

## Jesus shows who he is (Luke 2)

*When Jesus was 12 years old, Mary and Joseph took him to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover, when the Israelites remembered how God rescued them from Egypt. Do you know about that rescue? The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt and the king, Pharaoh, would not let them leave. There was a man called Moses and God spoke to him and.....well, that's another part of history, hundreds of years before this time. Moses led the people out of Egypt and God guided Moses and the people by giving them a pillar of cloud to follow by day and a pillar of fire to follow when it was dark. The Israelites remembered God rescuing them from Egypt each year at the Feast of the Passover, like we remember a birthday.*

Let's return to the time we are learning about, when Jesus was 12 years old and Mary and Joseph and their family and friends were travelling to Jerusalem from their home in Nazareth. There they all are in a big group approaching Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the capital city and a very important place for the Israelites because the temple was there. The temple was where the people went to worship God, to learn about God and to sing special songs and to say sorry for the times they had disobeyed God.

There were lots of people in Jerusalem from all over Israel and the streets were crowded around the temple. There were probably people selling food and other things on stalls along the streets and people rushing about, some with animals and some with bags and some in big groups and some on their own going about their business. Mary and Joseph and the group from Nazareth celebrated the Feast of the Passover and, when it was time for them to go home, they thought that Jesus was with them. The group set off along the road back to Nazareth.

After a day's travelling, Mary said, "Where is Jesus?" and Joseph said, "Where is Jesus?" They rushed around the group asking their relatives and friends, "Have you seen Jesus?" They were really worried and Mary and Joseph left the group travelling back to Nazareth and went back to Jerusalem to search for him.

It was still busy in Jerusalem and there were no phones or internet to help them back then. It took them three days of searching and worrying but at last they found him at the temple. He was sitting with the teachers, listening and asking questions. The teachers were amazed that he knew so much and he was only 12 years old!

His parents were just cross because they had been so worried. Mary and Joseph said to Jesus, "How could you do that to us? We've been so worried about you".

Jesus said to them, "Why were you worried? Didn't you know that I would be in my Father's house?" But they didn't understand what he meant and they looked puzzled.

They turned back towards Nazareth – Mary and Joseph and Jesus. Mary continued to think about what Jesus had said for a long time. She must have thought about the time when an angel, a messenger from God, had come to tell her that she was going to have a baby who would be God's son. This baby had grown up and was now a child of 12 years old and he was reminding her of that special message.