

Increasing in Wisdom

Key Verse: “As
*Jesus grew older
He gained in both
wisdom and
stature, and in
favour with
God and man.”*

—**Luke 2:52,**
*Weymouth New
Testament*

Selected Scripture:
Luke 2:39-52

FROM BIRTH UNTIL AGE

twelve, Jesus “grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.” (Luke 2:40) The “wisdom” he was filled with no doubt included hearing in the synagogue each week the reading of the Law which God gave to the Israelites and the words of the holy prophets. Having a perfect mind, Jesus could remember in detail everything which was read and treasure it up in his heart. Thus the “grace,” or favor of God, was upon him.

Luke writes that Jesus’ parents “went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover,” an annual remembrance of the Israelites’ deliverance from Egypt. (vs. 41) The slaying of the Passover lamb was a type, or exact pattern, of the much greater “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” (Exod. 12:1-11; John 1:29) As Paul later wrote, “Our Passover Lamb has already been offered in sacrifice—even Christ.”—I Cor. 5:7, *Weymouth New Testament*

The Passover celebration mentioned in this week’s lesson was especially noteworthy because of Jesus’ conduct on this occasion. Jewish custom was that when a boy reached twelve years of age, he could make a dedication of himself to the Mosaic Law, after which he was

then considered a “son” of the Law.

Jesus recognized himself as being not the son of Joseph, but instead as God’s only begotten Son. He knew that he had come into the world on a special mission. Therefore, it was a preliminary step on Jesus’ part to gain wisdom respecting the work he was to do, as outlined in the Law and the testimonies of God’s holy prophets. Reaching the age of twelve, Jesus perhaps wondered whether this custom of becoming a son of the Law implied that he should begin to serve God in some capacity at that age.

After the Passover, his parents went a full day’s journey toward home before noticing that Jesus was not with them. They returned to Jerusalem and searched for him several days. Finding him in the Temple, they asked why he had stayed in Jerusalem. “Why is it that you have been searching for me? He replied; did you not know that it is my duty to be engaged upon my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:42-49, WNT) We are not told what questions Jesus asked in the Temple. Part of his inquiry may have been to know at what age Messiah should begin his work, and whether the custom of considering a boy a son of the Law at twelve years of age was founded upon anything specified in the Law, or whether it was merely a human tradition.

Apparently, Jesus found the answers to his questions, determining that in accordance with the Word of God, he should not begin his ministry or public work until reaching the age of thirty. (Gen. 41:46; Num. 4:3,46,47) He returned with his parents to Nazareth and “was always obedient to them.”—Luke 2:51, WNT

God’s wisdom limited the record of Jesus’ childhood and youth. The boy Jesus is not to be our focus, even though his zeal for God and submission to his parents is worthy of admiration. At the age of thirty, Jesus made a full consecration to God, outwardly symbolized by water baptism. “The Holy Spirit came ... upon Him, and a voice came from Heaven, which said, Thou art My Son, dearly loved: in Thee is My delight.”—Luke 3:21-23, WNT ■