

9/8/13

LUKE: THE SON OF MAN, THE SAVIOR HAS
COME, WEEK 12

TITLE: THE CHARACTER OF A GODLY WOMAN

TEXT: LUKE 2:36-40

INTRODUCTION: (1) NORMALLY, WHEN I THINK OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY WOMAN, MY THOUGHTS ARE DRAWN TO PROVERBS 31:10-31.

* FOR IN THAT TEXT WE SEE THE ACTIONS OF A GODLY WIFE, A GODLY MOTHER, IN WHAT SHE DOES AND HOW SHE LIVES.

** AND PROVERBS 31 IS A GREAT TEXT IN TALKING ABOUT A VIRTUOUS WOMAN, AN EXCELLENT WIFE AND MOTHER, A GODLY WOMAN.

*** **YOU CAN'T GO WRONG** IN LOOKING FOR A MODEL OF A GODLY WOMAN, AN EXCELLENT WOMAN THERE.

**** HOWEVER, THERE IS ANOTHER TEXT THAT DESCRIBES THE CHARACTER OF A GODLY WOMAN, A HOLY WOMAN, THAT NORMALLY WE **DON'T THINK ABOUT.**

(2) AND A COUPLE OF REASONS THAT WE **NORMALLY DON'T THINK** ABOUT THIS PASSAGE IS THE GODLY WOMAN DESCRIBED THERE IS NOT A WIFE, BUT A WIDOW AND IT APPEARS THAT SHE MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN A MOTHER, FOR NOTHING IS SAID ABOUT ANY CHILDREN.

* YET, WHAT IS SAID ABOUT HER IS INCREDIBLE.

* SHE IS CALLED A PROPHETESS, SHE NEVER LEFT THE TEMPLE SERVING GOD CONTINUALLY.

** SHE FASTED, SHE PRAYED NIGHT AND DAY, SHE GAVE THANKS TO THE LORD CONTINUALLY AND WAS A WITNESS OF JESUS, THAT HE WAS THE MESSIAH AND HAD BEEN BORN.

*** NOW I WOULD SAY THIS WOMAN WAS A
GODLY HOLY WOMAN.

**** HER NAME WAS ANNA, WHICH LIT. MEANS
GRACE, FOR SHE WAS A TROPHY OF GOD'S
GRACE AS A GODLY HOLY WOMAN.

(3) AND SHE IS TALKED ABOUT IN OUR TEXT
TODAY, YET MENTIONED NOWHERE ELSE IN
SCRIPTURE.

* IN FACT, THE STUDY OF ANNA, LIKE THAT OF
SIMEON WHICH WE LOOKED AT TWO WEEKS
AGO, IS ONLY GIVEN TO US BY LUKE, THE
BELOVED PHYSICIAN, THE HUMAN AUTHOR OF
THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.

** AND IN THE WISDOM OF GOD, IT WAS
ORDAINED THAT A WOMAN, AS WELL AS MAN,
SHOULD TESTIFY AT THE TEMPLE IN
JERUSALEM, THAT THE MESSIAH WAS BORN,
THE SAVIOR.

*** AND ANNA GIVES US THE THIRD TESTIMONY OF THE MESSIAH SINCE HIS BIRTH, THE OTHER TWO BEING THE SHEPHERDS AND SIMEON.

**** AND IN THE MOUTH OF TWO INDIVIDUALS AND A GROUP OF SHEPHERDS, IN THE MOUTH OF TWO OR 3 WITNESSES, THE TRUTH THAT THE BABY FROM BETHLEHEM WAS THE MESSIAH - KING, THE SAVIOR, IS PRESENTED BY LUKE AS HE BUILDS HIS CASE THAT JESUS, THE LORD AND SAVIOR, THE SON OF MAN HAS COME.

(4) AND ANNA, IS ONE OF THOSE WITNESSES IN OUR TEXT TODAY, AND SHE PICTURES THE CONSTANCY OF FAITH, REVEALING THAT EVEN LATE IN LIFE GOD CAN USE A PERSON IN A GREAT WAY IN MINISTRY.

* FOR HERE SHE IS, NEAR THE END OF HER LIFE, STILL SERVING GOD FULL STEAM AHEAD. WHAT A MODEL OF GODLINESS SHE IS.

**** THUS I'VE TITLED OUR STUDY IN LUKE** TODAY, THE CHARACTER OF A GODLY WOMAN. AND **WE'LL LOOK AT 3 MAIN THOUGHTS THAT** INCLUDE ANNA AND JOSEPH AND MARY AND JESUS AS WE END THE BIRTH NARRATIVE IN LUKE.

***** NO. 1 WE'LL LOOK AT THE RECORD OF ANNA'S BACKGROUND, WHO SHE WAS, VV. 36&37A;** NO. 2 THE REVERENCE THAT ANNA HAS FOR HER LORD, AS WELL AS THE REVERENCE THAT JOSEPH AND MARY HAVE FOR THEIR GOD, VV. 37B-39A; AND NO. 3 THE RETURN OF JOSEPH AND MARY TO NAZARETH, VV. 39B AND V. 40.

******** AND WITH THAT OUTLINE AS OUR FRAMEWORK TO WORK FROM, LOOK AT V. 36 **PLEASE WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE OUR FIRST** POINT TODAY, THE RECORD OF ANNA.

I. THE RECORD, (READ V. 36)

A. NOW AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, ANNA'S NAME MEANS GRACE AND IS THE GREEK FORM OF THE HEBREW NAME HANNAH, ANOTHER GODLY WOMAN IN THE O.T., WHOSE SON WAS SAMUEL.

* NOW NOTICE AS WE GO BACK TO ANNA HERE IN V. 36, SHE IS CALLED A PROPHETESS. AND SOME MAKE MORE OF THIS THAN THEY SHOULD USING THIS AS AN ARGUMENT THAT WOMEN SHOULD BE LEADERS AND PASTORS IN THE CHURCH.

** HOWEVER ONLY THE DAUGHTERS OF PHILIP WHO WERE VIRGINS ARE CALLED PROPHETESSES IN THE N.T. IN ACTS 21:9 AS THE EARLY CHURCH MAY HAVE REGARDED THEM AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION, FOR NOTHING ELSE IS SAID ABOUT THEM.

*** AND THE ONLY OTHER REFERENCE TO A PROPHETESS IN THE N.T. IS TALKING ABOUT THE WOMAN NAMED JEZEBEL WHO CALLED HERSELF A PROPHETESS, FOR IT SAYS OF HER IN REVELATION 2:20 AS CHRIST SPEAKS TO THE **CHURCH OF THYATIRA: "BUT I HAVE THIS AGAINST YOU, THAT YOU TOLERATE THE WOMAN JEZEBEL, WHO CALLS HERSELF A PROPHETESS, AND SHE TEACHES AND LEADS MY BOND-SERVANTS ASTRAY SO THAT THEY COMMIT ACTS OF IMMORALITY AND EAT THINGS SACRIFICED TO IDOLS."**

**** NOW THIS FALSE PROPHETESS IS CALLED JEZEBEL HERE, FOR SHE IS LIKE THE O.T. JEZEBEL WHOM INFLUENCED JEWS INTO IDOLATRY AND IMMORALITY. AND TO CALL SOMEONE JEZEBEL WAS NOT A COMPLIMENT, BUT USED IN A NEGATIVE WAY. SO PROPHETESS HERE IS TALKING ABOUT A FALSE TEACHER.

1. AND THAT'S ALL WE HAVE IN THE N.T.

ABOUT PROPHETESSES AND WITH ANNA, THAT SHE IS CALLED A PROPHETESS BEFORE THE N.T. IS COMPLETE DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN SHE PREDICTED THE FUTURE, BUT THAT GOD USED HER TO SPEAK HIS WORD IN THIS IN BETWEEN TIME BEFORE THE N.T. SCRIPTURE IS COMPLETED AND THE CHURCH IS ESTABLISHED.

* AND OF COURSE ALL TRUE BELIEVERS ARE CALLED TO SPEAK HIS WORD, TO BE VOICES FOR GOD, FROM YOUNG TO OLD, TO MALE TO FEMALE.

** AND ANNA POSSIBLY WAS CALLED A PROPHETESS BECAUSE SHE WAS A TEACHER OF THE WORD OR MAY HAVE BEEN A PROPHETESS BECAUSE SHE TESTIFIED THAT JESUS WAS THE **MESSIAH, WE DON'T KNOW FOR IT DOESN'T** SAY, BUT CERTAINLY BEARS WITNESS THAT SHE WAS A SPECIAL VOICE FOR THE LORD, NOT AN APOSTLE, NOT AN AUTHOR OF SCRIPTURE AND NOT A FUTURE PASTOR OR A PRIEST IN THAT DAY.

*** NOW MOVING ON IN V. 36, ANNA IS THE DAUGHTER OF PHANUEL (FUH NYOO UHL) AND NOTHING IS SAID ABOUT HIM IN THE REST OF THE N.T., BUT APPARENTLY WAS KNOWN BY **LUKE'S ORIGINAL AUDIENCE AND YOU WOULD** THINK IN A POSITIVE WAY OR LUKE WOULD NOT HAVE MENTIONED HIM.

**** NEXT, ANNA WAS A MEMBER OF THE TRIBE **OF ASHER. AND ASHER WAS THE 2'D SON OF LEAH'S HANDMAID ZILPAH AND JACOB'S EIGHTH** SON.

2. AND WITHOUT GOING INTO A LOT OF DETAIL, THE TRIBE OF ASHER IS SUPPOSEDLY ONE OF THE SO-CALLED LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL, BUT ANNA IS LIVING IN JERUSALEM AT THIS TIME, WHICH SHOWS THIS TRIBE WAS NOT LOST.

* BUT ALSO THAT LUKE KNOWS TO WHICH TRIBE ANNA BELONGS INDICATES THAT THE JEWS WERE KEEPING THEIR FAMILY REGISTERS OR GENEALOGIES UP TO DATE, AN IMPORTANT PART OF JEWISH HERITAGE AND OF COURSE BIBLICAL DETAIL IN TRACKING THE SON OF DAVID AND OTHER IMPORTANT GENEALOGICAL DATA THAT COMMUNICATES THE RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE.

** NEXT IN TALKING ABOUT THE RECORD OR BACKGROUND OF ANNA IT SAYS SHE WAS ADVANCED IN AGE, MEANING SHE WAS OLD, A SEASONED SAINT, SHE DEFINITELY HAD HER GOLDEN BUCKEYE CARD.

*** FOR HOW OLD WAS SHE?

**** WELL, IT SAYS SHE LIVED WITH HER HUSBAND 7 YEARS AFTER HER MARRIAGE, OR FROM HER VIRGINITY AND THE MEANING OF THAT IS REVEALED IN V. 37A. LOOK AT IT PLEASE.

B. READ V. 37A. NOW IN JEWISH CULTURE, AS WE LEARNED FROM STUDYING MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS, JEWISH WOMEN MARRIED YOUNG TO PROTECT THEIR VIRGINITY, AT ABOUT THE AGE OF 13 TO 14.

* SO ANNA AS A TYPICAL JEWISH GIRL, WAS A VIRGIN AND MARRIED AT ABOUT THE AGE OF 13 OR 14, BUT HER HUSBAND DIED AFTER 7 YEARS OF MARRIAGE.

** SO SHE BECAME A WIDOW AT THE AGE OF 20 OR 21, AND NEVER RE-MARRIED, REMAINED A WIDOW FOR 84 YEARS.

*** NOW TWO INTERPRETATIONS HERE, SOME TRANSLATIONS TRANSLATE THAT SHE HAD BEEN A WIDOW FOR 84 YEARS AND OTHERS TRANSLATE IT, SHE HAD NOW REACHED THE AGE OF 84, AS A WIDOW TO THE AGE OF 84.

*** AND IF SHE WAS A WIDOW FOR 84 YEARS, SHE WOULD BE 104 TO 105 YEARS OLD AT THIS TIME, OR SHE WAS 84 YEARS OLD.

**** AND BOTH TRANSLATIONS ARE POSSIBLE
FOR BOTH SUPPORT LUKE'S STATEMENT THAT
ANNA WAS 84 YEARS.

1. AND FROM MY STUDY I LEAN THAT SHE WAS
104 TO 105 BUT IT IS NOT WORTH ARGUING
OVER, FOR AT 84 OR 104 TO 105, SHE IS
ADVANCED IN YEARS, BUT IS STILL FAITHFULLY
SERVING THE LORD AS A SENIOR CITIZEN, SHE IS
STILL WORKING HARD FOR THE LORD. AND WE
SEE THAT BY HER REVERENCE FOR GOD AS WE
MOVE ON IN THE TEXT, OUR 2'D POINT TODAY,
LOOK BACK AT V. 37 PLEASE.

II. THE REVERENCE, (READ V. 37)

A. NOW ANNA NEVER LEFT THE TEMPLE, AND
IT SAYS SHE SERVED GOD NIGHT AND DAY WITH
FASTING AND PRAYERS.

* NOW HOW COULD SHE NEVER LEAVE THE
TEMPLE?

** WELL, THAT PHRASE SUGGESTS THAT ANNA LIVED IN THE TEMPLE COMPLEX, POSSIBLY IN ONE OF THE APARTMENTS IN THE OUTER COURT OF THE TEMPLE, NORMALLY OCCUPIED BY PRIESTS DOING THEIR TWO WEEKS OF ANNUAL SERVICE AS WE LEARNED WHEN TALKING ABOUT ZACHARIAS THE PRIEST, THE FATHER OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

*** AND POSSIBLY AS A GODLY WIDOW WHO REVERENCED GOD, WHOM FEARED GOD AND LOVED HIM, SHE STAYED IN ONE OF THOSE APARTMENTS BECAUSE OF HER DEEP COMMITMENT AND NEED.

**** NOW WITH THAT SAID, ANNA WAS NOT IDLE FOR SHE SERVED GOD NIGHT AND DAY WITH FASTING AND PRAYERS.

1. AND NOTE THAT THE VERB SERVING IN V. 37 IS A GREEK WORD THAT HAS TO DO WITH WORSHIP, HOMAGE, SACRED SERVICE, AND THAT WAS HER LIFE, THAT WAS HER PURPOSE, THAT WAS HER PASSION, THAT WAS HER PRIORITY, SHE REVERENCED GOD.

* THERE WAS NO COMPARTMENTALIZING HER LIFE INTO SACRED AND SECULAR, ALL OF LIFE WAS SACRED, ALL OF LIFE WAS SERVING.

** AND OF COURSE ALL OF OUR LIVES SHOULD BE SACRED SERVICE. FOR IN SECULAR WORK, **WE ARE SERVING THE LORD, HE'S OUR BOSS** AND WE SHOULD WANT TO BE LIGHTS AT THE **WORKPLACE, IT'S SACRED AT HOME, MINISTERING TO FAMILY, IT'S MINISTRY AND** WORSHIP AT CHURCH SERVING HIM, REST IS SACRED, FOR IT IS TAKING CARE OF THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, EATING IS SACRED, FOR **IT'S FUEL TO SERVE OUR LORD AND TO** FELLOWSHIP AROUND, MY POINT BEING ALL OF LIFE IS SACRED.

*** AND BELOVED, ANNA SERVED GOD DAY AND NIGHT AND ONE OF THE WAYS SHE DID THAT IN THIS CONTEXT WAS BY FASTING AND PRAYERS.

**** AND PRAYER AND FASTING ARE OFTEN ASSOCIATED TOGETHER IN SCRIPTURE.

2. AND FASTING FROM FOOD IS A SELF-DENIAL THAT ACCOMPANIES PRAYERS.

* AND JESUS IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT IN MATTHEW 6:16-18 TALKS ABOUT FASTING AND **SAYS "WHENEVER YOU FAST" AND "WHEN YOU FAST" INDICATING** THAT FASTING IS ASSUMED TO BE A NORMAL **PART OF ONE'S SPIRITUAL LIFE.**

** AND WHETHER FASTING WITH REPENTING OR **FASTING TO SEEK THE LORD'S WILL AND FACE,** OR FASTING WITH PRAYER, IT IS A REPEATED TRUTH IN SCRIPTURE TALKED ABOUT 107 TIMES IN MY BIBLE IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

*** AND FASTING IS AN EXPRESSION OF OUR TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON GOD FOR BOTH PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL LIFE. AND IT GOES TOGETHER WITH PRAYER BECAUSE OUR PHYSICAL HUNGER REMINDS US OF OUR TRUE SPIRITUAL NEED FOR GOD.

**** AND NOT EVERYONE CAN DO A TOTAL FAST, A TOTAL ABSTAINING FROM FOOD FOR A PERIOD OF TIME BECAUSE OF DIABETES AND OTHER HEALTH ISSUES. BUT IF YOU CAN, IT SHOWS A SPIRITUAL SERIOUSNESS ABOUT THINGS, FOR MOST OF US, INCLUDING ME, LOVE TO EAT.

3. BUT IT CAN BE A SPECIAL TIME OF SPIRITUAL ALERTNESS AND SERIOUSNESS, SETTING YOURSELF APART TO THE LORD IN A WAY THAT WE ARE NOT SIDETRACKED BY FOOD BUT TOTALLY FOCUSED ON THE SPIRITUAL AND I CAN TELL YOU NOT IN BOASTING, BUT IN ALL HUMILITY, IT IS A REGULAR POWERFUL PRACTICE IN MY LIFE, TO COME APART FOR THE LORD AND TO BE SET APART DURING SERVICE

FOR HIM.

* AND FOR ANNA, IT WAS A REGULAR PRACTICE IN HER SERVING THE LORD ALONG WITH PRAYER.

** BUT MOVING ON, NOTICE IN V. 38 THAT MORE IS SAID ABOUT ANNA. LOOK AT V. 38 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 38. NOW OBVIOUSLY ANNA IS A WOMAN THAT IS LED BY THE LORD, AND IN **GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL TIMING SOMETHING** HAPPENS ONE DAY AS SHE IS IN THE COURT OF WOMEN IN THE TEMPLE, THE ONLY PLACE SHE WAS ALLOWED TO GO IN THE TEMPLE AREA AS A WOMAN.

*** BUT AS SHE IS THERE, "AT THAT VERY MOMENT," "COMING IN THAT INSTANT," "COMING UP AT THAT VERY HOUR,""COMING UP AT THAT VERY MOMENT," SHE RUNS INTO SIMEON, JOSEPH AND MARY AND JESUS.**

** FOR CONTEXTUALLY LUKE IS MAKING REFERENCE TO THE TIME WHEN SIMEON MEETS JOSEPH, MARY AND JESUS AT THE TEMPLE. **ANNA'S MEETING** TAKES PLACE AS SIMEON SEES JESUS, HIS SALVATION, JESUS CHRIST.

***** AND IN GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL TIMING, "AT THAT VERY MOMENT," WHILE SIMEON WAS** UTTERING HIS PROPHETIC HYMN OF PRAISE, THE NUNC DIMITIS, SHE CAME UP TO THEM.

**** AND IT MAY HAVE BEEN WHEN SIMEON IS HOLDING THE BABY JESUS AND SAYS, MY EYES HAVE SEEN YOUR SALVATION.

1. AND ANNA, BEING A PART OF THE FAITHFUL REMNANT OF JEWS, A GODLY WOMAN LOOKING FOR THEIR MESSIAH, UNDERSTOOD AT THAT TIME, THAT JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH.

* FOR WHAT IS HER RESPONSE IN V. 38?

**** "SHE BEGAN GIVING THANKS TO GOD."**

*** AND THE VERB GIVING THANKS IS IN THE IMPERFECT TENSE IN THE GREEK WHICH REPRESENTS CONTINUAL OR REPEATED ACTION, MEANING SHE KEPT ON GIVING THANKS REPEATEDLY, FOR THE BABY, THAT SHE ALSO WAS ABLE TO SEE **GOD'S SALVATION.**

**** AND ALL OF THE YEARS AS A GODLY WOMAN OF PASSIONATELY PETITIONING GOD FOR THE MESSIAH, THE SAVIOR TO COME, NOW REALIZED, NOW TO BE ABLE TO SEE HIS SALVATION, GAVE WAY TO AN OUTBURST OF JOYOUS PRAISE.

2. THIS IN A SENSE IS THE FINAL HYMN OF **PRAISE IN LUKE'S ACCOUNT OF CHRIST'S BIRTH,** FOR HE IS ONLY 40 OR 41 DAYS OLD AT THIS TIME.

* **BUT ANNA'S WORSHIP AND THANKSGIVING** DID NOT END AT THIS TIME, FOR IT MANIFEST ITSELF IN ANOTHER WAY, FOR IT SAYS: SHE, **"CONTINUED TO SPEAK OF HIM** (JESUS) TO ALL THOSE WHO WERE LOOKING FOR THE **REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL."**

** BELOVED, SHE TOLD OTHERS ABOUT JESUS. SHE TOLD THEM THAT THE REDEEMER HAS COME. SHE TOLD OTHERS THAT THE SAVIOR HAD COME.

**** AND THE REFERENCE TO ALL THOSE WHO WERE LOOKING FOR REDEMPTION IN JERUSALEM, REFERS TO THOSE WHO WERE LOOKING FOR THE CHRIST WHO LIVED IN JERUSALEM, WHO WERE VISITING THE TEMPLE COURT THAT DAY.

3. IT'S TALKING ABOUT THE REMNANT OF JEWS WHO BELIEVED THE PROMISES AND THE PROPHECIES ABOUT THE MESSIAH WHO WERE LOOKING FOR THEIR REDEEMER.

* SO ANNA AS A GODLY WOMAN TOLD OTHER JEWS ABOUT JESUS AND HIS REDEMPTION, THE ONE WHOM WOULD RANSOM THEM, DELIVER THEM FROM THEIR SINS, WHO WOULD PAY THE PENALTY OF SIN.

** AND BELOVED, THE NEWS WAS TOO GOOD FOR ANNA TO KEEP TO HERSELF, SHE HAD TO SHOW IT, TO PROCLAIM IT.

*** AND SO LIKE THE SHEPHERDS, SHE BECAME ONE OF THE FIRST EVANGELISTS. HER LIFE AS A GODLY WOMAN WAS ALL ABOUT SERVING, WORSHIP AND WITNESS. SHE TRULY REVERENCED GOD.

**** HOWEVER, AS WE MOVE ON IN OUR TEXT, WE MOVE FROM ANNA, A GODLY OLD WOMAN, TO JOSEPH AND MARY A GODLY YOUNG COUPLE, **BUT THE THEME DOESN'T CHANGE, FOR** REVERENCE IS STILL THE POINT, LOOK AT V. 39A PLEASE.

C. READ V. 39A. NOW THE THEY IN V. 39A IS TALKING ABOUT JOSEPH AND MARY.

* AND WHY DID THEY GO UP TO JERUSALEM IN THE FIRST PLACE? TO KEEP THE LAW OF GOD, TO OBEY THE LAWS LAID OUT FOR JEWISH PEOPLE, **FOR MARY'S PURIFICATION AND SACRIFICE** AND TO PRESENT JESUS TO THE LORD, A MALE CHILD UNDER THE LAW DEDICATED TO THE LORD.

** THEY DID **"EVERYTHING"** CEREMONIALLY THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO DO, OBEYING THE LORD.

*** AND THAT CONTINUES TO COMMUNICATE THE THEME OF REVERENCE. FOR WHAT IS REVERENCING THE LORD?

**** WELL, IT IS FEARING HIM, IT IS BEING IN AWE OF HIM, IT IS LOVING HIM, IT IS WORSHIPPING HIM, AND OF ALL THAT BOILS DOWN TO OBEYING HIM.

1. AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS, IF WE CAN BREAK DOWN, IF WE CAN DISTILL DOWN REVERENCING THE LORD AND LOVING THE LORD INTO ONE WORD, IT IS WHAT?

* OBEDIENCE!

** IT IS TO DEPART FROM SIN AND OBEY THE LORD, PROVERBS **16:6B SAYS: "AND BY THE FEAR OF THE LORD ONE KEEPS AWAY FROM EVIL."**

*** IN THE N.T., THE FRUIT OF LOVE FOR THE LORD CAN BE SUMMARIZED WITH ONE WORD, ONE RESPONSE AND IT IS OBEDIENCE, QUOTE JOHN 14:15, JOHN 15:10, I JOHN 5:3.

**** AND THEN II JOHN 1:**6 SAYS: "AND THIS IS LOVE, THAT WE WALK ACCORDING TO HIS COMMANDMENTS. THIS IS THE COMMANDMENT, JUST AS YOU HAVE HEARD FROM THE BEGINNING, THAT YOU SHOULD WALK IN IT."**

2. SO HOW DO WE KNOW IF WE REALLY LOVE THE LORD? NOT OUR TALK, BUT OUR WALK, OUR OBEDIENCE, OUR ACTIONS, OUR LIVES.

* AND HOW DID JOSEPH AND MARY SHOW THEIR LOVE FOR GOD, THEY PERFORMED EVERYTHING ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF THE LORD WITH THE CEREMONIES THEY NEED TO KEEP.

** AND AFTER THIS, AT SOME POINT THEY RETURN TO NAZARETH. LOOK AT V. 39 AGAIN PLEASE **WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR THIRD AND LAST POINT.**

III. THE RETURN, (READ V. 39)

A. NOW NOTE CHRONOLOGICALLY, AS WE COMPARE THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW AND HARMONIZE IT WITH LUKE, SOMETHING HAPPENS BEFORE JOSEPH AND MARY RETURN TO THEIR HOME TOWN OF NAZARETH IN THE REGION OF GALILEE.

* AND THAT IS THE EVENTS OF MATTHEW 2:1-23, THE VISIT OF THE MAGI, THE WISE MEN TO SEE THE CHILD JESUS, THE FLEEING TO EGYPT **TO ESCAPE HEROD'S MURDEROUS RAGE WHICH** CULMINATED IN HIS BRUTAL SLAUGHTER OF THE MALE INFANTS IN THE VICINITY OF BETHLEHEM.

** AND IT CHRONOLOGICALLY WAS AFTER **HEROD'S DEATH THAT JOSEPH AND MARY** RETURNED TO NAZARETH.

*** AND EACH GOSPEL WRITER IS LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT IN INSPIRATION TO EMPHASIZE CERTAIN THINGS, AND AS YOU HARMONIZE THE 4 GOSPELS, YOU GET THE COMPLETE PICTURE OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST THAT OUR LORD WANTS TO EMPHASIZE AND SEE.

**** SO EVENTUALLY JOSEPH AND MARY GO BACK, RETURN TO THEIR HOMETOWN. WITH THAT SAID, LOOK AT V. 40 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 40. NOW SCRIPTURE PASSES OVER **JESUS' CHILDHOOD** IN NAZARETH IN SILENCE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WHAT WE WILL LOOK AT LORD WILLING NEXT WEEK AS WE LOOK AT VV. 41-52 AS JESUS IS TAKEN TO THE TEMPLE FOR THE PASSOVER AT THE AGE OF 12.

* BUT HERE IN V. 40 AND IN V. 52 FOR NEXT WEEK, WE HAVE A SUMMARY STATEMENT BY LUKE ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF JESUS PHYSICALLY AND SPIRITUALLY.

** FOR JESUS GREW AND BECAME STRONG, WHICH MEANS THAT JESUS WENT THROUGH ALL THE ORDINARY STAGES OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT.

*** I MEAN FIRST HE WAS A NEWBORN, THEN HE COULD SIT UP, CRAWL, WALK THEN RUN. JESUS DID NOT COME OUT OF THE WOMB OF MARY WALKING AND TALKING. HE DEVELOPED LIKE ANY OTHER HUMAN BABY, THEN TURNED INTO A LITTLE BOY AND A YOUNG MAN, THE ONLY DIFFERENCE, WITHOUT SIN.

*** BUT ALSO JESUS GREW IN WISDOM. JESUS DID NOT POSSESS ALL KNOWLEDGE AS AN INFANT, TODDLER OR YOUNG CHILD. HE HAD TO BE TAUGHT LIKE ANY OTHER CHILD.

**** BUT NOT ONLY DID JESUS GROW PHYSICALLY AND IN WISDOM, BUT ALSO THE GRACE OF GOD WAS UPON HIM AT THE END OF V. 40.

1. AND THAT MEANS THE FAVOR OF HIS FATHER WAS UPON HIM, THE FAVOR OF GOD GRANTED TO HIS BELOVED SON IN WHOM HE WAS WELL PLEASED, FOR HE GUIDED HIS STEPS AND BLESSED HIM AS HIS BELOVED SON, WHO CAME DOWN TO DO THE WILL OF HIS FATHER, FOR HIS ULTIMATE DESTINY WAS THE CROSS.

* AND BELOVED, THE TOTALITY OF ALL THIS IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF JESUS WAS PERFECT, BOTH PHYSICALLY, INTELLECTUALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, UNIMPAIRED BY SIN AS THE GOD MAN, THE SAVIOR.

IN WRAP UP AND APPLICATION: (1) TWO QUICK THINGS: NO. 1 ANNA AS A WOMAN OF GOD AND A SENIOR CITIZEN SERVED GOD FAITHFULLY AND SACRIFICIALLY. LIFE MEANT SERVICE FOR GOD, FOR IN REALITY, IF WE HAVE LIFE, WE ARE CALLED TO SERVE GOD. ULTIMATE REST IS IN HEAVEN, ULTIMATE RETIREMENT IS HEAVEN.

* AND WE HAVE SOME GREAT MODELS OF THIS HERE AT FBC, WHO IN THEIR RETIREMENT YEARS SERVE GOD FAITHFULLY AND SACRIFICIALLY BY USING THEIR TIME AND TALENTS FOR THE LORD.

**** TO OUR SENIORS, FOLLOW ANNA'S EXAMPLE AND NOT THE WORLD'S MODEL OF SELFISHNESS, OR I'M DONE NOW. SERVE YOUR FATHER!**

*** NO.2 WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE CHRIST AND SERVE CHRIST? IT MEANS TO OBEY HIM!

**** CHRISTIAN, GOD CALLS US TO A LIFE OF GROWING IN OBEDIENCE, STRIVING AND STRUGGLING TO BE MORE LIKE CHRIST EVERYDAY.

(2) CHRISTIAN, OBEY HIM YOUR SAVIOR, FOR JESUS SAID, IF YOU LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS. BE A DAILY REPENTER, **OBEYING OUR SAVIOR MORE AND MORE. (LET'S PRAY)**