

animated by peculiar hopes. They had seen visions, they had dreamed dreams, they had heard sounds direct from heaven in connection with the birth and infancy of him who was emphatically the Virgin's Son. When he was twelve years old we find the Holy Family in the Holy City. Immediately after the feast of the Passover is ended, Joseph and Mary, along with a numerous circle of relatives and friends, leave the crowded city that they may return to their own happy home in the town of Nazareth. Little, however, did they know when they went out at the city Gate, and as they descended the hill side that he who was their son, their Saviour, the source of all their joy had tarried behind them. They supposed that he was in the company, otherwise they would not have gone one step of their way homewards, far less would they have travelled a whole day's journey. Having learned that he was not among the group returning to Nazareth, nor in the company of his kinsfolk, they, as might be expected, returned back to Jerusalem, seeking him. The Child Jesus, to Joseph and Mary, was a lost child for three long and weary days. We shall not attempt to describe their thoughts, their feelings, their anxiety, their sorrow and anguish, while seeking their lost son. At last they found him whom their souls loved, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions.

The burden of anxiety which weighed down their drooping spirits was removed when they saw the face of him who was fairer than the the children of men. Their wounded, saddened hearts were gladdened when they heard the sweet voice of him, into whose lips grace was poured, and who spake as never child spake.

We are not informed what questions the Rabbins put to Jesus, neither are we informed what questions he asked in return. Here, as in many other instances, Scripture is perfectly silent; but one thing we know, all who heard this young Teacher of teachers in the Temple were astonished at his understanding and answers.

The question, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us?" which