

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Luke 1:30

*"And the angel said unto her, 'Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.'"*

Luke 2:29

*"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word."*

Luke 2:49

*"And he said unto them, 'How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?'"*

For older folk some of the wording of the Gospel in the King James Bible sticks in the memory for life. These quotations highlight the joy of Simeon but also the bewilderment of Mary.

When the angel had visited her before Jesus's birth she at first questioned the announcement before obeying the call but probably remained a little puzzled. Soon after she visits Elizabeth wife of Zechariah who having just become pregnant unexpectedly blesses Mary and her unborn child saying *"But why am I so favoured, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"* (Luke 1:43) Mary must have had an inkling by then that she was carrying a special child.

When Jesus was 8 days old he was presented for circumcision as was the custom at that time. There he is seen and held by Simeon, a devout man who recognises who Jesus is to become and prophesises that he is destined for great things but also much agony. Jesus's parents are amazed and probably incredulous at what he tells them.

Jesus, aged 12 on the verge of manhood begins the natural process of separating from parental control. He went dutifully with his parents to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover but went missing on the return home. Mary, his mother found him in the temple courts listening to and questioning the learned rabbis who always gathered for religious discussion on these occasions. Mary chides him for worrying his parents but he replies *'wist ye not...'* (Don't you understand...). Mary was puzzled about what he meant by saying *'...about my father's business.'* Was that Joseph or God? Did she link these words with the events at Jesus's birth? Or those spoken by Elizabeth and Simeon?

There must have been many occasions between these events and the beginning of Jesus's ministry when Mary and Joseph wondered and worried about the future but they accepted the situation even though his death on the cross must have been very distressing and confusing.

We too might be confused by the meaning of it all but, like Mary we should remain steadfast in our faith in the words of the Gospel. Then redemption and everlasting life will be ours if we obey and believe.