



**Rice Memorial MBC**

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**Dedication of the Firstborn**

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 /1913 Edition  
or Roget's Thesaurus - **December 20, 2015**

**Worship with us** at **3201 Mary St** until we rebuild our sanctuary at 802 W. 15th,  
... We're just behind Kaufman's Lumber Company in Little Rock Arkansas...

**Exodus 13:13b-15; Luke 2:22-32**

**Introduction:** Christmas is a Christian celebration, so it is easy to forget the Jewish roots from which it came. It was in Israel that Jesus was born...

He was a descendant of David, Israel's foremost king, and fulfilled the **messianic** prophecies that foretold the rule of David's greater Son. He was born in Bethlehem, as foretold by Micah. His very name, "**Jesus**," was the equivalent of the Old Testament "**Joshua**," which means "Yahweh is salvation," and depicted His mission to save His people from their sins. He fulfilled the fore-shadowing and prophecies that pointed to His unique nature and work.

One aspect of the Jewish culture we are apt to overlook is the **dedication** of the **firstborn son**. It was a practice devout Jews took seriously since the Exodus. Thus, Joseph and Mary **dedicated** the **infant Jesus** in the temple, and this event became the occasion for a remarkable prophecy by an aged man, Simeon.

*(Source: The Bible Expositor and Illuminator, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series)*

**Exodus 13:11-13**, *And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he **sware** unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee, That thou shalt **set apart** unto the LORD all that openeth the **matrix (womb)**, and every **firstling** that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the **MALES** shall be the LORD'S. And every **firstling** of an ass thou shalt **redeem** with a **lamb**; and if thou wilt not **redeem** it, then thou shalt **break his neck (cut off neck)**; and **ALL** the **FIRSTBORN** of **man** among thy children shalt thou **redeem (ransom [buy out of servitude or penalty])**.*

**NOTE:** **And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb,....** Which was given to the priest for it; and according to the Jewish canon Misn. Becorot, sect. 1. sect. 5. , it might be redeemed with that only; "not with a calf, nor with an animal (a goat or a ram, as Bartenora interprets it), nor with a **lamb** slain, or torn to pieces. 'Jarchi thinks the ass only was to be redeemed, and not the firstling of any other **unclean creature**, but his reasons are insufficient; **ALL unclean creatures**, as horses, camels, dogs, swine, &c. **ARE included** in it, as should seem from Numbers 18:15 ...

**Numbers 18:15**, Every thing that openeth the **matrix (womb)** in all flesh, which they bring unto the LORD, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be thine: nevertheless the **firstborn** of **man** shalt thou surely **redeem**, and the **firstling** of **unclean beasts** shalt thou **redeem (ransom [buy out of servitude or penalty])**.

**and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shall break its neck; cut off its head** on the back of the neck with a knife or cleaver, such as butchers use, as the Misnah<sup>F7</sup>bid. sect. 7. Maimon & Bartenora in ib. , and its commentators, interpret it, so that the owner should have no profit by it:

**and all the firstborn of man amongst thy children shall thou redeem;** with the **price** of five shekels of the sanctuary, and within THIRTY DAYS of the BIRTH of it, Num. 18:16 and these being to be redeemed as the unclean beasts were, shows that **men are by nature unclean**, and even the **firstborn**, whose names are written in heaven, the elect of God, and need **redemption** by the **blood** of the **Lamb**.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=ex&ch=13#1>)

**Numbers 18:16**, And those that are to be **redeemed** from a **month old** shalt thou **redeem**, according to thine estimation, for the money of **five shekels**, after the **shekel** of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.

**NOTE:** ...**five shekels**; which was about eleven or twelve shillings of our money.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=3&ch=18>)

Shilling, equivalent to about twenty-four cents of the United States.

(12 x 24 = 288 cents, which is \$2.88)

**Exodus 13:14-15**, And it shall be when thy **son** asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the **house of bondage**: And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD **slew** all the **firstborn** in the land of Egypt, both the **firstborn** of man, and the **firstborn** of beast: therefore I SACRIFICE to the LORD all that openeth the **matrix (womb)**, being **males**; but all the **firstborn** of my children **I redeem**.

**NOTE:** therefore I sacrifice (KILL) to the Lord all that openeth thee matrix, being males; that is, the firstborn of all CLEAN creatures, as oxen, sheep, and goats: **but all the firstborn of my children I redeem;** by paying **five shekels** apiece to the priest for them, as before observed; and this law continues to be observed with the Jews; the manner of which, as related by Leo Modena<sup>F9</sup>History of the Jews, par. 4. c. 9. sect. 2. , is as follows, "**Thirty days** being **expired** after the **birth** of the **child**, they call a priest to them; that is to say, one that is descended of the stock of Aaron, whom the father of the child pleaseth; and so, many people being gathered together at the time appointed, the father of the child bringeth before the priest, in a **bowl** or basin, a good quantity of **GOLD** and **SILVER**, and then they **GIVE him** the **child** into his arms; the priest then calling the mother of it before him, saith unto her, mistress, is this YOUR SON? she answereth, YES; then, replies he, have you never had any child before, either male or female, or have miscarried anyone? she saith unto him, NO; then doth the priest say, this child is mine, as being the **firstborn**; then turning himself toward the father, he asketh him, whether he will redeem it or not? who answereth him, saying, see, here is **GOLD** and **SILVER**, take your **own price**; then saith the priest unto him, **you will redeem** it then? the father answereth, **I will redeem (ransom [buy out of servitude or penalty]) it;** it shall be so then, saith the priest, this child is MINE as being the **firstborn**, as it is written, Num. 18:16.

**1 Peter 1:18-20**, Forasmuch as ye **know** that ye were **not redeemed (ransom [buy out of servitude or penalty])** with corruptible things, as SILVER and GOLD, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your **fathers**; But with the precious **blood** of Christ, **as** of a **lamb** without blemish and without spot: Who verily was **foreordained** before the **foundation (conception)** of the world...

**Revelation 13:8**, And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are NOT written in the book of life of the **Lamb** **SLAIN** from the **foundation (conception)** of the world.

I therefore take this in **exchange**, &c. and so he takes the sum of two French crowns, or thereabout, as he thinks good, and then **delivers the child** to his **father** and **mother**, and this day they make a feasting day.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=ex&ch=13#1>)

**Luke 2:21** ...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**.

**Thought 1.** The people did this in obedience to the Law God gave through Moses. But, let's look back to when God first ordained circumcision. He gave it first to Abraham.

**Genesis 17:10-14**, This is my **COVENANT**, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy **SEED** after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall **circumcise** (**destroy** [do away with, get rid of]) the **FLESH** of your **foreskin**; And it shall be a token of the **COVENANT** betwixt ME and YOU. And he that is **eight days** old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is BORN in the house, or BOUGHT with money of any stranger, which is NOT of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my **COVENANT** shall be IN your flesh for an **everlasting COVENANT**.

And the uncircumcised man child whose **FLESH** of his **foreskin** is NOT circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my **COVENANT**.

**Covenant defined 1285, (in the sense of cutting); a compact** (an agreement; a contract between parties) (**because made by passing between pieces of flesh**).

**Thought 2.** What God was pointing to through the circumcision of the flesh was the circumcision of the heart, IN the spirit, that would take place when people believe on Jesus as the Christ: trusting their spiritual well-being to him. At the time a person believes on him, their FLESH (their old nature from Satan: called human nature) is CUT away FROM their heart, IN their SPIRIT by the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, as in removing ALL of the foreskin, he takes away ALL of our old nature! This means we do not have TWO natures, only the nature of Yahweh: our new Father.

**Romans 2:28-29**, For he is **not** a **Jew**, which is one outwardly; neither is that CIRCUMCISION, which is outward in the **flesh**: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and **circumcision** is that of the heart, **IN** the **SPIRIT**, and **not** in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of **God**.

**Spirit defined 4151, pneuma** **Pronounced: pnyoo'-mah: VITAL** (of life) **principle**(source), **spirit** [the intelligent, immaterial {not made of matter} and IMMORTAL {able to last forever} part of man].

**Thought 3.** Another definition of "spirit" is breath [the air inhaled and exhaled in respiration], but breath does not fit the meaning intended.

**2 Corinthians 5:17-18**, Therefore if any man be **IN** Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, **all** things are become new. And **ALL** things **are** **OF God**, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation...

**Luke 2:22-24**, And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him 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.

**NOTE: purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished;** which for a son were forty days: the seven first days after she gave birth she was unclean; and then she continued **three** and **thirty days** in the blood of her purifying, which made **forty**; see Leviticus 12:2 but though the time of her purifying was upon the **fortieth day**, yet it was not till the day following that she came to the temple with her offering: for so runs the Jewish canon<sup>F23</sup>Maimon. Hilch Mechosre Cappara, c. 1. sect. 5. , "a new mother does not bring her offering on the **fortieth day** for a **male**, nor on the **eightieth day** for a female, but after her sun is set: and she brings her offering on the morrow, which is the **forty first** for a male, and the **eighty first** for a female: and this is the day of which it is said, Leviticus 12:6 and "when the days of her purifying are fulfilled for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring", &c. And this was the time when they, Joseph and Mary, brought him, the child Jesus, to Jerusalem, and to the temple there, to **present him to the Lord**, to the **priest** his representative...  
(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=41&ch=2>)

**NOTE:** The circumcision and purification ceremonies were necessary as a reminder that we are all **born in sin** (Psalm 51:5). Jesus *could* have been excused because He was **not** born in sin. Yet, we see Him even as a baby, identifying with sinners, as He did at His baptism and on the cross.

- i. The correct reading of Luke 2:22 is "now when the days of **their purification** . . . were completed." Jesus was identified with sinners even as a baby
- ii. "Let us now speak first of the purification. Luke makes it apply both to Mary and to Christ: for the pronoun *of them*, can have no reference whatever to Joseph." (Calvin)
- c. **A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons:** Also, their offering (two birds, not a lamb) shows that Joseph and Mary were not wealthy. Leviticus 12:8 says the offering after childbirth was to be a bird and a **lamb**, but if the family could not afford to sacrifice a lamb, they could present **two birds**.
- d. This no doubt happened before the **wise men** came from the east (Matthew 2:1-12). Mary and Joseph would not have returned to Jerusalem after being warned by the angel (Matt. 2:13), and they would not have offered only two birds after receiving the **rich gifts** from the wise men (Matthew 2:11).
  - i. We see that Mary and Joseph were poor here, but the Lord provided their needs abundantly through the gifts of the wise men. **God always provides!**  
(Source: David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible [classic.studylight.org/com/guz/](http://classic.studylight.org/com/guz/))

**Luke 2:25** ...behold, there was a **man** in Jerusalem, whose name was **Simeon**; and the same man was **just** and **DEVOUT**, waiting for the **consolation** of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

**Devout defined 2126, circumspect (religiously, pious** [godly; reverencing and honoring the Supreme Being in heart and in the practice of the duties he has enjoined {commanded}]).

**NOTE: Simeon ...** This man has been identified as the son of the famous Hillel, father of Gamaliel, and president of the Sanhedrin. Spence noted that the Mishna (part of the Talmud), which preserved the record of sayings of great rabbis, has no word from Simeon, "perhaps owing to the hatred incurred because of his belief in Jesus of Nazareth." (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic. [studylight.org/com/bcc/](http://studylight.org/com/bcc/))

**Luke 2:26**, And it was **revealed** unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should **not** see **death**, before he had **seen** the Lord's **Christ (anointed, Messiah)**.

**Thought 1.** This privilege from God, the Father, was actually granted to Simeon because of

the life he'd lived in obedience to him. Because of favor from God, certain people are allowed to be WITNESSES of specific prophecies from him coming to past.

**Proverbs 3:1-4**, My son, forget not my **law**; but let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and **long life**, and **peace**, shall they **add** to thee. Let not **mercy** and **truth** forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: So shalt thou find **FAVOUR (kindness, GRACE)** and good **understanding** in the sight of God and man.

**Luke 2:27**, And he **came** by the **Spirit** into the temple: and when the **parents** brought in the child **Jesus**, to do for him after the **custom** of the **law**...

**Thought 1.** The Lord had him be there at the right time to accomplish his will.

**Proverbs 16:9**, A man's heart deviseth his **way**: but the Lord **directeth** his **steps**.

**Luke 2:28-32**, 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:** This passage carries the imagery of a bondservant requesting of his master that he might be dismissed. Simeon recognized that in the giving of Christ, God had indeed accomplished the **salvation** of men inclusive of **the Gentiles**. That Jesus was indeed the glory of Israel is fully true; but the Israel of this promise is far more extensive than secular or national Israel, and encompasses the **redeemed** of all ages.

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

**Thought 1.** Long LIFE is the first of many PROMISES of God! So, tomorrow is PROMISED.

**Ephesians 6:1-3**, Children, **obey** your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the FIRST commandment with **PROMISE**); That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest **live long** on the earth. (See Exodus 20:12)

**Psalms 91:14-16**, Because he hath **set** his **LOVE** upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I WILL set him on high, because he hath known my **name (authority, character)**. He shall call upon me, and I WILL answer him: I WILL be with him in trouble; I WILL deliver him, and honour him.  
With **long life** will I **SATISFY him**, and **shew** him my **salvation**.

**Luke 2:33-38**, And Joseph and his mother  **marvelled** at those things which were **spoken** of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the **fall (crash [destruction of life])** and **rising again (resurrection from death)** of many in Israel; and for a **sign** which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own SOUL also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And there was one **Anna**, a **prophetess**, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: **she** was of a great age, and had lived with an husband **seven** years from her **virginity**; And she was a widow of about **fourscore** and **four** years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant **GAVE thanks likewise** unto the Lord, and **SPAKE** of him to all them that **looked** for **redemption** in Jerusalem.

**NOTE:** **Departed not from the temple ...** can hardly mean that she resided in it, but that she had never forsaken temple duties, despite her phenomenal age. Matthew Henry said: It is pleasant to see aged Christians not weary of well-doing; but taking more and more pleasure in it, and seeing more and more need of it, till they come to heaven. Those who are **diligent** and **faithful** in improving their **light** and means, shall have further discoveries.

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

