

Luke 2:41-52 – Jesus at the Passover

In books about famous people of the world, we will read a lot about their childhood. But in the life of Jesus, there is only one event recorded from the time he was a baby until he began his ministry, so this passage is very precious. Jesus' ultimate beginnings were not in his childhood, because he was the Son of God who had come down from heaven.

1. Going to the feast (v41-42)

Joseph went to the feast of the Passover. This was commanded by God's law, Exodus 23:14-17. All the Jewish males were to go to the temple in Jerusalem, to remember what God had done at the first Passover and Exodus out of Egypt. Then, God had judged his enemies, but delivered his people through the blood of the Passover lamb. At that time, God had made Israel to be his own people. Though it was 1500 years earlier, Joseph still obeyed that law. Mary came too (v41). The law did not require her to. It was a 70-mile journey, she had to walk and she had several children (Mark 6:3). But she came, surely because of her delight in the word and works of God. Read Psalm 84 to see the heart of a true worshipper. Is this your heart? Do you worship God as unwilling and forced, or with a heart set free through true conversion to Christ? Not only Joseph and Mary, but Jesus went too. At twelve years old, it was around the time that sons began to learn their fathers' business and prepare for their adult labours. Jesus at that time came to the Passover festival. He was to be the true Passover, the lamb slain for the sins of the world (John 1:29).

2. Remaining at the temple (v43, 46-47)

Mary and Joseph returned to Nazareth (v43), but Jesus remained. They thought he was in the big crowd of family and neighbours, but he was not. He had remained at the temple – his Father's house – to learn his Father's ways, to listen to his Father's law. In verse 46 we find him listening and asking. Jesus was a true human being. There was no sin in him, but he had a human mind and soul, and therefore did not know everything, but needed to learn. He had natural, but not sinful, ignorance. In his soul he desired the knowledge of God. Do you? Can you say, "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God" (Psalm 42:2)? Jesus learnt with a pure heart. He loved the truth and obeyed it, and therefore he grew very fast (v47, John 7:17). To learn more from God, we must believe and *obey* what he already taught us. Otherwise we will remain in darkness.

3. Finding Jesus at the temple (v44-45, 48-50)

Mary and Joseph searched for Jesus amongst their family and neighbours. When they did not find him, they returned. On the third day they found him in the temple (v46) – why so long? The Son of God was in the house of God, doing the work of God! Mary, from her anxiety, accused Jesus. She called Joseph "your father" - which he was legally, but not truly. Even from that young age, Jesus was fully aware of his true Father, in heaven. He respectfully reminded Mary. Mary must not stand in his way in doing the work for which he entered the world. From that early age, Jesus was devoted to seeking his peoples' salvation. He was devoted to searching the Scriptures, to fully understand his mission, so that he could fully perform it. He was searching out the plan that would lead him to Calvary, so that he would fulfil it. He did not come to make Mary or anyone else comfortable. He came to do the will of God by dying for our sins.

4. Returning to Nazareth (v51-52)

Jesus returned to Nazareth and grew. He passed through every stage of life. Every stage of life is important and we can serve God in it. Before he could enter his ministry, he had to be prepared. The Bible says that before honour, comes humility (Proverbs 15:33). Mary and Joseph did not yet understand all these things they had seen (v50) – do you?