



Faith and Love C.O.G.I.C
Sunday School

Lesson 3 December 21, 2025

DEDICATION OF FIRSTBORN

SUNDAY SCHOOL CORE VALUES



SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. **Psalms 133:1**

School/Class: But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. **Hebrews 13:16**

Superintendent/Teacher: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**

School/Class: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. **Psalms 119:105**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Philippians 2:4**

School/Class: He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. **Proverbs 22:9**

Superintendent/Teacher: Therefore he says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." **Ephesians 4:8**

School/Class: As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. **1 Peter 4:10**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:12**

School/Class: For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function. **Romans 12:4**

Superintendent/Teacher: By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:35**

School/Class: For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **Gal. 5:13**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

ALL:

But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:18

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- Bible Basis: Exodus 13:11-15, Luke 2:22-32
- Bible Truth: Simeon experienced an overflowing joy when he dedicated Jesus.
- Memory Verse: VERSE: "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" (Luke 2:22).
- Lesson Aim: By the end of the lesson, we will: EXPLORE the story of Simeon at the presentation of Jesus at the Temple; FEEL the immenseness of joy that Simeon felt; and COMMIT to make Jesus the center of attention during the secular busyness of the season.
- Background Scriptures: [Exodus 13:11-16](#); [Luke 2:21-39](#), & [2 Chronicles 30:5-12](#) - Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

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Exodus 13:11-15, Luke 2:22-32 KJV

11 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,

12 That thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the Lord's.

13 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: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.

14 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:

15 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, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.

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Exodus 13:11-15, Luke 2:22-32 KJV

22 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;

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

24 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.

25 And, 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.

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.

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Exodus 13:11-15, Luke 2:22-32 KJV

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,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Simeon. Simeon (Gk. Sumeon, soo-me-OWN) was an elderly Jewish man residing in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' birth, who faithfully observed the Jewish teachings, or Torah. He lived in anticipation of the fulfillment of the arrival of the expectant Messiah, the "anointed one," who would bring comfort and relief to the Jews living under the oppression of the Roman Empire. Luke does not bestow the title "prophet" on Simeon as he does Anna ([Luke 2:36](#)); however, Simeon does deliver prophetic oracles under the power of the Holy Spirit concerning Jesus' role in God's plan of salvation.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The Temple. The Temple held a significant place in Jewish social, religious, and economic life. It was a place of religious observance including the presentation of tithes and offerings, daily prayers, pilgrimages, and festivals. The Temple referred to in [Luke 2](#) was not the Temple Solomon had built; the Babylonians destroyed that Temple when they seized Judah and Jerusalem in 586 BC. After King Cyrus of Persia defeated Babylon and allowed the exiles to return to Judah, Zerubbabel, a Jewish leader, led the campaign to restore the Temple of Solomon in 538 BC. This Temple is commonly referred to as the "second temple." Herod the Great began an elaborate reconstruction of the Temple in 20 BC that was completed in eighteen months. This was the Temple in Jerusalem where Jesus was presented. Some scholars refer to it as the Temple of Herod, and many refer to it as the third Temple since Herod made significant developments (those who still call it the second Temple do so because the Temple was not destroyed and rebuilt, simply majorly renovated).

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON:

AIM: We will understand how people forget the excitement behind holidays and special occasions, and treat them as routine and ordinary.

INTRODUCTION

Privileges of the Firstborn Son

In ancient Israel, as in many other ancient civilizations, the firstborn son held a privileged place in the family. The firstborn son usually had a legal right to his father's inheritance. According to Exodus, the firstborn son was also dedicated to God. Exodus associates the consecration or setting apart of the firstborn male, both human and animal, with God's saving act of delivering the Israelite firstborn males from death in Egypt ([Exodus 13:14-15](#)). Moses instructed the Israelites that every male firstling must be set apart for the Lord and redeemed for a price. For example, verse 13 stipulates that a donkey should be redeemed with a sheep. However, the redemption for a human firstborn is unspecified. By contrast, the book of Numbers specifies that the firstborn should be redeemed for five shekels of silver paid to the priest ([Numbers 3:47-48, 18:15-16](#)).

INTRODUCTION

Privileges of the Firstborn Son

Moses commanded the people to teach their children the meaning of the firstborn's consecration. When the children asked why they observed the Passover festival, their parents should tell them that the Lord delivered the Israelites from bondage in Egypt when the king of Egypt refused to release them to worship the Lord. The Lord destroyed the firstborn male of everything and everyone but redeemed the firstborn male of the Israelites. Since the Lord killed the firstborn humans and animals in Egypt, except the firstborn of the Israelites where there was blood on the doorposts, they observe this ritual to commemorate the Lord's salvation.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: We will see how the Holy Ghost revealed to the priest Simeon that he would not die before he saw the Lord's Messiah.

I. JESUS PRESENTED IN THE TEMPLE

Exodus 13:11-15; Luke 2:22-24

Although offering a sacrifice was a requirement of the Law, bringing the child to the Temple was not mandatory, and also not a known practice among first-century Jews. Mary and Joseph come to the Temple to dedicate Jesus similar to how Hannah dedicated Samuel to the Lord ([1 Samuel 1:21-28](#)). Underneath it all, they know Jesus is more than just an ordinary child. They come to the Temple to show Jesus is the Son of God being given back to His true Father.

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Exodus 13:11-15; Luke 2:22-24

11 And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee. 12 That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD's. 13 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: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.

The first set of verses captures just part of the Exodus narrative, in this case, one of Moses' messages to the people at their first stopping place, Succoth, after escaping from the Egyptians ([12:37](#)). They had not yet entered the Promised Land, "flowing with milk and honey" ([13:5](#)) - it would be decades before that happened - but when they did, Moses' instructions from God ([13:1](#)) detailed the way they would commemorate their deliverance from Egypt. By the time the Israelites would finally emerge from the wilderness, ready to overtake the Canaanites per God's sovereign promise to their forefathers, a full forty years would have passed, and by then they would need a way to remember the events that at the time were fresh on their mind.

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The second set of verses introduces the ultimate significance of the Old Testament practice when it comes to bear on the life of the infant Jesus. In this use, "set apart" uses the Hebrew abar (ah-VAR), which means to bring over or present as an offering. This is similar to but not the same as setting apart meaning "to be" or "make holy," or to consecrate, from the Hebrew qadash (kahDASH) (cf. [Exodus 13:2](#)). The same Hebrew word 'abar is used in [12:12](#) when God said that He would "pass through" Egypt on the pivotal night for both nations. In [12:13](#), God also said that He would "pass over" (Heb. pasakh, pah-SAKH) the Israelites' doorposts that had lamb's blood on them. Because both words are used in close proximity, the parallel meaning and wordplay seem to be highlighted and repeated for emphasis.

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God thus would pass through and bring death to Egyptian firstborns but pass over Israelite homes and spare their firstborn. Here the verb is used in a sacrificial context, as it often is in Mosaic Law, to indicate that the Israelites are to bring their offerings over to God. In the KJV, "all that openeth the matrix" and "firstling" refer to the firstborn, or the first to breach the womb (NKJV "open the womb"; NLT "firstborn").

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While donkeys, or asses, were unclean animals by Hebrew law and thus unfit for sacrifice, they also were the most valuable animals in ancient times, both for packing and transportation, so God permitted a substitute sacrifice, a lamb, to be made for them.

Commentators agree that the neck breaking was a way to clearly distinguish from an animal that had been killed by a knife and intended for sacrifice. For Israel's firstborn sons, "redeem" comes from the Hebrew *padah* (pah-DAH), which means "to ransom" or to buy back (cf. [Deuteronomy 9:26](#)).

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The passage from Exodus describes the seven-day feast of unleavened bread, which starts with the powerfully metaphorical Passover feast, with unleavened bread representing the haste with which they left Egypt, not being able to bake bread properly. A part of this annual festival, as instituted, included the involvement of children, as a way of saying that God's redemption is perpetual and applies to all future generations. The richness and depth of the symbolism are profound – applying lamb's blood, among the other rituals of the first Passover meal, spared the life of Israel's firstborn (symbolizing all of Israel). To later commemorate their deliverance or rescue from Egypt, the firstborn of each donkey, their most valuable but unclean animal, could be ransomed or redeemed (bought back with a price) with a sacrificed lamb in its place.

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The sacrifice of their other firstborn animals is analogous to the sacrifice of Egypt's firstborn who were not similarly ransomed or redeemed by a lamb's blood. As well, the annual consecration of Israel's firstborn sons is analogous to the redemption of her firstborn sons from Egypt – cause for perpetual celebration. Just as God passed over them, so they are to pass over to Him their sacrifices in remembrance. Per Cole, "Like all of Israel's religious customs, it is interwoven with the history of salvation" (123).

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Luke 2:22 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; 23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) 24 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.

The lesson bridges the original Old Testament context of having "set apart" or consecrated (to be or make holy) the sacrificial firstborn to deepen the significance of the event in Jesus' childhood, as Henow is to be called holy (Gk. hagios, HA-gee-ose-e.g., Holy Ghost, hagios pneuma) like all firstborn, but this time the Law applied to the Firstborn of all firstborn.

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Had Joseph and Mary been able to afford it, they would have offered a lamb, but because they were poor, they offered the allowed alternative ([Leviticus 12:6-8](#)). The offering of the turtledoves or pigeons was a purification offering in connection with Mary's giving birth. For the birth of a male child, the woman was unclean for seven days, and on the eighth day the male was circumcised. Following this, she remained in a state of purification for 33 days. For a daughter's birth, she was unclean for 14 days and remained in a state of purification for 66 days. The purification is related to the blood flow that occurs at childbirth, which would make the woman ritually impure at childbirth and in the days following. At the end of the period of purification, the offering was presented as a means of ritually purifying the Temple, something that the woman could not do until she herself was ritually pure again.

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([Leviticus 12:1-8](#)). As they had at every point, Jesus' parents had conformed with all Jewish laws (cf. [Luke 2:39](#)), this time obeying the purification rites after birth ([Leviticus 12:2-4, 6](#)) as well as setting aside their firstborn to the Lord ([Exodus 13:2, 12, 34:19](#)).

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Comfort to the Poor

The reality of Jesus being born into poverty and surrounding Himself with the poor throughout His life should be an encouragement to many, as Ryle states, "it should encourage every poor believer as he approaches the throne of grace in prayer. Let him remember ... that his mighty mediator in heaven is used to poverty" (40).

II. SIMEON THE RIGHTEOUS

Luke 2:25-27

Simeon, like Mary and Joseph, is presented as a man who faithfully observed the Law of Moses. We know this because he is called "righteous" (v. 25), which means to keep God's commands or be just in His sight. Simeon is also called "devout," which means having reverence for God. God rewarded Simeon for his many years of faithfulness and piety by allowing him to see the consolation of Israel.

The Holy Spirit, which was upon him, revealed that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah (Gk. Christos; v. 26). Luke explains that the Holy Spirit led Simeon to the Temple at the same time Mary and Joseph were presenting Jesus to the priest.

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II. SIMEON THE RIGHTEOUS

The Holy Ghost Speaks to Simeon

Luke 2:25-27

25 And, 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. 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.

Simeon, a prophet, is one of two witnesses to Christ in the Temple, the other being Anna, a prophetess ([vv. 36-38](#)). Simeon is mentioned nowhere else in the New Testament. His timely but sole presence at the Temple was only to witness the Christ-similar to his presence in Scripture. God is never without witnesses. Simeon being righteous and devout makes him a credible witness to something so significant as Jesus being presented to God at the Temple. It is no coincidence that Simeon, Joseph, and Mary arrived when they did, confirming the divine appointment, and consoling Simeon, who had waited for Israel's consolation (cf. [Philippians 2:1-2](#), KJV).

III. A LIGHT FOR ALL PEOPLE

Luke 2:28-32

Upon seeing Jesus, Simeon takes the infant in his arms. He immediately recognizes Jesus' significance and sings praise to the Lord. The song is a confirmation of the Holy Spirit's revelation that Simeon would see the Lord's Messiah. The song proclaims that the time of the salvation of the Lord is now.

III. A LIGHT FOR ALL PEOPLE

Luke 2:28-32

Simeon sings a message of fulfillment and peace. The consolation Simeon was expecting was the salvation God had prepared in the presence of all peoples. He could sing of witnessing it with his own eyes: here in his arms was the expected Messiah in the form of a baby. As the prophet Isaiah before him ([Isaiah 49:6](#)), Simeon proclaims that Jesus would be a light to the Gentiles, bringing them God's salvation and glory for the people of Israel (v. 32). Simeon's message is that God's salvation was for all people, both Jews and Gentiles.

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III. A LIGHT FOR ALL PEOPLE

Simeon's Joy and Blessing

Luke 2:28-32

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, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now let test thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Called Simeon's song or psalm, his words have been loved around the world for centuries. God's work and plan is for all people ([Luke 2:10](#); cf. [Isaiah 52:10](#); [Psalm 98:3](#)). Now that Simeon has seen this, he is ready to peacefully "depart" (Gk. apoluo, ah-po-LOO-oh), which can also mean to set free or dismiss, but here figuratively means to die. His words also are curious, because he doesn't say that he has seen the Christ or the Messiah, but rather God's "salvation" (Gk. soterios, so-TAY-ree-ose, from which we get the English word soteriology or the study of salvation), a word used only five times in the New Testament (see also [Luke 3:6](#); [Acts 28:28](#); [Ephesians 6:17](#); [Titus 2:11](#)). What else has the power to deliver us from the fear of death other than strong faith? It is interesting for an old, devout Jew not only to equate Jesus with salvation but as a light to the Gentiles and the glory of Israel ([Isaiah 45:25, 46:13](#), KJV).

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Jesus, the Light of the World

All of Jewish history was great because of God - Israel's entire history was replete with acts of a merciful and forgiving God who loved not only Israel but the entire world. Indeed, the day will come when all Israel, and all the world, will see the glory of the Lord, and that day surely cannot come too soon for any of us who today, like Simeon, also hope to see the "consolation" of Israel, God's people.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: We will anticipate in faith what the Lord
will do in our lives as we share the Good
News of Christ with others.

BIBLE APPLICATION

December is a month when many Christians are busy with preparations for the celebration of Jesus' birth and the coming new year. It is also a time when many people spend beyond their means to provide gifts that frequently depreciate in value or interest for the recipient. Jesus was born of humble beginnings. His parents could only afford the substitutionary offering of two pigeons when they presented Him at the Temple. Nevertheless, that did not prevent them from taking several days to faithfully observe the rituals of God. It is important that we take time from the busy holiday season to remember that the celebration of Jesus' birth is not about the material gifts we give, but about His significance in our lives and the world today.

STUDENT RESPONSES

AIM: We will renew our excitement of celebrating the birth of Christ and our faith through the year.

STUDENT RESPONSES

In the United States, Christians tend to focus on December 25, the day Jesus' birth is celebrated, and once the day has passed, we continue with our busy schedules. However, in many Christian communities, the Christmas season actually begins on Christmas Eve and continues another forty days until the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in February. This holiday season, commit to learning about the different ways Christians celebrate the season, such as the Mexican tradition of Las Posadas, and choose one that you find interesting. Or you could form your own new tradition, such as making a special meal at one of the feast days on the church calendar or volunteering to help someone in need. Whichever you choose, invite family and friends to join you in celebrating a new tradition that will help renew the joy of celebrating Christmas and your faith throughout the year.

Prayer

Lord,

You truly are amazing and awesome. Your gift of Jesus for the world continues to bring excitement, peace, and salvation in our lives. We are thankful for the gift of Christ for all creation!

In Jesus' Name we pray.

Amen.

Next Sunday
December 28, 2025
Lesson 4
A Generous Gift
Matthew 23:2-12; Mark 12:38-44