

**LESSONS THIS QUARTER**

- 1) 03 Dec 2017 ..... Acts 13 ..... The Gospel Message
- 2) 10 Dec ..... Acts 14 ..... Misguided Worship
- 3) 17 Dec ..... Acts 15a ..... Available to ALL
- 4) 24 Dec ..... **Luke 2** ..... **Christmas - The Promised One**
- 5) 31 Dec ..... Acts 15b ..... Strengthened
- 6) 01 Jan 2018 ..... Acts 16 ..... A changed Family
- 7) 07 Jan ..... Acts 17 ..... The Unknown Known
- 8) 14 Jan ..... Ps 139 ..... Sanctity of Life - Value ALL
- 9) 21 Jan ..... Acts 18-19 ..... Incomplete Picture
- 10) 28 Jan ..... Acts 20-21 ..... Delivered
- 11) 04 Feb ..... Acts 22-25 ..... The Testimony
- 12) 11 Feb ..... Acts 26-27 ..... Answering Critics
- 13) 18 Feb ..... Acts 28 ..... Always on Mission

**INTRODUCTION**

- These 52 verses take us from Jesus' birth to 12 years of age
- How much would we whine and complain if our kids were born under such 3<sup>rd</sup>-world conditions?

Passage	Comments
Luke 2:1-7	<p><b>The Birth of Jesus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was Jesus born in an open stable, a cave, or the basement of a relative's house?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ v7. "No room in the 'inn' – the "inn" word here is actually misinterpreted. A better translation is "there was no room in the 'guest room'" – see Luke 22:11 &amp; Mat 14:14 where this word [grk. kataluma] is used to describe the "guest room" where Jesus and His disciples celebrated the Passover</li> <li>♦ Besides, Bethlehem was too small to have a hotel</li> <li>♦ Luke actually uses the term for an inn in Luke 10:34 where he tells the story of the Good Samaritan taking a wounded man to an "inn" [grk. pandocheion]</li> <li>♦ Mary likely gave birth to Jesus in the opened lower level of a crowded in-law's house, where animals might have been brought in for the night. She then wrapped Jesus in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger (an animal feeding trough used as a crib)</li> <li>♦ Why such a humble beginning for the King of Kings?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Were animals kept in the house?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was customary to bring animals into the lower level of a house to protect them from weather and thieves</li> <li>• Judges 11:30-40. The account of Jephthah records he vowed to sacrifice the first thing which came out of his house upon his return from fighting the Ammonites</li> <li>• Apparently, he expected an animal to come out of his house. Instead his only daughter came out, and she remained a virgin all her days</li> </ul>
2:8-20	<p><b>The Shepherds and Angels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v13. Why did the Angels appear to the lowest class of people working in the dreary darkness and not to the wealthier, political or religious class residing in the city?</li> <li>• Shepherds were usually kids, slaves, or immigrants who couldn't get a better paying job anywhere else</li> <li>• Since the angels told the shepherds the Messiah would be found lying in a feeding trough it probably didn't take them long to find Him</li> </ul>
2:21-24	<p><b>The Circumcision and Presentation of Jesus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After 7 days, Jesus was circumcised; and after 40 days, Mary &amp; Joseph went to Jerusalem and presented a pair of turtledoves as a sacrifice ..... Lev 12:1-4</li> <li>• They were not rich enough to bring a lamb, so the wise men who had offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh have not paid them a visit yet</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
2:25-35	<p><b>Simeon's Prophetic Praise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God rewarded him with the ability to prophecy – to receive unique messages from God and to share them</li> <li>• The special revelations about their son was alarming</li> </ul>
2:36-38	<p><b>Prophetess Anna's Testimony</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apparently after becoming a widow young in life she opted to devote her remaining years in full time service - fasting, praying, worshipping (probably cleaning too)</li> <li>• Like Simeon, God rewarded her with ability to prophecy</li> </ul>
2:39-40	<p><b>The Family's Return to Nazareth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v40. "And the child grew, and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God"</li> <li>• Can any child do this? ABSOLUTELY, if they are first willing to turn TV off, study God's words and live by it</li> </ul>
2:41-50	<p><b>Jesus, 12 years old, Baffles the Religious Elite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was this miraculous? Or did Jesus apply himself to study and application while at home?</li> <li>• In all probability, Jesus did what every mentally-abled kid has the ability to do – no miracles were needed</li> </ul>
Apocrypha stories of Jesus as a youth	<p>Apocrypha books are of dubious nature and sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus brings life to a dried fish; breathes life into birds fashioned from clay; curses a boy who falls dead and his parents become blind; resurrects a friend</li> </ul>
2:51-52	<p><b>Jesus Grew in Favor with God and with People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v51. Jesus, the Creator – who knew more than His earthly mom &amp; dad, subjected Himself to them</li> <li>• Being God, Jesus knows everything, BUT He never experienced pain, loss or temptation like a human</li> <li>• He had to become human to learn those things... WHY?</li> <li>• He "learned obedience from his sufferings" ..... Heb 5:8</li> <li>• v52. There is no reason for each of us not to grow in favor with God and people on a continuing basis</li> <li>• If we have behavior issues, now's the time to fix them</li> <li>• It's never too late to start living by God's principles</li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS**

- We may not have been the perfect kid that Jesus was, and we may not be the perfect adults who love God with all our ability, but we have no excuse not to move forward for Christ and to grow in favor with God and with our neighbors, family, and co-workers

**NEXT WEEK: Acts 15b.** Finally, a committee of men figure out how to resolve the age-old dilemma of how to kill a legalistic sacred cow.

