

✠ Luke 2:22-40 ✠

In Nomine Iesu

In the book of Exodus Moses records for us the use of the sacrificial system as it was given to redeem the firstborn son. When the first son was born the parents of that son were to go to the temple of the Lord and have the priest of God offer a sacrifice on their behalf and on behalf of the firstborn. This sacrifice was one of redemption. You see, man is born into sin, not righteousness. From the seed of man is passed the corruption of our first father, Adam. It is as our Lord says, “flesh gives birth to flesh.” Thus the psalmist writes, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” God in His great mercy, however, provided an out, a substitute, for the wages of sin is death, yet God transposed that death to the sacrificial animal instead of upon the one born in sin. The animal symbolically bore the consequences of the sin in man, and so died in place of man. The redeemed lived while the sacrifice died.

According to the Law, blood must be spilled in order for sin to be atoned for. Jesus’ parents, His mother Mary and earthly father, Joseph, took Him to the temple of the Lord so that the priest of God may perform the ritualistic sacrifice in order to redeem the firstborn: Jesus. Here is a foretaste of the sacrifice He would later give of Himself on the altar of wood and nails. The dove’s life for the firstborn; Jesus’ life for ours.

Jesus is both the firstborn of God as well as the sacrifice that redeems the firstborn. He was born of the womb as the firstborn of Mary and born of the grave as the firstborn of God.

On the cross Jesus cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Jesus became sin for us. His death was not only a physical dying of a man; it was the death of sin. Jesus became sin and died. Just as the Lord struck down the firstborn of Egypt, so too was the firstborn of God killed by God. Thus is it written, “It was the will of the Lord to crush Him; He has put Him to grief.”

Yet Jesus was perfect righteousness. Keeping the Law fully and wholly; never transgressing God’s Law. In Him was no sin, no death. In Him is life. Thus on the third day He was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father. He came to life for His death was the death of sin, and where there is no sin, there is no death. Death could not hold Him because death itself had lost its power. The Son of Man died once for all that sin may no longer reign in this mortal body; and He rose again because in Him is life for He is God. Jesus died the death of the sacrificial animal, His blood spilled as the Lamb led to slaughter, the dove split in two upon the altar, so that you may be redeemed.

You do not suffer the wrath of God because it was spent upon His Son as He hung upon the cursed tree. Your sins are not counted against you because they have been transferred to the Son of Glory. You have been redeemed; bought back. You have been purchased, not with silver or gold but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!

And from what have you been redeemed, o sons and daughters of Adam? Who held onto your title, claiming you as his own? Was it not death? Did not death say to you as you came out of your mother's womb, "You are mine for you have been born into slavery"? As it is written, "Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned."

Even He who was born without sin was so treated as one who was sin. As a babe He was put under the Law, subject to the Law's demands. And the Law demands payment. Two turtledoves or a single pigeon, blood must be spilled to appease the Law. Death will have its payment; like a relentless landlord, Death will extract what is due.

Thus it is from the firstborn of the devil, Death, that you have been redeemed. It is the firstborn of Egypt, the firstborn of the devil that is put to death. Death has died and no longer has dominion over the sons and daughters of God. When you are washed by the water of God from His font, you are partaking of the death of Christ in that you are made dead to sin. It is appointed once for a man to die, and so you have died, you have been drowned in the waters of the flood; you have been swallowed up by the waters of the Red Sea along with Pharaoh and all his horsemen. You have been cast overboard into the turbulent seas with Jonah. You have been cast into the sea of death. And you have been brought back by the hand of God. For though you have died to sin, God does not leave it at that. No, He has given to you Life in the name of His Son, Jesus.

Remember this day, o children of Israel, o inhabitants of Zion, for on this day the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt, for by a strong hand the Lord has brought you out of the land of slavery. He has provided for you the sacrificial Lamb. Now He bids you come, come and eat of the flesh of God and drink His blood that His death may be yours and His life be given to you. Do not delay in coming before the Lord your God, the God of Israel, for He has given His salvation to the nations!

Let us cry out with Simeon, "Lord now let your servant depart in peace according to your Word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel."

In the name of the FATHER and of the ✠ SON and of the HOLY SPIRIT.

✠ AMEN ✠