



JESUS as a Child

By Diane L. Mangum



Temple at Jerusalem—This temple was different from temples today. It was very large, with courtyards and porches filled with people. People brought animals to the temple for priests to sacrifice.

Sacrifice—When priests sacrificed animals on an altar, it taught people that someday Heavenly Father would sacrifice His Son, Jesus Christ, who would die for our sins.



Mary held the baby Jesus as she walked into the busy **temple** at Jerusalem. She and Joseph had come from Bethlehem to offer a **sacrifice** of two doves at the temple. Jesus was almost six weeks old.

In the temple was an elderly man named Simeon. He had been promised that he would see the Savior someday. “It was revealed unto Him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ” (Luke 2:26). When he saw the baby Jesus, Simeon rejoiced because he knew the promise had been fulfilled. Then a woman

named Anna who served in the temple joyfully testified that Jesus was the Savior.

But not everyone was happy about the Savior’s birth. King Herod heard that a child had been born who would be the king of the Jews. Herod did not want any other kings in his land. He ordered

that all the babies born near Bethlehem in the past two years be killed!

An angel came to Joseph in a dream to warn him about Herod’s plan. Joseph and Mary fled in the night. They took Jesus to live in the land of Egypt, where He would be safe.

After King Herod died, Jesus’s family moved to the town of Nazareth. Joseph worked as a carpenter. Mary took care of the household.

Jesus learned to work beside Joseph. Like all Jewish boys, He studied the scriptures and Jewish laws. Joseph and Mary obeyed the commandments, and Jesus learned from His earthly parents. Jesus “grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him” (Luke 2:40).

When Jesus was 12, Mary and Joseph took Him to Jerusalem to celebrate **Passover**. They

This account comes from Matthew 2; Mark 6:3; Luke 2:21–52.



Passover—This important holiday celebrated the time when Jehovah helped the Jews escape from slavery in Egypt, about 1,400 years before Jesus was born.

traveled with many people. Women and men walked in different groups, and families met up each evening for dinner as they camped along the way.

After the celebration Joseph and Mary started back home. That night they realized that Jesus was not with any of the groups they were traveling with. They hurried back to Jerusalem to find Him. After three days they found Jesus in the temple.

He was talking to the teachers and answering their questions. The men in the temple were astonished.

Mary told Jesus that she and Joseph had been very worried. Jesus reminded her that He needed to be doing His Heavenly Father's business. Even though He was young, Jesus knew He had important work to do as part of His Heavenly Father's plan. ■