

2022-2023 RCIA # 12

12/6/22

Administrative Information

- The Bible Study Class will be presented in the Parish Hall every Tuesday morning from **9:30 A.M. until 10:30 A.M.** beginning **September 13, 2022** and ending **May 9, 2023** except for the following Tuesdays related to a holiday:
 - Nov 22, 2022 – Thanksgiving Week
 - **Dec 20, 2022 – Christmas Week**
 - **Dec 27, 2022 - New Year's Week**
 - Apr 4, 2023 – Holy Week
- The same class will be given every Tuesday evening from **7:30 P.M. until 8:30 P.M.** in the Parish Hall
- Contact info: email: biblestudy@straymonds.org ; Tel: **703 644-5873**
- Inclement weather decisions will be **based on a Parish Announcement**

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:8-9** *“And in that region there were shepherds out in the field,...And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shown around them, and they were filled with fear”*
 - Today, in that same region, we find *Bedouins* shepherding their sheep
 - Father reminded us that the shepherds were filled with fear at the birth of Jesus because when an angel appeared (in the Old Testament), people usually died

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:10-11** *“And the angel said to them, ‘Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord’”*
 - Once again, the angel tells Mary not to be afraid
 - “Savior” in the Old Testament was a reference to their king, whose job it was to rule over the people and **save them from their enemies**
 - Therefore, the word “savior” was another title for the king
 - Lord (*kyrios*) means “master,” the guy above you

Luke 2 (Cont)

- Father reminded us that New Testament Greek is different from regular Greek, and in many ways was related to the Greek of the *Septuagint*
- If we want to understand what Luke was saying, the best place to look was at how the words were used in the *Septuagint*
- For instance, the word *Kyrios* (Lord) was often used in the *Septuagint* in lieu of the divine name (Yahweh)
- This is why (in our English bibles), we often find the word LORD (in the Old Testament) in all caps

Luke 2 (Cont)

- Thus, when we look at Old Testament words being used in our New Testament, the translators often followed the *Septuagint* traditions
- For instance, we find the holy name in *Isaiah* or *Jeremiah* written as *Kyrios* (Lord)
- It would appear that Luke was giving us a hint at the divinity of this new king (not simply a king in the line of David)

Luke 2 (Cont)

- The Jewish people believed that God was incarnate in the kings of Israel, but not in the high priest?
- The high priest was the one who mediated between God and His people
- In the New Testament, we have a human king (Jesus) who was also the divine king
- This is why it is so important for us to understand the meaning of *Messiah* or *Christ* (the anointed king)

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:12-14** *“And this will be a song for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger...And on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased”*
 - Father suggested that something else must be going on in this passage, as the only thing a baby would be wrapped in was swaddling clothes
 - Father asked us to look at **Wisdom 7:4** (discussed earlier) to better understand why Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and later in burial cloths
 - At Christmas, we usually sing nice songs about peace and goodwill among men
 - But, this was not what this phrase means in the Greek, as we cannot have “peace” without “righteousness”

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:15-22** *“When the Angels went away from them into heaven,...they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord”*
 - Notice that it says “the Lord” and not “Yahweh,” even though they are obviously speaking about “Yahweh” here
 - Mary and Joseph (in accordance with the Law of Israel – **Leviticus 12:3**)₁ circumcised Jesus on the 8th day, which was also the designated day for Him to be named as member of the household of Israel
 - On the 40th day, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple in *Jerusalem* for Mary’s purification (**Leviticus 12:2-6**)₁ and to present him (her 1st born) to the Lord (**Exodus 13:2**)₂
 - *Jerusalem* was only about 6 miles from *Bethlehem*
 - Thus, they continued to live in *Bethlehem* for at least 40 days after the birth of Jesus, when they took Him to the temple for the celebration of Mary’s purification

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:23-24** *“As it is written in the law of the **Lord**, every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the **Lord**...a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons”*
 - “Lord, Lord” can be understood as a circumlocution* (see **Luke 2:11**)₃ which could simply mean that He was the Christ, our master, or the king who is to come
 - Again, Father pointed out that Luke was pointing to something else going on in these passages
 - Later, we will see them offering a “pair” of turtledoves or two young pigeons (**Leviticus 5:7**)₄

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:25** *“Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking” for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him”*
 - Simeon meant different things to different Fathers of the Church
 - Some believed that he was simply a righteous man, who just happened to be there praying
 - Others, like *Saint Ephrem*, believed that he was a priest
 - Father pointed out that in some children’s bibles, he is depicted in the garb of a priest
 - It is hard to know for sure what he was

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:26** *“And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ”*
 - The Holy Spirit revealed to *Simeon* that he would not see death before meeting the Messiah; so inspired by the Holy Spirit he came into the temple
 - We find references to the Holy Spirit everywhere in Luke
 - *John, Elizabeth, and Zachariah* were filled with the Holy Spirit
 - This is a story about Jesus, what does that have to do with the Holy Spirit?
 - Why is Luke suddenly talking about the Holy Spirit?

Luke 2 (Cont)

- Father pointed out that Jesus was being depicted throughout the infancy narrative as the Messiah, the Christ, the anointed one
- This anointed one is the one who has the spirit
- In the Old Testament, the king was anointed with the Spirit of God upon him
- We will see in Jesus' baptism where the spirit will be sent upon Jesus making Him the anointed one
- Yet, everyone else was also filled with the Holy Spirit

Luke 2 (Cont)

- The answer, according to both Luke and Paul, can be found in **Jeremiah 31:31**, where we see the idea that in the new covenant the Word of God will be written in the flesh and not on stone tablets
- Also, we will find in the writings of Paul and Luke the idea that the gift of the spirit will not just be on the messiah, but on all of God's people
 - In Peter's speech, in **Acts 2**, we see the Holy Spirit coming upon the Apostles (a fulfillment of Joel's prophesy – **Joel 2:28-29**)⁵
 - What Luke is showing us here is that when the Messiah comes, all of God's people will receive the Spirit
 - This will happen because soon all of God's people will become members of the Body of Christ!
 - This is a preliminary hint of what will come (at Pentecost), where the gift of the spirit will spill out on God's people who were in Jesus' presence

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:27-32** *“And inspired by the spirit he came into the temple;...And for glory to the people of Israel”*
 - Father said this phrase will be pronounced at the end of many church liturgical services (especially after *compline* – night prayer in a monastery)
 - It is said because it is the manifestation in the midst of the liturgy that we are seeing the continuation of the presence of Jesus among His people

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:33-35** *“And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him;...that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed”*
 - This child is going to be a source of revelation of whom people are and what God will be for them
 - The rise and fall of many will be felt by this child and His mother, as they feel this pain

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:36-40** *“And there was a prophetess Anna,...and the favor of God was upon him”*
 - Father said that it was hard to understand what Luke was trying to convey here, but she might have been another of the Temple Virgins
 - Further, Luke does not mention the visit of the wise men or the Holy Family’s trip to Egypt
 - Father suggested that we add a note to see **Matthew 2** at this point in our bible
 - Most likely, Luke was not trying to hide these events
 - John says that there were many things that Jesus said that if written down could not be contained in all the books of the world

Luke 2 (Cont)

- Each gospel writer had to pick and choose the details that they wanted to share with their audience
- By this point, Luke had spent a great deal of time telling us about the shepherds, the stable, the trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem, *Cornelius* and *Caesar*, *Zachariah* etc.
- Each author picked the details that they thought were most relevant to his audience

Luke 2 (Cont)

- One point that Luke wanted his audience to know was the fulfillment of the story of *Hannah* (**1st Samuel:2**), where she left her son (the prophet Samuel) in the temple, here being duplicated with Mary leaving Jesus in the temple
- Father suggested that we look at both Matthew and Luke to attain the full nativity story

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:41-43** *“Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of Passover....His parents did not know it”*
 - They did this to live up to the expectations of the Law which prescribed the three annual Pilgrim feast: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles
 - Since Mary and Joseph lived relatively close to Jerusalem, they went up to Jerusalem as often as possible
 - It would appear that Jesus was about 12 years old at this time

Luke 2 (Cont)

- Father presented a detailed description of the parallel stories between the four gospel writers (there is a parallel story in John concerning this visit to Jerusalem)
 - There may be as many as five parallel stories between Matthew and Luke
 - There were many parallels between Luke and John (this may be because Luke's gospel was based on his relations with the journeys of Paul, whose favorite hangout was Ephesus)
 - Most likely, John came to Ephesus sometime near the end of his life in the 80s or 90s, when he fled from Jerusalem
 - We are probably seeing the influence of Luke on John
 - John describes three Passovers in the story of Jesus, while Matthew and Mark only mention one (as a part of the Passion)

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:44-46** *“ His parents did not know it,...Listening to them and asking questions”*
 - Father pointed out that when Jesus asks a question he is using a style of dialogue that was common among the Jews at that time
 - For instance:
 - After the Pharisees asked Him why his disciples ate their meals without properly washing beforehand (in accordance with the Law), Jesus does not respond with “because,” but asked them why they take their tradition over the teachings of the Law
 - The crowd asked Him if He was the Messiah, and He responded with, “I will answer that if you answer my question, was the baptism of John of the earth or from heaven?”

Luke 2 (Cont)

- Pilate asked Jesus if He was a king, and He asked Pilate if he was saying this on his own or had someone told him?
- Thus, when we hear someone ask Jesus a question, and He replies with a question, it does not necessarily mean that He was seeking an answer, but for them to learn something

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:47-49** *“And all who heard him were amazed...Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”*
 - Father indicated that the Jews were listening to Jesus and not asking questions seeking answers
 - He was, in fact, teaching the teachers of the Law at age 12
 - He was certainly not just the adopted son of Joseph
 - He was the human and divine king

Luke 2 (Cont)

- **Luke 2:50-52** *“And they did not understand.... And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man”*
 - Luke ends with a story to finish off the *Hannah* image with *Samuel* being left in the temple
 - We can also see a reference to Jesus’ priesthood as *Samuel* was a priest not in the line of *Aaron*
 - *Eli* was in the line of *Aaron*, but upon his death, *Samuel* took over offering sacrifices for the people of Israel
 - We might see Luke ending this way because of something that was of importance to *Paul* in the **Epistle to the Hebrews**

Luke 2 (Cont)

- *Paul* proclaimed that the Levitical priesthood was falling away and a new priesthood of the order of Melchizedek was beginning
- Father suggested that there were other reasons Luke ended this passage in this manner
- One thing is sure, Luke says about Jesus the same thing that Hannah said about her son Samuel when she left him in the temple
- This concludes our study of the **Infancy Narratives**
- We will now briefly look at the **Gospel of Mark** before we return to Matthew for the beginning of Jesus' public ministry