

Jesus as a boy

We do not know much about Jesus when He was a boy. The Bible says that He was “filled with wisdom.” The Bible says that He was “in favor with God and man.” We know by this that Jesus was a good boy. We know by this that Jesus was loved by every one who knew Him.

Jesus probably went to school like other boys his age. He might have studied history and God’s Law, from the Old Testament books. Probably Jesus played with other boys His age. No doubt He worked in his father’s carpentry shop. Do you think the boy Jesus ever helped His mother in the house?

The boy Jesus surely learned from the mountains and lakes, the birds and flowers, the storms, the sunshine, and everything He saw or heard. All these were lessons for Him.

The Bible tells of a trip Jesus took when He was twelve years old. Every year in the spring there was a great feast in Jerusalem. It was called the Feast of the Passover. Children of Israel from all parts of the country went to it. In those days, women and old men usually rode on mules and donkeys when traveling. Sometimes they rode on horses or camels on trips. The young men, with long sticks in their hands, walked beside them and led the animals. Children were not generally taken along until they were twelve years old. Those children who did get to go on such trips would walk and run a part of the way. But when they got tired they were given a ride.

Many people made such trips together and they had a good time on the journey. They talked and laughed. They sang together. They stopped at the springs to get water when they were thirsty. And as they walked along, they picked the fruit and berries they found by the roadside. When they got tired they would stop and rest. For many people going to the Feast of the Passover in Jerusalem was a long and tiring trip.

Thousands of strangers were in Jerusalem when the feast began. Every house was full. Tents were put up for those who could not find room anywhere else.

When Jesus was twelve years old His parents took Him on this trip for the first time. It lasted seven days. Then the long procession of people started home again. Jesus was very interested in what He saw and heard. So much

so that when the others left the city, Jesus stayed behind. His parents did not know this. They thought that He was with some of their friends in the group. They did not look for Jesus until evening. Then He was nowhere to be found. No one remembered seeing Him all day. Think how troubled his parents must have felt. Their boy who had never been away from them was lost and so far away from home, too. They must go back to Jerusalem to find Him.

It took them another day to get back to the city. It was the third day before they saw their boy again. Then where do you think they found him? In the temple. The boy Jesus was in the temple hearing the old, gray-haired men talk. Asking questions that astonished them. Here was a boy of only twelve years who knew so much.

Do you think His parents were glad to see him? His mother hurried to Him and said ... "My son, why did you leave us? Your father and I have been looking for you, and have been very sad."

Jesus answered her ... "Why did you look for me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?"

Jesus did not mean Joseph when He said "My Father," He meant God. He was a young boy, but He was very thoughtful, and He knew that there was work for Him to do in the world. He knew that His work was to teach people how His Father wants them to live. He was ready to begin His work, but it was not yet time for Him to do so. So, He went back to Nazareth with His parents. He was the same loving, obedient boy that He had always been.

Until a Jewish boy was twelve years old, he was called a little boy. But after that he was called a young man. At twelve years old he was expected to study and work as the young men did. Every one must learn some trade. Every one must learn some kind of work by which he could earn his living. Joseph was a carpenter. He taught Jesus to do carpentry work. He taught Him how to make houses, tables, yokes for oxen, or anything made of wood.

