

Sunday 27 December 2020 - LK 2: 22 - 40

By: Fr Paul Magyar

Merry Christmas Everybody ! We are currently in another lockdown. It is sad, however we can get through it. It is like the time of Noah. Noah did not know exactly what he was building. However when the flood came then he realized that he was entrusted to save what was good in the world. We are like Noah right now again; waiting for the flood of Covid-19 to subside.

In today's gospel according to Luke we read about the presentation of Jesus in the temple. This practice according to the law of Moses in Ex 13:2, Lev 12:1-6 took place 40 days after the birth. The firstborn child was always understood as having a natural priesthood. The firstborn had a dedicated life to special duties. Within that time as well Jesus would have been circumcised and officially be made part of the people of Israel: the one's who struggle with God. Thus the presentation fulfills the rites of being part of the struggle.

Jesus' struggle is clearly seen in the garden of Gethsemane when He willingly takes on the heavy will of God. Jesus picks up the weight of human sin willingly and walks up hill with it.

While in the temple two interesting people visit Jesus, Simeon and Anna. Simeon according to the annals of the Jewish scribes became the leader of the Sanhedrin in 13 A.D. He allowed Jesus to teach in the temple when he was 12; when Mary and Joseph couldn't find him for days. Simeon had the privilege of seeing the consolation of Israel and the world in person.

Simeon has the gift of prophecy and he receives Jesus as he is presented which usually a temple priest would do. This is due to his devotion. Simeon sees Christ as a stone on which some fall and are bruised while others plant their feet upon it and rise to a higher life.

Simeon predicts that Mary will be pierced with a sword too, thus feeling the struggle of her son Jesus. The amount of pain is substantial because Simeon is referring to a large barbaric sword used by the Thracians and not the short Roman sword. Simeon concludes by predicting that when Jesus will preach it will cause the true actual thoughts of people's hearts to be revealed. Everything true will be unveiled.

Another great character is presented and that is Anna the prophetess. She is 106 years old at that time. She witnessed the conquest of Judea by

Pompeius and the rise of the Herodian house. She lived to see the Christ in person and being assured that salvation is real.

Jesus being presented in the temple preceded the visit of the wise men. The holy family does not urgently flee to Egypt right after the presentation. They would have gone back to Joseph's family home and then are visited by the wise men. The slaughter of the innocents would follow and Joseph and Mary Jesus would have to flee to Egypt. Then about 6 years later they return back to Nazareth. That is only found in the gospel of Matthew. Luke fast forward's Jesus life after the presentation in the temple.

Praying for all of you  
Fr. Paul Magyar