

The Passover Visit to Jerusalem

Luke 2:41-52

- A. This was an annual trip according to the Law (2:41).
- B. On the way home Jesus was missing (2:42-44).
- C. He was found in Jerusalem with Bible scholars (2:45-47).
- D. He was right where one should have expected Him to be (2:48-52).

- A. This was an annual trip according to the Law (2:41).
1. (vs. 41) “Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.” Ryrie says, “Attendance at the Tabernacle was required of all men for three festivals each year: **Unleavened Bread** (see note on Ex. 12:15); **Harvest, or Pentecost** (Lev. 23:15–23 – “50 days after the 1st Sabbath following the Passover [always a Sunday]”); and **Ingathering, or Booths** (Lev. 23:34–43 – “15th to 22nd day of 7th month [Tishri – our September–October]”).” BK says, “The one-day Passover (14th day of the 1st

1. (cont.) month [Nisan {our March -April}]) was followed by the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread” (15th day of the 1st month [Nisan] until 21st), but “The entire eight-day festival was sometimes called the Passover (Lk. 22:1, 7; Jn. 19:14; Ac. 12:3–4).” Link to Jewish Calendar: [Jewish Feasts \(bibletrack.org\)](http://bibletrack.org).

B. On the way home Jesus was missing (2:42-44).

1. (vs. 42) In the previous section (2:39), we saw that the family had traveled from Jerusalem & Jesus' dedication at the temple to Nazareth of Galilee "about 65 miles north of Jerusalem." Now, "when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast," so they made the same journey south. "Jewish boys became responsible for their actions at thirteen. At the age of twelve the instruction of boys became more intensive in preparation of the recognition of adulthood. The Bar

1. (cont.) Mitzvah of modern times, however, postdates the time of Jesus by five hundred years” (TC citing Boch). “At 13 a Jewish boy became a ‘son of the commandment’ and a full member of the religious community. This age was often anticipated by one or two years in the matter of going to the Temple” (RYRIE).
2. (vv. 43-44) “Luke noted that Mary and Joseph stayed for the duration of the eight-day festival, another tribute to their piety” (TC). Some only stayed for the “two chief days,” then “left for home” (ATR). Many

2. (cont.) wonder how Joseph and Mary could go that long and not notice that their twelve year old Son was not with them. But because “they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances” where He might easily have been traveling with other young people approximately His own age, both family and friends, it is easy to see how such a thing could have happened.

C. He was found in Jerusalem with Bible scholars (2:45-47).

1. (vs. 45) The level of urgency seems to have risen; so “When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem looking for Him.” What would that mean for us to travel out a whole day and then back again? It would typically mean that something significant or concerning had happened, causing hasty movement.
2. (vs. 46) “After three days,” that is, one day out, one day back, and one day searching. Sure enough, “they found Him in the temple,” not remotely in a corner,

2. (cont.) straining to hear, but “sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions,” like an interactive Q&A Bible Study. Wouldn't you *love* to have a copy of *that* (translated into English, of course)?

➤ Now, why was the Son of *God* both *listening* to them *asking* them questions? He did not know everything (Mt. 24:36; cf. Jn. 16:30; 21:17). He still was increasing in wisdom (Lk. 2:40, 52). In His humanity, He learned (Heb. 5:8). Even His opponents acknowledged His learning (Jn. 7:14-15).

2. (vs. 47) He certainly was not starting from scratch in His theological acumen (“the ability to make good judgements and take quick decisions” [Oxford]). No, indeed, for “all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers.” “Amazed (ἐξίστημι),” lit., “be out of one’s normal state of mind,” resulting in a “feeling of astonishment mingled w. fear, caused by events which are miraculous, extraordinary, or difficult to understand” (BDAG), “meaning that they stood out of themselves as if their eyes were bulging out” (ATR). “It is not

2. (cont.) difficult to ask hard questions, but this boy had astounding answers to their questions, revealing his amazing intellectual and spiritual growth” (ATR).

D. He was right where one should have expected Him to be (2:48-52).

1. (vs. 48) “When they saw Him, they were astonished (ἐκπλήσσω); His parents were caused “to be filled with amazement to the point of being overwhelmed...dumbfounded” (BDAG). And yet they seemed to miss the whole point as “His mother said to Him, ‘Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You.’” Wait, who left Whom behind? Besides, was it okay to be anxious in the OT, rather than believe?

2. (vs. 49) Here is another of His perceptive questions which turned the tables on His parents, that is, who was in the wrong? Jesus was not in error and had committed no sin: “Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s *house*?” Lit., “in the (things) of my Father,” with an ellipsis. This verse involves an idiom that probably refers to the necessity of Jesus being involved in the instruction about God, given what he is doing. The most widely held view today takes this as a reference to the temple as the Father’s house.

2. (cont.) Jesus is saying that his parents should have known where he was” (NET BIBLE).
3. (vs. 50) “But they did not understand the statement which He had made to them.” Perhaps it was unrealistic at this time that they would understand what He was saying, but in reality, they should have known better.
4. (vs. 51) “And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection (ὑποτάσσω) to them; and His mother treasured (διατηρέω) all these things in her heart.” Jesus was *never* wrongly in

4. (cont.) rebellion against His parents. And in His subjection, He continued to learn and growth. He, in fact, was perfect, *never* in error. How strange it is that “not even His brothers were believing in Him” (Jn. 7:5; Mk. 3:21). “After His resurrection, of course, His brothers came to believe in Him. Two of them, James and Jude, became authors of Scripture. James also became the head of the Jerusalem church (see Acts 15)” (GNTC).
5. (vs. 52) “And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” His spiritual

5. (cont.) growth and development continued steadily. He reached adulthood physically as well. More and more He pleased His heavenly Father, and more and more He commended Himself to godly men.

Conc.

This section is all we know about Jesus from His birth to the beginning of His public ministry. It is all we need to know. “A second-century document known as the Infancy Gospel of Thomas claims Jesus did miracles as a child. In it, Jesus makes clay birds and brings them to life, he causes a child’s body to wither, he strikes some neighbors with blindness, he resurrects a friend who died, and he heals his brother from a snake bite” (MITCH CHASE). We certainly do not need the Bible to be supplemented with that sort of thing, just as Pastor Chase says.

At age 12, Jesus knew who He was and what His mission on earth was all about. At the same time, He seemed rather normal, maybe even mundane, to His family. More than likely, He played with His siblings like any older brother would in games like what He referred to in Mt. 11:16-17. Did He ever disagree or debate with them, even argue with them? We are not told, but we know that He never sinned or did anything wrong to them ever.

What about the doctrine of the impeccability of Christ? That might be a topic for discussion at Q&A.