained in these two verses. Let's first consider the thoughts concerning Jesus. We have here an example of what a twelve year old should be, and that is **subject** to their parents. The parents are not to be **subject** to their kids. The Greek word translated "**subject**" here is hupotasso {hoop-ot-as'-so}, number 5293 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and according to Thayer's - Greek English Lexicon, it is found forty times in New Testament scripture. Forty is the number pointing to PERFECT TESTING. This in turn shows us that Jesus as a man was perfectly tested. In our text Jesus was perfectly tested by being **subject** unto his earthly parents, and He was **subject** unto them for eighteen more years! We will discuss this point further shortly. The word **subject** as used here means: to obey, be **subject** to, to **subject** one's self, to submit (one's) self unto, to obey. It has a Greek meaning of "a voluntary attitude of giving in,

cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.” In part this is what the Apostle Paul was referring to in PHILIPPIANS 2:8 when he states: *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient...* . Paul also stated this: *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right...* EPHESIANS 6:1, and *...Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord...* COLOSSIANS 3:20. Jesus was the only twelve year old who didn't have to follow this advice, but He was an overcomer, and humbly did obey His parents, *...and was subject unto them...* . So where does that leave the twelve year old of today? It leaves him or her without excuse not to do the same; that is to be **subject** to their parents, even though they may be smarter than their parents.

Okay we are in an adult Sunday School class, and we are all beyond twelve years old, but there is another application of the Greek word *hupotasso*, translated “**subject**” that also applies unto all of us, who want God’s best. Greek word *hupotasso* {hoop-ot-as'-so}, number 5293 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, also has a Greek military meaning, as well as the non-military meaning we looked at above. *Hupotasso* as a Greek military term means: “to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader.” Let me interject 1 CORINTHIANS 15:23 into the thought process here, a verse that references the order of the resurrection, showing ranks, the arrangement of troops, or divisions into ranks in a military fashion. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:23 *But every man in his own order: {the arrangement of troops, or divisions into ranks in a military fashion} Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.* There are indeed different ranks in the resurrection, and Christ’s closest followers will be in the first rank. (That’s a whole other Bible study in itself.) *Hupotasso* translates into English as: “be **subject** to, put under, be **subject** unto, submit (one's) self unto, submit (one's) self to, be in subjection unto, put in subjection under, and subdue.” This word *hupotasso* means: (1) to arrange under, to subordinate; (2) to **subject**, put in subjection; (3) to **subject** one's self, obey; (4) to submit to one's control; (5) to yield to one's admonition or advice; and (6) to obey, in other words be **subject**. The Apostle Paul used *hupotasso* in twenty-two verses of scripture that he wrote, and again twenty-two is the number pointing to LIGHT, and the LIGHT he was pointing us to of course references Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Paul wrote in ROMANS 13:1 *Let every soul be subject <5293> unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Applying this to the Greek military term we just learned, we find that the Apostle Paul here is admonishing the reader to understand that we all are to be under the command of a leader, and our leader is God, who has ordained the powers that we are to be in subjection to. The same thought applies to this next verse: TITUS 3:1 *Put them in mind to be subject <5293> to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.* In the following verses we see that we are really to be in subjection to God. PHILIPPIANS 3:21 *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue <5293> all things unto himself.* 1 CORINTHIANS 15:27 *For he hath put <5293> all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under <5293> him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put <5293> all things under <5293> him.* 28 *And when all things shall be subdued <5293> unto him, then shall <5293> the Son also himself be subject <5293> unto him that put <5293> all things under <5293> him, that God may be all in all.* HEBREWS 2:8 *Thou hast put <5293> all things in subjection <5293> under his feet. For in that he put <5293> all in subjection under <5293> him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under <5293> him.*

So back to the word “**subject**” in LUKE 2:51 *And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.* Jesus did indeed prove Himself to be an overcomer by being **subject** unto His parents. This was a tiny part of why He could say in JOHN 16:33 *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.* One more scripture, that we have referenced before in this study, which we must also keep in mind going forward, for it applies to His thought process, which we have been discussing, and that is HEBREWS 4:15. HEBREWS 4:15 *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of*

our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Jesus knew what it was like being a twelve year old. He knew what a twelve-year old felt when being confronted by His parents. Further note that Jesus was **subject** unto His parents until he began His ministry at age thirty!

So what did Jesus do these next eighteen years? Verse 52 gives us the answer: LUKE 2:52 *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.* The word “**stature**” interestingly is found seventeen times in scripture. Seventeen also just happens to be the number that points to VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. Jesus Himself as a man took the victory over the ageing process for the next eighteen years of His life. As a twelve year old He confounded those who heard Him ask questions, and answer theirs. His questions, and answers were beyond His years as a twelve year old man. His questions, and answers were beyond His **stature** in other words, and He had to mature as a man before He would be ready to fulfill His Father’s business. In other words He as a man took the victory over the ageing process for the next eighteen years of His life as He increased in **stature**, and in wisdom, and in favor with both God the Father, and man. We find then that He knew what it was like to grow up as a man, and the infirmities that were part of man’s maturing process.

Verse 52 also shows us some other things, which help us better understand Jesus as man. Consider the normal growth of a child. As children grow and develop, they achieve stages of maturity. Jesus, even though He was an eternal being from the eternity past, He emptied Himself of that fact to become a man. As a man He submitted Himself to the normal growth and development of a man; in other words He submitted himself to the restrictions of a human body without sin. Verse 52 shows that as Jesus increased in years He increased in stature, that is He increased in height, weight, size etc., which is what we would expect of any normal growing child. Verse 52 also states that *...Jesus increased in wisdom.* How could Jesus possibly increase in wisdom? To answer this question we must consider Jesus as man, not Jesus as God. As God Jesus possessed supreme intelligence, but as a man He submitted Himself to learning and gaining knowledge as a man. As a baby we wouldn't expect Him to start talking right away using a full vocabulary of words, even though He was the only one who could have done so. He submitted Himself to the time restraints of a man. Thus constrained by time, He increased in wisdom as a man does in the course of time. That is probably as simple as I can explain this thought, however consider the wisdom of Jesus in tarrying *...behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.* This was the wisdom of a twelve year old, not that Jesus did any thing wrong here per say for a twelve year old, but had He been a little older this might not have been the wisest thing to do. Jesus wasn't lacking any wisdom, but His wisdom as a man had not yet fully matured, for Jesus as a man had not yet fully matured. As a twelve year Jesus was about to learn what it felt like to see His Mother distraught over Jesus’ tarrying behind in Jerusalem. This was a new learning event that he had to go through as a man so that He could *...be touched with the feeling of our infirmities...* in this regard. Though He had done nothing amiss, His mother, and Joseph saw it differently. The wisdom of a few more years matured Jesus as a man.

Verse 52 also states that *...Jesus increased... in favour with God and man.* This simply means that as Jesus grew into manhood, and matured as a man, God was pleased and approved of what was taking place with Jesus as a man. He also won the approval of the people He came in contact with. In other words, during the rest of the development of His life here on earth, Jesus matured as a man in all points while waiting for the time to come to begin His ministry, and fulfil God's eternal purpose for Jesus coming to earth in the first place. The Holy Spirit wanted us to get a picture of Jesus as a man, so Luke was given the gospel of Christ as man. Luke is the only one who describes anything about the growth and development of Jesus as a boy and young man. LUKE 2:40 could have been the last words used to describe Jesus' childhood: *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him...* but thankfully we were given a little more insight into Jesus childhood in verses 41-52.

Compare verses 40 and 52 of LUKE 2 for a minute. Similar thoughts are expressed in each verse. Verse 40: *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of*

God was upon him. Verse 52: *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.* In these two verses are statements on Jesus development as a man. As a child He grew both in stature and wisdom, and matured as he grew as a man. The rational spirit, that is the power by which the human being feels, thinks, and decides, and the disposition or influence, which fills and governs the soul of any one, increased in strength as Jesus grew. This is what is meant in verse 40 when stated Jesus ...*waxed strong in spirit.* He also was ...*filled with wisdom,*... that is; to render full, to make complete in every particular (undertaking), to fill to the top: so that nothing shall be wanting to full measure; in other words to fill to the brim; to fill to the full, to furnish or be liberally supplied, this was how Jesus was increasing in wisdom as a man, in verse 52. Then we find that ...*the grace of God was upon him,*... and He was ...*in favour with God...* . These words “favour,” and “grace” are the same words in the Greek, the Greek word charis {khar'-ece}, found 147 times in the New Testament meaning: grace, good will, loving-kindness, favor, divine grace, and in rare instances thanks or thankfulness. It also carries with it the thought of joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, and loveliness: grace of speech. Consider this, when Jesus was found sitting in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors and speaking to them, did He display a level of charm and grace of speech? Sure He did. But as time went on and Jesus matured as a man He further matured in sweetness, as a man, charm, as a man, and grace of speech, as a man.

We can better explain this concept with scripture. The next time this word charis is used in the New Testament (after LUKE 2:40 & 52) is in LUKE 4:22. We will read from LUKE 4:14 *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. 16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up:* (they knew Him; had watched Him grow up in their midst) *and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. 17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* (He was reading about Himself!) *20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down.* (He was subject to the minister.) *And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. 22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?* Note that phrase in verse 22 ...*And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* Do you see a little better how that as time went on Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man? And how the grace of God was upon Him, and had matured in Him as a man? I hope so!

Our final thoughts of what Luke wrote in LUKE 1 & 2 after his interviews with Mary the mother of Jesus takes us back to LUKE 2:51, and gives us a glimpse at Jesus mother Mary, and what was taking place in her life these next few years. LUKE 2:51 ...*but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.* What sayings was Mary keeping in her heart? Several, first the sayings she heard of her Son in the temple when dealing with the doctors of the law. Second, the questions asked of her and Joseph by Jesus in verse 49: ...*How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* These statements confounded her at this time, just as the angel Gabriel in LUKE 1:29 had confounded her. LUKE 1:29 *And when she saw him, (Gabriel) she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.* The appearance of the shepherds on the night of Jesus birth also gave Mary many other things to ponder in her heart. She told Luke in LUKE 2:17 & 18 this about what she learned of Jesus from the shepherds: *17 And when they had seen it, (the manger scene) they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.* A few days later Simeon and Anna confounded her with their statements found in LUKE 2:25-38. Simeon said in LUKE 2:29-35 -- *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,*

*according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And spoken of Anna in verse 38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. In MATTHEW 2 certainly the visit of the wise men when Jesus was two years old had confounded her; MATTHEW 2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And the list of confounding things, thoughts, and statements grew in Mary's heart as her time with Jesus went on. We read in LUKE 2:19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. Now we have read in LUKE 2:51 ...but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. We pointed out early in this study that there was no way Luke could have known what Mary pondered in her heart without her revealing these things unto him. It took the enlightening power of the Holy Ghost for Mary to fully comprehend the things she had so long pondered about Jesus, and by the time Luke interviewed Mary late in her life, she more than felt comfortable telling Luke about the things she for so long pondered. And think of all the things over thirty-three years of being with Jesus that Mary was left to ponder. No one else here on earth had this much time with Jesus. We already pointed out that by the time Jesus had turned thirty, and began His ministry, Mary knew Jesus a lot better for she knew that ...*Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it...* JOHN 2:5.*

I am sure Mary enjoyed taking this trip down memory lane with Luke, and talking about their favorite person who ever lived, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Mary had given Luke tremendous insight into the Man Christ Jesus, and what it was like being with Him for thirty-three years. No one else had Mary's perspective of Him.

An Update on Luke's Life

We just finished Luke's interview with Mary the mother of Jesus, whose eyewitness accounts are recorded in LUKE 1 & 2. When I began these lessons on the man Luke, I had no idea how long we would be in this study, and I still don't, because I expect the Lord Jesus Christ to return at any time. As we proceed forward we will discuss some more unique aspects of what Luke wrote in his gospel record. Before we do this let's pause for a moment, and reflect again where we are in Luke's own life.

We begin this study from the perspective of Luke's life during Paul's final days when we found this statement in 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *Only Luke is with me...* . Thus we know that Luke was with the Apostle Paul until the end of Paul's life in approximately 68 A.D. We then traced in scripture back to the time frame when we know Luke first joined up with Paul, and that was a few months into Paul's second missionary journey, which began in ACTS 16. By the time frame of ACTS 16 the conference in Jerusalem discussed in ACTS 15, and GALATIANS 2, which occurred in 50 A.D. according to Conybeare and Howson's time-line, had already taken place, and Paul had returned to Antioch in Syria before embarking on his second missionary journey in 51 A.D. Luke joined Paul and Silas, and Timothy on that second missionary journey when Paul, and company passed through Troas for the first time. So obviously Luke got to know the Apostle Paul way before this time, and it is pretty plain to see that where they got acquainted was in Antioch, Syria, the place where they were first called Christians in ACTS 11:26. Luke wrote this fact in his second letter to Theophilus, which we know as the book of ACTS. The first letter Luke penned to Theophilus was The Gospel According to St. LUKE, which we are currently examining certain excerpts from. Recall that Theophilus was a prominent man in the assembly at Antioch, Syria. ACTS 11:26 also informs that Paul, who was still called Saul at this time, and Barnabas spent a whole year teaching in the

assembly at Antioch, Syria at that time. We also previously pointed out that Antioch, Syria was at the time of ACTS the third largest city of the Roman Empire with a population at that of 500,000. Two cities had larger populations, Rome and Alexandria, Egypt. Antioch, Syria was a link between the trade routes of the Mediterranean and the routes that lead east unto China. It was a sort of melting pot of cultures, as are most large cities. Antioch had everything that Roman wealth, Greek culture, and Oriental luxury could produce. Antioch was a wealthy city. The citizens of Antioch were somewhat unique in that they were given by the Roman Empire the privilege of worship in their own way without fear of repercussion or persecution. Antioch, Syria was called the "Queen of the East," and "Antioch the Beautiful," and was a fairly modern city at the time of ACTS. Stated another way Antioch, Syria was a Gentile city.

In ACTS 11 we find Luke making mention of Antioch six times as he introduces what went on there, and Luke wrote in ACTS 11:19 *Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.* And by this time also recall that Peter had already preached unto Gentiles at the house of Cornelius in ACTS 10, which caused great concern with the Jews at Jerusalem. ACTS 11:1-18 explains how Peter vindicated his ministry unto the Gentiles, and the concluding thoughts about those in Jerusalem is stated in ACTS 11:18 *When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* We see that the door had been opened for the gospel to go forth unto the Gentiles, but as we just read in ACTS 11:19 the word of the Lord was still being preached unto the Jews only at Antioch, Syria. That was about to change. Word got back to the Apostles in Jerusalem that a great number had become believers at Antioch, and had turned to the Lord. They sent Barnabas up to Antioch, Syria, a distance of about 320 miles to see what was going on there. ACTS 11:23 tells us: *Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.* Barnabas quickly realized that Saul of Tarsus, whom he had met at Damascus a few years earlier, and had heard him preach in the name of Jesus, would be a perfect fit to bring to Antioch to preach. Thus we read in ACTS 11:25 *Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: 26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.* By the time that a whole year had expired with Paul and Barnabas both teaching in Antioch, Syria the assembly consisted of much people, and the much people included Gentiles, unto whom the Apostle Paul was sent by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to preach unto. Nothing of Paul's gospel message was held back from those attending the church at Antioch, Syria. In other words they were among the first to learn of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus message that Paul taught! At some point in time Theophilus and Luke became part of this assembly. By the time frame of ACTS 13:1 & 2 we find people from all over their world assembled in Antioch, Syria, and it was this church at Antioch, which sponsored Paul on all his missionary journeys. After Paul and Barnabas first missionary journey we found that they returned to Antioch, Syria and once again abode there a long time according to ACTS 14:28. So keep in memory that Antioch, Syria was very instrumental in Paul's ministry, and it became his head quarter church if you will. Again the church that was at Antioch sponsored all of Paul's missionary journeys, and it seems that Paul spent more time at Antioch than anywhere else he preached. The only difference in Paul's time at Antioch was that it was spread out over several years. It was this assembly at Antioch, Syria that preserved Luke's gospel record, and his other letter entitled The ACTS of the APOSTLES. Thus it almost seems an understatement that *...the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.* Thank God for the assembly at Antioch!

The purpose in once again reviewing all of these scriptural facts is to point out when Luke became acquainted with the Apostle Paul, which was way before Paul's first missionary journey. So it seems that Luke, and also Theophilus must have learned Paul's gospel message during that time frame of ACTS 11, which Conybeare and Howson note as being 44-45 A.D. ACTS 11 ends with

Paul and Barnabas taking a trip to Jerusalem to provide financial relief sent from the assembly at Antioch, Syria to the poor Saints of Jerusalem. Remember Antioch was a city of much wealth. When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, Syria, Conybeare and Howson having them staying there from 46-47 A.D. Paul and Barnabas then were sent by the assembly at Antioch, Syria on that first missionary journey in 48 A.D., and they returned to Antioch, Syria by late 49 A.D., or early 50 A.D., after which time Paul and Barnabas attend the conference in Jerusalem discussed in ACTS 15, and GALATIANS 2, which occurred in 50 A.D. according to Conybeare and Howson's time-line. In 51 A.D. Paul is once again sent on a missionary journey, his second, by the assembly at Antioch, Syria taking with him Silas, a prophet from the Jerusalem assembly, and one who had been at the conference in Jerusalem. Timothy was added to this ensemble in the early verses of ACTS 16. As we have now shown, Luke would have known the Apostle Paul about seven or eight years by the time we read of him joining up with Paul, and company in ACTS 16:10. This is where Luke begins writing in the first person for a while using the words "we," and "us." Luke sailed with Paul, Silas, and Timothy to Philippi, and in ACTS 16 Luke tells the story of how the church at Philippi was established by the Apostle Paul. The year was 52 A.D. In ACTS 16:40 we read: *And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.* The "they" that went out of the prison at Philippi were Paul and Silas. It was Paul and Silas who comforted the brethren at the house of Lydia. Among the brethren would have been Luke.

Who departed Philippi in ACTS 16:40? Study the first 15 verses of ACTS 17, and you will see that Paul, and Silas, and Timothy were again traveling together, but what about Luke? Luke doesn't write any more first hand accounts until ACTS 20:5 & 6. The year now is 58 A.D., and this event was at the end of Paul's third missionary journey. Note where Luke was when he rejoined Paul; he was at Philippi, or perhaps we could say Luke was still at Philippi. Had Luke spent the better part of six years at Philippi? It appears that he did, and if this was the case, Luke would have been the main guy there at Philippi who could have expounded to the Philippian Saints Paul's gospel! When the Apostle Paul later wrote in PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample...* do you think the Philippian Saints immediately thought of Luke as one of them to mark?

The journey that began with Luke once again joining Paul in ACTS 20:5 & 6 at the conclusion of Paul's third missionary journey was to end once again in Antioch, Syria, the assembly Paul could call his home church. However the Holy Ghost had other plans. Luke is the one who documented these events in ACTS 20 and 21. The Apostle Paul was arrested in Jerusalem in ACTS 21, and he was sent to Caesarea by the Roman government as a prisoner the Roman Empire until his case could be heard before proper Roman authorities. We find in ACTS 24:27 that Paul would be a prisoner there at Caesarea for two years, and ACTS 24:23 records that Governor Felix let Paul have this kind of liberty, that his acquaintance should not be forbidden to come and minister unto him. What many miss in all of this is that Luke, one of Paul's traveling companions at the end of Paul's third missionary journey, never left Paul, and it seem that Luke never left Paul from this point forward. When it finally came time for Paul to be sent to Rome for trial two years later in 60 A.D., Luke was still with Paul, and writes in the first person again in ACTS 27:1 *And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy,...*

This brings us back to those two years that Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea. Where was Luke during this time? Well certainly Luke kept proper track of the Apostle Paul, and no doubt was one of Paul's frequent visitors in the prison at Caesarea, but Luke was still free to do what he was led to do. Note these next two verses that we will look at in ACTS 21 that tells of the Apostle Paul's arrival in Jerusalem at the conclusion of his third missionary journey. Keep in mind it was Luke who wrote these verses. ACTS 21:15 *And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem. 16 There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge. 17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18 And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the*

elders were present. 19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. Note that Luke was among the “we,” and “us” traveling with Paul. And they being Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of the Ephesians, and Luke were introduced unto James, the Lord’s brother, and the elders of the church at Jerusalem. These Gentile men were exhibit A as Paul ...*declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry...* ACTS 21:19. Underline this point in your mind, that Luke was introduced to the leaders of the church at Jerusalem by the Apostle Paul. After Paul’s sudden arrest, what happened unto Luke? Luke wasn’t arrested, and he had just met some of the people from Jerusalem he had previously heard so much about from the Apostle Paul. Luke being a documentary writer kind of person hung around Jerusalem getting better acquainted with the disciples of Christ after Paul’s arrest. No one knew what was going to happen next, but these disciples at Jerusalem took Luke in until it could be determined what was going to happen to Paul. Certainly Luke kept close tabs on the Apostle Paul during these two years, for there was no way to know exactly how long Paul would be held prisoner down at Caesarea. And in the mean time Luke got to interview those who followed Jesus from the very beginning, which included Mary the mother of Jesus, and the disciples, which became Apostles including Peter and John. There were some others Luke no doubt visited with again, such as Barnabas and John Mark, whom Luke would have previously met back at the assembly in Antioch, Syria.

Now in my minds eye I can see a little hesitation perhaps at first with these disciples at Jerusalem allowing interviews by this Gentile man named Luke, but it wasn’t too long that they accepted him into their own homes to talk about our lovely Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Luke was like a sponge soaking all of this information in. And for Luke it certainly was an incredible adventure while keeping pace with the Apostle Paul. Luke truly, and literally followed Paul as Paul followed Christ, but the main focus of Luke’s attention was Christ. In return the Holy Ghost gave Luke this incredible opportunity to document first hand eyewitness accounts of the ministry of Jesus Christ, and what that was like from the beginning, until two years after Paul’s arrival at Rome in 62 A.D. Concerning his time in Jerusalem, Luke wrote to a man of Antioch, Syria this epistle called The Gospel According to St. LUKE. Note again Luke’s opening sentence in LUKE. LUKE 1:1-4 *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.* The only way Luke got this perfect understanding of all things concerning Jesus Christ was by the Holy Ghost leading him to get the chance to interview these eyewitnesses, and this opportunity came while Paul was being held prisoner in Caesarea. There is no indication that Luke ever got back to Jerusalem after the Apostle Paul died in 68 A.D., so the only conclusion we can arrive at is that Luke took full advantage of the only time he visited Jerusalem, which was when Paul was held prisoner at Caesarea for two years.

And as you keep these things in the back of your mind, know that this was also the opportunity Luke had to piece together the information contained in the first twelve chapters of ACTS. In Luke’s travels back and forth between where Paul was being held prisoner in Caesarea, and Jerusalem, Luke no doubt had the opportunity to interview Philip the evangelist, and he probably did so as Philip also made frequent visits to Paul in the Caesarean prison. Recall that Philip the evangelist now lived in Caesarea, and had allowed Paul and his traveling companions to stay at his house in ACTS 21:8-10. Between what Paul told Luke, and what Philip told Luke, he would write ACTS 6, 7, and 8. ACTS 7 covers Stephen’s sermon before the Sanhedrin. Paul, then known as Saul of Tarsus, heard this conscious pricking sermon, and recalled word-for-word what Stephen said. Philip could fill in the details of ACTS chapters 6 and 8. The Apostle Peter, and perhaps the Apostle John back in Jerusalem could also tell the stories of ACTS 1 through 6. Peter could fill in the gaps of

ACTS 9 through 12. Paul could tell most of the rest of what took place in the concluding chapters of ACTS, and Luke himself was a part of that story from ACTS 20 through ACTS 28. This brief overview brings us back to where we are studying about some of the unique things Luke wrote about in his gospel record of LUKE.

And before we move on, let me give one more thought concerning Antioch, Syria. We previously noted in this study the Apostle Paul had five prolonged visits to Antioch, Syria during his life. Five we know as the number of GRACE, and it was Paul's gospel message of GRACE that was preached here in Antioch, Syria. When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, Syria after Paul's first missionary journey we find this statement in ACTS 14. ACTS 14:26 *And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.* 27 *And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.* 28 *And there they abode long time with the disciples.* Paul's gospel message of GRACE was appreciated by the assembly at Antioch, Syria where they were first called Christians. And Paul's message of GRACE was seen by this Antioch assembly as so important that they sponsored all of Paul's missionary journeys, a point that we have now noted several times in this study. Yet the Apostle Paul never wrote a letter, or an epistle unto the church at Antioch, Syria, and he only mentioned them once by name, that being in GALATIANS 2:11. It was Luke, who made known to us the important place that Antioch, Syria had in Paul's ministry. And it was Luke who told how Antioch, Syria had sponsored all of Paul's missionary journeys. So why didn't the Apostle Paul write an epistle to the church at Antioch? Have you ever pondered this question? If you consider the fourteen epistles that we have in scripture that the Apostle Paul wrote, nine were written unto the assemblies that he established, or hoped to establish in the case of the letter to the ROMANS. Four of Paul's epistles were written to specific individuals, where he encouraged the ones, who were his closest followers, who got saved because of Paul's gospel, to continue seeking God's best. The letter to the HEBREWS was written to Hebrew Christians without a signature from the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul didn't establish the church at Antioch, Syria where Luke and Theophilus were from. Even though the church at Antioch, Syria was very instrumental in spreading Paul gospel message, Paul never wrote them a letter because he always reported back to them in person with a report on how they had helped him spread the gospel message. However Paul never got back to Antioch, Syria after his third missionary journey because of his arrest in Jerusalem. But Luke, now one of Paul's closest followers, sent two letters to Antioch, Syria that contained all of the information, and more than Paul could have written them. Luke's gospel message written to Antioch, Syria was so influenced by the Apostle Paul that the encouragement was Pauline. Stated another way, Luke's two letters were really an extension of Paul's gospel message, especially ACTS. The church at Antioch, Syria got 52 chapters of Godly encouragement specially sent unto them, which very much expounded upon the very same themes the Apostle Paul had taught them in person.

Luke part 5 – Luke continues writing Theophilus the gospel of LUKE

Brother Hawkins in his The Gospel of LUKE study book also points out the unique story had to tell in his writing The Gospel according to LUKE. We have spent much time so far examining the things Mary the mother of Jesus expounded unto Luke in chapters 1 and 2 of LUKE, and the things Mary told Luke are not found in the other gospel records. Concerning the rest of LUKE, one Bible commentator writes that Luke derived about fifty percent of his gospel record from Mark. That could very well be true for no doubt Luke knew Mark from the time his uncle Barnabas first brought him to Antioch in ACTS 12:25. There Mark is called "John, whose surname was Mark." We find John, whose surname was Mark several times in scripture under the following names: John, whose surname was Mark, Mark, and Marcus. Scripture indicates that Mark was from Jerusalem. Mark we know was a follower of Peter from the early years of his ministry, as was Barnabas, who is first mentioned in scripture in ACTS 4:36. Mark wrote the Gospel According to St. MARK approximately the same

time that Luke wrote his gospel record of LUKE. Like Luke, Mark was not one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. In Mark's gospel he records an unique event that happened on the night that Jesus Christ was betrayed by Judas; an event that isn't recorded in the other gospel records. We read this event in MARK 14:51 & 52. MARK 14:51 *And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: 52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.* Since this portion of scripture seems to have no real connection with the context of the rest of the story other than an interesting side light, one scholar notes that this may be a reference to Mark himself. If that is the case then we must note that John Mark was a young man at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus, and a first hand witness to Jesus arrest. Mark was first associated with the church at Jerusalem as was his uncle Barnabas.

ACTS 12:12 informs us that "John, whose surname was Mark" mothers name was Mary, who had a house at Jerusalem where Saints met to worship and pray. When Luke, the author of ACTS, writes about this it is as if he had first hand knowledge about this event, and knew the characters. We are learning that Luke got some of this information from eyewitness accounts, and one of the eyewitnesses no doubt was Mark. Interestingly what Luke wrote in ACTS 12:12 doesn't specifically tell us if Barnabas and our Apostle Paul were a part of this many that were gathered together at Mark's mothers house, but they very well could have been for they were in Jerusalem at this same time. {Study ACTS 12 and note especially ACTS 12:25 to get the connection.} In the 12th chapter of ACTS it was Peter who came to Mark's mothers house after being set free from Herod's prison by the angel of the Lord, so obviously Mark knew Peter, and no doubt Mark knew the rest of the twelve apostles of the Lamb also, having become personally acquainted with them after the day of Pentecost spoken of in ACTS 2 where the Holy Ghost was poured out.

Luke also wrote what we have referenced above in ACTS. When Luke first arrived in Jerusalem with the Apostle Paul in ACTS 21, the Apostle Paul introduced Luke, and the others mentioned in ACTS 20:4, to the leaders of the church at Jerusalem as we noted earlier. Mark perhaps was back there in Jerusalem also at this time, and if so, perhaps he and Luke reacquainted during the early days of Luke's arrival in Jerusalem with the Apostle Paul. A few years later years Mark and Luke are both mentioned by Paul in COLOSSIANS 4, and in PHILEMON 1:24, and both Luke and Mark are mentioned as fellowlabourers together with the Apostle Paul at that time. So Mark and Luke knew each other well. Paul wrote his epistle to the COLOSSIANS, and his letter to PHILEMON about four years after his arrest in Jerusalem. The gospel according to MARK written by Mark is dated about the same time as Luke's gospel of LUKE. So putting all of this together it seems possible that both Mark and Luke shared, or gathered information together that is recorded in their gospel records as was noted by the unnamed commentator above. However Luke still recorded many different things in his gospel record that are unique to The Gospel According to St. LUKE.

So going forward from this point rather than do a verse-by-verse study of what Luke wrote, my intention is to point out some of the unique things that only Luke made known to us in his gospel record. The first two chapters of LUKE were certainly different than the other gospel records in that Luke recorded what Mary the mother of Jesus had told him concerning Jesus. Recall that the focus of the gospel LUKE is on Jesus as THE MAN, and certainly His mother Mary had very well explained to Luke her early years with Jesus before he began His ministry, and showed how He grew as THE MAN. For a more detailed study on a verse-by-verse basis of LUKE may I strongly suggest you reference Brother Hawkins study book on LUKE, which can be found on the Living Waters Tabernacle website.

We mentioned previously that one of the things Luke emphasizes more than all the other authors of scripture combined is the Holy Ghost. Obviously Luke himself was full of the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost is the agency of the trinity who inspired what is written in scripture. 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 tells us: *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* The Holy Ghost is also the agency of the trinity that will guide the Bride of Christ in full overcoming victory in Christ Jesus as a victorious racecourse runner.

Luke referenced the Holy Ghost eleven times in LUKE, and forty-two times in ACTS, for a total of fifty-three times. In total the term "Holy Ghost" is found ninety times in scripture, so we clearly see that Luke wrote more than half of these scriptures. We have already read six "Holy Ghost" references in the first two chapters of LUKE: see LUKE 1:15; 1:35; 1:41; 1:67; 2:25; and 2:26. Two more "Holy Ghost" references are found in LUKE chapter 3, which we will now reference.

In LUKE 3:1-22 the emphasis is on the ministry of John the Baptist of whom it is said in LUKE 3:3 *And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.* There is only One who can save us from our sins, THE MAN Christ Jesus. Luke wrote what the Apostle Paul had to say about this in ACTS 19:4 *...John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.* Back in LUKE 3:16 John the Baptist said this: *...I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.* As he spoke this John the Baptist was telling of future events to his time. The reference here is to THE MAN Jesus Christ, who sent the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost in ACTS 2.

Now let's read LUKE 3:21 & 22. LUKE 3:21 *Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, 22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.*

There are several points to take note of in these two verses. First notice *... all the people...* that were baptized here by John the Baptist. The previous verses of LUKE 3 tell us that there was a multitude that came forth to be baptized, and that John the Baptist preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. {Study LUKE 3:3 & 7.} One group found in LUKE 3:10 was "the people," no doubt a reference to the Jews. In verse 12 we find the publicans also came to be baptized, and in verse 14 we find the soldiers, no doubt Roman soldiers for the most part as a part of this multitude that came to be baptized by John the Baptist. Here in LUKE 3:21 we find that "Jesus also being baptized." This was when Jesus public ministry began, and He was baptized as a testimony unto the multitude, who were present at this event. The second thing to note is that this is the earliest account of Jesus praying, and Luke is the only gospel writing to note that Jesus was praying at this time of His baptism. Again Luke emphasizes Jesus as THE MAN, and we know from the scriptures that Jesus prayed to God the Father constantly. This also shows that Jesus as a man was in the habit of prayer, and it also shows that He prayed openly, which we know He often did.

I found it interesting that the word "praying" is only found in twenty scriptures. Twenty is the number of REDEMPTION, and REDEMPTION points us to Christ Jesus. ISAIAH 47:4 tells us: *As for our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.* The last part of ISAIAH 60:16 reads: *...and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.* Shortly we will note in LUKE 3:34 that Jacob was in the lineage of Christ just as ISAIAH 60:16 states.

Thirdly take note that *"...the heaven was opened..."* and Brother Hawkins here notes that *"...the heaven was opened..."* unto all. Brother Hawkins wrote: "God has opened up the windows of heavenly blessing to as many as will receive." Fourth we see in verse 22 *...the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon...* Jesus. This event is recorded in all of the gospel records, see also MATTHEW 3:16; MARK 1:10; and JOHN 1:32. The fifth point of interest causes us to focus for a moment upon the word "voice." In our text of LUKE 3:22 it is the "voice" of God who speaks. Earlier in LUKE 3:4 it was the "voice" of John the Baptist who spoke. Both voices put the focus upon THE MAN Christ Jesus, who is the beloved Son of God. In LUKE 3:22 we read: *...and a voice came from heaven...* . In HEBREWS 12:25 we find this statement: *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:...* . It would be a good study to review in scripture all the times voice of the Lord God spoke unto man.

Our sixth, and final point of interest of the things found in LUKE 3:21 & 22 causes us to focus on what the voice of God said: *...Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.* There are seven references in scripture to Jesus Christ as the “beloved Son.” MATTHEW 3:17; MARK 1:11; and LUKE 3:22 are the accounts of where Jesus is called the “beloved Son” by God the Father at His baptism. In MATTHEW 17:5; MARK 9:7; and LUKE 9:35 is where we read of the voice of God being heard by Peter, James and John coming out of a cloud at Jesus transfiguration stating in MATTHEW 17:5 *...This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.* Peter also recalled this event in 2 PETER 1:17, which reads: *For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

In LUKE 3:23 we find the only record in scripture of how old Jesus was when He began His ministry, which was thirty years old. Luke fully documented Jesus age as a man in his gospel record. Next in LUKE 3:23-38 we come to the genealogy of Jesus. Only two gospel records record Jesus genealogy; MATTHEW and LUKE. MATTHEW records Christ as the King, and all kings can trace their lineage. The Gospel of MARK tells of Jesus as a servant, and servants have no lineage, so MARK records none. LUKE, who pictures Christ as a Man, traces His lineage back to Adam. The Gospel of JOHN records Jesus Christ as the Eternal Ageless One, who was in the beginning. These four traits found in the four gospel records, are also found in the four living creatures of REVELATION 4:6-8; the lion king of the beasts; the calf or faithful ox a servant to man; the man; and the flying eagle typical of the king of the birds, the lofty ruler of the heavens.

The genealogy of LUKE, the gospel which pictures Christ as THE MAN, shows seventy-seven generations. The genealogy recorded in LUKE 3 is that of Mary’s, and the genealogy recorded MATTHEW 1 is that of Joseph’s. MATTHEW’s genealogy only goes as far back as Abraham, where LUKE’s record goes back to Adam. Again you can see some of the differences by studying Scofield’s reference notes, and Brother Hawkins study book on LUKE. MATTHEW records five women in genealogy record of Christ, and by studying their backgrounds we can certainly see the GRACE of God. Perhaps of these five women, only Mary was a Jew! The Gospel According to LUKE doesn’t record any women. Both Matthew and Luke’s genealogies trace the line back to David, and then back to Abraham. But Luke continues the genealogy of Christ back to the first man Adam. Recall what the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:45 *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.* Luke in his presenting the Man Christ Jesus shows the complete path from the first man Adam to the last Adam, Jesus Christ. And while we are talking about the first man Adam note what is said in LUKE 3:38 of Adam: *...Adam, which was the son of God.* Note in your King James Bible that the words “the son” are in italics, meaning these words are not found in the original Greek. The original Greek reads: “Adam, which was of God.” We read this in GENESIS 1 & 2. GENESIS 1:26 *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.* GENESIS 2:7 *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.* This was the verse in the Old Testament that the Apostle Paul quoted in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:45 above.

We are not going to study LUKE’s genealogy of Christ per say, but will note some special points of interest from LUKE’s genealogy that can be studied out further on your own time. In LUKE’s genealogy of Christ we find the following six Old Testament worthies of faith that are also highlighted in HEBREWS 11, and we will talk a little more about these men; Enoch (verse 37), Noah (verse 36), Abraham (verse 34), Isaac (verse 34), Jacob (verse 34), and David (verse 31). (Two of Jesus’ great grandmothers are also listed in HEBREWS 11, though not mentioned by name in LUKE’s genealogy: Sarah, and Rahab. Rahab is mentioned by name in MATTHEW’s genealogy, but Sarah is not.) One of the meanings of the number six is MAN. The focus of LUKE’s genealogy is on the Man Christ Jesus. Jesus as a Man was the ultimate full overcomer. Jesus said this in JOHN

16:33 *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.* The word “overcome” is found twenty-two times in scripture, and twenty-two is the number of LIGHT. Recall that JOHN 8:12 and 9:5 (plus many other scriptures) tells us that Jesus is the Light of this world. We also want to note that the Man Christ Jesus is the seventh overcomer found in Luke’s list of overcomers in Christ’s genealogy. By now we all know that the number seven is the number of SPIRITUAL PERFECTION or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION, that the Man Christ Jesus defines both of these terms.

The seventh generation from Adam was Enoch. Enoch was noted to be a prophet in JUDE 1:14. We will read JUDE 1:14 & 15 -- *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* Enoch prophesied of a time yet future. The purpose of the Apostle Paul writing about the hero’s of faith in HEBREWS 11 was to point out that these individuals had a focus on things above, and far beyond this lifetime. Faith is not sight, and we are told this in HEBREWS 11:1 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* Let’s now read verses 5 & 6 about Enoch: HEBREWS 11:5 *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* Enoch pleased God and was translated that he should not see death. GENESIS 5:22 and 24 both tell us the same thing, in part, *...Enoch walked with God...* and HEBREWS 11:5 & 6 informs us that men who walk by faith with God, like Enoch did, please God. When Enoch walked with God, God told him of the things recorded in JUDE 1:14 & 15.

Next let’s spend a moment talking about Noah. When thinking of Noah we are reminded that *...Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD...* GENESIS 6:8. This is the first mention of the word “grace” in scripture. Also five is the number of GRACE, and five times in scripture we find Noah spelled Noe, all in the four gospel records. The Apostle Peter also acknowledges that Noah was a preacher of righteousness in 2 PETER 2:5 writing that God *...spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.* Previously in 1 PETER 3:20 the Apostle Peter also wrote this about Noah: *...God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.* GENESIS 6:3 indicates that it took a hundred and twenty years for the ark to be prepared, so Noah preached righteousness at least this long, if not longer. HEBREWS 11:7 summarizes Noah’s life of faith like this: *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

We all came through Noah’s line somewhere, and we all came from Adam. Jesus lineage went back through Noah through Shem (Sem) in LUKE 3:36. According to GENESIS 5:32, and GENESIS 7:6, Shem was a hundred years old at the time of the flood. I found it interesting that Shem, who lived to be 600 years old, was 395 years old when Abraham was born, and 570 years old when Abraham died. There is no record that these two ever met. Shem out lived Abraham.

We are going to spend a little more time discussing Abraham mentioned in Christ’s ancestry in LUKE 3:34. In ROMANS 4:3; GALATIANS 3:6; and JAMES 2:23 we read this same statement: “Abraham believed God.” ROMANS 4:3 states: *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.* The scripture Paul referenced here is GENESIS 15:6, which says this of Abraham: *And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.* Now let’s read GALATIANS 3:6-9. GALATIANS 3:6 *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the*

heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

With this background let's now read what HEBREWS 11 has to say about Abraham, and in so doing we will cover two more in the lineage of Christ, that being Isaac and Jacob. HEBREWS 11:8 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* Let's focus on what Paul wrote here in verse 10, how that by faith Abraham ...looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. What is being stated here is that Abraham had a focus far beyond his lifetime. Abraham had a heavenly focus. All full overcomers have such a heavenly focus, and the Apostle Paul stated it like this in PHILIPPIANS 3:20 *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.* We get a glimpse of what Abraham saw in GENESIS 22, so let's go there for a few moments. The story in GENESIS 22 concerns the offering of Isaac, and in this chapter Abraham is a type of God the Father, and Isaac a type of Christ. GENESIS 22:1 *And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. 2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. 3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. 4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.* There is a double meaning to the place Abraham saw "afar off." The HEBREW word in The Strong's Hebrew Concordance for "afar off" (rachok) {raw-khoke'} is number 07350, and means: at a distance of space (several miles), or a great while to come, which speaks to a future time "afar off." I am sure you know this story, but let's read on. GENESIS 22:5 *And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? 8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.* Verse 8 always brings a tear to my eye, because I, like you, know that this spoke to the time yet very far in the future to Abraham's when the Lamb God provided was ...the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. JOHN 1:29 says: *The next day John (the Baptist) seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* I am telling you that by faith Abraham saw this afar off! Jesus even made mention of this in JOHN 8:56 where He said: *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.* In GENESIS 22:8 Abraham saw Calvary, and incidentally Luke is the only write in scripture to use the word Calvary, and he does so in LUKE 23:33. And Abraham saw beyond Calvary also, as we read earlier in HEBREWS 11:10 *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* Abraham saw this heavenly city "afar off." One more thing to note in GENESIS 22:8 *And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.* We find mention of "a lamb" here, which we have properly noted to be a reference to Jesus Christ the Lamb of God. Let's read further: GENESIS 22:9 *And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. 10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket*

by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. The lamb mentioned in verses 7 & 8 is different that the ram mentioned in verse 13. The lamb in verses 7 & 8 is number 07716 (say) in The Strong's Hebrew Concordance, and the ram in verse 13 is number 0352 (ayil) in The Strong's Hebrew Concordance, two different Hebrew words. The lamb {07716 (say)} is referenced sixteen times in Old Testament as a "lamb," and again sixteen is the number of LOVE. This same Hebrew word is the one found in EXODUS 12 for the lamb that was used in the Passover. Christ is our Passover, the Lamb of God, who was sacrificed for us upon the cross of Calvary, as the Apostle Paul noted in 1 CORINTHIANS 5:7. The ram of GENESIS 22:13 {0352 (ayil)} was commonly used for burnt offerings, trespass offerings, and peace offerings under the law of Moses. So once again we note that Abraham here by faith saw "afar off" the cross of Calvary, and the day when God Himself provided the Lamb of God, who took away the sin of the world!

Let's read on in HEBREWS 11 about Abraham starting where we left on in verse 10. HEBREWS 11:10 *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. 11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.* Let's pause here for a moment, and ask ourselves this question: what by faith do I see afar off? Are you looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of faith? Paul wrote in HEBREWS 13:14 *For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.* The city Abraham saw the same city the Apostle Paul wrote about in HEBREWS 12:22 *...the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem...* where resides God the Father, and Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith.

Now let's finish our thoughts on Abraham by reading these next verses in HEBREWS 11. HEBREWS 11:17 *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*

We are currently studying a little about the six men found in LUKE's ancestry of Christ, who are also found mentioned in HEBREWS 11. Isaac and Jacob are mentioned next again in HEBREWS 11:20 & 21. HEBREWS 11:20 *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. 21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.* Isaac and Jacob too saw things by faith afar off.

The sixth man found in Luke's ancestry of Christ, and also in HEBREWS 11 as a noted worthy of faith is David. Earlier in this portion we noted that only MATTHEW and LUKE gave an lineage of Jesus Christ, but the Apostle John in JOHN 7:42 wrote: *Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?* Luke certainly documented this fact probably more extensively than all of the other gospel writers. There are nine hundred sixty-eight verses of scripture that mention David. Luke wrote twenty-two of them. One of the scriptures Luke wrote is ACTS 13:22, a quote from Paul's sermon at Antioch in Pisidia, where Paul was quoting 1 SAMUEL 13:14. ACTS 13:22 reads: *And when he had removed him, (king Saul) he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. Also concerning David we read this in 2 SAMUEL 7:12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. ...16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever*

before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. This was the promise that the angel Gabriel repeated unto Mary the mother of Jesus in LUKE 1:31 *And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* The lineage of Christ back to David in MATTHEW goes through Solomon, but the lineage of Christ back to David in LUKE goes through Nathan (verse 31), whose mother was also Bathsheba (1 CHRONICLES 3:5).

As we continue to explore the unique things that Luke wrote in his gospel of LUKE that were different than the other gospel records, let's remember to consider all the chapters Luke wrote, both in LUKE, and in ACTS. These two accounts should really be read together to appreciate the chronology that Luke presented for about sixty some years, starting with the announcement by the angel Gabriel to Zacharias of John the Baptist being born in nine months in LUKE 1:5-25, to the time Paul was in prison at Rome in his own hired house for two years in ACTS 28:30. And to fully appreciate what Luke wrote we must remember that he got the majority of his information by interviewing eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word to these events, as he wrote in LUKE 1:1-4. Let's read this again. LUKE 1:1-4 *Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.* The only way Luke got this perfect understanding of all things concerning Jesus Christ was by the Holy Ghost leading him to get the chance to interview these eyewitnesses, and this opportunity came while Paul was being held prisoner in Caesarea. There is no indication that Luke ever got back to Jerusalem, where the kingdom Apostles lived after the Apostle Paul died in 68 A.D., so the only conclusion we can arrive at is that Luke took full advantage of the only time he visited Jerusalem, which was when Paul was held prisoner at Caesarea for two years.

The key to understanding Luke, and what Luke wrote in his gospel of LUKE, and the book of ACTS lies in this sentence we just read in LUKE 1:1-4. And in Luke's life it is very apparent that he deeply appreciated the word, meaning the word of God. And the Word of God is another name for Jesus Christ as REVELATION 19:13 plainly tells us. A good long study would be to look up the word "word," which is found in 675 verses of scripture. Luke wrote sixty of the "word" scriptures. Luke wrote twenty "word" verses in LUKE, and forty "word" scriptures in ACTS. Twenty is the number of REDEMPTION, and forty is the number of PERFECT TESTING. REDEMPTION points to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, THE MAN Luke emphasized for 24 chapters in the gospel of LUKE. The 28 chapters of ACTS tells some of the PERFECT TESTING that the Apostles, and disciples of the Lord went through being the "ministers of the word" that Luke referenced in LUKE 1:2.

I believe that Luke very much did his best to document as many sermons from "ministers of the word" as he could word-for-word. Some of these sermons Luke heard with his own ears of hearing, but most were accounts of what these "ministers of the word" had themselves taught after hearing the word of the Lord from Christ Jesus Himself. Forty times in scripture Jesus is referenced as "Master," a term used in reference to a teacher, and in Jesus case, a Master Teacher. The Greek word for Master is didaskalos {did-as'-kal-os}, number 1320 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, sometimes translated "Rabbi," and also "Rabboni." Vine's dictionary properly notes that there are more instance of this Greek word being used by Luke than all of the other gospel writers. We could safely say that Luke wrote about Christ THE MAN while also pointing out that He was the Master Teacher. Interestingly we find this Greek commonly translated "Master" used as "doctors," meaning doctors of the law in LUKE 2:46. Though at that time Jesus wasn't yet revealed as the Master Teacher, these doctors of the law got the first glimpse of Him as such. Additionally Luke seven times uses the Greek word epistates (number 1988 in The Strong's Greek Concordance), which is also