

Resources:

- Nathan Reichert. *Theology 1 notes* and *Church History notes*. Instructed at FSB, but is now a pastor at Southland Bible Church in St. George, Utah.
- David Thompson. *Luke 2:41-52; Matthew 2:1-23 Sermon*. Texas Corners Bible Church
- Charles Ryrie. *The Ryrie Study Bible*.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST DID GROW UP AND DEVELOP LIKE ANY OTHER NORMAL CHILD, BUT HIS CHILDHOOD EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES INDICATED THAT HE WAS THE SON OF GOD.

I'd like us to study this tonight by asking and answering 2 questions.

Question #1 - What information do we have about the childhood of Jesus Christ?

As far as the information regarding his childhood goes, I think we can look at it by considering the 10 events of his childhood that are recorded in the Bible.

(Event #1) - Before His birth, Jesus was taken from Nazareth to Bethlehem in the womb of Mary so that Joseph could register in a census. While in Bethlehem, Jesus was born in a manger. **Luke 2:1-7**

Micah 5:2 made clear that the eternal one who was to be born into this world needed to come from the little town of Bethlehem. Jesus' roots bring Him back to Bethlehem. If you will recall, Ruth, who was an ancestor of Jesus, was from Bethlehem.

(Event #2) - After being born in a manger in Bethlehem, Jesus was visited in the manger by shepherds. **Luke 2:8-19**.

I think it is significant that shepherds came to see Him, because throughout Scripture, we learn that although the job of a shepherd was a lowly, difficult, and dirty job, God describes Himself as a shepherd and Christ described Himself as our shepherd.

(Event #3) - Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day according to the Law of Moses. **Luke 2:21**

Galatians 4:4 describes Jesus being born under the law, and Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus was without sin. In order for both of those to be true, Jesus needed to be circumcised on the 8th day according to the law. That is what is described for the nation of Israel during the law age according to Leviticus 12:3. Joseph and Mary saw to it that Jesus would be raised in accordance with the Law of Moses.

(Event #4) - Jesus was taken from Bethlehem by Joseph and Mary and was presented at the Temple in Jerusalem for purification. **Luke 2:22-24**

Leviticus 12:1-8 describes the days of purification for a woman who has just given birth. According to the Law, she was unclean for a period of time. That time would be 41 days for having a baby boy and 80 days for baby girls. Mary had to wait a minimum of 41 days before she could go to the temple and offer a sacrifice that would declare her clean after giving birth. Not only did they need to do that for Mary, but they also, now having Jesus as their firstborn son, needed to bring Him to the temple so that He could be dedicated to the Lord. God had made clear in Exodus 22:29 that firstborn sons belonged to God, so Joseph and Mary took Him to the temple to offer Him to the Lord, not as a sacrifice, but as a dedication.

(Event #5) - While at the temple, Jesus was seen and held by a devout and righteous man named Simeon in the temple. **Luke 2:25-35**

(Event #6) - Also while at the temple, Jesus was seen by a prophetess named Anna who praised God and spoke of Jesus to all who were waiting for the redemption of Israel. **Luke 2:36-38**

Unique to the gospel of Luke, we learn about a man named Simeon and a prophetess named Anna. Simeon was a man of God who was focused on the prophetic plan of God. This man was Spirit led, and he was placed in the temple by God so that He could look upon Jesus and give to Mary and Joseph a message from God. That message included 1) looking on Jesus is equivalent to looking on God's salvation, 2) Jesus was appointed for the rise and fall of many in Israel, 3) He was to be opposed by most of the world, and 4) Jesus would reveal truth within people's hearts. Simeon also had a Spirit led burden on Him that He needed to see Jesus and explain this to His parents in order for Simeon to die in peace. Then, after Simeon saw Jesus, held Him, and declared truth about Him from God, this woman named Anna, who was also a godly woman, saw something unique in the baby Jesus, and she began giving thanks to God and was talking about Jesus being the one who has come to provide redemption for Israel.

(Event #7) After being presented in the temple in Jerusalem, Jesus was taken back to Galilee in the town of Nazareth. He was visited in a home by wise men from the east and given gifts. **Matthew 2:1-12**

The Biblical description of the wise men best fits to be in line with event #7. These men may have been directed by Herod to go toward Bethlehem, but they were guided to the home where Jesus was staying after He had been presented in the Temple. That would have been Nazareth, according to Luke 2:39. The timeline for these men coming to see Jesus is not clear, but Jesus would have been under the age of two. He could have been anywhere from 2 months old to nearly two years old when He was visited by the wise men. So, the manger scene that we most often see where the magi are by the manger in Bethlehem is not an accurate portrayal of the events, and here are 4 reasons why (from pastor David Thompson).

#1 - Verse 10 refers to Jesus as a child. This is different than Him being described as a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths.

#2 - This would indicate that Jesus was no longer at the age of needing to be swaddled. Verse 11 described the magi going into a house, not a manger, and not an inn. This house was likely the house of Joseph and Mary in Nazareth.

#3 - If you will recall from the visit to the temple, Mary and Joseph offered two turtle doves instead of a lamb. This was the exception that was made for people who could not afford a lamb according to Leviticus 12:8. If the magi would have come while Jesus was still in Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary would have been able to afford to buy a lamb using the gold that was gifted Jesus, but because they offered two turtle doves, that would indicate that they had not received the gifts from the wise men yet.

#4 - Herod commanding children two years and younger to be killed would indicate that Jesus was potentially that age instead of being a newborn.

(Event #8) - After the wise men departed from their visit to see Jesus, He was taken to Egypt by Joseph and Mary until Herod had died. **Matthew 2:13-18**

We looked at the flight of Jesus to Egypt and back to the land of promise when we studied types of Jesus in lesson #22. So, I won't go into detail on this, but it appears that the gifts of the magi funded this journey to Egypt and back.

(Event #9) - After the death of Herod, Jesus was taken by Joseph and Mary back to Nazareth of Galilee. He would remain there until semi-relocating to Capernaum at approximately 30 years of age. **Matthew 2:19-23; John 2:12**

When Jesus was brought back from Egypt, His parents settled in Nazareth and raised Him there. Charles Ryrie noted that this was key to fulfill the prophetic text of Psalm 22:6 and Isaiah 53:3 regarding Jesus being a despised and contemptible person. That is why He is described as a Nazarene. Pastor David Thompson said, "Nazareth was a city of reproach. Most Jews hated the city and had nothing to do with it."

(Event #10) - Jesus annually visited the temple during the Passover feast with His family, but at the age of 12, he was left behind as His family began to return to Nazareth. He was eventually found studying the Word of God in the temple at Jerusalem. **Luke 2:41-52**

This event is the only event that was recorded in Scripture of Jesus when He was a young boy that we have any dialogue of Him speaking. This is also the final time that we hear about Joseph. He probably died before Jesus' ministry took off, but what we see in this text is Jesus, at the age of 12, was found studying the Scriptures with mature adults, focused intently on the Word of God, and not wanting to leave the House of God.

Question #2 - What can we learn from the childhood of Jesus Christ?

I believe there are three lessons we ought to learn from the childhood of Jesus Christ.

(Lesson #1) - Every event of Jesus' life was orchestrated by the sovereign will of God.

Everything from his birth mother, the location of His birth, the people involved, and the places He went was all orchestrated by God. Jesus was not in a position to make all of this happen on his own. He was a baby boy, under the complete care and supervision of His parents. God clearly led Joseph and Mary along in every detail to ensure that Jesus would fulfill everything properly for the will of God, according to the Word of God.

(Lesson #2) - Each event of Jesus' childhood displayed that He was uniquely the Son of God.

Jesus could not have read the text of the OT and decided to portray Himself as this one that the OT testament predicted. He could not have been an imposter. In order for Jesus to truly and uniquely be the Son of God came to earth in human flesh, He needed to be carried along through detailed prophecies all while being a newborn baby and a small child under the complete care of His parents.

(Lesson #3) - His attention to the things of God at such a young age should be a rebuke to us who so often neglect the Word and will of God.

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