

Jesus to Jerusalem at Age Twelve

April, 8 A.D.

Luke 2:41-50

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Text:

Luke 2:41-50,

41. Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.

42. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom.

43. After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.

44. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends.

45. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

46. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

47. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.

48. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

49. "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

50. But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

Commentary:

Luke 2:41, Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.

I. Jesus' parents, Joseph his foster father and Mary his biological mother, as faithful Jews, journeyed to Jerusalem each Passover to observe this feast.

II. Jesus, being brought up to observe Jewish religious traditions, went with them.

Luke 2:42, 43, When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.

I. When Jesus was twelve years old the family, as was their custom, made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

A. They stayed the appropriate number of days (Greek: "having fulfilled the days"), probably seven; thus Jesus and other children would often be at different places than their parents during the festivities.

B. They evidently traveled in a group which was large enough that his parents could not keep sight of everyone in it.

C. Mary and Joseph assumed Jesus was in the group, but he was not. Don't take anything for granted!

1. Jesus had remained/tarried in Jerusalem.

a. There was no indication that this was disobedience to any instruction from Jesus' parents, just an intense interest.

D. Nothing is said here of the Bar-Mitzvah service for Jewish boys entering their thirteenth year; however, Luke does switch from referring to Jesus as “the child” (verse 40) to referring to him as “the boy” (verse 43).

Luke 2:44, 45, Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

I. Joseph and Mary went a day’s journey before beginning their search for Jesus.

A. They assumed Jesus was with them, but he wasn’t.

1. Thanks be to God, Jesus is never “nowhere to be found.”

B. Many people assume Jesus is with them today only to discover that he is nowhere to be found in their daily lives.

C. Many then think they can find Jesus among their relatives and acquaintances, but Jesus may not be found there either.

1. But even if he is, God does not have any spiritual grandchildren, each of us must decide whom he will serve.

II. Joseph and Mary then returned with urgency to Jerusalem seeking for Jesus.

A. If we would find Jesus we too must return to Jerusalem and to the gospel that was first preached there, to the cross and the empty tomb.

Luke 2:46, 47, After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.

I. The anxious parents sought three days for Jesus before they found him.

A. We are not given any details as to where Jesus stayed all that time, but apparently he was not expected to be with them during the week of the feast or else they would have known he was missing when they departed.

B. He was found in the temple, his Father's house.

1. Apparently, it did not occur to his parents to look in the temple first.

C. They found him among the teachers of the law, both hearing their instruction and asking them questions.

D. All that heard Jesus ask and answer questions were amazed at his understanding which was clearly far beyond his years.

E. Jesus was indeed a precocious learner.

Luke 2:48, When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

I. When Joseph and Mary saw Jesus they were astonished.

A. Jesus was not playing some childish game or engaging in some mischief with other boys his age.

B. He was engaging in an activity of a serious, solemn and mature nature dealing with the most important of life's aspects, his relationship with the Father.

II. Mary scolded Jesus by saying, "Why have you done this to us? Why have you treated us this way?"

A. "Son" here is actually "my child," when used this was in directly addressing someone.

B. Mary said that she and Joseph had sought Jesus sorrowing.

1. We can only imagine their agony during those three days of searching.

C. We must exercise the utmost certainty to be sure Jesus is with us every step of our lives!

Luke 2:49, "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

I. These are the first recorded words of Jesus.

A. Jesus said, "I did not leave you. You left me." This is the way it still is today!

B. Jesus further said, "You should have known I must be in my Father's house." There are many things we should now know about Jesus which we may not know.

C. Perhaps Jesus has begun to become aware of his unique relationship to the Father, because he says “in **my** Father’s house”, not “in **our** Father’s house.”

D. Jesus declared early in his life that his mission, purpose on earth was to do his Father’s will. This should also be our all consuming purpose in life!

Luke 2:50, But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

I. Joseph and Mary did not understand the significance of what Jesus said to them.

II. We also must study and pray that we will understand what Jesus has to say to us.

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Questions

1. Every year Jesus' _____ went to _____ for the _____ of the _____.

2. The trip to the _____ of the _____ reported in this lesson took place when _____ was _____ years old.

3. Following the _____ of the _____ Mary and Joseph headed back to _____, but _____ stayed behind in _____.

4. _____ and _____ thought Jesus was in the company among their _____ and _____, but Jesus actually stayed behind in _____.

5. When _____ and _____ did not find _____, they went back to _____ to look for him.

6. Have you ever lost Jesus, been separated from Jesus? When and how did this occur? _____

7. It took _____ and _____ days to find Jesus. They found him in the _____, sitting among the _____, _____ to them and asking them _____.

8. Everyone who heard Jesus was _____ at his _____ and his _____.

9. When _____ and _____ saw _____, they were _____. _____ said, "Son, why have you _____ us like this? Your _____ and I have been _____ for you!"

10. Have you ever "lost" a child? _____ How did it make you feel? _____

11. In what way was Joseph Jesus' Father? _____

12. Jesus replied, "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my _____?"

13. Did Mary and Joseph understand Jesus' answer? If not, why not?

14. What was the origin, meaning of the Feast of the Passover? _____

15. At what season of the year was the Feast of the Passover commemorated? _____
