

The Salvation of God and The Second Adam
Luke 2:21-52
Berean Baptist Church
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INTRODUCTION

Luke takes more time than any other Gospel to tell us about Jesus' boyhood. Here the Scriptures want us to see how God and humanity come together, how Jesus is the fulfillment of all hope and holiness, and also a child who obeys His earthly parents.

This passage shows Jesus' divinity and humanity by telling the story of two visits to the Jerusalem temple. The first visit, when Jesus is 40 days old, powerfully shows Jesus as the Divine fulfillment of the Law, the Comfort of Israel from God, and the saving light of the world.

And the second visit, when Jesus is 12 years old, memorably (even humorously) shows Jesus as the "son of man" - A fully human child who gracefully submitting to His earthly authorities without compromising His divinity.

Know and trust Jesus as the mighty fullness of God and the humble fullness of humanity!

For clarity's sake, here is a time-line of Luke 2:20-52.

Jesus is born (Luke 2:1-20)

8 days later (Luke 2:21)- He is officially named and circumcised, probably in Bethlehem.

40 days later (Luke 2:22-40)- The family visits the temple for Mary to make a special offering preformed by mothers (Lev Ch 12), and for the entire family to present Jesus as the family's firstborn (Num Ch 18). After this, they go back to Nazareth.

12 years later (Luke 2:41-52)- The family goes back to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover and Jesus stays in Jerusalem.

Luke 2:21-24 The First Visit to the Temple - Jesus as The Fulfillment of The Law

Vs 21 Jesus is salvation from God. The name "Jesus" means "God saves." He does not just save people from sin, He is salvation.

Vs 21-24 Jesus is the Fulfillment of the Law. Jesus is circumcised linking Him to Abraham and putting Him firmly in the Old Testament. And, notice how Luke emphasizes the Law.

“according to the law of Moses...”, “As it is written in the law of the Lord...”, “According to that which is said in the law of the Lord,..”

“The Law” refers to the 613 (give or take) commands that God gave to Israel. These are summarized by the Ten Commandments, and ultimately summarized by the Two Great Commandments: 1. love God, and 2. love your neighbor.

The Law was fearful and awesome, it was delivered on a holy mountain with signs of fire, smoke, and noise. It was marked by blinding light and the threat of death (Ex 19). And its purpose was to show God's people that they needed help (Gal Ch 3). But grace could only be offered by one who had met the standards of the Law (Gal Ch 4).

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons (Gal 4:4-5).”

Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law to offer freedom from the Law so that we could serve God.

Vs 22 “days of her purification” refer to Mary's required sacrifice explained in Leviticus Ch 12, and **“present him to the Lord;”** refers to special requirements for Jesus as Firstborn explained in Numbers Ch 18.

Vs 23 Jesus is Firstborn. The firstborn has special authority and in many ways represents the entire family. Under the Law, the firstborn was uniquely devoted to God.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine (Exd 13:1-2).”

This was a picture of the importance of Jesus who is the “firstborn,” the authority and inheritor, of all the universe from God the Father.

But it also solemnly looks ahead to God as a Father, who has a right to all of Israel's firstborn but would give up His own firstborn to die for their sins.

Trust Jesus as your Savior who fulfills all the Law of Righteousness for you, and your Lord who is Firstborn over the family of God!

Vs 24 “A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” This is a striking detail. It suggests that the Magi (the “three” wise men) had not yet brought their gifts, but it also illustrates something more profound. See Leviticus 12:6-8.

The "two birds" were an option for people who could not afford to sacrifice a lamb. What a marvel! The one who came to fulfill the Law, the one whom the Law exists to bring people to, didn't have the money to do the fancy sacrifice.

Know Jesus, the mighty Redeemer, who came in tender humanity and lived in poor humility!

Luke 2:25-40 The First Visit to the Temple -Jesus as The Fulfillment of Hope

Vs 25-26 Simeon is one of the last Old Testament saints and lives to see the Messiah who bridges the Old and New Testaments.

Vs 25-28 Simeon the Hopeful. Normally we think of him as an old man, and he does seem quite ready to die, but there is no other evidence that Simeon was an old man. What we can say with certainty is that Simeon lived in hope.

Vs 29 “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,” Already in Luke's story we have met no small number of people talking about God; angels, priests, aged woman, and young woman, shepherds and others. But this is something different, where before everyone has been talking about God, Simeon is talking to God.

Vs 30-35 In a way that should remind us of one of the Old Testament blessings (Abraham, Issac, or Jacob), Siemon takes Jesus in his arms and speaking a prophetic blessing. By Siemon's blessing we

learn more about Jesus:

“For mine eyes have seen thy salvation” Jesus is the salvation that comes from God.

“Before the face of all people...A light to...Gentiles, and the glory of...Israel.” The salvation of Jesus goes out to all people and gives light to the world, while also being the glory of Israel.

“Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;”

A **“sign”** is a demonstration of the power and will of God. For those who trusted Jesus, He was the greatest demonstration of God's love and faithfulness. Many would rather renounce God's love and faithfulness than believe that it could be offered to their enemies.

“the fall and rising again” The coming of the Kingdom turns the World order upside down. For those who trust Jesus, He is a rock and the key to what God is building. But for those who reject Him, that same cornerstone is a dangerous stumbling stone. See 2 Peter Ch 4.

“(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,)”

Simeon is saying that a sword shall pierce the soul Mary, Jesus' mother. This is a hard saying but even if the details are lost to us, the point is clear: Mary, blessed above all woman, will have sorrow to match any woman's. Great blessings and great sorrow often go together.

“that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

Vs 36 “of a great age” Thirteen would be a normal age for marriage at that time. If Anna was married when she was thirteen, widowed when she was 20, and lived another 84 years until this day, she would be about 104 years old.

Look at all of the detail Luke gives about Anna's family. Doubtless, he interviewed her relatives or people that knew the family. Anyone that wanted to fact-check Luke could go to Jerusalem and ask about these people.

Vs 29 and 36 The Two Watchmen When Simeon says **“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:”** he speaks of his physical death. Likely he and Anna were not long for the world.

Anna and Simeon's lifetime of watching and waiting was now over. They had spent decades in prayer, hungering for the fulfillment of God's saving promise.

The Bible says that 104-year-old Anna served God day and night with fasting and prayer. She was active in this important work.

Vs 39-40 The theme of the Law's completion and grace's coming is unmistakable. "They performed all things according to the Law of the Lord...and the grace of God was upon him."

This is the end of an age – Law and Grace are meeting in Jesus. Before Jesus was still gracious and salvation was always by informed trust in God's promises, but people struggled under the Law

“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).”

Know and Trust Jesus as the divine fulfillment of the Old Testament!

Luke 2:41-52 The Second Visit to the Temple - Jesus as a human boy

After the first visit to the temple, Luke's readers might be tempted to think that Jesus is some kind of super boy; one who is among humans, but not quite human.

This might seem like a harmless opinion – that Jesus was not really human like we are human – but that is a dark road that leads to grave error. The Gospel depends on Jesus being 100% God and 100% human.

So Luke includes another story that powerfully dispels that error. Luke shows Jesus' humanity by showing how he submits to his earthly parents, without compromising or confusing His divinity.

Vs 42 Twelve years old was a very important time for a Hebrew boy. This was a time of transition. When Jesus turned 13 he would be considered a man – his childhood would be over.

Vs 43-47 The family (probably including extended family) would go to Jerusalem every year to celebrate the Passover. This sort of trip was very common. The family would travel as a big caravan and the entire trip was a time to fellowship with relatives that you might not see often.

Often the men, women, and children would gather in their own groups as part of one loud, happy caravan. This is why it took Mary and Joseph so long to realize that Jesus was not with the family.

Vs 48 To our ears, the KJV language sounds a little more formal than the KJV translators might have intended. What Mary says to Jesus is more like: “Child! Why did you do this to us?”

Vs 49-50 Jesus' response points to His divinity and calling. But his parents don't get it yet.

Vs 51-52 Nevertheless, Jesus goes back "home" and "was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart." “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

Jesus obeyed his parents and grew as a child does: in wisdom and stature – mentally and physically.

As His human character developed His good standing with His community (man) grew, and in His relationship with the Father grew as well (God).

Know and trust Jesus as a true human able to help weak people!

CONCLUSION

We are just getting started in this journey of learning who Jesus is from Luke's reliable history. And already we have seen Jesus as the hope of those who trust God and the fulfillment of the Old Testament system, but He is also a fully human person.

He was obedient to the Law and His parents, even when they did not understand Him, as the perfect human. And as the hope and joy of the Godly as the Divine Savior.

Know and trust Jesus as the mighty fullness of God and the humble fullness of humanity!