

the falling and rising of many in Israel.” Most commentators see this imagery coming from Is. 8:14-15 and 28:16, where Isaiah speaks about a “stone” which one can believe in or stumble over. Whether that is the case or not, many continue to rise or fall spiritually depending on their response to Jesus. Second, Simeon declares that Jesus would be “a sign” that would be opposed. That certainly proved to be the case. He not only was opposed; he was unjustly tried and murdered. Third, Simeon says “the inner thoughts of many “would be revealed. Again this turned out to be quite true. No one can hide when faced with the claims of Jesus. One must make a decision. Either we accept or reject those claims. And our eternal destiny depends on our choice. Finally, Simeon reveals to Mary that she would personally suffer in her soul. And of course that also happened in a devastating way when Jesus was arrested, tried, and crucified.

Another person is introduced, her name is Anna who was a prophetess and spent “night and day” at the temple in praise and worship, and that “she never left the temple.” This could be Semitic hyperbole meaning that she spent all day, every day, at the temple. After a seven-year marriage, she was widowed and she remained a widow until the age of 84. The implication is that she was 84 at the time these events took place. Some believe that the text is saying that Anna was a widow for 84 years, which would have made her over 100 when Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple. We are told that Anna began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for redemption; but unfortunately, we are not told what she said. After the presentation, the family returned to Nazareth, where we are told that Jesus grew, that he became strong, and that he was filled with wisdom, “and the favor of the Lord was upon him.”

The overall theme of Jesus’ presentation is one of trust. First, Joseph and Mary time and time again found themselves forced to trust God. They did not understand everything the angels had told them in connection with Jesus’ conception and birth, but they trusted. At the presentation in the temple, they did not know exactly how to respond to Simeon and Anna, but they accepted the events in trust. That is a lesson that we all must learn. We must learn to trust God when things happen that we do not understand or seem to be hindering rather than helping us to accomplish the will of God.

Simeon and Anna also learned to have trust in God. They were both elderly and lived a righteous and devout life that everyone is capable of doing by the power of the Spirit. Both were looking forward to the promises of the messianic age, “the consolation of Israel.” The New Testament instructs us today in this same belief. Finally, both had the Holy Spirit resting on them, we have the Holy Spirit, not just resting upon us, but dwelling within us.



***(excerpted from: //dochr.org)

The Presentation of Jesus

In the Temple



Canticle of Simeon

...Now you are releasing your servant, Master,
according to your word, in peace;
for my eyes have seen our salvation,
which you have prepared before the face of all peoples;
a light for revelation to the nations,
and the glory of your people Israel (Luke 2:29-32).

The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

***Purification** took place on the fortieth day after the Nativity in the case of males, and eighty days in the case of Females (Leviticus 12: 15). Until it was performed the mother was not permitted to go to the Temple, take part in any public service, or even to leave her house. It seems that the members of her family were also ceremonially unclean, because they came in daily contact with her. The family had to bring the child up to Jerusalem (to the Temple), to be presented to the Lord. This is in response for when God killed the firstborn of Egypt but spared the firstborn of Israel. For this reason all the firstborn of Israel were regarded as being peculiarly the Lord's (Exodus 13:11 – 15, Numbers 18:15 and Numbers 18:16).

Originally the firstborn or eldest son was priest of the household after his father's death; but God chose the Levites to serve in his sanctuary in the place of these firstborn or household priests (Numbers 3: 11 – 13; 8: 14 – 19), but this choosing did not annul the statute which required the payment of redemption money. The redemption money for a male was five shekels, or about \$3.75 (Leviticus 27:6). As it was written in the law of the Lord, every male that opened the womb shall be called holy to the Lord and a sacrifice had to be offered.

Jesus' redemption money and sacrifice was ceremonially redeemed from God the Father, that His consecration of it to the will of the Father might be perfect. We are also likewise redeemed by the blood of Christ, but are expected nevertheless to be more consecrated than ever according to that which is said in the law of the Lord (Leviticus 12:6-8; 5-11). A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons could be substituted for a yearling lamb, if the family was poor. There is no dishonor in poverty in God's eyes, for Mary was honored of him above all women.

*(excerpted from: www.biblestudytools.com).

****The Feast of the Presentation** is among the most ancient feasts of the Christian Church. There are sermons on the Feast by the bishops Methodius of Patara († 312), Cyril of Jerusalem († 360), Gregory the Theologian († 389), Amphilocheus of Iconium († 394), Gregory of Nyssa († 400), and John Chrysostom († 407). The earliest reference to specific liturgical rites surrounding the feast are by the nun Egeria, during her pilgrimage to the Holy Land (381-384). She reported that February was a day solemnly kept in Jerusalem with a procession to Constantine I's Basilica of the Resurrection, with a homily preached on Luke 2:22, and a Divine Liturgy. Egeria does not however offer a specific name for the Feast. The date of the Feast was on February 14, and indicates that in Jerusalem Christ's birth was celebrated on January 6, Epiphany.

Originally, the feast was a minor celebration. But in 542 the feast was established throughout the Eastern Empire by Justinian I. In 541 a terrible plague broke out in Constantinople, killing thousands. The emperor ordered a period of

fasting and prayer throughout the entire empire. On the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord (Presentation) a great procession was arranged throughout all the towns and villages and solemn prayer service (Litia) to ask for deliverance from evils, the plague ceased. In thanksgiving, the feast was elevated to a more solemn celebration. Meanwhile, in Rome, the feast appears in the Gelasian Sacramentary, a manuscript collection of the seventh and eighth centuries associated with Pope Gelasius I. For the first time, the feast had a new title that of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

***(excerpted from: en//Wikipedia.org)

*****As** the naming of John was followed by Zechariah's prophecy (1:67-75), we find in Luke 2:25-29, the naming and presentation of Jesus followed by a statement of praise from an old man named Simeon. Knowledge about Simeon is unknown. However several important things are said about him. First, he was a righteous man, although nothing is said why he was righteous, but in the New Testament this normally means that the person is right with God and his fellow man. Second, Simeon was a devout man, which means that he kept the law and cultivated his relationship with God. Third, Simeon "was looking forward to the consolation of Israel." The "consolation of Israel" was a way of speaking about the comfort that would come to Israel with the coming of the Messiah. It referred to the expected comfort of the messianic age. Fourth, and most important, the Holy Spirit rested on Simeon. It is rare for the Holy Spirit to fill people in Old Testament times, but not so rare for Him to come upon people. Simeon was among those who were blessed by the power of the Spirit coming upon them.

The Holy Spirit had prepared Simeon for this day. He had revealed to him that he would not die physically before seeing the Messiah. Then the Spirit guided him to the temple on the day when Jesus' parents brought him there for his presentation. God arranged for Simeon to be there that day, and it was the Spirit who indicated that Jesus was the one, because he took Jesus in his arms and praised God.

In Simeon's praise or song he interprets his opportunity to see the Messiah as a release from his vigil. He has seen the Messiah, and now he can die in peace. Simeon declares that by seeing the Messiah he has seen God's salvation. And notice that he has the insight that God's salvation is for all peoples, both Jews and Gentiles. In Isaiah and other places the Old Testament clearly taught that God's salvation of Israel was to benefit Gentiles as well as Jews. The Jews had a hard time understanding that.

Having blessed God in his song, Simeon now blesses Joseph and Mary. The parents were amazed at Simeon's song. There was one more mysterious revelation. Mysterious revelations had come to them rather fast and furiously since before the birth of Jesus'. However this probably was the first time that they had heard of Jesus' significance to the Gentiles.

After blessing Joseph and Mary, Simeon speaks directly to Mary and reveals four things all of which proved true. First, he says that Jesus "is destined for