

Luke 2:48

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

Analysis

Mary's response—'Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing'—reveals her maternal distress but also her limited understanding. She refers to Joseph as 'thy father,' yet Jesus' response corrects this, pointing to His true Father. Mary's natural anxiety is understandable, but she hadn't yet fully grasped Jesus' unique identity and mission. This incident marks a transition—Jesus' increasing awareness of His divine sonship begins to create tension with normal family expectations.

Historical Context

In first-century Jewish culture, a son's primary duty was obedience to parents. Mary's rebuke ('why hast thou thus dealt with us?') was legitimate by cultural standards—Jesus had caused His parents serious distress by remaining behind without informing them. The reference to 'sorrowing' (Greek 'odynōmenoi,' ὀδυνώμενοι, suffering pain/anguish) emphasizes their emotional torment. That Jesus prioritized His Father's business over His parents' wishes challenged normal filial duty, hinting that His higher allegiance to God would sometimes override earthly relationships.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Mary's reference to Joseph as Jesus' father contrast with Jesus' true identity, and what does this misunderstanding reveal?
2. What does this incident teach about the tension between earthly family relationships and ultimate allegiance to God?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ιδόντες	αὐτοῦ	ἐξεπλάγησαν	καὶ	πρὸς	αὐτοῦ	ἡ
And	when they saw	him	they were amazed	And	unto	him	G3588
G2532	G1492	G846	G1605	G2532	G4314	G846	
μήτηρ	αὐτοῦ	εἶπεν	Τέκνον	τί	ἐποίησας	ἡμῖν	οὕτως
mother	him	said	Son	why	dealt	with us	thus
G3384	G846	G2036	G5043	G5101	G4160	G2254	G3779
ἰδοῦ,	ὁ	πατήρ	σου	κάγώ	ὁδυνώμενοι	ἐζητοῦμέν	σε
behold	G3588	father	thy	and I	sorrowing	have sought	thee
G2400		G3962	G4675	G2504	G3600	G2212	G4571

Additional Cross-References

Luke 2:49 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?