

Further Study – Dec 27, 2020

Read: Luke 2:22-40

If you heard the sermon this week, was there any part of the message or scripture passage that was particularly important or meaningful to you? If so, what?

Understanding Questions:

- Where did Mary and Joseph bring Jesus in Jerusalem? Why did they travel there? What offering did they present to the Temple?
- Who greeted Mary, Joseph, and Jesus at the Temple? What does Luke have to say about this character? Who was he and what was he like?
- What does Simeon have to say about Jesus? What special message does he give to Mary?
- Who is Anna and why was she in the Temple? How does she respond to Jesus and to whom in Jerusalem does she begin speaking to about the child?

Application Questions:

- Who are the important figures in your life who have helped nurture your faith? How have they done so? Describe the example they set for you and why it was impactful for you.
- Who are the people in your life that can you depend on to be completely honest with you, both when you are setting a good example and when you need course correction? In what ways has this positively impacted your own life and faith? What do you think makes them feel comfortable being direct with you?
- Mary and Joseph bring Jesus up in the life of the Jewish community from the moment of his birth. Why do you think they found being surrounded by a faith community important? In what ways do you think participating in religious traditions would have been beneficial for the family?

Jewish women, like Mary, participated in ritual washings before returning to normal life after encountering the holy mystery of childbirth [see Lev 12]. First-born sons were to be dedicated to God [see Exod 2, 12].

Mary and Joseph present two turtledoves to the temple. This small detail again reinforces the poverty of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. The expected offering at this ceremony is two lambs, but Leviticus 14:21-22 explicitly says those in poverty can instead give two turtledoves. These small details accentuate Jesus' concern for the poor later on.

Luke is the only Gospel that includes these events, including the encounter with Simeon and Anna.

Anna is described as a prophet. A prophet is someone called to deliver God's message. Because Anna specifically begins spreading the good news of Jesus to those seeking redemption, she might also be characterized as the first evangelist.