

Learning with Jesus

1-20

—Imaginary stories of children
living around and learning from Jesus during His younger years

By: CQ

Introduction

Did you ever wonder what it would be like to be living in times past, at the time when Jesus was a boy?

Did you ever wish you could have been one of His friends?

Let's take a trip back to those times, and imagine that we are there, living in Nazareth.

What might it have been like? What might He have helped to teach and show you, as you played and grew up together?

Helping and Caring

Sarah had just finished feeding the animals in their family's small farm, and now she was headed down to the lake to wash out the clothes. The basket felt heavy and she was tired.

Just then she heard a voice that cheered her. "Shall I help you to carry that to the lake, Sarah?"

With gratefulness she handed it over to Jesus, who was taking his brothers and sisters for a walk, while their mother prepared the meal and cared for the youngest.

Sarah then had a race with the children to the water's edge.

"Please don't get wet!" Jesus was heard to say, knowing the evening was soon coming and they didn't have many extra clothes to put on.

It would be chilly. He cared for His brothers and sisters well. His mother was depending on Him.

When Jesus arrived at the lake with the basket of laundry, Sarah thanked Him, and began her job of washing.

"Thank you," she said. "It was pretty heavy for me."

"I'm glad I could help," Jesus said, and continued the game of rock skipping that the other children had begun.

Jesus' sisters were happy for time to talk with their friend, Sarah, and following their brother's example of kindness, helped her wash out the clothes, while they chatted about this and that.

The boys then started some racing games with Jesus, and the sound of laughter and running was heard all around.

“It must be nice to be Jesus’ sisters,” Sarah said. “He must be the best brother of all!”

“We love Him so much,” the girls replied. “Sometimes He’s busy, and can’t always do things with us. He has a lot to do, since He is the eldest. But He likes to help anyone He can. Mother really needs His help. He’s a good hard worker and helper, but likes to have fun playing too. And we are glad for the times we get to play with Him. He’s the best!” His sisters commented.

“Are you and the girls done with the washing?” Jesus came over to ask, with a bunch of tired-from-running boys.

“Yes, we just finished now,” Sarah replied.

“We’re going home now, and I could carry it back, if you like.” Jesus offered.

“Oh, that would be wonderful. Usually I have a little wagon that I use to pull it, but it’s broken. I didn’t know how I was going to do the carrying part.

“It’s even heavier now that it’s all wet!” Sarah explained.

“We could help fix the wagon!” the boys said, who had gathered around. “Jesus could tell us what to do.”

Sarah was delighted, and the boys were happy for an opportunity to get to work in the carpentry shed.

“Alright!” said Jesus.

“I think we have the time to do it now. Why don’t you boys go with Sarah to get it, and bring it to our workshop. I’ll bring the clothes to her house, and bring the girls home.”

“Yeah!” said the boys and off they went to get and carry, pull, drag, and whatever else they could do to bring the broken wagon to their place. Getting to work on a project with Jesus was always fun.

The next day the team of boys and girls, with Jesus of course, went over to Sarah’s house to deliver the fixed wagon.

Sarah and her family were very grateful! “Thank you all so much!” they said again and again.

“Here, this is for your kind work!” said Sarah’s mother, handing them a bowl of figs, as well as a bag of ground wheat.

“Take these to your mother, and tell her our thanks as well.”

The children knew these were special gifts. It took a long time to grow grain, to thresh it, and to grind it. And the figs were a treat too.

Neither of the families had all that much to spare. It was a kind, generous and thoughtful gift.

Jesus wanted to say, “Oh, that’s fine, please keep it for your family. You need it too!” But it would have been of no use.

Sarah’s mother was kind-hearted and insisted on Jesus’ family having what they needed too.

“Thank you so very much!” Jesus and his brothers and sisters all said, and brought the gifts to their mother.

“Here, Mother!” Jesus said.

Mary was so very surprised. “Where did you get those?”

“Remember the wagon that we fixed yesterday, for Sarah’s family?” Jesus asked.

Mary nodded.

“And the laundry we helped to wash and carry!” added the girls.

“Sarah’s family offered these in return for our kindness,” Jesus said.

It was just what they needed! God had used their loving hearts to help others in need, and now, through kindness given back, they had received food for their next meal.

“Praise God!” Mary exclaimed.

Grapes of Gentleness

Jude, a childhood friend of Jesus, tells of one day in the vineyard:

The hot sun was beginning to set. This was our favourite time to play. My sister Tamara and I, along with our neighbour friends met in the central courtyard, while our mothers prepared the supper.

Suddenly Tamara leapt with joy. “Jesus is here!” she exclaimed.

We asked our mothers if we could go to the nearby vineyard. It belonged to my uncle, and we could snack on the ripening grapes as we played. We always enjoyed it when Jesus was with us.

As Tamara and I walked up the road, I saw Jesus holding the hand of a little child who wanted to come along.

He always seemed to notice the youngest ones, and took great care to see that no harm came to them. He was never too busy in play to stop and help the littlest children.

“Tamara,” I said. “I want to be like Jesus.”

“Yes, Jude,” she agreed. “He’s so kind to those who are smaller, or in need of care.”

“And He doesn’t seem to mind whether He is first, or if He wins a game. He’d rather that all of us are safe and happy, and treating each other well.” I added.

“He doesn’t act roughly, or speak harshly to others. Even if someone taunts Him to do something unkind, He won’t do it.” Tamara said.

“Jesus shows gentle care to animals too.” I said, remembering a time when He helped to rescue a baby sparrow that had fallen from its nest.

Just then Zach and Jordan, who were walking ahead of us all, began an argument. Jesus shook his head, looked back at us and said, “When you use force and anger to try to get someone to agree with you, it’s like offering sour grapes. But gentle words and kind deeds are received and enjoyed like sweet ripe grapes.”

At the vineyard Jesus called Zach and Jordan. He jokingly offered them some grapes that were unripe. They made a face imagining how sour they would taste. Jesus then gave them the best ones He could find. The boys gladly ate them, while Jesus explained:

“Gentle speech and actions makes others happy to agree, and grateful for your friendship. When our tongues and hands are like these sweet grapes, others are more willing to consider our feelings and opinions.”

We all listened intently while Jesus continued,

“People are also like grapes, with feelings—like the thin skin—that can be easily hurt. They need to be treated with care and gentleness.”

Jesus' way of teaching, and what He showed by example, made it easy to learn.

The Wooden Chest

Nehemiah, a childhood friend of Jesus, tells of one interesting evening:

It was winter, when the sun sets early, the stars come out to play, and around the fire place is the favoured spot to be. My cousin Samuel and I ventured away for a walk under the stars, as the brilliant moon was rising over the hills.

"Let's go see what's happening over there." I offered. We made our way to a small shed, with a few oil lamps burning.

"Seems someone is working there. Let's see what they are doing." Samuel said, eager for something to amuse us.

There was a father and three boys, one older and two younger. They seemed to be building something out of wood scraps they'd found. We decided to sit quietly near the window and watch.

Joseph, the father, was offering suggestions and giving advice, or helping with a tool. The older child, Jesus, with His eager brothers Joses and Simon, was trying to make a wooden chest.

We observed the delight on the young boys' faces, being allowed to "work" in the shed. The time with their father and older brother was special to them.

Clearly, it would have been easier for Jesus to work on His own with His father. But as we watched we noticed the patience Jesus had.

Joses was trying to fit the wood together just right but wasn't using the correct pieces that had been cut for that part of the wooden chest. Jesus just smiled, and gave him time to notice it for himself. It was obvious that Joses was trying to do this part alone.

When he was ready for help, Jesus offered the right piece. It worked better now. Joses smiled. It was nice working with his older brother. He was so patient, even when others didn't do things just right. Being together and having a nice time was important to Him.

We continued watching from the window. Not only were we learning carpentry, but how to get along well with others, and how to have patience.

It was Simon's turn to help. It was his job to sand the chest, so there wouldn't be rough surfaces.

"Do I have to do this?" He asked. It seemed like a long job. He just wanted the chest to be done right away, imagining how happy his mother would be to have it all complete and ready to use.

"I'll help you," Jesus offered. "It'll go faster that way. But we must sometimes do these time-consuming and tedious jobs, if we want the best result. It takes time and hard work. But wouldn't you rather do that, than get a splinter? Or have mother get one?"

Simon didn't want anyone to get hurt while using their new, strong chest. Thinking of what might happen if he were to be too impatient, helped him to slow down and do the job well.

At last the wooden chest was complete.

They all clapped. Joses and Simon carried it excitedly out to show it to their mother. With the job done we prepared to leave and go to bed for the night. But just then Jesus noticed us.

“Come in,” He said warmly, as He beckoned us to come into the work shed.

We got to see all the tools as He showed them to us, as well as the projects that were being worked on, but were only part of the way completed.

“If you want to come tomorrow night, you could help us, if you like,” Jesus said.

Samuel and I were delighted. Happily we skipped off to our house. We could hardly wait to work on a project with Jesus. He was the best and most patient teacher and helper we had known.

We knew we’d learn not only how to build and make things, but also the more important lessons that Jesus was able to teach us—the things that helped us to grow in character and in love.

Humble Grains of Kindness

Samuel, a childhood friend of Jesus, tells of one harvest day:

“Nehemiah, how would you like to come out to the field with me? Father, Uncle and the others are harvesting the barley.

We could help out a bit, and learn from watching them. Perhaps we can bring water to the workmen. It’s not an easy job, you know. But if they didn’t do it, we wouldn’t have much to eat in the coming year,” I asked my cousin.

“Well, I’d like to, but I’ve also promised my sister that I would help her finish the chores early, so we could have time to play with Jesus and our friends in the already harvested field, over near the hill,” Nehemiah replied.

“Alright, then. Perhaps afterwards I could join you for play? I’ll help in the field first, and then I’ll see you later,” I said and headed in that direction.

Just as I was walking I met Jesus on my way.

“It’s a good idea to help out. Even if all you can do is bring water to the workmen.” Jesus said, when I told him what I was going to do.

“May I join you?” He asked.

“Of course!” I was very happy to have a friend to accompany me, and especially such a special one. We hauled water from the well, and served it out under a shady tree for those who were thirsty to come and drink it when they could.

Jesus suggested that we ask if we could pick up the grain that fell, to gather it up and give it to our families.

Together it was fun. We weren’t doing anything very great, nothing that others would have cheered us for, as if we’d won some race or done some amazing feat. But doing the humble, simple things brings special rewards our way.

The smiles from those working hard, thanking us for the water, made us feel happy that we’d done an act of kindness, even if it was just a lowly little job.

The hugs from our mothers for bringing back the grain that we’d gathered made us glad.

After, as we walked to the nearby field for play with our friends, Jesus said,

“Remember the barley that we helped to collect? Each little seed seems so small, and could be

considered unimportant.

“But when you add them all together, it makes a big harvest that feeds many. In the same way, deeds of thoughtfulness may seem small and humble, but when done with a kind heart, they add up to a feast of love, shared by all whose lives you touched. Remember that.” Jesus said to me.

And I did. The next time my mother asked me to do something that seemed small, and not very exciting—like washing the dirty dishes, or hanging out the wet clothes—I remembered the field of barley.

This little job might be just like one humble seed. But if I do it, and whatever else I can do to show love and kindness, our lives will be filled with happiness, and enriched with love. These are more precious than the finest things found on Earth.

Loads of Love

Zach, a childhood friend of Jesus, tells us this next story:

“Could you please help me with one more thing?” Jesus heard his tired mother say, as He was just about to walk out the door for His late-afternoon stroll.

He so looked forward to this time of day, when He could relax out in nature, and take a break from His otherwise busy life.

Had I been in His situation, with lots to do each day, and many brothers and sisters to care for, I might have had a hard time staying longer to do yet another job.

I had dropped by to see him, and was about to leave when I heard His mother calling Him.

I wondered what He would do. But rather than acting impatiently, Jesus calmly responded, “Yes, Mother?”

He was the oldest and was depended on for so much.

“Could you please help me to lift this heavy basket on to the horse cart? I just don’t have the strength to do it.”

“Of course, Mother,” He said. “That’s what I’m here for, to help you!”

Mary gave her son a hug and thanked Him. “Now off you go. Enjoy your time away for a bit,” she said with a smile of thankfulness.

I caught up with Him as He headed out to the nearby hill.

“You’re so kind to your family. Of course we have to obey what our parents tell us to do. But the way you do it, Jesus, shows that you aren’t just obeying because you have to, but because you love them.”

“That’s what makes work easier,” Jesus said. “When you do something out of love, and you think about how much you love someone and want to please them. Then it’s almost like it’s not work anymore.”

“Really?” I responded. “I’ll have to think about that—and try it out too. But I think it would be hard if I was really tired and still had to do something.”

“Well,” Jesus replied. “Our mothers and fathers have helped us with so much as we were young—and still do so much for us—most of the time when they are so tired. Why do they do it? —Because

they love us.

“They show their love to us in more ways than we could to them. So helping with the jobs we can do, is one way to say, ‘Thank you’ to them for all that they have done and continue to do.

“Also, they will be less tired if we help in all the ways we can. We’ll be a happier family, because they won’t feel like they have to do all the work.”

“Okay then! I guess I’ll be off to see if my mum needs my help. See you later!” I said to Jesus, while He walked on for His quiet time on the hill.

Little Sunrays

It was a cold and frosty morning. Jesus sat outside to see the sunrise, His cloak pulled around Him warmly. He was a young man now, 14 years of age.

He rubbed His cold hands, and then folded them in prayer. His breath could be seen as He whispered a prayer for His day.

As the sun peered over the horizon, it was time to get on with the jobs of the day. Making sure the fire was going so His mother could start the cooking was the first task, followed by bringing water from the cistern into the house for washing.

“You look peaceful—yet pensive—today,” said His mother, giving Him a hug, knowing there was probably a lot on His mind.

“I watched the sun rise, and had time in prayer with My Father in Heaven,” Jesus replied.

Just then a knock came at the door. It was Ezra, a kind elderly neighbour.

“I brought you some fresh bread that my wife baked,” he said, handing a small basket to Mary.

“That’s so very kind of you,” she said.

“Your boy has been a wonderful help to us too.” Ezra added.

“Oh?” Mary wondered.

“Whenever He passes our way, He stops to help if there is a need. He doesn’t take long, as to not keep you and your family waiting for Him. But He seems to spare time every so often to lend a hand. He does it cheerfully and with a kind heart. I wanted to repay you all for your kindness,” Ezra explained.

Mary put her arm on Jesus’ shoulder and smiled, like she was real pleased.

“Mummy, can you help me?” came the morning pleas from the younger children. There was much to do.

“I’ll go,” Jesus said, leaving His mother to chat, and prepare breakfast.

“Jesus,” said His little sister. “I always like it when You come to help me. You are the best big brother in the whole world!”

Jesus smiled. It felt good to be appreciated. It wasn’t always that people thanked Him for all that He did throughout the day. But He tried to do whatever He saw needed to be done, when He had the time and felt it was the right thing to do. The town around Him was a happier place because of it.

“Little deeds of kindness and care,” He told His brothers and sisters, “are like rays of sunlight. They make the plants of our lives to grow and bear fruit for us and others. When you share the sunshine of care with others, you’ll reap the benefits sooner or later.”

Everyone nodded, as they shared the bread their neighbour Ezra brought—as a result of Jesus’ kindness to him and to his wife.

The Sparrow in the Tree

Esther was a cute little girl, with curly dark brown hair. She had a smile ready to share with those who passed her way.

She couldn’t get around like others; she had to sit or be carried around from place to place. She couldn’t walk. But that didn’t steal away the happiness in her soul, like a bubbling stream sparkling in the sun’s rays.

One day she told her friend Dilliah, who’d come to spend some time with her now, under the shade of the tree, “Do you know why I’m content, even though I can’t walk and get around as you do?”

Dilliah had often wondered about this.

“You always seem to find your smile, even on the hottest days, or when people around you are too busy to even notice you are there.

“What keeps you content, and filled with praise to God, even though things aren’t easy for you?”

“Look up in this tree!” Esther said.

“See that little bird on that branch, way up high?” Esther continued.

Dilliah looked hard, and then at last spotted it, “Ah, yes, there it is! How cute!”

“Well, one day I was sitting here, watching everyone moving here and there. I saw how they were able to walk and get whatever they needed, without having to wait for others to help them.

On that day, Jesus came to visit me. He has the friendliest nature, and such a kind heart.

“I think He must have sensed that I was starting to feel sad about my situation. We sat here under this very tree and looked up. That day we noticed ten sparrows in it.

“We played a game of finding and counting them all, as well as watching them flying here and there to gather food. And Jesus reminded me about how special we all are to God. He knows each one of us.

“We can’t fly like the birds—that’s their job. It’s what suits them. I can’t walk, but I can be content with how I have been made. I can do what God has made me to do.”

“And what is that?” Dilliah asked. “What has God made you for, and how can your being crippled help you to do it?”

“Jesus told me that there isn’t a single person on this world that doesn’t need prayer, or a kind word, or a look that will cheer them.

“And most people are too busy going here and there, and doing this and that, in their active lives, to remember to help each other in these important ways. But he said, I could do just that!

“If I pray for each person I see; if I smile at each one that looks my way; if my words are filled with hope and kindness when talking with those who stop by, then it will give them joy, strength, and courage to carry on.

“This town will be filled with laughter instead of tears. Instead of struggling with the heavy load of work, people will do it with joy, knowing that God sees and cares for them. I can talk to the children. I can tell them about God’s love and care.

“Oh, Dilliah, don’t you see there is so much that I can do, and that needs to be done? I may be the only one today that has the time to do these things. See, we each have our place, and each can do a big and important job for God.”

“So every time you see a sparrow, it reminds you of what Jesus told you?” Dilliah asked.

“Yes, it helps me to smile, to sing a song of praise, and to cheerfully do what I can do—and it does make a difference. Did you notice the neighbour over there, the one who used to always be angry about something? He now has a smile as he whistles about his work.

“God blessed his crops, and his family, and those around him are also starting to cheer up more. I am helping! And it feels wonderful. So that’s why I can smile. God made me to be just what I am, and I am glad He can use me to help others.”

“Thanks for talking to me,” Dilliah said. “You’ve helped me too,” she said, wiping a few tears from her eyes. “You’ve warmed my heart and reminded me of God’s special love and care for me as well.”

Esther gave her a hug, and waved as Dilliah ran off to help fill her place as well, with more joy than before. Esther smiled. It felt good to encourage a friend, just as Jesus had encouraged her too.

The Harp

The harp plays such beautiful music, that the listener almost feels it’s singing to them the melodies plucked from its strings.

On one particularly hot afternoon in Palestine a boy came into the house of his aging uncle, who was a skilled musician. He sat at his uncle’s feet, while he played a longing yet beautiful type of song.

It told of a coming Healer and Saviour, a Shepherd, a King, the Promised One.

The notes of the harp rang out with joy and wonder, as if announcing or celebrating the present arrival of such a one, though the words expressed the yearning, the desire, for this, God’s chosen One, to come and soothe, heal and save mankind.

When the song ended, the boy asked, “Uncle, when will this One come?”

And with a far-away look on his face, his uncle said, “I don’t know, my boy.” Then he looked down and smiled with a ray of hope, “Maybe in your lifetime...”

Not too long after this boy’s family had to travel. There was to be a census, a time of taxing. Everyone had to go to the birthplaces of their fathers.

It was a difficult time for all. Travel wasn’t easy and they were without the comforts of their home and village; father’s couldn’t continue their trades as usual and mothers had to find new places for securing food and water for their families.

Jonas’ family had to go to a place called Bethlehem, along with the many others who travelled there too. His family stayed there for awhile with relatives before returning home.

On one dark night when they were in Bethlehem, as they were sitting around a fire, a group of lively shepherds came running nearby, proclaiming something incredible. Could it be true, what he

heard them say?

They were telling everyone about a vision of angels announcing the arrival of the promised Messiah!

This is what his old uncle was often singing about, putting to music ancient prophecies and scriptures describing the event.

Could it be so, here and now, right where they were? He had to find out. Jonas ran to catch up with this happy bunch of men, asking them exactly who they had seen.

The shepherds told of the angels, and of the baby they were honoured to see that very night. Jonas' older brother had run to catch up as well.

"Let's go and peek in to see this Baby!" Jonas suggested, and off they ran, in the direction the shepherds had spoken of. And it was just like they'd been told.

Not wanting to disturb Mary and the Baby, the boys found a small window, and by the light of the dim lantern light they saw little Jesus sleeping, snuggled in the manger.

The boys waved, and then returned joyfully to their family.

Jonas knew that at that moment it had finally come to pass. A smile beamed on his face that he just couldn't hide.

He felt a wellspring of joy inside. He knew now that no matter how difficult things in his and other's lives were, they were all going to get better, from this day onward.

Maybe not everything would change in all the ways that would make life more comfortable. Jesus wasn't here to give out riches to each person, or to force everyone to behave in the kind and loving ways that would be best.

But somehow Jonas knew that Jesus' mission of saving and healing both hearts and bodies, would affect the lives of multitudes the world over, from that day forward. And he was glad to be around at the time of Jesus' arrival.

It was many years before Jonas heard the happy news, that Jesus was travelling around, doing just that: helping, healing, encouraging, and bringing forgiveness to all who asked.

One happy day he saw a large group of people travelling up a mountain, he wondered just where they were going. Then he saw a man, who he found out was Jesus. That's who they were all going to hear speak.

"His words are amazing!" the people were saying. They all wanted to hear what He had to say. And that day there was a very special talk that Jesus gave, ending with a great free meal of loaves and fishes.

Jonas was there that day, so glad to have had the opportunity to hear Jesus speak and get to partake of a miracle too!

Later on, after Jesus had given His gift of love and life, and had risen from the dead and then ascended up to Heaven again, Jonas was among another crowd listening to an important message.

He heard when Peter stood up and told them all of Jesus' life, and how He rose from the grave, and would forgive and save them all, if they accepted His gift of love.

Jonas received this news gladly, and became part of the new team of disciples, bringing the news of His arrival, His love, and salvation to many.

Peaceful Moments

The sun was starting to set, and Mary was busy trying to finish grinding some wheat. It was hard work. Joab was standing nearby hoping to catch a few moments of play with Jesus' younger brothers. He liked playing with them.

"I'll see if any of them can come," offered Jesus. It was the time of day when most children were either playing or busy helping with the preparations for the meal at the end of the day, and doing evening chores.

A few boys bounded happily off in Joab's direction, enjoying what was left of the sun's light.

Jesus took the rest of His young siblings for washing and a story, giving his mother a chance to finish up her work.

"Can you please tell us a story about someone who lived long ago?" asked one of His little sisters.

"All right," said Jesus. "But first you must wash your face, hands, and feet, and get your little cloak on. It will be dark and cold soon."

The happy and eager children did just as their older brother asked, and were back within minutes, settling down for a good story.

"Long ago, before you ever set foot on a grassy hill..." Jesus began, and told of the creation of the world, the first people to live on earth, and what the world was like in the beginning. Each one sat listening with rapt attention.

Their brother Jesus had a way to tell stories that captivated their attention each and every time. He spoke in such a way that, even if it was a story they knew well, it was as interesting as if it was the first time they heard it.

Before long Joab and the others were back. Seeing that a story was being told, they quietly and eagerly joined in, listening intently and laughing along with the others.

Jesus kept them all interested for long enough that by the time the story was over there was a simple meal prepared.

After saying a prayer, they ate with grateful hearts, before going to bed for the night.

Before going to sleep, Jesus first said good night to each of His brothers and sisters, and then spent a bit of time sitting out under the stars, to pray and commune with His Father in Heaven.

It wasn't always easy being the eldest. It required a lot of work to care for everyone, as well as learning the trade of a carpenter. But the moments spent alone in prayer, in quietness of heart, gave Him the reassurance that everything would work out well.

And the peace He received during those times alone with His Father in Heaven made a difference to His family as well. He passed on the faith and peace that was given to Him in those moments.

Flowers Fade—Love is Forever

Jesus' sister came running to Him happily, bringing a wild flower she'd picked. She showed it to her big brother and He smiled at her, then she skipped off happily to set it in the house.

The next day, however, it had withered. "What happened to my flower?" she asked sadly, noticing that it was not as bright as it had been the day before.

"Flowers don't last—not like you do! You are like a wonderful flower. And God loves you so much. He made you and you will last a long time—much longer than a pretty little flower.

“More flowers will grow, and you can pick them again. But all flowers, and all grass and plants will have a time to live and a time to fade,” Jesus explained.

It was nice to have a big brother to go to when things were difficult or made her sad, His little sister thought. Jesus had faith and didn't get too worried about things that were lost or gone.

Somehow He seemed to know that the best things would last forever. —Like God's love and care, and His Words and promises! And the people God made who loved Him would keep on living with Him, forever, no matter what happened on Earth.

“It's time to go!” they heard their mother Mary say. The family was off for a picnic with some neighbours.

They'd planned to walk to a nearby hill, play on the hillside, and eat some of the fresh foods they had harvested from their gardens.

“I have more flowers!” Jesus' sister exclaimed later as she came running to Him with a handful of freshly picked flowers she'd collected while on their picnic. Jesus smiled and said,

“There's always something else to cheer us. When something is gone, something else comes and takes its place. We have room then in our heart for new joys.”

His little sister skipped happily off in the sunlight.

“Children grow and time passes. It's nice to enjoy them while they're here—before adulthood takes them on to new challenges.” Mary was saying, looking in Jesus' direction.

It seemed she knew that one day He too would be on a different path, doing new things, and bringing to the World salvation, healing, and God's Words of love and life. Jesus understood what His mother was saying and was trying to prepare herself for. He knew it wasn't easy to have people you love move away, or move on from your company, or pass away.

People want to believe that those they love will be with them forever. It's hard to let go of something special to you—like a friend, a brother or sister, a parent, or a child.

Jesus came and put His arms around His mother and said. “My love for you will be forever.” He reassured her that no matter what happened for awhile on Earth, He'd always love her.

What happens on Earth is only for a very short time, compared to the wonderful things those who love God will get to experience for eternity. Life with God will go on forever, and those we love or miss will be near us again.

Mary shed a tear. She knew one day she would miss her big boy Jesus. He would be a grown man, and have a big job to do. But she also knew that what He said was true—love would go on and on. It was something that would never fade or come to an end.

Love is from God, and He never ends. And because she would share Jesus with others, and He would one day go and teach, preach, heal, and bring God's forgiveness to everyone, in the end she'd get so much more in return. —Great rewards in Heaven, as well as God's special love forever. She'd be able to see Jesus then in Heaven, and be with Him always.

Giving up someone you love to do a job God wants them to do will bring you great rewards—and you'll get to be with them again, too—for eternity one day!

Clay

“What are you doing?” asked Jordan, who was always a curious child.

Jesus was kneeling down in the dirt and had His hands all muddy. He seemed to be collecting something and was placing it in a bag.

“I’ve found some clay and wanted to bring it home. Perhaps you’d like to come and watch me make something out of it?” Jesus suggested.

So off they went to Jesus’ house and found a corner where they could work.

“We’ll need a bit of water and a flat stone to work on,” Jesus said.

“I’ll get some water!” said Jordon, happy to participate in the project. Meanwhile Jesus searched the grounds for the perfect rock.

It took a bit of effort to get the rock moving and into position in the place they had chosen to work, shaded from the bright sun.

“The clay will need to be wet in order for us to form it into shape. Too much direct sunlight will dry it out faster, and make it harden. We don’t want too much water either, as then it will be too soft to shape it,” Jesus explained.

First they worked on mixing the clay into a smooth mouldable consistency. Once it was ready they divided it between them so that each had a portion to work with.

“What are you going to make, Jesus?” Jordan, His young friend asked.

“Hmm, I was thinking I’d try to make a small clay cup. It’s my sister’s birthday next week, and perhaps I could give it to her as a gift,” Jesus answered.

“I think I want to make a set of little balls to play a game with my friends, once the clay dries of course,” said the boy.

Before long the objects were made and Mary offered to bake them.

“This is lovely!” she said to Jesus, admiring his clay creation. “And I think you and your friends will have a lot of fun together with these clay toys,” she said to Jordan. “Perhaps Jesus can come and bring them to you later on when they are finished baking and have cooled down,” she offered.

“Thank you,” the boy said, waving goodbye, happily skipping off to find his friends and tell them about making his new clay toys.

That evening before the meal, Jesus brought the clay balls to Jordan. “Here you go!” he said, handing them to the boy.

“Thanks!” Jordan said, taking them carefully, so they wouldn’t drop.

“We are kind of like clay, in a way,” Jesus then said.

“We need the water of God’s Word to help us take shape. We need to let God change us into whatever He needs us to be, in order to be useful and do good.

“Sometimes we have hard times and difficulties, just like the hot oven had to bake the clay to make it be as strong as it needed to be. But it was good in the end, right?”

“God can give us just what we need at just the right time, and make our lives good, beautiful, useful and even fun if we let Him be the One to hold us and shape us and make us into what He knows is best.”

Jesus’ friend nodded and then said, “Let’s go and try this game, shall we? You can come along too, Jesus, if You like! After all, You shared the clay and helped me to make it!”

And the happy group of friends enjoyed a fun game.

Have Faith

“Mother, is Uncle Zebulon here yet? Will he forget to bring his horse? Will he only let Simeon try it out?” Miriam seemed to ask a question every few minutes.

“Have faith. He said he would come, and give you both a turn on his horse,” her mother said. “Why don’t you go play with your friends while waiting?”

Just then Simeon came running with a handful of nuts he’d gathered from the almond tree. “Mother, these are for you!” he said, then grabbed his sister’s hand, and off they ran.

“Where are we going?” Miriam asked breathlessly. “Why do we have to go so fast?” Simeon replied, “To see our friend Jesus. He’s at the well with His family—right now.”

Simeon needn’t have worried that his friend would be gone. Filling up the water pots takes a long while. “I’m sorry I hurried you, sister. I should have trusted that Jesus and His family would still be here.”

“That’s okay, brother, I’m learning faith too. It’s hard waiting for things sometimes!” she said, as she went over to Jesus, who was waving at them.

“It’s so nice to see You!” He said, while filling a pot. “Come to our house. I’ll need to be there for now. My brother has hurt himself, and needs care.”

Miriam, being the kind-hearted girl that she was, would be happy to help care for Jesus’ brother. “I’ll fetch him whatever he needs!” she said eagerly.

Joses wasn’t hurt badly, but he couldn’t walk. He had fallen and hurt his ankle. Miriam brought him pillows and a cup of water.

“Will I ever be able to run and play again?” Joses asked Jesus. It seemed like so long already that he’d been unable to walk—even though it had hardly been a day.

“Of course you will, Joses. Have faith!” Jesus replied. “Remember father told us about King Hezekiah, Captain Naaman, and others who God healed?”

Joses nodded.

“Jesus,” His mother called, and then said in a soft voice, “It seems like we have run out of food. I know God will provide. I’m just not sure what to do.”

“We will have faith, Mother. God blesses faith! Let us pray!” Together Jesus’ family and the visiting friends asked God for food and for Joses’ healing.

The sound of a trotting horse startled them, and a man yelled out, “Simeon! Miriam!”

Could that be Uncle Zebulon? Here already? They ran out to see.

There was a jolly man sitting on a brown and white horse. “Your mother said I might find you here!” he said getting off his horse.

Uncle Zebulon was carrying a bag of grain, a bottle of oil, and a large cluster of grapes. “These are for you.” He handed them to a very surprised Mary!

Everyone smiled. God had answered so quickly. “You were right!” said Miriam in a whisper to Jesus. “God blesses faith. He will care for us all.”

Saying goodbye to Jesus and His family, Simeon and Miriam sat up on the horse together, and rode home with Uncle Zebulon.

“This is the best day in my life!” Miriam shouted.

“I’m glad we learned from Jesus to have faith, to pray, and to trust,” added Simeon. And as they waved good-bye once more, they saw Joses at the door, standing and waving, too!

A Happy Day

“On your marks, get set, go!” A group of eager boys chanted together and were off on their race.

“Where are they running to?” Samantha asked her friend, Dina. “Over to the base of that hill. My brother wanted to see who was the fastest.”

“Huff, puff! We’re exhausted!” Jubal flopped down, “and very thirsty!” The sun was still burning down.

“Why don’t we take a rest under this tree?” suggested Jesus. “We don’t want to overdo ourselves in heat like this.”

“I wish I had won. I want to try again!” Jubal thought and suddenly sprung to his feet before taking a break.

“I’ll race you again!” shouted Aaron, and off they dashed.

Jesus just shook his head. “Too much sun will make them feel unwell.”

As Jubal finally came to rest and get a drink of water, he lamented,

“My head hurts. Even though I won the race this time, I wish I would have stopped before. I don’t feel well.”

“Ha, ha! Hee, hee!” squealed a laughing little child. Jubal and Dina’s younger sister had grabbed a large cluster of raisins, and was trying to eat them all.

“That was for all of us to share! Sarah, come back here!” Jubal said chasing and catching up with her.

“You can’t have them all right now.”

Sarah handed them to her older brother, and came to sit under the tree. Jesus gave her a smile.

“To stop when you’ve had enough, and not try to have everything you want, all at the same time shows moderation and takes self-control.” Jesus explained.

Slosh, slosh! Dina and Samantha struggled to bring a big jug of water and a few cups for the boys to share.

Grateful boys grabbed and tried to reach for it, all at once.

“I need some!” They all were saying.

Though very thirsty Himself, Jesus handed a cup to Jubal and Aaron first, and the rest of the boys calmed down to wait their turn.

“Help!! Ahh!” came the sudden desperate cry, startling them all! Their neighbour’s horse had suddenly taken off on a run, on its own, pulling a wagonload of hay behind it.

Jubal’s father quickly jumped on their horse, and galloped after it. He grabbed hold of the runaway horse’s reigns, and slowed it down.

“Yay!” The children who were all watching intently clapped and cheered. “Father’s great!” exclaimed Dina. “He sure knows how to control the horses.”

Jubal smiled. He looked at the horse, at Sarah, and at his friends. He had learned something today.

“Moderation and self-control are important—if you want to have a happy day!” Jubal thought.

Practicing Kindness

Jesus was racing along the shore with His brothers and sisters, while Mary prepared their picnic.

One of the little ones let out a cry, as she stepped on something sharp. Jesus picked her up and carried her over to their mother. She always seemed to know what to do to make a little one feel better.

“There now, are you alright?” she said.

Jesus was glad for such a kind and caring mother. He loved to see children getting good care. He was older and stronger and could care for himself, but if a little one needed help He still remembered what it felt like to be young and to appreciate the kindness of caring parents and friends.

“Shall we check on the bird nest that we found the other day in the tree over there?” Jesus said, as He carried His little sister to the tree. She smiled and dried her last tear. It felt good to be well cared for.

She was learning from her parents, and big brother Jesus, how to one day care for children. She would grow to be a mother herself one day, and the way she was treated and cared for now by a loving family taught her how to be a good and loving mother.

“I want to be as kind and caring as You and mother and father are when I am grown,” said the girl to Jesus.

“Well, you don’t have to wait until you are fully grown to begin learning kindness and being as caring as you wish to be when you are older. You can even practice and prepare now, when you are still young, you know?” Jesus said.

“Really?” she asked, wondering what He meant.

Jesus continued, “Take a look over here. What do you see?”

“I see a pretty flower, can I pick it?” the girl asked.

“Sure,” said Jesus. “And then what do you want to do with it?”

“I want to put it in some water so it can last,” His sister said, and then added, “and I want to give it to my friend who lives near our house. She’s been sick, and I want to cheer her up with it as a gift!”

“That’s a great idea!” Jesus said. “See how easy it is to practice loving kindness. And the more you do the little deeds that show others that you care about them, the better at it you will be.

“The more you think about others and putting their happiness first, the better a mother you will be one day to your own children, who will need your loving care.”

The girl smiled as she carried the flower with her when they returned to the house, and asked her mother for something to put it in.

“What a nice flower you’ve got, dear!” Mary said smiling at her little girl.

“Mother, I need something to put it in, so I can give it to my friend. I wanted to share it with her,” she said.

Soon she was happily walking to her friend’s house, accompanied by Jesus. She was on her way to give love and cheer, and growing up just a bit more each moment while doing so.

A Man on the Pathway

The sun was rising and the air was fresh. Jesus watched the sky brightening as the sun's rays crept over the hills. He breathed in deeply. It wouldn't always feel this fresh. The sun was both friend and foe. It gave life to plants depending on its light, but the heat was wearying at times.

Jesus turned to walk into the house.

"Good morning," He greeted His mother. "Is there something I can help you with?" He asked with a smile.

"Jesus, You are like the sun of the morning, a blessing to us, bringing the light and warmth of God's love into our lives," Mary said.

There was plenty to do and the morning moved quickly to mid-day, when the sun was at its highest. At this time most people choose to rest and stay in the shade, and usually Jesus did too. But on this day He felt compelled to walk along a certain path way. He felt there was something He was meant to do.

Shielding His head with a cloth from the now burning rays He started up the path.

"Oh! Are you alright?" Jesus asked as He came across a man lying on the ground. It seemed he had fallen or was hurt in some way.

Jesus sat by the man and gave him a drink from a flask that He'd brought.

Indeed the man was hurt and needed some care. Jesus made the man as comfortable as He could and left the flask of water with him while going to get what was needed.

Jesus asked a friendly neighbour to please help, as there was a hurt man. A wagon might be just what was needed. The neighbour was willing to both lend his wagon as well as help to bring the man back to where someone could attend to him.

Together the neighbour and Jesus lifted the hurt man onto the wagon and then slowly and gently pulled it back to Jesus' house.

Mary came out to see how she could help and others did too.

With the kindness of many, the man was soon feeling much better. He told them what had happened, and how he wasn't careful to step out of the way when a fast moving team of mules carrying a load of supplies had knocked him over.

"Thank You so much for all You've done to help," the man said to Jesus who brought him a portion of His own dinner to share.

"If it hadn't been for You coming to rescue me, I might still be there, and I certainly wouldn't be feeling as good as I do now. I think I can make my way home now. My family must be wondering what happened to me," he said.

"Where do you live?" Jesus asked.

"It's not far from here, but I should be going before the sundown," the man said.

He tried to walk, but it was obvious he couldn't go very fast.

"I know someone who owns a mule, perhaps he could take you back to your home. Just a moment, I'll go and see what he says," Jesus said and was off in a flash.

The thought of getting a ride home filled the man with hope. He was eager to hear the answer.

When Jesus returned he told the expectant man,

“He said you could ride his mule, but he cannot take you there, as he is busy with a family event today.” Jesus said, and then added. “But he has given Me permission to lead the mule and take you home, and then ride the mule back to return it.”

“I wouldn’t want to trouble You,” said the man.

“Oh, don’t worry about that!” Jesus said. “I would enjoy an afternoon walk and it would be a pleasure to get to ride on the way back. I’m glad to be a help to you and to your family.”

The grateful man was soon riding slowly while Jesus led the way. He guided the mule and made sure it wasn’t going too fast, so the man would be as comfortable as possible.

On they walked, trotted and talked for quite a while before arriving at the town.

Jesus bid the man farewell and climbed on the mule to make His way back. He could go faster now and would be back in good time.

As Jesus neared His village He saw His brothers and sisters eagerly waiting and watching for His return. They waved and Jesus smiled and waved back. They knew they had the best brother in the world, always willing to lend a hand to those in need.

As they sat around the fire that night Mary patted Jesus on the back and said, “You did a good thing today helping that man.”

“It was a help to Me too,” Jesus said. “When I help others I seem to get back more in return.”

“What did You get in return this time?” one of His brothers said.

“Well, I learned that it’s always important to do what I feel God is telling Me to do. I saw it worked out well when I did that, and it made Me glad to have been the one to help.

“I got to talk with someone and learn all kinds of things about life in another place that I might have never heard about if I hadn’t gone the extra distance to make things easier for someone else.

“Oh, and I almost forgot! When I reached the village, he said that when he was well enough he would bring his family to visit us, and come with gifts and a nice meal for us all to share!”

“Yay!” everyone said, happy at the thought of a celebration and new friends.

“But the rewards don’t always come right away,” Jesus added to His brothers and sisters, “maybe one of you will one day be in need of help, and this man or one of his children will be the one to respond to your need, remembering how we helped their father. Who knows?”

“Kindness always comes back to you in some way at some time. Watch for it, and you won’t be disappointed. And most of all, always watch for opportunities to give it to others. As you do, your life will be rich with God’s blessings.”

Everyone made their way to bed for a good night’s sleep. It had been a wonderful day. Any day where love is shared in abundance is a great day!

—Memories of the Master—
(For Mature Readers)

Jesus speaks today, with thoughts and
memories about His life on Earth.

Memories of the Master —1

(Jesus says:) I was very lonely as a child. I suppose you know that. There are many reasons for this, but the loneliness was a special consecration in my bosom, a knowledge that I wasn't to be just anyone in society, to have my drinks, my laughs, and say randomly whatever came to mind. No, I was to be special, for I held a royal place in the Kingdom of God.

Sometimes the only solace I got from this constant 'set aside' condition of the soul that I knew was present, was to talk with the animals, the wild birds, the pigeons who came to be fed, or at times the neighbour's animals that might wander into our courtyard.

They would understand what I was saying, for I had a way of communicating that made sense to them.

As the Son of God I could do things like that. It wasn't a noticeable gift, but one that My Father allowed.

They too felt the troubles of the fallen world and wished for things to be at peace—where animals and man could walk in harmony to the tune of their Creator.

We had a little donkey for a while, that's where I learned how to ride one. It was always a bit shabby and not particularly cooperative—much like many people I had to learn to get along in harmony with anyway.

It wouldn't look Me in the eye, like it knew it wasn't being the best donkey in the world. But still I'd pat it and feed it its provender and do what was needed in its care.

What I didn't always see was the host of surrounding angels that accompanied Me constantly. I was the most important being on the planet, because I held the keys of life and had the power to transform the fallen state of the world into one of peace and beauty.

Of course, everyone meant so much to the King of all—the Father in Heaven. I knew this, and that is why I was there in the first place. I missed being with My Father and seeing the angels that served, while I appeared in this "lower than the angels" state.

At the same time I truly did love each and every one so much that I felt My heart would break—which eventually it did, as I gave My life, knowing that many of the ones around that day would not be able to join me in paradise, because they turned away and chose their own belief systems.

I had a vineyard, not very big, but it was with great joy that I at last saw the first little grapes begin to form. After tending to the plants for so long and nurturing them, I could hardly express how very happy I was to see the fruit of My labour starting to show forth. Of course I called my mother, and sisters, and a few others. I wanted each one to share in the joy.

They must have wondered why I was just so, overwhelmingly happy; joyous. But again, I think it's because it had something to do with you—My fruit, the fruit of My life; My reason for coming to Earth.

Though grapevines grow grapes naturally, so it's not really that big of a deal, but in my heart it was a sign that My life was going to bear fruit, no matter how long it took to nurture the fruit.

Thank you My beautiful, darling fruit. You are so sweet. Your beautiful shiny faces, clustering around Me, like shiny grapes on a stem! How I love you. You are so pleasant to Me!

Memories of the Master —2

(Jesus says:) I'd wake up real early to the rousing sound of the neighbour's chickens. And there was this one peculiar rooster whose crow could be heard a mile away. Ever since I was a child I grew accustomed to hearing this sound upon the break of My day.

Anyway, the sun would rise, of course, and I would start off by memorizing some of the Holy scriptures and letting them be a part of Me. When I was younger I would be much more anxious to get outside to play with My friends, whenever I got the chance.

But when I was getting a bit older I needed to take things more seriously and start preparing My heart and soul for what I knew in My heart was ahead of Me.

I liked to have lots of fun, as I know you do as well, but when I was getting on in years I needed to prepare for what I knew to be My life's calling. —One especially dedicated to God, with a job to do for Him, in a short amount of time. Not unlike many of you, too.

I'd then get up and move on with what I needed to do. Instructing the boys of our village and going about My daily chores. People would ask Me to come into their house to help them fix this or that or furnish them up with what their housing needed.

But I was not fully anointed for My future job yet. That came later as God called me into the role I had to play to fulfil My mission.

God, the Father, came through and we made a good team. You see I had to learn to work along side of Him, not following with My program and plan, but what He showed Me to do and that's when it best works out and brings about the best results.

There was one thing that was particularly hard for Me to face and that was actually leaving behind the life that I had come to lead, the comfortable home life, the cosy way things could seem to be.

Things weren't always calm, we had some fiery natured brethren, who were tough and strong and not mild natured. But the Lord brought us through somehow—because He was with us.

I gave up My family and loved ones, who I knew cared a lot about Me and My wellbeing and knew I had some kind of mission in this life, though were not always clear on what it really was going to be. But I had those loved ones to forsake.

I care about you and thus have I gone the great lengths I did for you. You are Mine and who I bought with a price.

The price of My blood is what it cost to have you forever. I did that for you. I did it to save and bless and prosper you in all your ways that you may come to know Me fully, without measure.

Know that I am your life and your song, your reason for existence, your joy of living, I am all these things and so very much more for you, My precious you!

Memories of the Master —3

(Jesus says:) Shall I tell you about the time I first did a major job on my thumb, a real whacker? I was using a rock, primitive, I know, but sometimes you use whatever you have on hand. We had tools of all sorts, but sometimes just a good natural tool works just as well for simple jobs.

So I was working with wood, as was my trade when on Earth, and missed what I was aiming at, and knocked myself a hard blow with the rock directly on my left thumb. Oh, boy, boy, boy that took some recovery. I couldn't work right for a few days at least.

So even though I was God's Son, I wasn't immune to pain. I guess I couldn't be, or else it couldn't

be said that I “suffered for your sins” if I had it all blissfully easy, without pain from the start of life to the end.

When I was pondering my pulsating thumb, really feeling the pain, and being hardly able to think about anything else, what do you think came to mind? My Father helped use these times and these accidents to show me things I wouldn’t have been alerted to on a regular day.

I saw a flash of a vision of a nail being driven into a piece of wood, the difference was that there was my hand also there, inbetween the wood and the nail. “Ouch!” I almost said aloud.

Somehow the picture of the greater pain that I was being prepared for—the death on the cross for the sins of all people--made the wound now seem much less intense. I got sombre and pensive. It was to be part of my life on Earth, and I knew I would have to go through worse things than a bruised and bleeding thumb.

I went to soak my thumb in water, and a tear or two ran down my face. I wasn’t crying now because of pain, but because I was starting to feel the premonition of the anguish and sorrow that I was yet to endure some day.

I didn’t linger long on this, as though I was hurting, I would need to keep doing what I could to help my family. But these glimpses and preparation of the heart, flashes of pictures in my mind, and the readying of the mind and body and soul kept me sober and maturing in character.

I had a unique mission on Earth, though no fun, would yield much good on the overall scheme. I wouldn’t regret it, if I chose to yield and to do what I was sent to Earth to do.

I didn’t do carpentry non stop; that’s not all I did; but I did need to grow into that task and learn it well pretty early on in life, as the more we could get done, the more we could support our growing family with growing appetites.

But there were hikes and hills to climb. There were meals to cook, and trips to be taken nearby to get the things needed. Farmers to help sow and plough and harvest their crops, neighbours to lend a hand to, and thank when they helped us out.

And there was always chores of one sort or the other to carry out. The days were tiring, and the nights often cold, but it was just what I was meant to experience.

As I sat at the beach side of that Galilee lake, I picked up one stone after another, examining them.

The sun was slowly rising; the smell of fish was strong. I was taking time to ponder about My life’s work and calling.

Like each of these stones, each of the people were different. Story ideas would come to me. Things I could use to help get the message and ideas through to the hearts and minds of the people.

Memories of the Master —4

(On house visiting Jesus did while on Earth:)

(Jesus says:) The home in Bethany was a favourite for Me, of course. (The house of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary.) I think what I most liked was their love for Me, their belief in Me.

That meant I could relax. I didn’t have to always be defending that what I was doing and saying was right. I wasn’t in a battle, nearly, just to speak or to heal someone. Their hunger for what I had to give, and their total acceptance and belief in Me made it so pleasant to be there.

Of course in every household there are some sceptics, and there were the ‘friends’ of these ones

in Bethany that came and snoopied around plenty, checking out what was going on, and helping themselves to the meal. But I just ignored them and focused on the hungry.

I didn't let the "help themselves" nosey ones take away the Bread of Life--the time of sharing and feeding the family.

And later on, thankfully, even some of them believed on Me too, after seeing Lazarus rise from the dead. If I had only come when he was sick, many of these others wouldn't have been at the house.

They had gathered for the time of mourning, to comfort the family. That's why they were there. So it was good that I waited, for then many more were able to come to a saving knowledge of the truth.

How did it feel, when Lazarus was dead—if I knew he was going to rise again? Did I have perfect peace and no feelings of grief and loss?

Well, I was tempted or tried and tested in all types of trials of life. So it was part of my Earth course, My lesson learning, to feel the sorrow of a friend that died, since that is what so many people have to feel and go through. And it was one more reason to die for the world's sin, so that death could die in the end.

In the end, death itself is going to get the boot. The sorrow of loved ones being gone forever is something that I did away with on the cross. Though there still is pain now on Earth, it won't be long now until everyone who loves Me will all be reunited again. And those who don't, well, they'll get some more chances for a pace more, until they know what is good for them.

So feeling those deep feelings of loss, a wave of deep human sorrow for awhile helped spur me on when it was My time to "take up My cross".

It was the sorrow of the death of loved ones that was also going to be done away with due to My sacrifice.

Lots of joys, so many joys, would be ushered in because I gave up the life I had, so that you and everyone could live forever—those who wanted Heavenly joy, not fleeting pride and earthly pleasure.

Ending Note and Thoughts from Jesus

(Jesus says:) I was sure I was missing out on all kinds of things, when I was on Earth. I missed so much fun and planning and preparing going on in Heaven. And I missed all kinds of things on Earth too, by having my life cut short, and staying very diligent in what I was meant to do.

But you never really miss out when you do God's will. He always makes it up to you in the end.

Sometimes it's a test so you'll re-evaluate what your heart's priorities are, and to see if you love God more than a fleeting bit of fun.

Mothers have to do that all the time, caring for children. Every day a good mother gives up something, many things, she wants and needs and would prefer, in order to lovingly care for her young children.

Fathers often give up being personally with their families, so that they can earn the bread needed to provided for them.

Maybe I understand the Father's role pretty well, as I can't be in the flesh, in person, right now with each person on Earth. I have a job to do, and must do it in the spirit.

Of course I can see and hear each one, loud and clear, but it's very different from having the

joyful satisfaction of holding My children in My arms, and having them know that I am there.

So I have to wait, for a long time, just like it might feel like you are waiting to be with Me.

So was it worth it—all the pain I went through? All the sorrow? All the years of loneliness, knowing I was to remain separate and set apart, in order to complete the mission I came to earth to do?

Well, I've got all the love I could desire—surrounded by you who love Me so completely.

Yes, there are others who still need to be brought to know of My loving longing for them. But still, I am a happy man. Each one of you are worth all the diamonds and rubies in the world.

Please don't think I am not valuing the fact that you have given all to Me—all your love and life, and endured much tribulation for it. It means all the world to Me, and I will tenderly care for your soul for eternity. It's just that everyone that My Father created, that is meant to be a part of our happy fellowship is very much engraved in My heart and soul and on My mind too. Like an unfinished puzzle.

I want to hold you, play games with you, teach you things, go on explorations with you, help you make wise choices, counsel you, tell you stories, and do all I can with you now that you are here.

I'm going to make up for all the time lost while you and I were separate, or so it seemed. I just love being with you all.