

First Sunday after Christmas

OLD TESTAMENT
Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15

Consecration of the Firstborn

The LORD said to Moses,² “Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether man or animal.”³ Then Moses said to the people, “Commemorate this day, the day you came out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

13:1 THE LORD SAID – The Lord will personally guide Israel by His Word on the journey ahead (vv 21–22). (TLSB)

13:2 *Consecrate to me every firstborn male.* God had adopted Israel as his firstborn (see 4:22) and had delivered every firstborn among the Israelites, whether man or animal, from the tenth plague (see 12:12–13). All the firstborn in Israel were therefore his. Jesus, Mary’s firstborn son (see Lk 2:7), was presented to the Lord in accordance with this law (see Lk 2:22–23). (CSB)

The first born was privileged to receive a double portion of the inheritance (Dt. 21:7) and the leadership over the family (Gn. 35:23; 43:33; 2 Chron. 21:3). Sometimes the birthright was given to a younger son (Gn. 25:23; 49:3-4). The term also signifies the preeminence of the exalted Lord Jesus and His relationship to the heavenly Father (Col. 1:15, 18). (Lutheran Bible Companion – Volume 2)

The first born of human beings and of animals belonged to God. The firstborn of Man was given to God as priest. When the Aaronic priesthood was established, The Levites took the place of the Israelites’ firstborn (Num. 3:12-13; 18:15-17). (Lutheran Bible Companion – Volume 2)

The firstborn of animals were given to the temple offerings. The clean were sacrificed; the unclean were either replaced by suitable sacrifices or killed (Ex. 13:2, 13; 22:30; 34:19-20; Lev. 27:26-29). (Lutheran Bible Companion – Volume 2)

The consecration of the firstborn to the Lord was closely connected with the Passover. Since the firstborn of the Israelites had been spared, the Lord commanded that these be set apart for special service to Him as a reminder of His grace to the people. The Lord also declared that the nation of Israel was His “firstborn son.” By dedicating their own firstborn to the Lord Israel constantly remembered their gracious deliverance by the Lord’s hand. This act of consecrating the firstborn was to be carried out after the Lord would bring His people into the land of Canaan. (PBC)

God claimed Israel's firstborn as His own because He rescued them from the 10th plague, making the firstborn a firstfruit offering to the Lord. This consecration, or setting aside, served two functions: (1) Collectively, the firstborn represented all Israel, whom God chose as His own firstborn among the nations (4:22–23). (2) As individuals, the firstborn were living reminders of this calling in every home (e.g., Joseph and Mary presented Jesus, Mary's firstborn, at the temple). Scripture describes firstborn sons as receiving a double portion of the inheritance, a special blessing, and headship of the family. (TLSB)

13:3 COMMEMORATE THIS DAY – The Lord here repeats His ordinance respecting the Feast of Unleavened Bread with impressive solemnity, His name for Egypt being “house of slaves”; for that was the relation in which they had stood to Pharaoh and to all the Egyptians, that of practical slavery. (Kretzmann)

¹¹ “After the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and gives it to you, as he promised on oath to you and your forefathers, ¹² you are to give over to the LORD the first offspring of every womb. All the firstborn males of your livestock belong to the LORD. ¹³ Redeem with a lamb every firstborn donkey, but if you do not redeem it, break its neck. Redeem every firstborn among your sons. ¹⁴ “In days to come, when your son asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ say to him, ‘With a mighty hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ¹⁵ When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed every firstborn in Egypt, both man and animal. This is why I sacrifice to the LORD the first male offspring of every womb and redeem each of my firstborn sons.’

13:13 *Redeem*. See 6:6. The verb means “obtain release by means of payment.” (CSB)

every firstborn donkey. The economic importance of pack animals allowed for their redemption through sacrificing a lamb. (CSB)

Clean beasts were to be substituted for the unclean; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck, for the unredeemed animal might not be kept. (Kretzmann)

If you broke it's neck this was killing without spilling blood (blood made it a sacrifice). (TLSB)

every firstborn among your sons. Humans were to be consecrated to the Lord by their life, not by their death (see Ge 22:12; Nu 3:39–51; cf. Ro 12:1). (CSB)

The Lord later provided special regulations for the redemption of the first-born sons by means of a certain sum of money, Num. 3, 46. 47; 18, 15. 16. (Kretzmann)

Two special cases. First, the donkey was not acceptable as a sacrifice (Lv 22:19). The people were to redeem a firstborn male donkey by sacrificing a lamb or by breaking the donkey's neck to kill it without spilling blood (blood made it a sacrifice). Second, the Israelites were to consecrate their children to life rather than to death, so this command effectively prohibited human sacrifice. Cf Gn 22:13 and note. The offering of a lamb in place of a human points to Jesus Christ, the Lamb offered by God on our behalf. (TLSB)

13:14 See note on 12:26. (CSB)

WHEN SON ASKS YOU – The fathers of Israel are here represented as speaking collectively and as giving individual instruction to their sons, for the Lord did not want a mechanical observation of customs that were no longer understood. (Kretzmann)

EPISTLE

Colossians 3:12-17

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

3:12 *God's chosen people.* † Israel was called this name (Dt 4:37), and so is the Christian community (1Pe 2:9). Divine election is a constant theme in Paul's letters (see note on Eph 1:4), but the Bible never teaches that it dulls human response. On the contrary, as this verse shows, it is precisely because the Christian has been elected to eternal salvation that he must put forth every effort to live the godly life. For Paul, divine grace and human response go hand in hand. (CSB)

Israel was so designated (Dt 4:37). Cf 1Pt 2:9. (TLSB)

Chosen (or elect) and beloved are virtual synonyms here. Believers are chosen in that God, who chose them from eternity for salvation through faith in Christ,

has called them to that saving faith through the Gospel (2 Thess 2:13-14). Such is the way in which they are beloved by the Lord. (CC p. 144)

CLOTHE YOURSELVES – Virtues are not ours to accomplish but are gifts provided by God. They are Christ’s virtues. (TLSB)

A Christian’s life ought to break with the old vices and be filled with Christian virtues. In this section of Colossians Paul shows what virtues ought to result in Christian’s lives from putting on of the new nature that is daily renewed in the image of God, and he urges Christians to live and grow in these virtues. These virtues are to become permanent, distinguishing marks of each Christian’s life. (PBC)

COMPASSION – (splugchna oiktirmou – bowels of compassion) – A literal translation might be “feelings of compassion” or even “entrails of compassion,” for the visera were thought of as the seat of such tender emotions. In English this might become “a heart of compassion.” (CC p. 144)

The apostle calls for a deep dealing of affection rooted in the love of Christ which fills believers’ hearts. Believers extend compassion especially to those who are suffering or in distress. (PBC)

KINDNESS – Goodness, kindness, generosity is used to describe how one stands in relation to others. Paul includes kindness in his list of “fruit of the Spirit” in Gal 5:22. (CC p. 144)

Kindness is somewhat broader than compassion. The very opposite of malice, it is a cordial, loving disposition which knows no harshness. The early Christians were well known for their kindness, both to one another and to all their fellow human beings. (PBC)

HUMILITY – As a virtue of the Christian life, humility involves displaying the mind of Christ, which is ours in Christ (see “In Christ” at Col 1:1-2), so that one puts the other person ahead of himself (Phil 2:3-4 in light of 2:5-11). In the Greek world, the term was used disparagingly with respect to the spiritual and moral state of man. Humility was considered a disposition for only for slaves. The higher the regard in which our culture holds those who are humble is evidence of the wholesome leaven that Christianity has been in society. (CC pp. 144-145)

The believer who, with a loving heart, is kind to others does not have too high an estimate of himself. He is clothed with humility, the virtue that leads Christians to strive to place themselves below others and to put the welfare of others before their own. Paul is not speaking here of a pretended humility, like that of the false teachers (see chapter 2:18), but of a genuine humility that marks the believer who recognizes his own sin and unworthiness and truly appreciates what God has done for him and for all sinners in Christ. (PBC)

GENTLENESS – This is the strength to deal gently so as to be of help instead of offending another (Gal 6:1; 2 Tim 2:25), as a strong man has the physical strength to set down a heavy weight so gentle on a fragile surface that is not damaged. (CC p. 145)

This virtue has also been ennobled by Jesus through His perfect example. Christian gentleness is not a spinelessness that bows before every breeze or refuses to take a stand on any principle. The Christian who follows Jesus will always stand firm in Him. At the same time, that Christian will exhibit gentleness in his dealings with others, including his enemies. He will not be easily provoked to fits of rage or anger by the carelessness of others, and he will overlook insults in the spirit of forgiveness. A gentle Christian would rather suffer injury than inflict it. (PBC)

PATIENCE – longsuffering – means bearing with others despite their defects. (CC p. 145)

This is a “holding out” despite provocation and injustice. The patient Christian does not bear a grudge and refuses to harbor thoughts of revenge when he is wronged. (PBC)

3:13 BEAR WITH EACH OTHER... AND FORGIVE – Both bearing with and forgiving are present participles, designating that these actions are to be ongoing in the Christian life. In the present passage, these participles are attached to the imperative “clothe” in 3:12 to designate how one puts on the virtues enumerated here: put on these virtues by “putting up with” and by “forgiving.” Hence, the impact of the participles here is the same as if they were also in the imperative mood: put on... put up with... forgive.” (CC p. 145)

As we each struggle with our own temptations, so we understand the struggles of others. (TLSB)

As they live together with one another and with their unbelieving neighbors in the world, believers must always remember that they are sinners living with sinners. In spite of all their efforts, there will be lapses in their Christian living. Blemishes and faults will show. There will be occasions when even Christians will hurt each other and complaints against one another will arise. But day after day believers work to understand. They will bear with each other and help each other, lovingly overlook slights and injuries. They will try to help each other grow, and they will strengthen each other rather than cruelly tearing each other down. (PBC)

AS THE LORD FORGAVE – Forgave is an aorist indicative, pointing to a completed past action – Christ’s death on the cross – as the time of our forgiveness. Since the one-time event of baptism is an incorporation into Christ’s death. (CC p. 145)

Echoes the Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:12); see SC, p xxxviii. Forgiving others shows that we truly believe God has forgiven us. (TLSB)

When Paul encourages mutual forgiveness, he is not speaking of a forgiveness with conditions. It is easy to agree to forgive when pardon is asked or amends are offered to soothe our wounded pride, but Jesus' forgiveness to us is not based on any conditions we must fulfill in order to be forgiven. The forgiveness we give to one another should be either. (PBC)

3:14 OVER ALL THESE THINGNS PUT ON LOVE – Love is another object of the verb in Col. 3:12, which we have repeated in translation. Paul employs the neuter relative pronoun in apposition to the feminine noun love (agape). As he regularly uses the correct gender of the relative pronoun elsewhere in this letter (1:24, 27: 2:10, 17, 18, 22), his departure from the usual rules of syntax here points to the relative clause being less an identification and more an interpretation. Therefore, perhaps we are to think of love as the “belt” that fastens together all other “clothes” (virtues) that have been put on, since love is the summation and essence of Christian virtue (Rom 13:9; 1 Cor 13; Gal 5:14). (CC p. 145)

This virtue is a matter of the will, for practicing love means making a determined decision of the will to love another even in the face of what is unlovable on the part of that other person. It is because love is an act of the will that believers can be commanded to love others. As an act of the will, love reaches out to those who have no claim on us. It overflows with concern for the one who needs our help, and it is prepared to be betrayed. Jesus Himself offered the Good Samaritan as an exemplar of such love, for He helped one who was his natural enemy, he reached out in concern to and provided help for one in need. He would receive no recompense in this life for his sacrificial love, and to provide such aid he ran the risk of himself being harmed. (CC p. 157)

Lit, “the bond of perfection.” Like a belt, it holds all things together. (TLSB)

3:15 *peace of Christ*. The attitude of peace that Christ alone gives—in place of the attitude of bitterness and quarrelsomeness. This attitude is to “rule” (lit. “function like an umpire”) in all human relationships. (CSB)

Peace is a relational word; to have peace with God is to have a relationship with Him that is based on the forgiveness of sins, since man's sin created enmity with God. “Of Christ” is a subjective genitive; the peace of Christ is the peace with God that Christ gives through faith. In extrabiblical Greek, *BraBeuo* (rule) is a term used for judging in the law court and in athletic competition. The peace of Christ is to “referee” or “adjudicate” conflicts and disputes within the body Of

Christ. Hence possible translations are “rule” or “be in control” or “be the decisive factor.” (CC p 146)

In speaking of peace, Paul is describing not an idealistic setting in which there are no tensions, nor is the peace spoken of here an absence of conflict arrived at by remaining separate from one another, so as to remove the occasion for conflicts that would disrupt such a peace. Instead, peace is that virtue, bestowed by Christ Himself, which will overcome the conflicts that naturally arise when even the best among us less-than-perfect people live in close association with one another, such as a family under one roof. When the peace of Christ rules, conflicts are settled by this unique mediator. (CC p. 157)

RULE – Act as an umpire. (TLSB)

YOU WERE CALLED – To call is regularly used for the effective activity of God by which He brings the unbelieving into a saving relationship with Him through faith in Jesus Christ. (CC p. 146)

AND BE THANKFUL – At first blush, the exhortation to be “thankful” seems to be an unrelated afterthought, yet it too is a relational virtue. The apostle very often speaks of thanksgiving as that which is to be offered to God not so much for benefits received by oneself but for those blessings received by others. Thus, we cannot fully practice thanksgiving unless we are in association with others, that we may know of those blessings they have received for which thanksgiving to God is appropriate. Public worship affords a good opportunity to practice thanksgiving as a relational virtue, for in its prayers the assembly of believers will regularly offer thanksgiving for blessings, eternal and temporal, that others have received. (CC p. 157)

3:16 *word of Christ*. Refers especially to Christ’s teaching, which in the time of the Colossians was transmitted orally. But by implication it includes the OT as well as the NT. (CSB)

DWELL – He is the center and chief content of the Word, which is to be preached and taught. The present tense of the imperative “let dwell” points to a continual presence of the Word. It is not merely to be read, commented on, and the like, but it is to be internalized so that it is continually present. Believers are to live, think, and exist in relation to the Word of Christ. It is to empower and norm everything about their existence. (CC p. 146)

RICHLY – This is a term used by Paul almost exclusively to describe the splendor of the way of salvation. Richly here not only means a great deal but also a great benefit, for the riches of salvation will come through the employment of Christ’s Word. (CC p. 146)

Corresponds perfectly with Paul’s goal in 1:28. (TLSB)

psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Some of the most important doctrines were expressed in Christian hymns preserved for us now only in Paul's letters (1:15–20; Eph 5:14; Php 2:6–11; 1Ti 3:16). "Psalms" refers to the OT psalms (see Lk 20:42; 24:44; Ac 1:20; 13:33), some of which may have been set to music by the church. "Psalm" could also describe a song newly composed for Christian worship (cf. 1Co 14:26, where "hymn" is lit. "psalm" in the Greek text). A "hymn" was a song of praise, especially used in a celebration (see Mk 14:26; Heb 2:12; see also Ac 16:25), much like the OT psalms that praised God for all that he is. A "song" recounted the acts of God and praised him for them (see Rev 5:9; 14:3; 15:3), much like the OT psalms that thanked God for all that he had done. See note on Eph 5:19. (CSB)

Includes OT psalms as well as NT hymns (1:15–20; Eph 5:14; Php 2:6–11; 1Tm 3:16). Songs conveyed some of the Bible's greatest teachings. Great expressions of joy and thankfulness naturally flow from the rich doctrine of Christ. "Certainly you will not release a stronger incense or other repellent against the devil than to be engaged by God's commandments and words, and speak, sing, or think them" (LC Longer Preface 10). (TLSB)

It is impossible to delineate any rigid distinctions between the terms for music in this verse. Multiple terms are used here for emphasis rather than to distinguish one type from another. "Spiritual," while grammatically modifying only "songs," stress that all three terms refer to music with a definite content. It is "spiritual" in that it sets forth "the Word of Christ." These songs are "spiritual" because they are vehicles for the Spirit, who works through the Gospel Word, also the Word in song. (CC p. 147)

As the Word of the Lord gives life (John 20:31; Col 1:25-27) and remains to eternity (Is. 40:8; 1 Pet 1:25), as baptism is a resurrection with Christ (Col 2:12) which assures us of being raised with Him in His parousia (Col 3:1,4), as the Holy Sipper of Christ's body and blood is a foretaste of the banquet of the kingdom to come, so through the type of singing described in this text, the church on earth participates in the worship of eternity, in the worship of angels, and archangels, and all the redeemed in heaven. Thus, the closest we can get in this life to the joy and glory of paradise is in the church's worship – for all its faults and shortcomings, real or perceived – highly significant and therefore truly exciting. (CC pp. 158-159)

3:17 WHATEVER YOU DO – There is no division between the sacred and the secular concerning what a Christian says and does. Christ should accompany us in all facets of life. (TLSB)

IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS – This denotes that His saving work enables all that we do (Mt 29:19; John 14:13-14) as well as that all is to be done

to His glory (Phil 2:10). In this verse, the name of Jesus holds the same status as the divine name of Yahweh in the OT. (CC p. 148)

GIVING THANKS – Christians whose hearts are filled with Christ’s love and ruled by His peace will naturally be thankful. Five times in this relatively brief epistle Paul encourages Christians to be thankful. As believers’ knowledge of Christ and the spiritual blessings they have in Him grow and mature, so will their gratitude, and that gratitude will become evident in their whole manner of living. Love and peace always result in gratitude, and gratitude, in turn, promotes love and peace. (PBC)

Paul has mentioned thankfulness three times in three verses. (TLSB)

GOSPEL
Luke 2:22-40

Jesus Presented in the Temple

²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived. ²² When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.” ²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: ²⁹ “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” ³³ The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.” ³⁶ There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹ When Joseph and Mary

had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

2:22-40 Theophilus (Lk 1:3), already knowing something of the content of the Gospel, is catechized about the Lord of all humankind, of Jerusalem and of the nations. The carefully recorded birth announcements for John and Jesus, the recounting of their births, and also the praises of heaven and earth sung at their births, instruct Theophilus how to understand Jesus growing as God in the flesh. Jesus, after he has been born man, will grow as man grows, and at the temple Theophilus watches the Son of God begin to fulfill his sacrificial ministry with his whole life. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

2:22-24 Lev 12:1–4 demanded nothing for the husband or the child. With the plural (*tou katharismou autōn* [v 22]), Mary’s purification and the offering for the Child are gathered under one heading; Jesus entered the temple with Mary (Arthur A. Just Jr., *Luke 1:1–9:50*, Concordia Commentary [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1996], 115). Mary’s impurity stresses the reality of the incarnation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

In Exodus 13, the firstborn were presented (*parastēsai* [v 22]) as the special servants of the Lord. For Jesus no purchase price (Num 3:12–13, 44–51; 18:16) is noted—for he is holy (1:35; cf. Ex 13:2, 12, 15); he was not presented to be redeemed. Rather, since the presence of the child at the temple was not required for the act of redemption, Jesus is presented in service to the Lord. This is his active obedience; he has no guilt, but is presented as the One who will freely take the guilt of the world upon himself (Is 53:4–6; Jn 1:29). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

2:22 *their purification.* Following the birth of a son, the mother had to wait 40 days before going to the temple to offer sacrifice for her purification. If she could not afford a lamb and a pigeon (or dove), then two pigeons (or doves) would be acceptable (Lev 12:2–8; cf. Lev 5:11). (CSB)

to Jerusalem. The distance from Bethlehem to Jerusalem was only about six miles. (CSB)

present him to the Lord. The firstborn of both man and animal were to be dedicated to the Lord (see v. 23; Ex 13:12–13). The animals were sacrificed, but the human beings were to serve God throughout their lives. The Levites actually served in the place of all the firstborn males in Israel (see Nu 3:11–13; 8:17–18). (CSB)

2:24 OFFER A SACRIFICE – τοῦ δοῦναι θυσίαν—“To offer sacrifice” retains the language of sacrifice. (CC)

A PAIR OF DOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS – Lev. 12:8 allows this instead of a lamb, since not everyone could afford a lamb. This helps us to understand that Joseph and Mary were of a humble state (Luke 1:48), i.e., too poor to be able to afford a lamb. (CC)

Most modest of the different sacrifices that could be offered; suggests that Jesus' parents were poor (Lev. 12:8). (TLSB)

2:25-32 Forty days after Jesus' birth in Bethlehem His parents took Him to the Temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, verses 22-24. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Simeon came to the Temple just at the time when Mary and Joseph were there with the baby Jesus. He took the baby in his arms, praised God and spoke what we call *The Nunc Dimittis*. In keeping with God's promise, Simeon saw God's salvation with his own eyes. He declared Jesus as the Light of all the nations and the Person Who was Israel's greatest glory. This brings us to verse 33. (Buls)

2:25-28 After John's birth, his destiny was revealed. Now behold (*kai idou* [v 25]) what Simeon will declare about Jesus. Like Zechariah (Lk 1:6), Simeon is described as *dikaïos* (v 25), and as a devout man he has been waiting for the consolation of Israel (*paraklēsîn*; LXX Is 49:13; 57:18; 61:2; cf. Gen 5:29). With the Spirit upon him, Simeon has been endowed with the ability to recognize the Child as the Christ (*ton christon* [v 26] foreshadows *keitai* [v 34]). The continued emphasis on the Holy Spirit reminds us that these events in the temple are not historical coincidences, but are under the direction of the Lord. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

2:25-27 Simeon's watchfulness, discernment of the Messiah's presence, and consequent prophetic utterance were all the result of the Spirit's action. (TLSB)

2:25 CALLED SIMEON – There was nothing great and wonderful about him; he has no high office, standing or power. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

WHO WAS RIGHTEOUS – This speaks of his standing before God, the conscientiousness of his religious obligations and his reproachlessness in the of others. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

Aged persons who have long walked uprightly in piety towards God and good will towards men, often have, as they approach the close of life, remarkably clear and exalted views of the Savior – views that which disarm death of its terrors, and prepare them to ascribe “unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father,” “glory and dominion for ever and ever.” (CB)

WAS WAITING – “to wait for” heightens the sense of expectation. (CC)

προσδεχόμενος—“To wait for” heightens the sense of expectation. This word is also part of Luke’s frame between Simeon and Anna, where she and others are waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem (2:38; cf. 23:51). (CC)

the consolation of Israel. The comfort the Messiah would bring to his people at his coming (see vv. 26, 38; 23:51; 24:21; Isa 40:1–2; Mt 5:4). (CSB)

This recalls the comfort Isaiah foretold. Synonymous with the Lord’s salvation and forgiveness. (TLSB)

the Holy Spirit was upon him. Not in the way common to all believers after Pentecost. Simeon was given a special insight by the Spirit so that he would recognize the “Christ.” (CSB)

When Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit as being “another Paraclete” (comforter) He calls Himself the first Paraclete who brought to Israel consolation here mentioned by Simeon. (Lenski)

2:26 REVEALED TO HIM BY THE HOLY SPIRIT – Simeon wasn’t carried away by a pious wish; it was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. The manner of this revelation is not revealed. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 13, Part 1)

WOULD NOT DIE – The Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he beheld the fulfillment of God’s promise to send the Messiah. (TLSB)

BEFORE HE HAD SEEN THE LORD’S CHRIST – Examples of Messianic hope are listed below:

Mark 15:43, “Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body.”

Luke 2:38 – Anna

Luke 3:15, “The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ.”

John 4:25, “The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

This Lukan motif of closed and open eyes refers not to physical vision but to an eschatological understanding of the work of Jesus. Throughout Luke’s gospel, “the eye” used metaphorically describe the understanding of God’s revelation in Jesus. (CC)

2:27 TEMPLE COURTS – This apparently refers to the outer court of the temple, where women were allowed. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

Specific setting is likely the temple’s Court of Women, because both Mary and Anna (vv 36-38) were present. (TLSB)

The Holy Spirit not only gives Simeon a preview of what he is to experience, but also leads him to the right place at the right time to meet the world’s newborn Messiah. The temple courts included the whole temple compound. Women, for example, were not allowed in certain parts. The presentation of Jesus was part of the established duties for the firstborn. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 13, Part 1)

2:28 TOOK HIM IN HIS ARMS – Simeon literally takes Jesus in his arms (without any protest by His parents), but not to cuddle or coddle Him. Simeon breaks forth in a paean of praise. Simeon’s adrenalin must have started pumping real well! How poor does the world look to one that has Christ in his arms and salvation in his view! (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 13, Part 1)

SIMEON...PRAISED GOD – First on his own behalf and then on behalf of the whole world. (Lenski)

2:29-33 *nun* (v 29) highlights the presence of salvation. Having taken Jesus in his arms, Simeon confesses what he, the servant, has presently received from the Lord, his Master. Whether emphasizing departing this life (v 26) or release from sin (v 30), *to hrēma sou* (v 29) defines Simeon’s status before the Lord. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

In full view of the peoples, God has come to save them. *kata prosōpon pantōn tōn laōn* (v 31) refers to all participants, Jews and Gentiles. Jesus, *phōs eis apokalupsin ethnōn* (v 32), will lead the nations out of their darkness (Is 42:6; 49:6; 60:3). “Nations” further anticipates the Baptism of Jesus (whose genealogy encompasses all humankind, Luke 3), the preaching of repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations (Lk 24:47), and the mission in Acts. Meanwhile, Jesus is also *doxan laou sou Israēl* (v 32), the head of the people (Col 1:18), the pinnacle of the temple (Eph 2:20), the paramount gift of the Lord to Israel (Jn 4:22; Rom 9:5). The glory is dwelling with his people (Ex 40:34–38; 1 Sam 4:21–22). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

2:29–32 See note on 1:46–55. This hymn of Simeon has been called the Nunc Dimittis, from the first words of the Latin Vulgate translation, meaning “[You] now dismiss.”

Psalm 116:15, “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.”

Romans 14:8, “If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.”

The Nunc Dimittis has been used constantly in the liturgies of Christian churches for 14 centuries. The thought which runs through the hymn is: Simeon represents himself under the image of a sentinel, whom his master has placed in an elevated position and charged to look for the appearance of a star, and then to announce it to the world. (PC)

Are we watching as he watched not asleep in sin but diligent in the Lord’s service and rejoicing in His praises. (PC)

There is a vast multitude of men who seek satisfaction in temporal things – in taking pleasure in making money, in wielding power, in gaining honor etc. But they do not find what they seek. (PC)

2:29 SOVEREIGN LORD – despota is used infrequently with reference to God, denominates Him according to His unlimited power. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

NOW – This emphasizes that salvation is here now in this tiny child Simeon holds in his arms. (CC)

DISMISS YOUR SERVANT – The thought underlying its wording is of a slave who is instructed by his master to keep watch through the long, dark night on a high place to wait for the rising of a special star and then announce it. After wearisome hours of waiting he at last sees the star rising in all its brightness. He announces it and is then discharged from keeping watch any longer. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

Like Mary (1:48), Simeon identifies himself as God’s servant while bursting forth in praise – a thematic link between the two songs. Simeon’s song also continues to be sung as part of the Church’s liturgy (LSB, pp 238-240). (TLSB)

2:30 YOUR SALVATION – Realized in the baby Jesus. (TLSB)

IN PEACE – This expresses the feeling of his heart, perfect contentment which seeks no more...application is having the actual and complete salvation in Jesus for the rest of our lives. (Lenski)

With his own eyes Simeon saw Jesus, the Messiah, the embodiment of God’s salvation who would make it a reality. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 13, Part 1)

2:31 YOU HAVE PREPARED – It is a done deed. There is no secret about His coming; it is in “the sight of all people.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 13, Part 1)

all people. As a Gentile himself, Luke was careful to emphasize the truth that salvation was offered for the Gentiles (v. 32) as well as for Jews. (CSB)

2:32 LIGHT – That is the kind of “light” the Gentiles needed, one that would reveal their dreadful condition and would show them God’s grace in Christ for deliverance from sin and death. (Lenski)

φῶς—The image of light for revelation complements Luke’s metaphor of eyes that see salvation. (CC)

Matthew 5:14-16, ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

Psalms 119:105, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”

FOR REVELATION – εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν—The verb ἀποκαλύπτω is repeated in 2:35, forming a frame to Simeon’s words and tying the two parts together. Revelation is one of the themes, if not the theme of Simeon’s hymn. (CC)

TO THE GENTILES – Gentiles (instead of nations) anticipates the Gentile mission in Acts. (CC)

FOR GLORY TO YOUR PEOPLE ISRAEL – δόξαν λαοῦ σου Ἰσραὴλ—The angels announced glory to God, and now Simeon announces that the salvation and light in this child are for the glory of Israel. This strengthens the interpretation that the heavenly glory in 2:14 is also reflected on earth. Since δόξα is in the accusative, it goes with the preposition εἰς so that salvation/light (φῶς stands in apposition to τὸ σωτήριον) is for revelation to the Gentiles and is for glory to Israel. (CC)

The glory of Israel is her salvation. Because this salvation is for all people, it will come to shine upon every nation through the preaching of the Gospel. (TLSB)

2:33 child’s father. Luke, aware of the virgin birth of Jesus (1:26–35), is referring to Joseph as Jesus’ legal father. (CSB)

MARVELED AT WHAT WAS SAID – When Simeon was telling such marvelous things concerning the child, his parents did not despise them, but believed them firmly. For this reason they stood, listened and marveled at his

speech – how else could they react to it? (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

Note that AV and NKJV have the Koine reading "Joseph and his mother" whereas the others have "His father and mother." Joseph, Jesus' legal father, was regarded by people as His father.(Buls)

"Marvelled" is variously translated "marveling, amazed, wondering, surprised." They were astounded at what Simeon said concerning the baby.(Buls)

Bengel: They began to understand more and more how glorious the things were which had been spoken concerning Jesus, before He was born. And they were now hearing similar things from Simeon and others, whom they did not suppose as yet to be aware of the fact.(Buls)

Lenski: Simeon's words went beyond Matthew 1:21 and Luke 1:32.33 and 2:10, which referred only to Israel; Simeon included all the Gentile nations in the salvation that this child was bringing.(Buls)

Arndt: That Mary had conceived the Child through the action of the Holy Spirit they knew, and Gabriel's message and other information about Him they had pondered; but here additional matters, betokening that He would have a divine mission, are mentioned, and at that by a person who was a total stranger to them and who evidently spoke through divine revelation. (Buls)

Luke 2:51, "But His mother treasured all these things in her heart."

This includes all happenings in chapter 2 plus. The mysteries which were beyond her comprehension, yet she treasured them and sought not to penetrate as to draw the blessedness from them. (Lenski)

The same amazement that struck Zechariah, his friends and neighbors, and the shepherds is now experienced by Mary and Joseph. (CC)

2:34-35 This Jesus—mark well, Joseph and Mary and all who would hear him and would follow him—is appointed by the Lord (*idou houtos keitai* [v 34]; cf. Phil 1:16; 1 Thess 3:3). The sufferings and opposition that Jesus will encounter are not incidental to the office of Messiah. Having followed the brightness of the star to the manger, to the infant Jesus, will we follow this Jesus to the darkness of his cross, and therefore to the darkness of our baptismal cross, trusting only in the Father? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

Jesus will scandalize many (*eis ptōsin* [v 34]), yet many will see the new Israel in him (*kai anastasin* [v 34]); some will reject, and others will believe (Jn 1:10–12; cf. Is 8:14; 28:16; Mk 12:10; Lk 20:17; Acts 4:11; Rom 9:32–33; 1 Pet 2:6–8).

Judas despairs, but Peter repents; one robber blasphemes, but the other confesses. Men oppose this sign (*eis sēmeion antilegomenon* [v 34]), because they do not think Jesus is a real sign from God. This sign brings about a sharp division; he brings a sword (Mt 10:34; Jn 1:11; 6:66). This sign forces us to confront every self-satisfying preconception and every religious posturing. And the sword wielded in his preaching pierces our neatly wrapped and packaged lives, reaching into the very marrow of our thought and will. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

Though maternal anguish cannot be discounted, Mary must confront the sword of Jesus' preaching (*sou [de] autēs tēn psuchēn* [v 35]); she also belongs to the family that hears the word of God (Lk 8:19–21). Note how the NIV has rearranged the sentence structure (v 35). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

hopōs an apokalupthōsin ek pollōn kardiōn dialogismoī (v 35), dependent on *keitai*, states the purpose of Jesus' coming. Christ is the sign that requires people take certain action; through their stance toward Jesus, their inmost thoughts are expressed. In Luke, this begins in Nazareth (4:22–29; 5:21–22; 6:8; 9:46–47; 24:38). On the Last Day, the Father will not ask us if we enjoyed ourselves during Christmas, but whether we have done his will, believed in the incarnate Lord crucified and risen. Has our flesh revealed the birth and death and resurrection of the flesh of Christ? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

2:34 THIS CHILD – "Then" denotes something exceptional or remarkable. "This child" refers to Jesus, whom Simeon is holding in his arms (verse 28). "Is destined" means "is appointed, ordained (by God)." Cf. Philippians 1:16 and 1 Thessalonians 3:3. In keeping with the context, these Notes suggest that Simeon is speaking of two groups of people, not one. (Buls)

falling and rising of many in Israel. Christ raises up those who believe in him, but is a stumbling block for those who disbelieve (see 20:17–18; 1Co 1:23; 1Pe 2:6–8). (CSB)

Based on their reaction to Jesus, people will either stand or fall (cf 1 Peter 2:6, 8). (TLSB)

Christ is, as it were, a Rock placed in a road. Some people despise the Rock and dash against it in a rage. The result is that they are hurt and fall. It is not the fault of the Rock; it has been placed in the road for people to rest on. But if one refuses to make the proper use of it and persists in that refusal, the results are disastrous. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

There is a reason for the poverty of the child. His humble birth is a sign of foreboding. Many Jews will fall and rise as they meet Jesus; He is a stumbling

block to everyone, including His own disciples and family, because of the nature of His ministry and the nature of His kingdom. (CC)

Plummer: Notice Isaiah 8:14 where the same double destiny is expressed.(Buls)

The word "many" refers to both nouns, describing both the many who will fall and the many who will rise. He is speaking especially about Israel, the Covenant people. No one can be neutral to Jesus. The theologians distinguish the *voluntas Dei antecedens* and the *voluntas Dei consequens*. The first denotes God's saving will for all. The second denotes God's judgmental will toward those who reject Christ. Christ is destined to be the cause of the fall of those who reject Him, but they are to blame. Christ is destined to be the cause of the rise of those who repent and believe in Him. (Buls)

Bengel: It is to be observed that these things were not foretold in the prediction of the angel but were added by a holy man. (Buls)

Lenski: When men reject that grace in unbelief they fall, and it is God's will that they perish (Mark 16;16; Isaiah 8:14; Matthew 21:42.44; Romans 9:33). On the other hand, when God's grace in Christ wins men and makes them rise up from sin and death in a spiritual resurrection (Ephesians 2:5.6), this is again the effect of his consequent will but at the same time the execution of his *voluntas antecedens*. (Buls)

Plummer: Some welcome the Light; others love the darkness rather than the Light, because their works are evil (John 3:19) and are by their own conduct condemned. Judas despairs, Peter repents; one robber blasphemes, the other confesses (2 Corinthians 2:6). (Buls)

Geldenhuy: For the first time in the Gospel history the coming struggle and suffering are referred to. (Buls)

Arndt: The message of Christ and His work would arouse much opposition in Israel, and instead of being universally acclaimed as the Savior, Jesus would meet with much rejection. What is startling is that it is stated this has been ordained by God. (Buls)

sign ... spoken against. Christ points to the Father and his love for sinners, and those who oppose him also oppose the Father. (CSB)

Jesus' rejection is foretold early in Luke. Before the infancy narrative ends, the cross begins to loom. (TLSB)

Secondly, Jesus is ordained by God for a sign which will be contradicted. (Buls)

Geldenhuys: This indicates a phenomenon which cannot escape notice, of which cognizance must be taken, and through which something else is made known. (Buls)

It refers to Jesus' entire person, Word and work. The Jews contradicted Jesus in words and deeds. Read Hebrews 12:3. Sinners spoke against and contradicted Him. It began at John 5:16-18. They persecuted and wanted to kill Jesus because He did not keep the Sabbath and made Himself equal to God. John chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, plus Jesus' trial, condemnation and crucifixion make this thought clear. "He came to His own but His own received Him not." They spoke against Him. They contradicted Him. (Buls)

For nearly 3 centuries the name of Jesus of Nazareth and His followers was a name of shame, hateful and despised by the Romans and the Jews in their rabbinical schools. (PC)

You can't be neutral with Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 13, Part 1)

2:35 THOUGHTS AND HEARTS WILL BE REVEALED – διαλογισμοί—Jesus will cause the “thoughts” of many to be revealed. This is fulfilled as Jesus’ divine omniscience enables him to discern the “thoughts” of others in 5:21–22; 6:8; 9:46–47; 24:38 and in parables in 12:17; 20:14. Whenever this noun for “thoughts” or the verb διαλογίζομαι, “to think, debate,” refers to Jesus’ opponents, they are always contemplating evil thoughts that stem from unbelief. See the noun also in 5:22; 6:8 and the verb in 12:17; 20:14. The noun also refers to “doubts” of the apostles in 9:46–47; 24:38. However, the verb denotes sincere questioning or wondering by believers in 1:29 (Mary) and 3:15 (the people). (CC)

Note that the Nestle/Aland Greek text make the first part of this verse a parenthesis, as do AV, RSV, JB, NASB, NKJV. And TEV, NIV, and AAT place it last for the sake of clarity. Some commentators agree with this, some do not. We take it as a parenthesis. (Buls)

Bengel: When Jesus is presented for the first time in the temple, adversities are awaiting Him. When He was in the temple the last time He Himself spoke words not unlike those of Simeon. The sword may have pierced through her soul on the occasion mentioned at the end of verse 48, Mark 3:31, John 19:25. Her faith attained its height by proving victorious through the height of temptation. Something bitter is now announced even to her, who was blessed among women. All have to bear the part assigned to them in chastisement. (Buls)

Arndt: It adds a slight touch of contingency 'in every given case' whenever human hearts are confronted with Christ. (Buls)

A person's attitude to Jesus' person, Word and work, brings out the thoughts of that person's heart. (Buls)

Bengel: Both faith and unbelief are in the heart and are put forth by the mouth. Romans 10:8.9.21; 15:5.6; Acts 13:46; 2 Corinthians 4:13; 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:12.13.(Buls)

Geldenhuis: The appearance of Christ will cause a clear division between those who really serve Him and those who are hostile to Him. (Buls)

This verse is not saying that some hearts are better, by nature, than are others. Judas was lost. Peter repented. One malefactor was lost. The other was saved. In both instances, the former rejected the Christ and the latter, only by grace and mercy, repented. Read John 3:20.21 where we have the same thought in different words. Christ is was ordained by God to bring out this great distinction among men. This truth stands side by side, in Scripture, with the great truth of the universal atonement and God's serious desire that all men be saved, that they come to the knowledge of the Truth. (Buls)

sword will pierce your own soul too. The word “too” indicates that Mary, as well as Jesus, would suffer deep anguish—the first reference in this Gospel to Christ’s suffering and death. (CSB)

Mary will someday experience sorrow because of her Son’s suffering and death (cf John 19:25-27). (TLSB)

You" means "also" implying that a sword would pierce Jesus' soul too. "Pierce your soul" is emphatic, and is, of course, metaphorical, denoting extreme pain. Note John 19:25 in the Nestle/Aland margin. Mary's pain reached its height when she stood under the cross. (Buls)

Mary *the woman*, as a part of Israel *and* as the mother of Jesus, will feel the pain of Jesus’ words and his crucifixion. She herself will be pierced by Jesus’ teaching, especially when he speaks about blood relationships giving way to the new family of the church. All believers (including Mary) will belong to this family, consisting of “those who hear the Word of God and do it” (8:19–21). And the mother of Jesus will be pierced at the cross as she watches her son die the humiliating death of crucifixion. Like every other participant in Jesus’ life, Mary, Israelite and mother, will experience sharp pain because of Jesus’ teaching and death. (CC)

2:36-38 To confirm the words of Simeon, a second witness, Anna, is introduced (Deut 19:15). She, as did the women who saw the resurrected Jesus and as the shepherds who heard the good news, spread the message of hope. She spoke of his death as the redemption/ransom (Lk 21:28). Her presence confirms that Jesus is the hope for all Israel, for she, of the tribe of Asher, represents the ten

tribes. Her constant presence in the temple, her piety (cf. Acts 14:23; 27:9; 2 Cor 6:5), and her waiting (cf. Is 4:2–6; Zeph 3:14–20) stand as an example for believers today. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

Furthermore, with the presence of Simeon and Anna and their confession of God's redemption for all nations in Christ, divisions once in place (e.g., Gal 3:28) begin to fall. Before us is Jesus, who fulfills the purpose of the temple and who is the reconciliation between God and man. He is the Passover; he is the place of atonement; he is the High Priest. Those who belong to him as priests offer their living sacrifices. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

2:36 *prophetess*. Other prophetesses were Miriam (Ex 15:20), Deborah (Jdg 4:4), Huldah (2Ki 22:14) and the daughters of Philip (Ac 21:9). (CSB)

Note how similar the beginning of verses 25, 33, 36: Simeon, the parents, Anna. The first information, other than that from Gabriel, which the parents received, was from two elderly, pious, believing Jews. Likely they were not well-known. Mid all the empty ritual at the temple, these two shine. An example for us: though we are insignificant and often must live mid much mere ritual, God sustains us. (Buls)

Anna (Old Testament Hannah) was a prophetess. God caused her to speak His Word. Evidently she was known for this. She has been compared with Miriam, Deborah, Huldah and the daughters of Philip. She made God's will known to people. Her father's name is noted, not that of her husband. Obviously this is done to denote her descent. (Buls)

Before the Destruction of Jerusalem (and all records) Jews could trace their lineage. Asher was one of the ten tribes of the north which were lost. But God preserved one of their descendants as His child. "This one advanced in many days" obviously means she was quite elderly. This verse plainly means that her husband died after seven years of marriage. By the way, this verse can be used in the interest of the ordination of women as little as verses 25-32 can be used in the interest of the ordination of men. (Buls)

The Holy Spirit was upon and guided both Simeon and Anna. These passages do not speak about or pertain to the holy ministry. God used these two elderly people for a specific purpose: to give further information about and to glorify this baby. (Buls)

Luke often has stories in pairs, and women figure prominently in the narrative. As in the Easter story, women play a key role in the events surrounding the Nativity. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

Anna. Same name as OT Hannah (1Sa 1:2), which means “gracious.” Anna praised God for the child Jesus as Hannah had praised God for the child Samuel (1Sa 2:1–10). (CSB)

She is either 84, or she had remained a widow for 84 years after 7 years of marriage, which probably would make her at least 105. Did she, perhaps, have a room in one of the buildings on the temple grounds? Nothing can be said with certainty, but in any case she was an exceptional saint. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

2:37 WIDOW – A variety of widows exhibited exemplary devotion (1 Kings 17:8-24; Luke 21:1-4; cf 1 Tim. 5:3-10). Anna was an outstanding example of such a pious widow. (TLSB)

AV NKJV and JB read the Koine text: "She was a widow of *about* eighty-four years." All the other translations read "until." That causes a problem. It can mean either: "and as widow till she was eighty-four" RSV NIV AAT NEB NASB, or: "she had been a widow for eighty-four years" LB TEV. The former would mean that she was eighty-four, the latter that she was about 105 years old. In other words, the Koine reading makes the genitive a predicate genitive of description, whereas the Nestle reading gives it a temporal meaning (until). Frankly the Koine reading makes much more sense. The text very likely is saying that as a widow (the time between the death of her husband and this occasion) she devoted herself entirely to a sanctified life of fasting, supplication and testimony about Jesus. (Buls)

Verse 37 does not say that she lived in the Temple. (If the verse be pressed literally it would have to mean that she never left the Temple). In what sense did she not depart from the Temple? In serving day and night by fastings and supplications. A remarkably dedicated widow. (Buls)

never left the temple. Herod's temple was quite large and included rooms for various uses, and Anna may have been allowed to live in one of them. This statement, however, probably means that she spent her waking hours attending and worshiping in the temple. (CSB)

WORSHIPED NIGHT AND DAY – To worship God in the OT liturgical perspective was to “serve Him with fasting and prayers. The same expression is used in 1:74. (CC)

2:38 COMING UP TO THEM – "At that very moment" a dative of time meaning: "at that very time," when the parents and the baby were in the Temple. "Coming up to them" means "appeared." By the way, this might indicate that she came into the Temple at that very time, but it can't be proved. (Buls)

"She gave thanks" is "she was acknowledging in return," in return for blessings received. She was a grateful penitent sinner. Both verbs in this verse are imperfect tense, denoting continued action. It has been suggested that she did this speaking *after* the parents left, but the text does not say this. The text does not specify whether she did this before, during or after the parents came. But that she spoke of Jesus is clear. (Buls)

For the rest of this verse compare verse 25. It reads: "To all of those who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem." Its intended sense is that many people were awaiting the coming of the Messiah. Our text makes Jerusalem, as representative of all Israel, objective genitive. The context must be speaking of spiritual deliverance. NEB "the liberation of Jerusalem" sounds like political deliverance. So does AAT "were looking for Jerusalem to be set free." The context clearly calls for the spiritual deliverance gained by the Messiah, not political deliverance from Rome. (Buls)

GAVE THANKS AND SPOKE ABOUT – The imperfect tense may well mean that she continued her thanks also after Mary and Joseph had gone. (Lenski)

Anna continues the proclamation of the Good News that shepherds began at the birth of Jesus (2:15-20). (CC)

Jerusalem. The holy city of God's chosen people (Isa 40:2; 52:9); here it stands for Israel as a whole. (CSB)

REDEMPTION OF JERUSALEM – Echoing Simeon, Anna spoke to those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem and said, "It is here in the person of this child." (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 1)

λύτρωσιν—"Redemption" (as opposed to "deliverance") parallels 1:68 and emphasizes Luke's concern with atonement language. λύτρωσις/λυτρόω are part of Luke's larger Gospel frame, occurring in the final chapter of the gospel as the Emmaus disciples tell Jesus that they had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel (24:21). (CC)

2:39-40 With *etelesan* (v 39), we are drawn ahead to Jesus' completion of everything according to the Father's will (Lk 24:44–49). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

Truly human in every way is Jesus (cf. 1:80; 2:52; Heb 2:10–18; 4:15; 5:9). His wisdom, the ability and desire to use knowledge in relationship to the Father, anticipates the next narrative. His wisdom also set him as superior to John, for from childhood Jesus possessed both wisdom and grace. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

Though the language differs, *charis theou ēn ep' auto* (v 40) evokes the Father's declaration at Jesus' Baptism and transfiguration. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

2:39 *they returned to Galilee.* Luke does not mention the coming of the Magi, the danger from Herod, or the flight to and return from Egypt (cf. Mt 2:1–23). (CSB)

"Had done everything" obviously refers to the ceremonial requirements noted in verses 21-24. "Returned" whence they had come, 2:4. Arndt is of the opinion that they returned immediately to Nazareth to move their belongings to Bethlehem to live there permanently. Most other commentators believe that Luke is abbreviating the account because the flight to Egypt intervened as according to Matthew. The latter is likely the true view. Whether or not Luke was aware of the flight into Egypt is beside the point. The accounts in Matthew and Luke do not contradict each other. (Buls)

Plummer: Luke appears to know nothing of the visit of the Magi. It would have suited his theme of the universality of the Gospel so well, that he would hardly have omitted it, if he had known it. In that case he was not familiar with our first Gospel, Matthew. From Matthew 2:11 we infer that the Holy Family, after the Purification, returned to Bethlehem and there occupied a house. (Buls)

In brief narratives like the present, intervening events are often passed over in silence. We know from Matthew that the wise men from the East found the Savior at Bethlehem; that afterwards He was carried into Egypt; and after a sojourn there of some time, to Nazareth in Galilee, whence Mary had come with Joseph to Bethlehem before His birth. (CB)

2:40-52 Luke continues last week's emphasis on the presence of God and the temple. Jesus, born of woman, grew as man grows. But with the completion of everything according to the Law, Luke answers the question posed of John the Baptizer: What will this one be? How will this one increase and abound in wisdom? Luke provides this event as his response, to anticipate how Jesus will be about the Father's matters in his ministry. Or to view it from our Lord's eyes: "You brought me to the temple and I was dedicated to the service of the Lord. Did you not think that I would be in my Father's house?" This record demonstrates that Jesus always had set his face set toward Jerusalem, his Father's matters at the temple. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

Since the ministry of Jesus culminates as High Priest and the offering, completing the purpose of the temple, Luke has selected an event from Jesus' youth that characterizes this direction of his life. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 1)

2:40 CHILD GREW AND BECAME STRONG – The lad attained more and more wisdom in the Biblical sense as the right knowledge of God and His salvation

coupled with its application to life. In the case of Jesus this included the realization of His own relationship to God. (Lenski)

On this verse compare 1:80 and 2:52. This verse evidently describes Jesus' progress from infancy until the age twelve. He is called "child," a true human being. Note that both verbs are imperfect tense for obvious reasons. He grew as did any other child. Note the passive verbs denoting God as agent in both the mental and spiritual "filling." "Grace" does not denote saving grace, but the favor and approval of God. This verse is a remarkable commentary on the humanity of Jesus. (Buls)

Lenski: It is impossible for us to penetrate the mystery of this development in Jesus -- body and soul untouched by sin, unchecked and unretarded by any result of sin, his mind and soul absorbing the wisdom of God's Word as a bud drinks in the sunshine and expands. (Buls)

Geldenhuis: For the first time a human infant was realizing the ideal of humanity. (Buls)

The sinless Jesus grew and developed as do all other children. He did not need baptism as an infant. His baptism later, was a vicarious baptism, for us. He was not "contradicted" as a child, verse 34. That came only when He began to testify later, John 5:16-18. Though sinless, Jesus must have been a very normal child. (Buls)

FILLED WITH WISDOM – Likely alludes to Is. 11:2, where the Messiah is characterized as one endowed by the Spirit with Wisdom. (TLSB)