

Episode #551 Christmas 2019 4: The Presentation of the Child

I. The birth of Christ was a miraculous event that prepared the way for all that He would accomplish in His death, burial, and resurrection. At this time of year we remember that birth and the glorious salvation that God gave us as a result.

II. The latter half of Luke describes the circumcision and the presentation of the child at the temple. This is not commonly told with the Christmas story, as it does not fit our modern ideas. But the reality is that Christ was a Jew come to Jews. Today we will consider the important events that surrounded His presentation.

III. Luke 2:25-32. Simeon (Listening) and the Child.

- A. Verse 25. A just and devout man. Waiting for Israel's Consolation (*Paraklesis*). God's holy power is upon him.
- B. Verse 26. He had been given an amazing promise by the Person of the Spirit. See = experience. No doubt he had seen Israel's pathetic state, with the madman Herod in charge. He longed for Consolation. He will not see it before he dies, but he will see the One Who will bring it. Christ = Messiah = Anointed (as the Savior).
- C. Verse 27. On this day, the Spirit (the Person) leads him into the temple as Mary and Joseph arrive with baby Jesus.
- D. Verse 28. He takes the child in his arms and blesses (in Greek *eulogeo*, which means "to speaks well of") God.
- E. Verse 29. This does not mean he would immediately die, but rather is acknowledging the fulfillment of the promise.
- F. Verse 30. He knows the salvation itself is not going to come in his lifetime, but he has seen the One Who will bring it. "Salvation" here is an adjective, "Salvation-bringing." He means the salvation-bringing Messiah.
- G. Verse 31. He knows that the Lord Jesus is for all peoples.
- H. Verse 32. The child would bring light and revelation (*apokalupsis*) to all nations and peoples, but especially glory (esteem, honor, significance) to Israel.

IV. Luke 2:33-35. Simeon, Joseph, and Mary.

- A. Verse 33. Joseph and His mother marvel at these words about their Child!
- B. Verse 34. Simeon speaks well of them, too. He tells them some of what Christ will do. Some will be promoted, and some put down. Some will speak against the Lord.
- C. Verse 35. Mary's own heart will be pierced! Both by the Lord, and His death. All will result in the hearts of many being revealed! How does the Lord affect our hearts?

V. Luke 2:36-38. Anna (Grace) and the Child.

- A. Verse 36. A prophetess. A woman who speaks God's words. Phanuel (The Face of God) her father. She was of the tribe of Asher. One of the northern tribes, the "ten lost tribes." This shows Asher was not lost!
- B. Verse 37. She was very old. Had been married seven years, then a widow ever since. (Around 106 years old?) She lived in the temple, never leaving it. The temple grounds, not the holy building in the center, which she could not enter. This means she dwelt in the very presence of God.
- C. Verse 38. She enters the scene and thanks the Lord. Human messengers now proclaim the message! She knows those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and tells them about it.

VI. Luke 2:39. The homecoming.

- A. They follow the law of the Lord. The Lord was brought up a Jew following Moses' law.
- B. They do not return to Bethlehem. They go back to Galilee, to their home in Nazareth. This is where the wise men found them over a year later.

VII. Luke 2:40. The Lord grows.

- A. He grows in body. This is automatic.
- B. He grows strong in spirit (mind) and wisdom. This is not automatic.
- C. God's grace is upon Him. How much more do we need His grace to grow?

VIII. As the Lord and His mother presented themselves at the temple according to the law, two Spirit-filled individuals were moved by the Spirit to proclaim the truth over Him. That message included salvation for all nations, but especially glory and redemption on the people of Israel. Do we believe that Christ had a mission to God's people Israel? Or do we deny this truth and insist His only mission was to save all nations equally? The reality is that Christ is the Savior of Israel, as well as of the world! May we believe all the truth contained in the story of Christ's birth.