

Joseph and Mary were committed worshippers of the Living God as well as responsible parents. Passover was the chief Jewish celebration where they remembered how God had brought the Jews out of the land of Egypt under the leadership of Moses.



To think of such a young boy teaching and astonishing older, prominent men from the cradle of religious knowledge demonstrates that Christ was not an ordinary young man.

The priests of the Jews were to lead them in worship. The Levites were descended from the tribe of Levi (one of the twelve tribes). This is the “family” from whom the priests were chosen.

then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, “Now Lord, Let Your bond-servant die in peace, according to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all nations, a light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.” And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him.

And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed - and a sword will pierce even your own soul - to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

ANNA

And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with a husband seven years after her marriage, and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

THE BOY KING

Luke 2:41-52

DAY THREE 3

Jesus used to go to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast; and as they were returning, after spending all seven days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. And His parents were unaware of it, but thought he was in the caravan, and they traveled a day's journey; and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. When they did not find Him they returned to Jerusalem to look for Him.

And it came about that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them, and asking them questions. All who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. And when His parents saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, your father and I have been anxiously looking for you.”

And He said to them, “Why is it that you were looking for me? Did you not know that I had to be doing my Father's business?” And they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

John the Baptist was the "Elijah" promised to return by the last "Old Testament" prophet Malachi 400 years earlier. He is distinct from the disciple named John who was one of the Twelve and who penned one of the Gospel accounts.

John immediately understood that Christ was the Lamb who would die for the sin of the world. He was, after all, baptizing with water those who knew they were spiritually dead. When he baptized Jesus (something he did not want to do), he saw a dove descending upon Him, and a voice saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased."

Disciples are followers. They follow the teaching and traditions of those they hold in high regard. The Pharisees were the prominent religious party of Jesus' day. They found their identity in Abraham, the father of the Jews - and their righteousness in keeping the Law of Moses.

Information about Christ spread among friends, family, and followers. Three or four years later when He was crucified and raised from the dead, there was hardly a person in all of Israel who did not know who He was.

Jesus was from the country town of Nazareth. His birth and actions fulfilled prophecies that were spoken hundreds and even thousands of years before He was born.

THE LIGHT, THE LIFE, THE LAMB

John 1:19-51

This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" And he confessed, did not deny it, but made it plain, "I am not the Christ."

They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" And he answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said."

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him and said to him, "Why are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them saying, "I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know. It is He who comes after me, the fastener of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan river, where John was baptizing.

The next day John saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is one of whom I spoke: 'After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.' I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be clearly revealed to Israel, I came baptizing in water." John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending like a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' I have seen Him, and tell you for certain that this is the Son of God."

The next day John was standing with two of his own followers, and he looked at Jesus as He walked and said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" His two followers heard him speak and they followed Jesus. And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you want?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means teacher), where are You staying?" He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where He was staying, and they stayed with Him that day, for it was late in the day.

One of the two who heard John speak and had followed Him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He found his own brother Simon first and said to him, "We have found the Messiah (Christ)." He brought him to Jesus, and Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

The next day as He purposed to go into Galilee, He found Philip. Jesus said to him, "Follow Me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the one whom Moses and the prophets wrote - Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!"

Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered Him, "Teacher, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."

Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, you believe in Me? You will see greater things than this." And He said to him, "Truly, truly I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."