

Baby Jesus in the Temple
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And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." Luke 2:22-24

There is no reason Mary must bring her Son to the temple. Jesus is the temple with skin. Jesus was not conceived from the seed of man. Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of the angel Gabriel into Mary's ear and womb. Her first-born male Child is holy to the Lord regardless of the Law of Moses because He is the Son of God. Yet Mary and Joseph keep the Law by bringing Jesus to the temple with the offering required by the Law. Because they are poor they bring the price of sacrifice: two turtledoves or two pigeons.

Like Simeon we hold Christ close to us. But we live as if Christ is far from us; as far as the east is from the west. We don't want to suffer. We don't want to explain everything in the kindest way. We don't want to teach the Word. We would rather hold Christ close to us when it's convenient, then drop Him like a bad habit when the devil and the world threaten us.

Jesus' ministry of hope was already in full swing at eight days old when He was circumcised according to the Law of God. He didn't need to be circumcised. Yet He submits willingly to the Law of God in our place so He might keep the Law for us. Jesus sheds blood that we might live forever, covered in His blood and His perfect righteousness. Jesus' ministry of hope continues at age 40 days.

He didn't need to be presented in the temple. Jesus is the perfect sacrifice from our heavenly Father. Yet He submits willingly to the Law of God in our place so He might keep the Law for us.

We can argue whether or not Simeon was an old man. We can argue whether or not Simeon is saying he's ready to die in peace or he's ready to leave the temple in peace. The one thing we cannot argue is that Jesus is in His temple, the temple made of flesh and blood, and we behold Him in His temple as He is presented in His temple made of stone. The beauty of the Lord is no longer about an architectural masterpiece. The beauty of the Lord is about Jesus being last, lost, least, little, and dead so we might be with Him in His resurrection as first, found, greatest, large in life, and alive in Christ.