

BABY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

Luke 2:22-40



MORNING came. This was going to be a happy day for Mary, Joseph, and little Baby Jesus. Jesus was forty days old and He was going to church. It was a long way to the beautiful Temple Church in Jerusalem.

When Jesus was a little Baby all the baby boys went to the church when they were forty days old. There in God's house the mother and father of each little boy would hold their little baby and thank God for giving them a little baby boy to have for their own. Then the father and mother would leave a gift for God in the church to show how happy they were.

Mary and Joseph did not have very much money to buy a real big gift so they brought two very pretty birds to give to God in the Temple Church.

This happy day was a pretty day. The sun came up and warmed the earth. Perhaps Mary and Joseph had to walk to the city of Jerusalem. They did not care. Most people had to walk everywhere they went in those days so they were used to it. Some people rode on donkeys. They walked slowly along. Joseph carried the two pretty birds that they were taking to give to God. Mary carried the Baby. Little Baby Jesus was real little and tiny yet. He was just a little over one month old. He had not been here on earth very long.

They had walked and walked, and after awhile they saw the big city. Maybe the top of the big Temple Church was so high up in the sky they could even see that. Oh, how happy they were! Now they hurried a little faster. Down this narrow street they went and up that one until they stood in front of God's Church. How beautiful it looked to them! How quiet they must have felt in their hearts as they looked at it!

Every boy and every girl has a house where he or she lives. That is their house. God has a house here on earth, too. It is the church. That is God's house and even if we cannot see Him, God is there in His house. It is not like a house a family has where we can run and play, and jump, and talk any time we want to say something.

God's house is a very special place. God wants His little boys and girls to be very quiet in His house. He wants them to be very still so they can learn about Jesus. God wants us to just talk about Him and His Book and learn stories from the Bible. God's rules are written in the Bible. He tells us how to be good. If we talk, or run in church, God feels very bad.

Mary and Joseph knew how to act in God's house. They went up the steps very softly, just like God was walking right beside them. Into the beautiful Temple Church they went. Inside the door, no one was making any noise, not one noisy sound. Even little Baby Jesus did not cry. He lay very, very still in His mother's arms. He was not going to be noisy in God's house.

While they were inside the Temple Church, Mary and Joseph met a kind old man who loved little baby boys very much. His name was Simeon. This man was old. He had loved God a long time. When he looked at the Baby which Mary held he knew right away it was God's Son, the Baby Jesus. God told him in his heart.

Simeon took Baby Jesus in his arms and held Him. Simeon looked at Baby Jesus, then he told Mary and Joseph, that this little Baby Boy was going to grow up to be a good kind Man. He would teach everyone how to be good and to do what God wants them to do. Simeon thanked God for letting him see Baby Jesus. God had let Simeon know that he would get to see God's Son someday, and here was the Baby Jesus in the Temple Church. Because Simeon loved God so much he even got to hold Baby Jesus.

There was someone else in the Temple Church that got to see Jesus, too. It was a very old lady named Anna. Anna loved God and did all she could to live just like God wanted her to. God let her see Baby Jesus, too. God told her that Baby Jesus was His Son. How happy Anna was to know this!

Anna was so happy that God had told her that Baby Jesus was His Son that she said, "Thank You" to God, for Baby Jesus. Anna went quietly out of the Church. She went to tell all her friends that she had seen Jesus, God's own Son. She told about Mary and Joseph's being in the Temple Church. She must have told everyone how little Baby Jesus looked. Oh, she was so happy!

Mary and Joseph stood together in the Church, oh, so quiet, so quiet. They bowed their heads like God wants us to do when we talk to Him. They said, "Thank You God, for giving us Baby Jesus."

Joseph put down the two pretty birds he had carried all the way from home as a present to God. He left the birds in God's house.

Mary and Joseph walked out of the beautiful Temple Church, into the sunshine. Down the steps they went very, very slowly. They would never make any noise in God's house, even on the steps. Baby Jesus had been to church. It was the first place He ever went away from home. Church is a place for little children as well as grownups to come to learn about Jesus and how to behave in God's house.