

The Mind of Christ Week 8

March 13, 2019

Let's get into telling some stories. We will get into some straight theology.

We'll start in **Matthew 2:13-15** with the little boys in Bethlehem being killed.

¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son." [HOSEA 11:1]

The reason I want to include this story is that such a tragic event would have made a great impact on Jesus later when He learned of this surrounding His birth. If you want to share, is there anything, even historically going on around the time that you were very little that you may not even have been aware of at the time, but later, as you grew up, the story was told about these things? I think of people who grew up in Europe during the war, or in the war zones, and they hear the bombs and see the lack of food and those kinds of things.

I know of people who lived during the depression in our country. Even as little children, they would save bread and put it under pillows trying to store something up.

Brenda: During the war, my dad was in charge of many children overseas. He couldn't get the kids to fall asleep at night and he wondered why. He knew they were tired and stressed. He asked one little boy what was wrong, and the child said that he couldn't sleep until he had some bread. My dad went into a kitchen and brought him some bread. The child put it under his pillow and quickly fell asleep. He went back and got a loaf of bread and gave some to each child. They needed the comfort of having food for "tomorrow" in order to be able to sleep at night.

Rod: They needed to make sure that when they woke up they would have something to eat.

Things like that that happen early in Children's lives, although they don't personally remember them, often affect them when they are older. They hear the stories being told about it and it affects the way people think.

I got to thinking about that with what happened to all the little children killed by Herod. There was the appearance of the angel of the Lord, the departure of Joseph into Egypt, the prophecies related to this and the essential impact on Jesus because of the lasting "hurt" of those who lost their children. In the life that Jesus came into, a lot of mothers when He was growing up or even through His ministry had lost children during this time.

What do you think the effect of the ‘slaughter of the little children’ had on Jesus as He grew up? How did He come to understand it? The slaughter of little boys must have had an impact on Him as he heard the stories when he was growing up. Did He know any of the mothers and fathers who had lost their babies when Herod was king? Did it affect Him that there were very so few little boys His age?

Matthew 2:13-18

- The slaughter of the little children and its effects on Jesus
- The angel of the Lord—actually An Angel of the Lord
- How long was the stay in Egypt?
- Hosea 11:1; Jer.31:15—50-60 year old women when Jesus ministered
- Did Jesus meet these mothers as an adult?

Let’s talk about the angel of the Lord. It isn’t the first time we read this. When Joseph considered putting Mary “away”, the angel of the Lord **appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, [f] because he will save his people from their sins.”**

Mt. 1:17. I was actually thinking that this was **the** angel of the Lord who is talked a lot about in the Old Testament. But it is really more “**an**” angel of the Lord. **The** angel of the Lord, it is conjectured, is really **Jesus on Earth** in the Old Testament. That is a very popular contention of many—that Jesus had appeared on Earth before His physical birth.

Usually in the O. T. seeing miracles and seeing angels was rare. They went through long concentrations of time with no mention of either. We sometimes read it as though angels were appearing all the time and miracles were happening all the time. This is not so.

The “dream” appearances make this even more subjective as opposed to the appearances, as in the case of Abraham. Here is an angel that appears in a vision to Joseph as opposed to an angel who is in the appearance of a man making this even more subjective because it is happening in someone’s head.

Abraham: Genesis 18:1-2

Now the Lord appeared to him by the [a] oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. ² When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth...” But the dramatic impact on **Joseph** that caused him to uproot his entire family to Egypt is amazing.

I have a note here on the effects this may have had on the Coptics and the establishment of the church because of Jesus spending time in Egypt. {'The Egyptian Orthodox Church'} is an Oriental Orthodox Christian church based in Egypt, Africa and the Middle East.} There are still Coptic Christians in the church in Egypt that are being persecuted by Muslims today. (Halai Selassie was a Coptic Christian, an Ethiopian regent from 1916 to 1930 and emperor from 1930 to 1974. He is a defining figure in contemporary Ethiopian history. His original name was Tafari Makonnen, (born July 23, 1892, near Harer, Ethiopia, who died August 27, 1975, Addis Ababa). Some of his influence got into Jamaica.

I have always believed that Jesus was about two years old, but I cannot find a reference to that. We only know that Herod was killing the children of two-years-old and younger when He was actually taken to Egypt so we're not sure of His exact age.

I suppose I got the length of the Egyptian stay from the idea of slaying of two-year-olds so I had it in my head that He had been there maybe two years, so he was older than two by the time He came back. But Matthew marks the time from Herod's death (in other words, He came back after Herod died; not so much as when He turned two years old). So what difference does this make?

Well, the longer Jesus was in Egypt, the greater the Egyptian experience influenced His family. How long did they stay in Egypt? That experience was in His family's history. Brenda's family was in Costa Rica and had more of an influence on Tim than on Brenda because Tim was there long enough to learn the language and that affected his whole life—what he's doing today. He is fluent in Spanish. Where you live and how long you stay in another country has a huge impact on you, and how long Jesus was in Egypt, we don't know, but He was influenced somewhat by the culture of Egypt, the language, and all the things that He was exposed to.

Jesus must have followed the same route as the early Israelites did AND *His* father's name was Joseph.

So the "out of Egypt" quote is from Hosea 11:1 and a reference to the Israelites' exodus from Egypt was obviously an historical reference and a Messianic prophecy. Jesus later made others aware that He was the fulfillment of prophecy about Him. Later, when Jesus began His ministry, He connected the Old Testament prophecy to Himself as the fulfillment of the prophecy. So, Hosea 11:1 was one of His prophecies of His 'coming out of Egypt'.

The last consideration of Jesus' later understanding of the babies' who lost their lives because of Him may have been the hurt of the parents—the emotional impacts on them in Bethlehem. This was a small area. This is right outside Jerusalem. In a community this small, it would have had a significant impact on the people of that community. It would have been spectacular and it is reasonable to think that this event, even if it had happened thirty years prior, (think about Carlie Brucia), —that kind of story doesn't die easily. But here is a whole village of two-year-olds slaughtered by a bunch of soldiers. This was remembered. This massacre was brutal and had been prophesied by Jeremiah in 31:15.

What did these women think on that mournful day? What did they think was happening? Why was this occurring? “They were not to be comforted” it said. Did Jesus later ever meet any of these mothers? By the time He was 30, these mothers would have been 40, 50 or 60 years old. If you were twenty years old when you had a two-year-old, you might now be 50 years old. So it is reasonable that these women were still alive, and if they had tied the murders to the coming of the Messiah because of prophecy etc., and Jesus comes along claiming to be the Messiah...again, just connect the dots. Here are women who have to deal with this Messiah being the reason and the cause of my child being ripped out of my arms by the Romans and being killed. We see the greater picture, but when you are grieving the loss of your child...even if you knew there was some purpose in this...it doesn't matter much

Why did my baby have to die in order for Jesus to be the Savior of the world? This was just another emphasis of evil in the world that Jesus came to save us from. Did Jesus grow up with stories about that? He certainly came to know it later on and ran into these women. I don't know. All of this is conjecture but this must be **partly** what went on in the mind of Jesus.

What would He have said if a woman came up to Him and said, “You're the reason my child died.”? I mean, He would have known what to say. But we can only imagine how His childhood events surrounding His birth later affected His thinking.

One more thought to be dealt with. Now remember, when Mary was told about Jesus' coming, He would be the rise and fall of many (Luke 2:34). Jesus was going to cause pain as well as bring salvation. (Now, Jesus didn't cause the pain. It was peoples' reaction that caused the pain).

Let's go to Matthew 2:19-23.

Matthew 2:19-23; Luke 2:39

- Return from Egypt
- Effects on Jesus
 - Another move
 - Fear is the norm for the family
 - Dream revelations
 - Residue of the pregnancy scandal (Num.5:11ff; Deut.22:13ff)

Matthew 2:19-23

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord *appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and said, ²⁰ “Get up, take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child’s life are dead.” ²¹ So [h] Joseph got up, took the Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Then after being warned by God in a dream, he left for the regions of Galilee, ²³ and came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

Luke 2:39

When Joseph and Mary had performed everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own city of Nazareth.

This follows on the heels of Jesus being presented in the Temple but this isn’t directly chronological here. They didn’t return to Nazareth until after they had gotten back from Egypt.

So this is the story of the family’s return from Egypt to Judah. Because Herod’s son, Archelaus, was reigning over Judea, Joseph was warned by God to return to Galilee to live in Nazareth. This is the city where Mary became pregnant (Luke 1:26). They hadn’t been back to Nazareth, it seems, since she had the baby. Now, did they know she was pregnant before she left for Bethlehem? Joseph had contemplated putting her away privately already but it’s a little fuzzy about whether the people of Nazareth knew she was pregnant. We get the picture that when she came to Bethlehem she was about nine months pregnant and ready to deliver, but do we know that she was that close to delivering? It is depicted that she gets into town and in the morning she had a baby.

Well, it may not be exactly that way. It could be that they had to stay there a little bit longer because they had to go through the process of the census and everything. We do not know how long that took. What I want to know was how far along was she before she left Nazareth. The travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem wouldn’t have taken more than a week to walk it. The distance isn’t that far. I would say probably, that she was far enough along that everyone knew she was pregnant because Joseph had already talked about putting her away. They were already concerned about that. So let’s assume that they knew she was pregnant, they were not married and now they have been gone for a couple of years at least, and now they are back and they have a baby.

In this section, there are some issues that may have impacted the thinking of Jesus.

1. Here is the effect of *another* move.
2. Then there is the *fear of the King*. Ever since Jesus was born, they have been living in fear. They have been in hiding for two years for fear for their lives and the life of this baby. Imagine, if there has been a threat to your child by the King, Herod the Great, this is huge. It’s not like someone is a little upset with you. We are talking about the most powerful man in the whole region is trying to kill you. And don’t you think he had influence in Egypt too? They’ve been living in fear, looking over their shoulder for years.

3. Now, *Archelaus, Herod's son is in power* and they're still afraid of him. So even going back to Nazareth keeps them in fear. Fear has got to be the norm of their lives. (Is Joseph wondering why they are in Egypt putting their whole lives at risk...and this child isn't even mine?) He must have had a lot of faith in Mary too. (Tell me what that angel said to you one more time). *Fear is a stressor.*

4. Was this dream really a revelation from God? And remember, here is a family that is moving around doing things because someone had a dream. I have to try to put myself in their shoes. I mean, if Brenda said, "You know, I had a dream last night and we have to get out of town" I'd be like, "Okay, Brenda. You had a dream last night." But she would have a lot of convincing to do. But suppose I believed her. *Doubt is a stressor.*

So here they are getting re-established in Nazareth where the scandal occurred a few years earlier. Now they have to get resituated in that area. Again, I can only raise questions and speculate on the effects of Jesus' thinking, but we can assume that these issues did have some effect on Him.

There is also another underlying question of 'did He know He was the Messiah?' At what point did Jesus understand that He was the Messiah? I have to believe that He didn't know it the day He was born. Was he 6 months old, or a year old? This gets into what kind of normal challenges Jesus had. He shared in our humanity. He had to go through the same processes humans go through and we'll get there. We know He had to learn to walk, to eat solid food, to learn everything that we did. It's true that He grew in wisdom and stature with God and man (Lk. 2:52). But I am going to assume that there was some point in time where He knew that He was the Messiah of God...He totally related to that identity of who He was. How that exactly came and at what point we're not sure. Children can recall things very early in Childhood.

Rod: They've done studies to try to trace back earliest memories and sounds bring on certain emotions. Babies can listen to sounds that comfort them. They are sounds that they would have heard in the womb (under water).

Moving is traumatic on a family even if there isn't much to move. The wealth from the wise men's gifts perhaps supported the family while they were in Egypt and maybe they worked down there as carpenters. *Moving and support for his family are stressors* so we have to add that into Jesus' childhood.

Being ostracized because of *Mary's pregnancy could have been a stressor.* Was she thought of as an adulterous woman?

The word used to describe Joseph's fear is phobia φοβία which is a common word for fear. Back in Matthew 1:20, "Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, *do not be afraid* to take Mary as your wife". The word for *afraid* is "φοβηθησ".

At least two major fears dominated Joseph's thinking:

1. The fear of disgrace or of being ostracized for marrying an adulterous woman

That was a fear in Joseph's head. I am going to be separated from Society. They think I married a woman of adultery. In their minds, it's the Hosea thing. I wonder if He thought of Hosea although Mary was not Gomer. She was pure.

Numbers 5:11-28

The Test to figure out if someone has committed adultery

¹¹ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹² “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘If any man’s wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, ¹³ and a man has intercourse with her and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband and she is [f] undetected, although she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in the act, ¹⁴ [g] if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has defiled herself, or if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has not defiled herself, ¹⁵ the man shall then bring his wife to the priest, and shall bring as [h] an offering for her one-tenth of an [i] ephah of barley meal; he shall not pour oil on it nor put frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of memorial, a reminder of iniquity.

¹⁶ ‘Then the priest shall bring her near and have her stand before the Lord, ¹⁷ and the priest shall take holy water in an earthenware vessel; and [j] he shall take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. ¹⁸ The priest shall then have the woman stand before the Lord and let the hair of the woman’s head go loose, and place the grain offering of memorial [k] in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy, and in the hand of the priest is to be the water of bitterness that brings a curse. ¹⁹ The priest shall have her take an oath and shall say to the woman, “If no man has lain with you and if you have not gone astray into uncleanness, being under the authority of your husband, be [l] immune to this water of bitterness that brings a curse; ²⁰ if you, however, have gone astray, being under the authority of your husband, and if you have defiled yourself and a man other than your husband has had intercourse with you” ²¹ (then the priest shall have the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and the priest shall say to the woman), “the Lord make you a curse and an oath among your people by the Lord’s making your thigh [m]waste away and your abdomen swell; ²² and this water that brings a curse shall go into your [n]stomach, and make your abdomen swell and your thigh [o]waste away.” And the woman shall say, “Amen. Amen.”

²³ ‘The priest shall then write these curses on a scroll, and he shall [p] wash them off into the water of bitterness. ²⁴ Then he shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings a curse, so that the water which brings a curse will go into her [q] and cause bitterness. ²⁵ The priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman’s hand, and he shall wave the grain offering before the Lord and bring it to the altar; ²⁶ and the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering as its memorial offering and offer it up in smoke on the altar, and afterward he shall make the woman drink the water. ²⁷ When he has made her drink the water, then it shall come about, if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, that the water which brings a curse will go into her [r] and cause bitterness, and her abdomen will swell and her thigh will [s] waste away, and the woman will become a curse among her people. ²⁸ But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, she will then be free and conceive [t] children.

Perhaps it was not necessary in this case because Mary **was** pregnant and had clearly been with another man so she did not need the test.

Deuteronomy 22:13-25

“If any man takes a wife and goes in to her and then [f] turns against her,¹⁴ and charges her with shameful deeds and [g]publicly defames her, and says, ‘I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin,’¹⁵ then the girl’s father and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of the girl’s virginity to the elders of the city at the gate.¹⁶ The girl’s father shall say to the elders, ‘I gave my daughter to this man for a wife, but he [h] turned against her; 17 and behold, he has charged her with shameful deeds, saying, “I did not find your daughter a virgin.” But [i] this is the evidence of my daughter’s virginity.’ And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city.¹⁸ So the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him,¹⁹ and they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give it to the girl’s father, because he [j] publicly defamed a virgin of Israel. And she shall remain his wife; he cannot [k] divorce her all his days.

²⁰ **“But if this [l] charge is true, that the girl was not found a virgin,²¹ then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway of her father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her [m] to death because she has committed an act of folly in Israel by playing the harlot in her father’s house; thus you shall purge the evil from among you.²² If a man is found lying with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel.²³ “If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her,²⁴ then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them [n]to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he has violated his neighbor’s wife. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you.²⁵ “But if in the field the man finds the girl who is engaged, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lies with her shall die.**

Here, if Joseph had followed *this* ruling, Mary would have been stoned to death at her father’s door. The exception would be if she had been raped in a place where no one heard her cries for help.

So Joseph has options: Do I follow the dream that I had to stay with this woman and that everything is going to be okay, or do I do what the Law says and **stone** her at her father’s door? That was the Law of Moses regarding a woman who was betrothed to another man.

Clearly breaking the Law and being looked down on by society would have been heavy for Joseph. And when told that he was to keep her as his wife with the explanation that was given, that this is by the Holy Spirit, would have required great, great inner strength on his part.

2. His second fear was for the safety of his family.

The first fear was his disgrace. The second fear was *how do I keep my family safe?* I need to keep my family safe ... especially Jesus because He was a special child. The circumstances about His birth – how do I raise the son of God? Imagine a hit that is put out by a ruthless king (Herod) who has already had his **own** wife and children murdered. It wouldn’t bother him to kill Jesus.

Remember that Joseph has been hiding out in Egypt for awhile. How does this fear shame a family if they are trying to re-establish themselves in Nazareth? Perhaps the lives of those who fear religious persecution in Islamic lands might be some clue to us today as to how people might deal with that.

Jesus was raised in a family with such fear that they had to adjust their lives *to* this fear and *live*. How does this affect Jesus' family? He grew up in a home that *had* to have a lot of stress in those days. You can talk about looking at your brother as you walk down the street, looking at this little boy and wondering if this is a *bastard* child. If the people had any inclination that this is the child that takes away the sin of the world ... which has already been revealed to Mary (in part, by the angel); that's a *lot* of pressure to keep Him alive.

Another possible affect on the family was **the dream revelation**. God, through His angels was really connecting with this family. God was intimately involved with this family. He was leading, guiding and protecting them. Mary and Joseph were listening and being obedient. This was *huge* in their family. It wasn't just some kind of reading the Bible and trying to do what God said. God is personally shepherding them through this experience; and telling them what to do every step of the way. That's big. They are building a very intimate relationship with God here because so far, in everything God has told them to do, they have been obedient and God has protected them and is working everything out and so their faith is probably growing during this time. But this is the kind of experience they're having. Jesus is developing an intimate relationship with His Father, in part because of His parent's relationship with God. When Jesus began to grow up, He saw how *they* reacted to God's leading and guidance. That was His primer. And Jesus used this "hearing" and "obeying" often in His ministry.

It reminds me of Paul's words to King Agrippa, "[So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision](#)" Acts 26:19.

One of the four possible affects on Jesus' family that helped shape Jesus' thinking was their return to Nazareth. This was where the scandal began. This was where Mary and Joseph were living when she became pregnant. The {optic} there was "stigma". How could this family fit into a society which was a very small, close-knit rural society? We know that Joseph was a carpenter and Jesus, a carpenter's son. We know Jesus had half-brothers who grew up not believing in him. And did they not believe in Him because the community didn't believe in him or because (as he said) a prophet has no honor in His own town? They may have been influenced by the negative reactions of the people... they just didn't know what to **do** with Him. I wonder if they were willing to do business with Him. Some of this is speculations but these are reasonable things to extract from the circumstances that we know Jesus went through.

Was this because of the way the community treated him, or the way he grew up. All these speculations are reasonable to suggest that.

The incident in Luke 4:14-2 indicates that when he did reveal His identity through prophetic fulfillment, He did it in the synagogue at Nazareth.

“He stood up to read,¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” [f]

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. ²¹ He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

I wonder if that was His crowning moment when “I’ve grown up in this community. And you have all been looking sideways for 30 years. And now I am going to stand up and tell you who I really am. I am going to reveal to you for the first time who I **really** am. And after that event, they tried to throw Him over a cliff. They thought that this was the straw that breaks the camel’s back. They’re ready to throw him over a cliff but He slips out through the middle of the crowd and escapes from them. This tells me that there is this “30 years of stigma, of stereotype” attached to Him. These people know his beginnings. Was this revelation of Himself to them is just too much to take? This must have affected his thinking. He grew up with a cloud of scandal hanging over Him. And remember, later, when He talks about the cross, which was another scandal, (scandal or stumbling block). There are stumbling blocks all through the life of Jesus. People will stumble over the stumbling stone. The stone that the builders rejected has become the capstone. And they were stumbling over Him from the time he was a baby all the way to the cross . . . and after the cross.

Matthew 2:23 says, ‘and came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: ‘He shall be called a Nazarene.’” To reside means to make a permanent dwelling – to settle down. It is the same word used for God dwelling with men. Acts 7:48 “However, the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands. As the prophet says ⁴⁹ “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me?” says the Lord.

In **Acts 17:24-25**, Paul says, “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

Was it in {Jerusalem} that Jesus was taught not to trust Himself to any man? (John 2:24). Jesus had learned what was in man. Maybe He learned early on—growing up. ‘I can’t trust them. I just cannot trust them. They are not trustworthy. They don’t accept me. They’ll hurt me’. So Jesus wouldn’t trust Himself to any man.

Let’s go to **Luke 2:40**. “And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.” The word for ‘He grew’ means caused to grow, or went through all the normal developmental stages of growth including mental, emotional, physical stages. He learned to walk. He was potty trained. He learned to feed Himself. He learned social skills. He went through puberty. He lost teeth. All the things that kids go through, Jesus went through.

Jesus had friends. He discovered things like (how did He look at a butterfly). Were there certain emerging talents that they began to recognize in Jesus? Could He sing? Did he have rhythm? Was he athletic? We don't know that He was naturally good at everything. Could He do the broad jump? It doesn't say that he was physically good looking.

Isaiah 53:3 says, “He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

3 He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.”

Did he ever have to go through trial and error to figure things out? Did He ever have to correct something like, “Oh, I cut that board too short”? Did He have chores? Did He ever have to take out the trash? Did He have to ever look after His younger siblings? Did He have to discipline them? Did His parents have to discipline Him? Heb. 5:8 says “**Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.**” Did He ever grieve over a lost pet? Did He ever wet His bed? You know that all of these experiences shape us into who we become. I remember when I lost my prized pet. I can close my eyes and see that I was riding in the front yard. I was five, maybe. I remember the first time I shot a sparrow with a bb gun ... and I felt bad. I remember that.

Jesus had to navigate these same waters that we do in our upbringing. That's how He became strong – strengthened. Becoming strong physically raises the issues of childhood Diseases. Did He ever have a childhood disease? Did He have colds or ear infections, mumps or measles, pinworms or diarrhea? Did work make Him strong? How long did He work for Joseph before Joseph died? Did He take over the carpenter shop as a teenager, maybe? Did He play sports? Did He watch His diet? Was he over weight? Did He jog or swim? Did He have emotional struggles? Did He have struggles like fear or anger? Did He like to look at girls? Did He stutter? Did He have acne? Did He ever have a wart? My point is, these are common things everybody goes through. We go through “stuff”. Jesus went through “stuff” to grow and become strong. These are the normal ways of becoming strong.

Jesus increased in wisdom. John 1:14 says, “**And the Word became flesh, and [k] dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of [l] the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.** The word “wisdom” in Greek is ‘Sophia’ or ‘σοφία’. Jesus did not merely gain knowledge and information, but he got the application of this information – wisdom. It seems strange that the Creator of the Universe would have to increase in wisdom. He had to learn how to **apply** the knowledge that He had. Proverbs 9:10 says, “**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.**”

I believe that this was the type of wisdom that Jesus increased in. He grew greater insight in all areas that he possessed before He emptied Himself to become frail flesh. Before he came here, He had to let go of His “God-wisdom” and take on “human wisdom”.