

## Looking into Mary's Heart and Soul

### Part Four: Dutiful and Attentive

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:21-39

As was stated earlier, Joseph and Mary had a way of doing the next thing, without any presumption. Their baby is the Son of the Highest / The Son of God. So, what do you do next? You get your son circumcised on the eighth day, like you would do for any Jewish baby boy!

#### **First things first! Luke 2:21-24**

The law required that a male baby be circumcised on the eighth day (Genesis 17:12; Leviticus 12:1-3; Philippians 3:5). This also brought the occasion to officially give the baby his name (e.g. John the Baptist – Luke 1:59). As they had been told by the angel, they named Him Jesus (Matthew 1:21). Next was the time of purification for a mother who gives birth to a boy (40 days – Leviticus 12:2-5). After those days had been fulfilled, it was time to go to the temple to make an atonement / a sin offering for the mother. The normal offering was a yearling lamb and a dove or pigeon. If the family was poor, as in the case of Joseph and Mary, two doves or two pigeons could be offered (Leviticus 12:1-8). They were too poor to bring a lamb. Yet, they brought The Lamb (John 1:29)! Next would be the presentation / dedication of the first-born son. A redemption payment was required (five shekels - Exodus 13:1-2,11-15; Numbers 3:47; 18:16). How interesting, that the redeemer had to be redeemed! This helps us understand I Peter 1:18-19. The Son of God was handled as a normal Jewish child, but the parents would be reminded again that this was not an ordinary baby.

#### **The testimony of the aged servants of the Lord! – Luke 2:25-38**

Two special, elderly people, who served the Lord continually were waiting for Joseph, Mary and Jesus. The Lord had revealed to them both that this child was the Messiah.

#### **Simeon – Luke 2:25-35**

Here is the only mention of Simeon in Scripture. Simeon was a godly, devout, and faithful man. He was not part of Israel's religious leadership. Yet, he was deeply desiring to see the fulfillment of God's promise concerning the Messiah ("the Consolation of Israel" cp. Isaiah 25:8-9; 40:1-5). He had a close, personal, and spiritual walk with the Lord (Luke 2:25-27). It is to be noted that the ordinary and common people seemed to be more concerned with the coming of the Messiah than the "experts and professionals." The Scriptures don't specifically say that Simeon was old. Tradition says so. We might get that impression from Simeon's statement that, now that he has seen the Christ, he was ready to die (Luke 2:26-30). A younger man might have desired to live and declare the coming of Messiah.

### **Simeon's Praise – Luke 2:28-32**

- He showed satisfaction and fulfillment in beholding Christ (Luke 2:29-30). See John 6:35; Philippians 1:21.
- God has prepared the way of salvation for all people – for Israel and for the Gentiles (Luke 2:30-32). See Isaiah 60:1-3; 61:1-2a; John 8:12; Ephesians 5:14 cp. Romans 15:4-13.

**Simeon's Prophecy – Luke 2:34-35** – These verses are difficult to interpret. First let's look at them without the parenthetical thought about Mary.

- The Christ child is going to cause many in Israel to fall and rise (rise again / resurrect). Eternal life is given to those who die to self, take up their cross, and follow Him. See Matthew 16:24-27; John 12:24-26 cp. 5:21-25; Galatians 2:20.
- The Christ child shall be a sign that others will speak against. He will fulfill the Scripture prophecies yet be reviled and condemned. See Isaiah 53:1-9; 8:13-15; Psalm 118:22-23; I Peter 2:3-8; John 5:30-47; 8:37-49 cp. 20:30-31; Matthew 8:16-17.
- The Christ child shall cause the thoughts of the hearts of many people to be revealed, as they respond / react to Him. See John 2:23-25; 6:60-71; 8:30-59; Luke 7:36-50; Matthew 9:1-4; 19:16-26; 12:33-42 cp. 8:5-13; 15:22-28.

Now let's notice the parenthetical statement about Mary. Though Christ is the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, Mary's soul is going to have special sorrows concerning Him. To see the way the world will treat her son will feel like a sword going through her.

**Anna the Prophetess – Luke 2:36-38** – A widow for most of her life, this elderly saint gave thanks and testified to others about Christ.

### **Time to get back home! – Luke 2:39**

Luke 2:33 tells us that Joseph and Mary marveled / were amazed at the things that were spoken about their son. They didn't go to the newspapers with the story. They didn't go on a preaching campaign. They just went home and got back to their business. Mary had a family to care for. Joseph had work to do in the shop. Luke 2:39 tells us that they went home to Nazareth of Galilee. This city was not prestigious in the minds of Israelites. Galilee was not known as a place for prophets to arise. The location of Christ's childhood was a source of confusion, division, and reproach among unbelievers (John 1:45-46; 7:24-28,40-43,52). Please note that Luke simply does not comment on the events that are in Matthew 2:1-23.

**Are we like Mary?** Do we appreciate the Lord's blessings and promises while still taking care of our ordinary lives? Do we see the importance of serving God through common tasks? Consider how David rewarded those who "stayed by the stuff / supplies/ baggage (I Samuel 30:1-25).