

November 20

Luke 2: 41: Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. 42: And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

This is the beginning of the passage where the Lord Jesus secretly stayed back in Jerusalem while Joseph and Mary went a day's journey supposing he was in their company. It is a passage that teaches us about presumption and gives us a picture of our Lord's dealings with his believing people to turn us to him. But first we see an example of a believer's faithfulness to God.

By God's grace, Joseph and Mary were devoted to God, serving God, according to the covenant they were under. Joseph and Mary were very poor. The trip to Jerusalem from Nazareth was very long and very dangerous. But together, as husband and wife, with their child, according to the word of God, they left everything every year and came to worship God, in God's way, at God's time. Since they were poor, were they presuming upon God's grace to make such a long trip? Could they just as easily have worshipped God from home? Were they presuming upon God's protecting grace to leave all for this long trip? No, they were obeying God, not presuming upon God. If they stayed home, forsaking the assembly, then they would have disobeyed God's command, distrusting God to provide, and presumed upon God's grace to keep them though they were walking contrary to God's will. What they did was faith and obedience to God, from a heart of love, trusting God to provide as he promised. (Ex 34: 23-24) They showed the truth that nothing else is as important as the public worship of God in God's ordained way. God's word to us who profess faith in Christ is that we ought to give more heed to the preaching of the gospel than they did under the old covenant. (Heb 2: 1-4; 10: 21-27) If we love and consider our brethren, if we would provoke each other to love and good works then we do so by not forsaking Christ's assembly.

We cannot end this reading without noticing, they came to the house of the Lord with the Lord Jesus. This must have been an extra special time of worship for them. By now, Mary had heard the gospel declared to her several times; they knew something of the truth that Jesus is the Messiah; they were observing the passover with Christ our true Passover Lamb; who put an end to that law forever. The picture this sets before us is the assembling together with God's people, to worship God, in Christ Jesus the Son of God. When we come to the Lord's feast (the preaching of the gospel) we must come in Christ, through Christ, because there is no other way to approach God for sinners. We are unrighteous and God is righteous but Christ is the righteousness God provides for his people. We are unholy and God is holy but Christ is the sanctification God provides in his people. Christ is the only way of approach unto God and acceptance with God. By his own blood he obtained eternal redemption for everyone for whom he died. We draw near to God in the worship of God when our hearts are washed by the Holy Spirit in Christ's blood, so that our hearts are true and resting in Christ, our Passover Lamb. So let us follow the example before us of making no excuses but coming to the Lord house as God commanded and coming in the Lord Jesus.