

➤ **Read Luke 2:21–52.**

➤ **Reread Luke 2:21–40.**

1. This passage shows Mary and Joseph’s obedience to “the Law of the Lord” (v. 23), the Old Testament law. What does circumcision signify? (Gen. 17:9–14; * Rom. 4:11–13)

The Name “Jesus”

The name Jesus is the equivalent of Yehoshua (Joshua) in Hebrew, meaning “Yahweh saves” or “the Lord saves.”

 See Mt. 1:21.

2. Being faithful to “the Law of Moses” (v. 22) meant a constant awareness of a great many details throughout the Old Testament. Mary and Joseph travel with the young infant Jesus to Jerusalem and the Temple to obey the law laid out in Leviticus 12:1–8 and Numbers 18:15. What does their sacrifice of two young pigeons instead of a lamb and a pigeon reveal about them? (Lev. 12:8)

3. How does the passage describe Simeon? (v. 25)

4. Simeon believed the Holy Spirit’s revealed promise (v. 26) and waited faithfully for it to be fulfilled.

- a. How does Simeon’s life highlight God’s faithfulness?

The Consolation of Israel

“The ‘consolation... of Israel’ refers to the time when, according to Isa 40:1–2, God would end Israel’s time of alienation and suffering through the advent of the Messiah... The time of the ‘consolation’ would also be the age of the promised Holy Spirit, who himself is the one who consoles and encourages...”¹

- b. We have been given many promises through Scripture. Which of God’s promises do you hold especially dear in your present circumstances?

5. Mary and Joseph come to the temple in obedience to the Law, which demanded first born sons be consecrated or set apart for the Lord (Exod. 13:2). What prompts Simeon to head to the temple courts? (v. 27)

6. As Simeon praises God for fulfilling the promise he had been given (v. 30), who else does he reveal Jesus has come for? (vv. 31–32)

7. While holding the sweet new baby and praising God, what hard truths does Simeon reveal about the impact of Jesus...
...on Israel? (v. 34)

...on the hearts of many? (v. 35a)

...on Mary? (v. 35b)

How is Jesus destined to be received? (vv. 34–35; Isa. 53:3; Jn. 1:10–12; Jn. 12:36–50)

8. Who is the second person Mary and Joseph encounter in the temple? (v. 36)

Why is she there? (v. 37)

9. Simeon has just prophesied of the pain and conflict that would accompany Jesus. How does Anna immediately follow up that hard word? (v. 38)

► **Read Luke 2:41-52.**

10. Luke repeatedly emphasizes Joseph and Mary's obedience to the Law. Of what event from the history of God's faithfulness does the Feast of the Passover remind the Israelites? (Deut. 16:1-8)

11. Being twelve years old meant that Jesus could have been travelling either with the men or with the women and children. This makes his parents' losing track of him understandable, but it also makes the circumstances they find him in remarkable.²
 - a. Where is "tween" Jesus found and what is he doing? (v. 46)

 - b. How do people react to him? (v. 47)

12. Jesus has not disobeyed his parents by staying behind, but it obviously upsets Mary and Joseph greatly to have lost him.
How do they respond, and why?

What response does Mary ultimately have? (v. 51b)

13. How does Jesus' response to Mary's question give a glimpse into his true identity? (v. 49)

14. Jesus has just spoken of his divine nature (v. 49), but his parents do not understand him (v. 50). Nevertheless, how does the boy Jesus respond to his parents? (v. 51a; Phil. 2:6-8)

15. Little is known about Jesus' life before the age of 30. What does Luke say characterizes Jesus' childhood? (vv. 40, 52)

16. All of the people in this passage – Simeon, Anna, Joseph, Mary – get only glimpses of who Jesus is and do not see the full picture of God's plan of redemption, but they trust and obey him nonetheless. Like Mary, take time to treasure and ponder what God has done in Christ and is doing in your life, whether you understand it or not. Ask for faith to believe that God is worthy of your trust and obedience.

*📖 For further study

¹ Frank E. Gaebelin, Gen. Ed. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with the New International Version of the Holy Bible in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 8 (Matthew, Mark, Luke) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), footnote on verse 25, 850.

² Gaebelin, 852.