

# The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Candlemas)

## Luke 2 v 22-40

### Context:

Just a few weeks ago we celebrated the birth of Jesus at Christmas. The Bible doesn't give us many details about Jesus' childhood following his birth, but in Luke 2 v 22-40 we are invited to travel to Jerusalem with the infant Jesus and his parents as they visit the Temple to observe two ancient religious rituals dating from the early days of Israel's history. During their time in the Temple they encounter two elderly Jewish prophets who have some startling things to say about Jesus' identity and mission. Let's listen in on their conversation.

### Observation:

1. When, where and why did Mary and Joseph take Jesus in v 22-24?
2. How is Simeon described in v 25?
3. What amazing thing had the Holy Spirit revealed to him (v 26)?
4. Why did he go into the Temple Courts (v 27a)?
5. What did Simeon do when he saw Jesus (v 28)?
6. What was the theme of his song in v 29-32?
7. How did Joseph and Mary react according to v 33?
8. What blessing did Simeon pronounce over them in v 34-35?
9. How is Anna described in v 36-37?
10. What did she do when she saw Jesus (v 38)?
11. What did Jesus' family do afterwards (v 39)?
12. How is Jesus described in v 40?

### Meaning:

1. What was the cultural and spiritual significance of the two rituals Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem to observe in v 22-24? – see Exodus 13 v 1-16 & Leviticus 12 v 1-8.
2. What do these details tell us about the economic circumstances of Mary & Joseph?
3. What do you think Luke means when he says that Simeon was waiting for the 'consolation of Israel' in v 25?
4. In what ways was the Holy Spirit at work in Simeon's life according to v 25-27?
5. Read Isaiah 42 v 1-9. How does this Old Testament prophetic promise help us to understand Simeon's song of praise in v 29-32 and how does it explain why he was so excited as he took Jesus in his arms?
6. What had Joseph and Mary already learned about the identity of Jesus before this point and why do you think they *marvelled* at Simeon's words (v 33)?
7. What do you think Simeon's prophetic blessing means (v 34-35)? How would it have brought both encouragement and challenge to Mary & Joseph and in what ways do we see this prophetic word played out in their lives?
8. What does v 37 tell us about the spiritual state of Anna?
9. What do you think Luke means in v 38 by '*the redemption of Jerusalem*'? How does this phrase relate to the similar phrase in v 25 (see question 5)? Can you think of any Old Testament passages that shed light on what these two phrases might mean?
10. What impression of family life do we receive from the final verses in this passage (v 39-40)?

**Application:**

1. Describe the various ways Joseph and Mary demonstrated their obedience to God in this passage. How might we follow their example today?
2. Simeon was saturated in the Holy Spirit. How might we follow his example today?
3. Anna was totally dedicated to the service of God. How might we follow her example today?

**Pray:**

- For grace to follow the examples of Joseph, Mary, Simeon and Anna.

**Sermon Notes:**