



Luke 2

Luke 2
Tape #8046
By Chuck Smith

Luke seeks to give us the timing by reference to historic events. In chapter two, he seeks to give to us the timing of the birth of Christ. In chapter three, he gives us the timing of the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist. In giving to us the timing of the birth of Christ,

It came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) (2:1,2)

There are those who imagined that the Bible had a discrepancy here because according to the historic documents that we had, Cyrenius was governor of Syria in about 7 to 9 A.D. and that would put it several years after the birth of Christ. It does seem that when Justinian, the Roman emperor, ordered a new calendar to date history from the birth of Christ, the Roman calendar originally dated history from the birth of Rome. But Justinian ordered a new calendar to be made that would put history as the birth of Christ would be the focal or the center point of history rather than the birth of Rome. But it seems like the men that he hired to do the job did make a mistake. So that curiously and interestingly enough, Jesus was probably born about 4 B.C. But this was just a mistake, not of the Bible but of the man hired by Justinian to create a new calendar.

But the situation with Cyrenius, the governor of Syria, was considered by Bible critics as one of those flaws of the Bible and they pointed out as it being a flaw. But interestingly enough, recently records have been found to show that Cyrenius was actually governor of Syria twice and the first time he was governor of Syria was quite a bit earlier than the second in 7 to 9 A.D. so that the discrepancy has been cleared up. They realize that he was the governor of Syria even earlier. So again, the critics fall and the Bible stands. But that's been going on for years.

Caesar Augustus, his real name was Gaius Octavian. Gaius Octavian was the first Roman emperor, he was a grandnephew of Julius Caesar. He took the name of Caesar by adoption and the name Augustus was given to him by the Roman senate. Rome has been ruled pretty much by several generals who were called the imperators (plural). He became the first imperator (singular) and spelled with a capital 'I'. Gradually the power of Rome was vested into one man, a singularly astute man, Gaius Octavian and the senate in trying to give to him a title, first of all suggested that he be called the king of Rome. But he rejected the title of king, he said that it signified a temporary reign. So they suggested that he be called the dictator of Rome and he said, No, that doesn't signify enough. So they finally came up with this title, Augustus, which comes from the Latin "augur" and suggests a divine type of a title and it was sort of the beginning of the claim of the Roman Caesars to deity. And gradually the rulers of Rome claimed deity and the requirement was to say that Caesar is Lord.

Many of the Christians were martyred because they would refuse to acknowledge that Caesar is Lord. When facing execution they could escape execution by just saying Caesar is Lord. But they would refuse to do so and thus were stretched to death on the racks or burned at the stake and the various methods, put on the crosses, by which the Roman government tried at first to extinguish the light of Christianity.

We begin to realize a little bit of the power of this man, "there went forth a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made)"—the timing of it, but verse three picks up the thought again,

And all went to be taxed (2:3),

Interesting. Here's a fellow sitting in Rome, he has now achieved such power. He was working towards hegemony. He is able to make a decree and all of the world immediately bows to that decree. "There went forth a decree from Caesar Augustus, all the world should be taxed and all went to be

taxed.” Think of that kind of power. One man. There’s no appeal, no court of appeal, Caesar has spoken and the world must bow and submit to the decree of Caesar. And we read,

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:;) (2:4)

It seemed like this enrollment for the taxation had to be done in your home area. And thus they had to return to Bethlehem in order to be enrolled for this taxation. It’s interesting that they have found some papyri in Egypt that speaks of this taxing. In Egypt which was also under the Roman rule, they also had to go and it was specified in the papyri that was found that they had to return to their home villages for the enrollment for this taxation. Confirming the Biblical account here. So “Joseph went from Galilee, the city of Nazareth,” it’s about an eighty-mile journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. But that isn’t on a freeway in an air-conditioned car. That’s at best on a donkey or walking. Can you imagine Mary in the advanced stages of pregnancy making that eighty-mile arduous journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem? Just because some punk in Rome wants everybody to be taxed. And there was no appeal, they couldn’t go to the district governor and say, But she’s pregnant, she’s going to have a baby anytime. There was no appeal. Caesar said it, you got to do it. Caesar reigns, Caesar rules. So Joseph went from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Anybody in their right mind wouldn’t make that trip under those conditions, those primitive conditions in that state of pregnancy. That’s looking at it from the human side. But there’s another side to this story. This other side begins seven hundred years earlier. It begins with the prophet whose name was Micah and he was prophesying concerning the Messiah that was to come. In his prophecy he said, “And thou Bethlehem of Judaea, though thou art little among the provinces of Judah, yet out of thee shall come he who is to rule my people Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2). And when I read the prophecy of Micah, I suddenly realize that this little fellow sitting on the throne in Rome isn’t what he thinks he is. The autocratic ruler of the world, all he is a puppet in the hands of God.

Because you see, God had a problem. The child was to be born in Bethlehem in order to fulfill the prophecies. And he knew that they wouldn’t go voluntarily to Bethlehem at this stage of her pregnancy. So He taps Caesar on the shoulder and says, Hey, order a taxation, everybody to return to their home city to be taxed. And so he gives the decree and God gets Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem in order that the Baby might be born in Bethlehem. Man may think he rules but God overrules. And so,

he went with Mary his espoused wife, who [and it delicately describes and beautiful] being great with child (2:5).

You all understand what that means, don’t you? I know you mothers specially do.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 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 (2:6,7).

Don’t think of the inn as a Motel 6. It was not a hotel. Even the inn itself was just an enclosed area, a shelter. Walls, a place for the animals, and it was shelter from the winds but there was not even place there for them. And so Jesus was born and placed in a manger because there was no room for them even in the inn. There is a beauty and a pathos to this all wrapped up. It was almost a prophecy of His life.

It seems like there wasn’t room in the earth for Him. We see that there was surely no room for Him within the religious system of the day. They were upset with Him. And throughout His life it seemed to be the story of His life, no room for Jesus. And unfortunately, it continues to be the story in many lives where people are unwilling to make room for the Saviour. So born there and placed in the manger, verse seven, the text would seem to indicate that she was alone. Perhaps not even a midwife to attend to her. For “she brought forth her firstborn and she understood wrapped him in the swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger,” in the feeding trough; because there was no room in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds who were abiding in the field, keeping watch over their

flock by night (2:8).

This would probably preclude December as being the time of the birth of Christ. Our Christmas correlates more with the pagan celebrations of the winter solstice, the Roman saturnalia, than it does with the birth of Christ. It's more or less an adaptation by the church of a pagan holiday Christianizing it and saying we'll celebrate the birth of Jesus on this date.

Just when Jesus was born, we do not know for certain. There are many who suggest that it was perhaps in the early part of October. It is very possible that in God's design that He was born perhaps during the feast of Trumpets. That would be quite significant. We do know that other events of the life of Christ coordinated with the feast of Israel. We do know that He was crucified on Passover and we do know that the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. And thus, it is quite possible that on the other major feasts, Tabernacles or Trumpets, the blowing of trumpets, or perhaps even on Yom Kippur, the day of atonement our Saviour was born. That would seem to fit more with the pattern that God established because when Paul talked about how that they had their fast, their new moons and the keeping of the sabbath days and so forth, he said, "These all were a shadow of the things to come; the substance is Jesus" (Colossians 2:17). These things only were foreshadowing the coming of Jesus.

Shepherds watching their sheep. Some have suggested that these were the temple shepherds, not ordinary shepherds. But they were watching the sheep that were used in the temple sacrifices. Every morning and evening, a lamb had to be offered. On the sabbath day, several lambs offered. On the day of Passover, many lambs. Day of atonement and other feast days they were many lambs that were offered, so that during the course of a year over a thousand lambs. And thus they had the temple shepherds that raise lambs specifically for the purpose of sacrifice. Lambs that had extra care because they could not have a spot or a blemish and be used in temple sacrifices. So there is that speculation that they were temple shepherds. We don't know but if so, it lends a beautiful touch to the story.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid (2:9).

It would appear that God had given to Gabriel the charge of overseeing the events of the Messiah's coming into the world. Some 500 years earlier, Gabriel had appeared to Daniel and had told him the very time that the Messiah would come. It would be related to the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, to the coming of the Messiah would be 483 years. Daniel wrote about that. It was the angel Gabriel that we found last week in chapter one, appeared to Zacharias as he was ministering in the temple. Informed him that his wife Elisabeth was to have a son in her old age who would be the forerunner of the Messiah. It was Gabriel that then appeared to Mary and let her know that God had chosen her the special instrument to be the human instrument of bringing His Son into the world.

Now the Bible doesn't tell us that it was Gabriel that appeared to the shepherds but I'll lay you odds when we get to heaven we'll find out it was. The angel of the Lord. And I believe that that particular angel of the Lord was indeed Gabriel, and he came upon them. I think that having accomplished his job, the child is born, is swaddled, safely there in the manger, and I think he's got to tell somebody, anybody. And it's night, everybody's asleep, he sees the flickering light of a fire off there in the fields near Bethlehem, he goes out and finds the shepherds and makes the announcement to them. Anybody, I got to tell somebody. This event is too glorious to hold. "The glory of the Lord shone round about them: they were afraid,"

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings [the Gospel and it is the Greek word for gospel] of great joy, which shall be to all people (2:10).

Not just the Jews but to the world. The Gospel is for the world, for all who believe.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah (2:11).

The Greek word Christos is the translation of the Hebrew word Meshiac, and the word Lord is Kurios, which also is the Greek word for the Jehovah or Yahweh of the Old Testament Saviour which is the Messiah, the Lord.

And this shall be a sign; You'll find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men (2:12-14).

We are told in the prophecies concerning Jesus, the Messiah, that "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end" (Isaiah 9:7). Peace on earth, good will toward men. Now that has not yet been fulfilled. When the angel Gabriel told Daniel of the coming of the Messiah and told him of the things that would transpire through the Messiah: making an end of sin, reconciliation for iniquity, fulfilling the prophecies, anointing the most holy place, we realize that Jesus fulfilled a part of those prophecies.

But Daniel said the Messiah would be cut off and truly He was cut off, He was crucified. But He is coming again. And He's coming again to fulfill the remaining prophecies and when He comes again, there will be peace on earth, for one of His names is Prince of Peace. And "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." And another prophet declared, "And there shall be peace like a river" (Isaiah 66:12).

Jesus said to His disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). So there is peace on earth in the heart of the believer tonight. If you believe in Jesus Christ, then the peace of God is keeping your heart and your mind. You have trust in Him. He made peace possible for you. Peace with God. And having peace with God, He also brings to us the peace of God that keeps and establishes our hearts.

There are many people who have peace with God but they don't have yet the peace of God. You can't really experience the peace of God until you really understand and know the grace of God. That's why so often in the New Testament, we read "Grace and peace unto you." But always grace first because until you know the grace of God and really experience and understand God's grace, you don't really have the peace of God.

So the announcement, "Peace on earth, good will toward men,"

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 (2:15),

Which indicates that where they were probably isn't the traditional site of the shepherd's field. If you go to Bethlehem today, they'll take you about three quarters of a mile away from the Church of Nativity and they will show you a cave and they'll say, this is the cave where the shepherds were. But "let us go now even unto Bethlehem" would indicate perhaps that it was some distance away.

and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord or God hath made known unto us. And so they came with haste, and they found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger (2:15,16).

This was the sign, the angel said. You're going to find the babe wrapped in swaddling, and there He was.

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child (2:17).

They went out and spread the news. The angel and the whole story. I would imagine that after they got the story out, there were probably a lot of houses that were opened then to Mary and Joseph. And by the time the wise men came, as much as a year or so could have passed before the wise men came. Our Christmas story sort of gets, we see them coming to the manger and bringing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. But that came later, maybe up to two years. Because you remember Herod had all the babies killed from two years and under in order to try and eradicate the rival for the throne.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart (2:18,19).

Don't you know that Mary was as confused as possibly could be concerning this child and all that had been told her concerning the child?

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and

seen, as it was told unto them. Now the eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, and his name was called JESUS (2:20,21),

Under the law, the child was to be circumcised on the eighth day in order that he might have the mark of the Hebrew nation. God gave the rite of circumcision to Abraham, it was a part of the Abrahamic covenant and the sign of that covenant was circumcision. God's people. It was symbolic of cutting away the flesh. So it was symbolic of a nation of people who would be living after the Spirit rather than after the flesh. And it became a very important rite so that if the eighth day would happen to fall on the sabbath day, they could go ahead and circumcise. Though as a general rule any other kind of activity on the sabbath day was prohibited, but circumcision was allowed because it was such an important rite. And so, on the eighth day, the child was named when they circumcised the child, that was when He was given His name and so they called His name Jesus,

which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb (2:21).

So you remember the angel told Mary before He was ever conceived that she was to bear the Son, call His name Jesus. The glorious name, Yeshua. The Hebrew name is Joshua and Joshua is a contraction of Jehoshua. Joshua you remember was the servant of Moses. And his given name was Hoshea, which means Salvation. But Moses renamed him and Moses called him Jehoshua, which is Jehovah is salvation. It was then contracted to just Joshua, for Jo is a contraction of Jehovah and there is no "J" sound in the Hebrew so it gets a "Y" sound and it would be Yeshua.

His name implies His mission. "Call His name Yeshua: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jehovah is salvation.

And when the days of her purification (2:22)

Now some thirty-three days later, she would have to go through purification rites and so having gone through the thirty-three days of purification. Now if it's a girl, you have to go sixty-six days. But for boys it was thirty-three days for purification rites and then she would come to the temple and offer the sacrifices that would then allow her to again participate in the ceremonial worship in the temple. So "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; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) (2:22,23)

Now originally this was the law of the Lord. The firstborn male child was to be the priest dedicated to the Lord to the ministry, to the priesthood. Later on, this was changed. It became the tribe of Levi that was chosen for the priesthood and they stood in the place of the firstborn son. God's ideal and divine ideal was that the firstborn son always be the priest of the family. And so they are bringing Him to present Him to the Lord, the male child that open the womb. He was to be called holy to the Lord.

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 (2:24).

This would indicate that Mary and Joseph were poor because under the law they were to be bring a lamb. But in Leviticus 12:8 if they can't afford a lamb then they bring two doves or two pigeons. And so the fact that they brought the two doves and the two pigeons would indicate their poverty and would also indicate that the wise men had not yet come. You remember that the wise men brought the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh and many believed that they brought sufficient gold to support Jesus through His lifetime. And that's how He was able to take a large company and travel around the country in His ministry. Because of the gold that was brought by the wise men, that that was used actually to finance the ministry of Jesus. So their poverty. And so Jesus was born, not in opulent circumstances and surely not wearing designer clothes and all of these junk that these people who try to excuse their lavish lifestyles by claiming that Jesus was rich and so forth.

As they brought Jesus to present Him to the Lord as the firstborn opening the womb,

Behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; he is described as just and devout, and waiting for the consolation of Israel (2:25):

Waiting for the Messiah. Waiting for God's promises to be fulfilled. And also we are told, *the Holy Spirit was upon him (2:25).*

God's anointing of the Spirit.

And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he would not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Messiah (2:26).

He had that revelation, you're not going to die before you've seen the Lord's Messiah.

And he came by the Spirit (2:27)

So, he was a devout man and led by the Spirit,

into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms, and he blessed God, and said, Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation (2:27-30),

The angels declared, "There is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, you're to call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). And now this godly man, filled with the Holy Spirit, as he takes the child, said "I have seen your salvation."

Which you have prepared before the face of all people (2:31);

And notice the salvation is not just for the Jews.

A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel (2:32).

Jesus came to save the world from sin.

And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him (2:33).

Again, here's Mary just marveling at the things which are said concerning her Son.

And Simeon blessed them, and he said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against (2:34);

This child "set for the fall and the rising again." Israel fell. Jesus predicted it. He said that the temple was to be destroyed, not one stone to be left standing upon another, and the people were going to be dispersed throughout the world. The fall of Israel, that happened. But He is also "set for the rising again," and that rising again interestingly enough has already begun. The nation of Israel does exist, you can't deny it. The rising again, and we have that glorious psalm, When the Lord shall build up Zion, then shall He appear in His glory. And so the birth of the nation of Israel and the rising up again of the nation is one of the most significant biblical prophecies that we have. And the Lord's coming is soon. But then turning to Mary, he said,

(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) (2:35)

Set for the fall. The Messiah was rejected. He was hung on a cross with the accusation, The King of the Jews. When Pilate washed his hands, said, "I'm innocent of this just man's blood: see ye to it. They responded, His blood be upon us, and our children" (Matthew 27:24,25). And that horrible proclamation was fulfilled and Israel fell and for two thousand years, was scattered and dispersed throughout the world. And when Mary stood at the foot of the cross and saw her Son hanging there, "a sword pierced through her own soul." The suffering that she must have felt. Knowing what she knew about Jesus, holding these secrets in her heart, knowing how the angel had told her; but seeing him despised and rejected and being ridiculed. Don't you know that a sword did pierce through her own soul, even as this godly man predicted? And so, "A sword also shall pierce through," even as the sword pierced Him, it "also pierced through her own soul."

that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed. Now there was also a lady named Anna [which is the Hebrew Hannah], who was a prophetess, she was the daughter of Phanuel (2:35,36),

which means the face of God. So, probably had a very godly father,

they were of the tribe of Asher: she was of a great age [she was eighty-four years old], she lived with an husband for seven years (2:36)

and he died, only seven years married and he died after the seven years of marriage, and thus she had been a widow for many years.

She was a widow of about eighty-four years old, and she departed not from the temple (2:37),

She devoted her life to God. It was just the thing that when her husband died, she just at that

point made a commitment and devoted her life completely to God. And she probably had little sleeping quarters there in the temple and probably had certain duties that she just fulfilled around the temple.

She served God with fastings and prayers night and day (2:37).

A woman of prayer, a godly woman, all of these years in serving the Lord.

And she coming in that same instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spoke of him to all that were looking for the redemption in Jerusalem (2:38).

Those people who were expecting God to fulfill His promises, those who were looking for God's redemption, she went around telling them about this child.

And when they had performed all of the things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth (2:39).

In the meantime, they had fled to Egypt and were in Egypt for about two years which Luke doesn't tell us anything. Matthew is the one that tells us that they had left, and rather than going immediately to Nazareth, they fled to Egypt. And it was not until after the death of Herod the great that they then returned and went on up to Nazareth.

And [in these first twelve years] the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him (2:40).

Now that's all we know of the first twelve years of the life of Christ. We know of His circumcision on the eighth day, His dedication on the fortieth day, and then we know that in the next twelve years, as He was growing, He was "waxing strong in the spirit, He was filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him."

It would be interesting to have an account, you'd like to know how He related to His brothers and what kind of a kid He was as He was growing up. There are books of the Apocrypha which have very fanciful stories, a book on the childhood of Jesus, but exaggerated fanciful stories, healing little birds with broken wings and a lot of things like that. But they're just fanciful stories. There isn't any basis of real background facts to them.

Now his parents (2:41)

And of course, Mary and Joseph were godly people, living according to the law, "his parents," *went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover (2:41).*

It was required that the adult Jews attend the feast, the three major feasts. If they lived a certain distance away, they didn't have to come to all three but would have to come whenever they could. And so Mary and Joseph had made it a point, the feast of passover, and that would be the easiest feast to come to in that springtime, the weather is better during passover to travel. It's not yet really hot. If you would come to the feast of Pentecost, a hot trip from Nazareth to Jerusalem in June, it gets quite hot there. And also during the feast of Tabernacles, it's still quite hot. And thus, they chose the feast of Passover and every year they would come to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover.

And when he was twelve years old (2:42),

He probably had already been barmitzvah'ed, the son of the covenant or son of the law; because when He was twelve years old, He was in the temple and He was discussing the scripture with the teachers. Now that would not be allowed until He had gone through the barmitzvah. Whether or not He was barmitzvah'ed in Jerusalem in the temple or in the synagogue in Nazareth, we're not told. But when He was twelve years old,

they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast (2:42). 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 (2:42,43).

Some think that that's quite strange, how is it that He can stay back in Jerusalem and they not know it? They traveled with family, with relatives. And you know how little twelve year old boys are, they have their own agenda and when I hike with my grandsons who are about that age, I mean, they go five times as far as I do. They're up the hills and down the hills, they're always taking all these side things and I just sort of keep plodding along on the path and they keep crossing back and forth and I

see them on occasion, but you know that they're keeping an eye on you. And so, travelling in large companies there would probably be several hundred people who would be coming from Nazareth for the feast. And so the big companies starts to move off and you just figure, He's with some of His cousins playing around and come evening, He'll find us. So when evening came and Jesus didn't show up, then they began to inquire among the relatives. Have you seen Jesus? No. I thought He was with you. No, we haven't seen Him all day. And we're told that,

They supposed that He would have been in the company (2:44),

He was somewhere with the crowd, they figured.

And they had gone a day's journey; and then they sought for him among their relatives, the kinsfolk and among their acquaintances (2:44).

Figured He was with one of his boyfriends.

So when they did not find him, they turned back again to Jerusalem, looking for him. And it came to pass, that after three days (2:45,46)

Don't you know they were frantic? Put yourselves in their shoes, you parents, you know when the kid disappears for a while and you get frantic, you want to call the police and everything else. And then when they show up, you want to beat them. You just, because you're so, you've been so torn up emotionally that you're angry, you're upset. "And it came to pass, after three days,"

they found him in the temple, and he was sitting in the middle of the doctors (2:46),

That is the doctors of the law.

both hearing them, and asking them questions (2:46).

Now He had the right to do that. Having been barmitzvah'ed, He had now entered into the place where He was held responsible for His own actions and He had the right to sit there and listen to them and also to ask questions and to answer their questions. So here He was, sitting among these teachers, these doctors of the law.

And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and at his answers (2:47).

They couldn't believe the understanding that He had and the answers that He was able to give to them.

And when Mary and Joseph saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, [and you can hear it] Son, why have you dealt thus with us? behold, your father and I have sought thee sorrowing (2:48).

We thought maybe You were dead. How can You do this to us? Now there are those who point to this scripture as a refutation to the virgin birth of Jesus because Mary refers to Joseph as Your father. And so "Your father and I have sought thee sorrowing." It's quite possible that Mary has not yet told Jesus of the circumstances of His birth. And she perhaps is waiting until He is older to tell Him. Figuring that He just figured that Joseph was His father, it's quite possible she had not yet told Him otherwise. But Jesus answered her,

And he said unto them, How is it that you sought me? did you not realize that I must be about my Father's business (2:49)?

Your father has been worried, I've been about My Father's business. And suddenly Mary realizes the little kid knows. You see, He doesn't acknowledge Joseph as His father. I've been about My Father's business.

And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. But he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart (2:50,51).

Here we have all that is told of us of the life of Jesus from twelve years to perhaps thirty years old. You see, in one verse we are told concerning the earlier period of His life, "He grew, waxed strong in spirit, He was filled with wisdom, the grace of God was upon Him." Now we are told for the next eighteen years that He was there in Nazareth and subject unto them.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature (2:52),

Grew up into manhood.

and in favour with God and man (2:52).

He was popular. He had become very popular. And He had the favour of God and man. So that sums up an eighteen year span of His life. Now when we see Him again, it will be some eighteen years later as He begins His public ministry, as we get into the third chapter of the book of Luke. Actually we get into His baptism and then chapter four, the actual ministry of Jesus.

Now in chapter three, you're going to get a lot of names that you're going to have difficulty with pronouncing them, much less understanding them. As we have here in chapter three, the genealogy of Jesus back to Adam, very interesting. The genealogy that carries us from Mary back to Adam.

It is interesting to note the contrast in the genealogy of Luke with the genealogy of Matthew. Because though they both go back to David, they come from a different line. Joseph's genealogy from David passes through Solomon and comes from a different family line than that of Mary's. Mary when you get to David you have the son of David, Nathan, and her genealogy follows from the son Nathan. And it is quite significant that we have the two genealogies and that we notice the difference in the family line from David on to Christ because it's very significant to other Biblical prophecies.

And as we get into the third chapter and we look at the genealogy we will point these things out for you. So you can skip reading the genealogies if you want. I won't require that as required reading because it's tough, I admit it's tough. I'll read it for you and then try to explain why we have Mary's genealogy and why we also have Joseph's genealogy, and showing you and pointing out the difference; and why Jesus could not be king if He was born of Joseph. So that's why you have the two genealogies. Through Joseph, He would have been disqualified from sitting on the throne. But from Mary's genealogy, He can sit upon the throne of David as king because of Mary's genealogy. So that's something to look at and of course, cutting off the genealogies you only have twenty-two verses. So my, you should have a snap this week in your reading. I really should make you go through chapter four too but we'll, it's Thanksgiving and we'll give you a special dispensation.

Father, thank You for this beautiful story that always thrills our heart every time we read it. Every time we think about it. The story of Your love. Loving us so much that You sent Your only begotten Son. Born of the virgin Mary, crucified on the cross for our sins. Lord we pray that we'll never lose that sense of awe and wonder as we read this story. And as we think of Your birth in the lowly stable, placed in the manger. But there lies the Son of God, the Saviour, the Messiah, God in human flesh. O Lord, our hearts can hardly conceive but we bow and worship before You. Help us Lord that as we go out and we live in this world, that we might share as did the shepherds the things that we have seen and heard of the glory of God and the fulfillment of His promises. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.