

## Notes for Next Sunday

### The Purification of Mary and Presentation of Our Lord

#### The Point of this Week's Readings

Old Testament (1 Samuel 1:21-28). Hannah, the mother of Samuel, had prayed fervently during her time of barrenness that the Lord would grant her a son. Now that Samuel was born she stays at home instead of going up to Jerusalem for the annual sacrifice. She does so not because she diminishes the importance of this special event but because she wants to wean Samuel. Then she will take him and the appropriate sacrificial worship materials to the high priest. At that time Samuel will be dedicated to life-long service to the Lord. While there she reminds Eli that she is the same woman whom he accused of being drunk while she was fervently praying.

Epistle (Hebrews 2:14-18). This reading points out that people are human and beset by sin which lead to eternal death. Therefore, it became necessary that Christ come to earth and take on human flesh and blood. That allows him to take on our sins in his suffering, death and resurrection. That made him our brother. This text also points out because in his humanity he is able to understand the temptations that come into our lives and to help overcome them.

Gospel (Luke 2:22-32). We have here a similar scene as in our OT lesson. Jesus was dedicated to the Lord according to the Law of Moses. All that takes place in this text is to fulfill the Scripture. This needed to be done so that Jesus did everything according the Law and take our place under the Law. There was not even the smallest deviation when it came to Jesus following what the Law required. Therefore his work here on earth met all the requirements to be our perfect substitute. While in temple we are introduced to Simeon. Simeon's words of witness have become our Nunc Dimittis.

*For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.*

#### OLD TESTAMENT – 1 Samuel 1:21-28

<sup>21</sup> **When the man Elkanah went up with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the LORD and to fulfill his vow, <sup>22</sup> Hannah did not go. She said to her husband, “After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the LORD, and he will live there always.” <sup>23</sup> “Do what seems best to you,” Elkanah her husband told her. “Stay here until you have weaned him; only may the LORD make good his word.” So the woman stayed at home and nursed her son until she had weaned him. <sup>24</sup> After he was weaned, she took the boy with her, young as he was, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh. <sup>25</sup> When they had slaughtered the bull, they brought the boy to Eli, <sup>26</sup> and she said to him, “As surely as you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the LORD. <sup>27</sup> I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me what I asked of him. <sup>28</sup> So now I give him to the LORD. For his whole life he will be given over to the LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.**

*1:21 his vow.* Making vows to God was a common feature of OT piety, usually involving thank offerings and praise. Elkanah no doubt annually made vows to the Lord as he prayed for God's blessing on his crops and flocks, and fulfilled those vows at the Feast of Tabernacles (see note on v. 3). (CSB)

*1:22 weaned.* It was customary in the East to nurse children for three years or longer. (CSB)

*1:23 his word.* Prayerfully, Elkanah expresses his own hope that God's blessing of more children will come with the fulfillment of Hannah's vow (v. 11). Hannah will not fail to bring Samuel into God's

presence and will prepare the boy for service to God. Husbands had responsibility for their wives. (TLSB)

*1:26 As surely as you live.* A customary way of emphasizing the truthfulness of one's words. (CSB)

*1:28 worshiped.* Literally, "he bowed down" (some versions have "they"). It probably means that Samuel worshiped the Lord at Shiloh from that time, though an act of consecration may be meant; the meaning is ambiguous. (TLSB)

#### EPISTLE – Hebrews 2:14-18

**<sup>14</sup> Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—<sup>15</sup> and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. <sup>16</sup> For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. <sup>17</sup> For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. <sup>18</sup> Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.**

*2:14 through death ... destroy.* Jesus' death absorbed God's judgment against sin. On the cross, Jesus bore all sin and the condemnation of death. (TLSB)

*2:14 him who holds the power of death.* Satan wields the power of death only insofar as he induces people to sin and to come under sin's penalty, which is death. (CSB)

*2:14 the devil.* He uses God's Law to bring accusations against those who have sinned. Luther: "The devil's work is to crush us under his feet and, because of our sin, to dispatch us from life into death.... [Christ's] works are truly divine works such as: to justify, to restore to life, to save" (AE 13:135). (TLSB)

*2:16 Abraham's descendants.* Christ assumed not angelic nature but human nature, characterized by the descendants of Abraham. (CSB)

*2:17 in every respect.* Jesus was, and is, a real human being who has shared in every aspect of human life, including the temptation to sin. (TLSB)

*2:17 make atonement.* Jesus removes the stain of sin, bringing human beings into a right relationship with the Father (TLSB)

#### GOSPEL – Luke 2:22-32

**<sup>22</sup> 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 <sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup> 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."<sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup> 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, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: <sup>29</sup> "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. <sup>30</sup> For my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the sight of all people, <sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."**

*2:22 to Jerusalem.* The distance from Bethlehem to Jerusalem was only about six miles. (CSB)

*2:24 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)

*2:25 the consolation of Israel.* This recalls the comfort Isaiah foretold. Synonymous with the Lord's salvation and forgiveness. (TLSB)

*2:25 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)

*2:27 temple courts.* Specific setting is likely the temple's Court of Women, because both Mary and Anna (vv 36-38) were present. (TLSB)

*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)

*2:29 now.* This emphasizes that salvation is here now in this tiny child Simeon holds in his arms. (CC)

*2:29 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)

*2:30 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)

*2:31 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 to the gentiles.* Gentiles (instead of nations) anticipates the Gentile mission in Acts. (CC)