

Chapter 7

Jesus in His Father's house

Luke 3 vv 41-32

In Nazareth dwelt a simple family. The father was an ordinary carpenter named Joseph.

Mary, the mother, was a poor woman. Their Child, Jesus, was still very young. That Joseph was really a prince and Mary a princess was unknown to the inhabitants of Nazareth. They did not know that they were both descendants of David; and that their Child was the Son of God, the long awaited Messiah, the Son of David, was also unknown to the Nazarites.

Joseph and Mary, however, did know who their Child in fact was, since the angel Gabriel had informed them before His birth. But they did not tell it, they kept quiet. Oh, no one would have believed it any way. They would have been laughed at and ridiculed. So they kept quiet and waited.

Years pass by. The Lord Jesus lived in Nazareth until His thirtieth year. Like all other children He had to learn to walk and to talk. He played with other children in Nazareth. Whether He had brothers, we cannot say with certainty, in the Bible the word "brethren" certainly appears several times. Some say that they really were brothers, and that Mary had yet more children and that could well be true, for it nowhere states that the Lord Jesus was the only son of Mary, but it frequently uses the word firstborn. Others say that by brothers, the cousins of the Lord Jesus are intended. The Authorised Version mentions

"Kinsmen" in the margin.

But whatever the case was, the Lord Jesus lived in Nazareth like any ordinary child. The people in Nazareth, the neighbours and acquaintances spoke of Him as the son of Joseph. Yet, He was not the son of Joseph, but the Son of God. He was the Saviour.

But there was one great difference between the Lord Jesus and the other children in Nazareth. All other children were sinful; the Lord Jesus was not. The other children were sometimes disobedient and rude to their parents, but the Lord Jesus was never disobedient. He was never rude. When the other children had fights and quarrels; the Lord Jesus did not. The other children were sometimes punished; the Lord Jesus was not punished because he never deserved correction. Not for the reason that He was spoiled, but because He was without sin.

But the people of Nazareth did not take notice of this. They may perhaps have sometimes thought "What a wonderful child Jesus is, what a quiet, gentle boy", but nothing more. He was, and remained to them "the son of Joseph, the Carpenter".

Oh, now the long promised Redeemer was living in their midst and nobody, nobody took any notice. What a deep humiliation that was for the Lord Jesus. He, the Son of God, was looked upon by everyone as the son of Joseph, but he did not defend Himself. He was silent.

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Freely He took upon Himself the humiliation. Truly, He became like men in all points, except that He was without sin.

Oh, boys and girls, He had to be without sin, because otherwise He could never pay for the sins of others, He could never be a Saviour. If the Lord Jesus had committed one sin, then He would have had to have suffered and died for His own sin. Then He would not have been able to save anyone from sin.

But throughout all those years He rendered complete obedience to the Law of God. He completely fulfilled that Law which was broken by us. What happened during those years, we do not know. I can tell you hardly anything about it. Just one story, just one incident out of the youth of the Lord Jesus is described in God's word.

We have often told you that the Israelites journeyed to the temple three times every year. That was at the times of the great feasts. Of these feasts, the Passover was the most important. If it was possible the whole family went together. Only the very small children stayed at home.



The Israelites on the way to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover.

Now it was customary that boys, when they were 12 years old, to go for the first time to the House of God. When they journeyed for the

first time towards Jerusalem, they were full of longing and excitement. They were very anxious to see the city and the wonderful temple, about which they had heard so much.

Joseph and Mary also set out for Jerusalem every year to celebrate the Passover. For the first few years, when the Lord Jesus was still too young, He remained behind in Nazareth, probably with relations, for Mary had married sisters who also lived in Nazareth.

At last the time came when the Lord Jesus was twelve years old. Now, therefore, He would go for the first time to Jerusalem. Look, they close the door and set out on the road. They do not travel alone, for at such times all worshippers journeyed in groups. That was safer and more sociable. Above all they could then, if necessary, help each other on the way. And not only the Nazarites, but also the inhabitants of other places joined themselves to the procession. The nearer they came to Jerusalem, the bigger the crowd became since more and more joined on the road. This happens now, too.

There walks the twelve year old Jesus among all those people. Holy reverence fills His soul, for He is on the way to His Father's house. They draw near to Jerusalem. They climb the last hill and before long the great crowd is pressing through the capital city of the land. In Jerusalem they are celebrating the Passover. Pascal lambs are slain in their thousands. The blood flows.

The Lord Jesus also walks in the Court of the Temple. Now is fulfilled the word which Malachi had already foretold "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall quickly come to His temple". Now the Lord Jesus has come to His temple, now He walks in the Courts of the Lord, but scarcely

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anyone knows it. Of course not. He is "the son of Joseph". The Pascal lambs are slain and eaten.

When the Passover is finished the worshippers prepare to return again in groups to their homes. Joseph and Mary also leave Jerusalem. The Lord Jesus is not however with them. Oh, where would He be? But they do not worry very much yet, because there are so many people about. It is quite possible that He is coming along with friends or relations. So His parents leave the city with the others, but they keep a sharp look out to get at least a sight of Him.

They ask everywhere "Have you seen our Child?" "Do you know where Jesus is?" but no one has seen Him. They search everywhere, but they cannot find Him. They become more and more anxious. Where can that Child have gone? Evening comes and they have still not found Him. Then they can no longer bear it. What must they do now? He must have had an accident. Oh, perhaps He stayed behind in Jerusalem. Perhaps He is even now walking through the streets of Jerusalem crying and looking for His Mother.

The next day they hurry back to Jerusalem. They must find Him. In great anxiety they search and search, it is not until the third day after their departure from Jerusalem that they find Him.

No, He is not crying. Nor is He walking about looking for them. Do you know where they found HIM?

Close to the temple various rooms had been built on. In one of these rows sit some scribes. They are giving instruction, apparently to young Jerusalem boys. Amongst those pupils is – Jesus! He asks those scribes various questions.

They also ask some of Him, and then that young Lad gives such intelligent answers that they are all amazed. They are astounded both at His questions and at His answers.

Suddenly Joseph and Mary step inside. Their eyes look around anxiously. But when Mary sees Him sitting there so peacefully, she becomes angry. "Son", she says reproachfully, "Why hast thou dealt thus with us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing". It is just as though she says "How could you do this to us. You must have known how anxious we would be." Mary is not used to this from the Lord Jesus.

Quietly Jesus looks at her and answers calmly "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?" That is not a rude answer. Oh no! But the Lord Jesus means "Mother, God is my Father. I have not come to earth to do thy will, but the will of my Father. I have come to obtain salvation for my people. You know that, surely? - You know, surely, why I have become Man?"

Children, Mary had to learn that she could not give Jesus orders and commands. Mary had to learn that He had come to redeem her from sin also. But He gets up immediately and goes with them like an obedient boy to Nazareth. He is subject to His parents.

Can that be said of you too? The Lord Jesus did not wish to sadden His parents, and He goes with them at once. How often you cause your father and mother sadness, don't you? Some more and some less, but all of you are sometimes disobedient. That is because your heart is evil and depraved. The heart of the Lord Jesus was pure and sinless.

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After the events described in this story, He lived another eighteen years in Nazareth, What happened during those years, we do not know. Apparently He later helped His father Joseph. He too became a carpenter.

There is something for us to learn in that too. Nowadays many boys and girls consider work to be shameful. No, they don't want to work. They must and will study, however dull they may be, even though they cannot study at all. Carpentry, bricklaying, painting? — No, that work is far too mean. You understand, they are much too proud for that.

But that is not true. Work is not shameful. The Lord Jesus did it too. A good carpenter is better than a bad office worker. Are any such foolish ones among you? Then learn from this story your abominable pride. Let us take as an example the life of the Lord Jesus. If He was not ashamed to work, should we be ashamed to do so?