

Story #3

Growing Up Years

Matt. 2:1-23, Luke 2:40-52

By Jerry Kamphuis

The Visit of the Wise Men

- They did not visit Jesus in the manger at Bethlehem
- Jesus was about two years old when they visited (Matt 2:9-14)
- They were probably astrologers from the Mesopotamia area
- They were Gentiles looking for the “KING OF JEWS”
- They used religious writings and prophecy for study which probably lead them to associate the star with the promised Messiah (Balaams prophecy *Num 24:17*)
- There could have been anywhere from two to several hundred wise men.

Early Travels

- Herod’s decree to kill all the boys in Bethlehem that were two years and under forced Joseph to take his family and escape to Egypt
- **Interesting Note:** Israel went to Egypt as an infant nation, and Jesus did the same as an infant
- **Interesting Note:** God lead Israel out of Egypt and away from Pharaoh’s attack and God lead Jesus into Egypt and away from Herod’s attack
- We are not sure how long Jesus and his family were in Egypt but after Herod’s death Joseph was instructed by God to take his family back to Israel, and he went to Nazareth.

Nazareth

- Located between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee
- Located at the crossroads of the world but because of its topography it was somewhat detached from people because it sat on a plateau in the middle of a valley however it provided for a tremendous view on all sides
- Mediterranean Sea to the west; Jordan River to the east; Sea of Galilee to the northeast; Mt. Carmel to the northwest; and Samaria to the south; Mt. Tabor to the north
- The young boy Jesus could look in all directions and recount the stories of the Old Testament on all sides
 - Elijah on Mt. Carmel
 - Gideon and the defeat of the Midianites
 - The territories of Saul, Jonathan, and David
- Depended on its olive groves, vineyards, and grain fields for its livelihood

Jesus' First Recorded Trip to Israel (Luke 2:41-50)

- Jesus was twelve years old when he attended His first Passover at the Temple.
- Jewish males would go to the Temple three times per year, however Mary would only go to the Passover.
- Twelve-year old Jesus goes to the Temple, where he sits, listens, and asks questions (*Think about that*)
- His parents are heading back home traveling with a large group of people. When they make camp for the night, they realize that Jesus is not with them.
- His parents were terrified because their little boy was not with them, and they knew that children could be sold into slavery – like the story of Joseph (*Imagine this as a parent*)
- They return to Jerusalem and looked for him for three days. They finally found Jesus in the Temple **sitting**, not standing with the religious leaders
- The teachers were impressed; He heard them, He asked questions, and answered questions.
- His parents were astonished because Jesus was sitting among the religious leaders and His parents caught a glimpse of His divine wisdom, knowledge, and glory that day
- His mother probably took Jesus aside and like all mothers, probably scolded Him (*Think about that*)
- Jesus' reply: Mom, you of all people knew that this day was coming. Remember the angel?
- Joseph and Mary believed Jesus to be the Messiah but they like everyone else were probably looking for a throne room and not a temple
- ***What do suppose Joseph and Mary talked about the rest of the trip home?***
- ***What does it mean when we are told that Mary treasured all of these things in her heart?***
- Jesus returns with His mom and dad and we really know nothing about Him for the next 17-19 years

Jesus' Teenage and Young Adult Years

- Jesus probably went to school and learned several languages; Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic because we know that used these later in His ministry
- He grew in wisdom, stature, favor with God and favor with men
- He was fully God and yet fully man so He knew what it was like to study and learn.
- Jesus probably went back to Jerusalem with His dad for all of the celebrations but we know nothing about that

Things to think about...

1. Why was it that Gentile wise men came to the young boy Jesus and the chosen Jews who lived right next to Him did not know Him and seemingly paid no attention to this special child?
2. Think of the people of Bethlehem who lost their children after Jesus was born. Why did their two-year-old children have to die? Think of the hurt in the lives of the parents who lost their little child.
3. What do you think Jesus and the religious leaders talked about in the Temple?
4. What was it like to be the parents of Jesus? Jesus called Joseph “dad” and Mary “mom”. What was it like to be his brother or sister? What was it like for His grandparents, aunts, and uncles?
5. Imagine going to school with Jesus. Did He get straight “A’s”? What was it like to be His teacher?
6. What was Jesus like as a teenager and a young man in His 20’s? What about some of the young ladies who lived in Nazareth at the time? Some of them could have looked at Jesus and considered him a potential husband.