

Where is Jesus? (Luke 2:41-52)

1. The Consecrated Family (v.41-42)

- The Passover was one of three pilgrimage festivals that required Jews to visit Jerusalem. The other two were Pentecost and Feast of Tabernacles (Ex. 23:14-17; 34:22-23; Deut. 16:16).
- While children were not required to be present with their parents during these festivals, they were not prohibited (Ex. 12:26).
- Jesus appears to join his parents for the first time in their yearly trek to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover (v.42).
- Luke informs the reader of the piety and centrality of God's word in the family of Joseph and Mary.
- Even though Jerusalem was 80 miles from Nazareth, and the trip, along with the sacrificial lamb, was costly, Mary and Joseph walked in obedience to the Torah.
- This is no surprise, as they were both upright before their engagement. An angel had announced Mary's pregnancy to Mary and Joseph on two separate occasions (Matt. 1:18-21; Lk. 1:26-38), and they obeyed the angel's command to name him "Jesus."
- After being informed of Mary's pregnancy, Joseph did not divorce his wife. He was not the biological father. Despite the cultural shame of marrying his pregnant wife, he did not divorce her.
- After Jesus was born, they:
 - circumcised him on the eighth day according to the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 17:9-14; Lev. 12:3)
 - obeyed the ceremonial law of purification, and dedication of their firstborn as prescribed in the Law of Moses (Lev. 12:2-8)
- The family that raised Jesus was consecrated to the LORD.

2. The Concerned Parents (v.42-49)

- At Passover, Jerusalem's population swelled from 70,000 to over 250,000. Over 100,000 sheep were slaughtered during this festival.
- Typically, people travel in large "caravans," often composed of clan members from the same town/city. These large caravans would usually be over 100+ people.
- After several days, Joseph and Mary departed, yet this time without Jesus. How could they leave Jerusalem without their son (v.43)?
 - Women would typically walk in the front of the caravan with their children while the men would follow in the rear.
 - Jesus was 12 years old and on the precipice of "adulthood." Both would have assumed Jesus was with the other.
 - They inquire with their relatives and friends, and to their surprise Jesus is not with them (v.44).
- At the end of the first day after departing from Jerusalem, Mary and Joseph discover that Jesus is not with them. They turn around and arrive back in Jerusalem the next day (day two).

- They spend most of the next day (day three) searching for Him. To their surprise, He is at the "temple" (v.46).

3. The Confounded Teachers (v.46-47)

- When Mary and Joseph found Jesus after three days (v.46), He was at the temple "sitting among the teachers, listening and asking questions" (v.46-47):
 - During major festivals, top scholars would often be present at the temple teaching. Jesus had a "question and answer" session with the "teachers."
 - He was also asked questions, and the teachers were "amazed" at His understanding and answers (v.47).
 - This is a fulfillment of the "spirit of wisdom and understanding" that the Spirit of the LORD will give to the "stump of Jesse" (Isa. 11:2; Lk. 1:78).

4. The Committed Son (v.48-51)

- When Joseph and Mary find Jesus, they rebuke Him (v.48). While they were "astonished," they belittled Him. In several translations, it reads "Son, why have you....," but in Greek, it can translate as "Child, why have you...."
- These are the first and only recorded words of Christ in the first thirty years of His life (v.49):
 - Mary informs Jesus that "Your father and I have been searching...."
 - Jesus replies, "Why were you looking for Me? I am about My Father_____." This is an idiom in Greek, translated as "In My Father's house" or "about My Father's business."

Mary calls Joseph Jesus' father (v.48), while Jesus says that He obeys His Father (God) (v.49). This is the first time in Scripture where an individual calls God their "Father." While other OT writers spoke of God as the Father of a nation or a people, here Jesus is aware of who His "Father" is. God is His Father, but not after the order of man. While He is "from" the Father missionally, the Father did not "create Him."

Luke is demonstrating:

- at the age of 12, Jesus is conscious and aware of His identity as the Son of God (1:35). Luke intentionally includes this event to illustrate that even as Jesus transitions from childhood to adulthood, He is about His Father's business (John 6:38; 8:29).
- the Father willed Jesus to return home with His parents because His public ministry has not yet commenced (v.51). Jesus did not sin when He was left behind in Jerusalem. They should have known where He would be (v.49).
- that Mary is treasuring all of this in her heart (1:29; 2:19, 51) as she is still learning about her Son, Jesus.

Points of Application:

- 1.
- 2.