

Text— Luke 2:22-32

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

We celebrated Christmas, the anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ, just a couple days ago. Interestingly, even as a baby, Christ our Lord was at work as our sinless substitute, our Redeemer, for immediately preceding our text we read: “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)

Consider the fact that Jesus was circumcised in keeping with the Old Testament Law’s sacrament of circumcision, for although Jesus had no sin of His own He fulfilled all righteousness for the entire world of sinful human beings, for we read in Galatians 4:4-5, “when the fulness 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.” Hence, even as an infant, Jesus was at work as our sinless substitute, keeping God’s Law perfectly for us, which He continued to do throughout His entire lifetime in this world.

JESUS means SAVIOR, and He was so named by the angel Gabriel who had said to the virgin Mary in Luke 1:30-35, “Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Thus, Mary gave birth to Jesus the holy Son of God. Accordingly, Jesus is true God and true

man – sinless man – but one Christ, the only Savior of sinners.

Our Scripture selection supplies us with more insights regarding our Savior as it relates:

“THE PRESENTATION OF JESUS IN THE TEMPLE”

With that as our theme may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) When and why the presentation of Jesus occurred
- 2) What confession was made concerning Jesus at His presentation

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Verses 22-24, ----- (Luke 2:22-24)

To understand the opening verses of our text it will be beneficial if we consider the Old Testament Law of the Lord found in Leviticus 12:1-8, where we read: “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. 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. But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days. And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall

bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”

Thus, Mary, having given birth to a son, was ceremonially unclean for a total of 40 days, and then she made an offering in the temple and was declared clean. Mary’s son Jesus had been circumcised the eighth day in keeping with the Law, and He was to be presented to the Lord — dedicated to the Lord — the same day His mother Mary offered the atonement offering for herself. Furthermore, Jesus Christ, being Mary’s firstborn son, was presented to the Lord in accord with Exodus 13:1-2, where we read: “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.” Additionally, Numbers 3:11-13 declares: “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine; Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the LORD.” The Levites were those who served in the tabernacle as priests and such. Accordingly, Jesus Christ our great High Priest was presented to the Lord as a baby and dedicated to Him!

Thus it happened, that when the days of Mary’s *purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Jesus 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. All was done in full accord with God’s Word!

My friends, Jesus Christ was truly HOLY TO THE LORD, for He was conceived and born without sin!

Hence, Hebrews 4:14-16 declares: “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Jesus far surpasses all Levitical priests, for Jesus is our great High Priest forever who speaks on our behalf at the throne of God.

Let us be grateful to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who ever lives to intercede for us at the throne of God the Father, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Romans 3:23-26)

Notice that Joseph and Mary were apparently not rich in worldly wealth, for Mary’s sacrifice at her purification was two birds rather than a lamb. Thus, Jesus the only begotten Son of God was born in poverty and not in worldly wealth, “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich,” states 2 Corinthians 8:9. Think of it: Jesus Christ is He, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” reports Philippians 2:6-8. Jesus gave so much, even His life, to save us sinners, and He began His mission of mercy from the moment of His conception— so great is Jesus’ love for us undeserving sinners!

Take it to heart that the presentation of Jesus occurred because He was determined to fulfill ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS for us, and to later pay for all the sins of all people with His own holy and precious blood that He would shed while nailed to the cross of Calvary. Jesus was dedicated to the Lord in absolute perfection because none of us could be since we are all sinners from the moment of our conception. Jesus is truly wonderful! Jesus is our only Savior, for Acts 4:12 informs us: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." All thanks and praise be to the Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, the one true Savior of the world.

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As we ponder our text to its conclusion, let us see what confession was made concerning Jesus at His presentation.

Verses 25 & 26, ----- (Luke 2:25-26)

Here we are introduced to a man named Simeon, and we are informed that *the same man was just and devout*. Now, since Habakkuk 2:4 relates that "the just shall live by his faith," it is evident that Simeon was a true and persistent believer in the promised Messiah, the Christ, for we are also told that he was *waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him*. Furthermore, we read in Romans 8:9 that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Hence, Simeon was definitely a man of faith in the promised Messiah, the Christ, who is the consolation, the comfort, of Israel in that He is the Provider of the forgiveness of sins and salvation who came from the Hebrew people according to the flesh.

Simeon was extra blessed in that *it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ*. Indeed, God the Holy Ghost revealed to Simeon that he would not experience temporal death before he had seen with his own eyes the Lord's Christ, the

Lord's anointed, the promised Messiah foretold of old.

Verses 27-32, ----- (Luke 2:27-32)

Observe that the Holy Ghost led Simeon into the temple in Jerusalem at just the right time to meet the Christ child. And *when the parents – foster father Joseph and mother Mary – 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, 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; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel*.

Note well that it was God the Holy Ghost who led Simeon to recognize baby Jesus as the Christ! My friends, it is still God the Holy Ghost who causes folks to recognize Jesus IS Christ the Lord, for Holy Writ relates in 1 Corinthians 12:3, "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Fellow Christians, take it to heart that we would not be Christians if the Holy Ghost did not gift us with faith in Jesus as He worked through the Gospel of Christ, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 1:16-17; 10:17) Let us be grateful to God the Holy Ghost for His sanctifying work.

Simeon was privileged to take baby Jesus up into his arms. Can you imagine it: Simeon got to hold his Savior in his arms. Looking at the infant Jesus as Simeon held him in his arms, Simeon *blessed God, and said, 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; A light to lighten the*

Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Simeon was so very thankful to God for permitting him to see God's salvation, the salvation that God had prepared for all people— the salvation that Jesus Christ would earn by His perfect life and by His atoning death on the cross where He would shed His holy and precious blood in payment for all the sins of all people. Simeon recognized Christ AND the saving work Christ would accomplish.

Simeon could depart this world in peace, knowing that salvation was provided for him by God through Christ the only begotten Son of God. Jesus Christ is the Savior of the whole world, the Light which lightens the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel since He was born of that race according to the flesh, as foretold of old.

Simeon's confession made concerning Jesus at His presentation in the temple clearly puts forth the truth that Jesus is the Savior of the whole world, both Jews and Gentiles, and that Jesus is the Supplier of the salvation God prepared before the face of all people.

Oh beloved, without God preparing salvation for us we would ALL be lost and damned, for Holy Writ reports: "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not. The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Ezekiel 18:20) But thankfully, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Therefore, it behooves all of us to sincerely repent of our sins and believe on Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, for 1 John 1:9-10 states: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

Jesus says in John 12:46-48, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should

not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." And what are the words of Jesus which we must cling to? Certainly all of Holy Scripture, but especially the fact that Jesus says in John 14:6 in no uncertain terms: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Yes, Jesus Christ is the ONLY WAY to God and heaven! Looking at Jesus with the eyes of faith we see the SALVATION God has prepared before the face of all people.

Thus, Simeon's confession made concerning Jesus at His presentation in the temple was right to the point concerning the fact that salvation provided by God for all people would be accomplished by Jesus Christ who was always truly holy to the Lord and has provided holiness for ALL people since Holy Writ reports: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (2 Corinthians 5:19, 21; John 3:36)

Let us therefore remember the significance of the presentation of Jesus at the temple. Let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins; and, let us keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord. Amen.

m.e.l.