

The Old-Timers

Genesis 17:1-14; Luke 2:21-39 / Isaiah 40:1-8

Dr. Edwin P. Elliott

I. Joseph and Mary Brought Jesus to God

A. The Messiah must be fully God and fully man and must fulfill all the obligations revealed in Scripture. *“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”* (Galatians 4:4-5)

B. The ritual process began with circumcision and naming. “And when eight days were accomplished for the *circumcising* of the child, *his name was called JESUS*, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.” (LUKE 2:21) [Matthew 1:21]

C. The parents scrupulously followed God’s instructions for the child. “And when the *days of her purification* according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, *to present him to the Lord*; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, *Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord*;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, *A pair of turtledoves*, or two young pigeons.” (LUKE 2:22-24)

D. Circumcision was obligatory. “And *he that is eight days old shall be circumcised* among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed.” (GENESIS 17:12)

E. A period of rest and retirement for the mother followed, ending with a sacrifice at the Temple. “And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall *then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days*; she shall touch no hallowed thing, *nor come into the sanctuary*, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.” (LEVITICUS 12:3-4) [41st for a male, and the 81st for a female]

II. Simeon Was Waiting for the Presentation

A. Simeon displayed a righteous faith, communicated with God, and expected the Messiah. "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was ***Simeon***; and the same man ***was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel***: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And ***it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.***" (LUKE 2:25-26)

B. The Holy Spirit brought Simeon to the Temple when Joseph and Mary brought Jesus. "And ***he came by the Spirit*** into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, ***Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God,*** and said," (LUKE 2:27-28)

C. Simeon acknowledged that God had kept His promise of a Savior. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, ***according to thy word***: For ***mine eyes have seen thy salvation***, Which thou hast ***prepared before the face of all people***;" (LUKE 2:29-31)

D. In the child, Simeon saw the fulfillment of the double promise to Abraham of a Savior for both Israel and the Gentiles. "A light ***to lighten the Gentiles***, and the ***glory of thy people Israel.***" (LUKE 2:32)

E. The parents, who had grown accustomed to startling news from God, were amazed. "And ***Joseph and his mother marvelled*** at those things which were spoken of him." (LUKE 2:33)

F. Simeon foresaw Mary's agony; the mother would stand in the crowd at the cross. "And ***Simeon blessed them***, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, ***this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel***; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, ***a sword shall pierce through thy own soul*** also,) ***that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.***" (LUKE 2:34-35) "***Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother,*** and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." (JOHN 19:25)

G. The long-expected Redeemer would also be the terror of those who reject God; the hope of heaven includes the dread of hell. "And he shall be for a sanctuary; but *for a stone of stumbling* and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and *be snared, and be taken.*" (ISAIAH 8:14-15) "To *the one we are the savour of death unto death*; and *to the other the savour of life unto life.* And who *is* sufficient for these things?" (2 CORINTHIANS 2:16)

H. Those who refuse to answer the call to heaven will answer the order to hell. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou that killest the prophets*, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, *how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens* under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, *your house is left unto you desolate.*" (MATTHEW 23:37-38)

III. Anna Had Waited a Lifetime for the Messiah

A. The women of Asher were reputed to be the most beautiful in the world; God chose one of the beautiful women who had lived a long life of suffering and dedication to acknowledge His Son. "And there was one *Anna, a prophetess*, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher: she was *of a great age*, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which *departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.*" (LUKE 2:36-37)

B. The hope of the hopeless, the guardian of widows and orphans, came to an old woman who believed against all worldly evidence that God would yet redeem His people. "And *she coming in that instant gave thanks* likewise unto the Lord, *and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.*" (LUKE 2:38)

C. Here was the second witness to testify that God keeps His promises; no one ever lost by trusting God's promises. [Solomon said] "Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: *there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.*" (1 KINGS 8:56)

