

Intro Feb 2

*[Malachi is always preaching against those who try to get by doing the minimum, pretending to be or to do Good.]*

## Malachi

Thus says the Lord God:

Lo, I am sending my messenger

to prepare the way before me;

And suddenly there will come to the temple

the Lord whom you seek, *[are looking for]*

And the messenger of the covenant whom you desire.

*[He brings the new Covenant,  
a new contract between God and US.]*

Yes, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.

**But who will endure the day of his coming?**

**And who can stand when he appears?**

Handel takes these words: "Who shall stand" for his Messiah.

This is a poor video but an excellent vocal rendition.

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. (Malachi 3:1)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcehacMpRws>

Here the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sings

**"And He shall Purify."**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MaHJm6VCrE>

Remember that you have to heat any ore, a rock, to make it usable!

You have to put it into **FIRE**.

This version is by an authentic Baroque orchestra as it would have been presented by Handel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-x-rtR3dlw>

*[Even if you are more into Texas Shuffle, spend a little time on Handel.*

*He picked all the wonderful texts from SS for his Messiah.]*

For he is like the refiner's fire,  
or like the fuller's lye.  
He will sit refining and purifying silver,  
and **he will purify the sons of Levi**,  
Refining them like gold or like silver  
that they may offer due sacrifice to the Lord.  
Then the sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem  
will please the Lord,  
as in the days of old, as in years gone by.

*To refine ore you put in into a FIRE,  
to prepare wool you put it in lye.  
So the Levites [priests of the Temple]  
will suffer and get 'burned'  
So that they will return  
to the holy service of the Lord.*

The **PSALM** says 'Here is the Messiah'. BUT. . . Not exactly how you expected Him to look.

**HEBREWS** 2:14-18

Was NOT written by Paul. We don't know by whom. It is not an actual letter as Paul's Epistles are. It is an "essay" in the form of a "letter", a common Greek and Roman device.

It says: XT did not come for any angels, he came for us MEN, who need *refined*, as in Malachi.

Jesus had to become truly HUMAN like US, his brothers and sisters in every way. But—NOT LIKE the old Priests, the Sons of Levi—who over time became lax, just went through the motions and became less than good priests—XT IS THE PERFECT PRIEST. He was 'refined' by His Passion. So:

***Because he himself was tested through what he suffered,  
he is able to help those who are being tested.***

*Xt was tested and refined on the CROSS for US—His FELLOW humans. He was tested so HE can help all of us as we are tested in life. For them Roman Persecution, for us public ridicule.*

**GOSPEL**

*LUKE 2:22-40*

The fact that this incident is only in Luke, points to Mary as the source of it for Luke. Tradition says that Mary told Luke about it and other stories specific to Luke. [more on this later in Intro]

Joseph and Mary take Jesus to the Temple to FULFILL the Law, to present him back to God who gives every child to his family as a gift! The Jewish Family takes this child, God’s gift to them, and gives it back to God as their gift thanking YOU for this living Child of Yours. Here is the irony: JESUS IS the Presence of God, even more so than the Temple is for the Jews. Jesus IS that sign that God-is-with-us. JESUS IS the EMMA-NU-EL, the With-US-God! In the flesh.

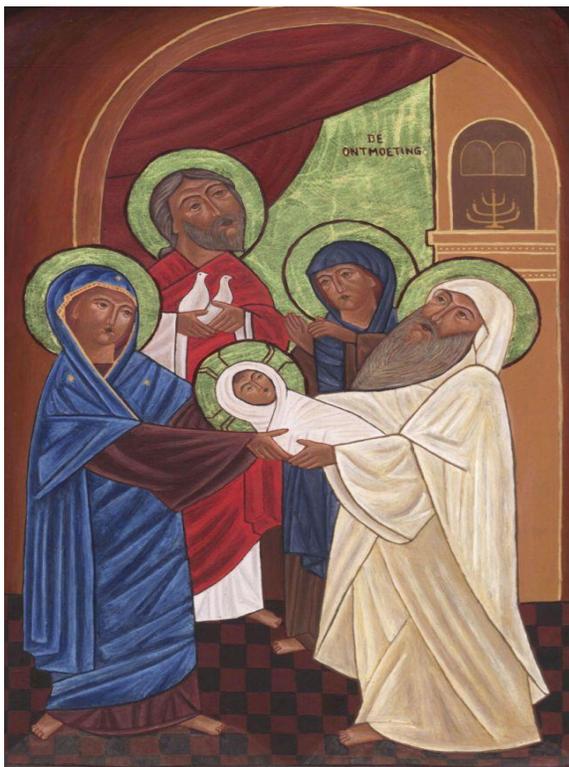
And Simeon and Anna who spend their time “in the presence of God”, God present in the TEMPLE of Herod, are able to “SEE” in this little Jewish kid, Jesus, the long-promised Messiah! Because they have ‘lived in the presence of god—which we are all called to do!—they can see the god who flesh and blood is right there. Simeon and Anna represent all of us who “Wait for the Lord.”

How can they see the Messiah in this boy? Purity of heart and the Spirit of God, who is in them both. Note: **\*\*Holy Spirit** was upon him. . . , **\*by the Holy Spirit** and. . . **He came \*\*in the Spirit.**

Then, after fulfilling the Law, they simply: *returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.* They go back to the ordinary life in an ordinary place and WAIT. And Jesus grew up NORMALLY, taking time to mature, as all of us did and do. And yet everyone could see, in this normal child, . . . *the favor of God was upon him.*

And so is God’s GRACE, God’s *favor*, upon US as we grow to become the Image of XT in our own ordinary town?

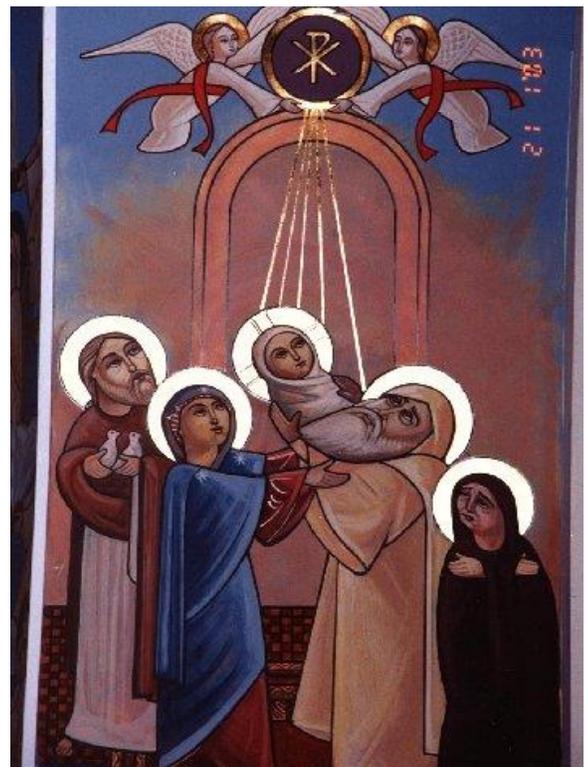
As Hebrews says: XT appeared and seemed to be a NORMAL human kid. Why? So that HE could save US, his brothers. BUT as the **GOSPEL**, Malachi and the Psalm say: It takes GRACE and FAITH to recognize Him as the Messiah, simply looking won’t work. Like Simeon and Anna, WE have to ‘live in the presence of God’ to be able to recognize him. Here are some Ethiopian Coptic Icons of the Presentation. Ethiopia is one of the oldest Christian Nations.



Mary Joseph Anna Simeon

Note the 2 doves because Jesus was POOR; and the Menorah, fulfilling the LAW.

Simeon and Anna & GRACE



Joseph Mary Simeon Anna

Malachi was written: c. 480-430 BC

{I explained Malachi in more detail in the Fall.}

He is **not** mentioned in any other books of the Old Testament. Why? The book of Malachi concludes the Old Testament canon. Because he is the LAST of the Prophets before the arrival of **John the Baptist**. But he is quoted in the New Testament (Matt 11:10 to 14; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27; Rom 9:13). Malachi reminds us of God's love for us. He reveals the importance of worshiping correctly and NOT 'cutting corners' with God.

Malachi preaches **Prepare for the Day of the Lord**, a day of judgment for evildoers, but a day of healing for those who fear the name of the Lord (Mal 4:1-2). The last couple verses announce that *Elijah* will come before the **Day of the Lord** (4:5-6). The Gospels understand **John the Baptist** to fill this role (Matt 11:14, 17:12; Mark 9:13). John said also, "Prepare the way of the Lord."

While Malachi reproves the people for their sins, mainly by **doing the minimum** for God, he anticipates the joy of redemption sounding a note of **hope** at the end of the Old Testament.

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## PRESENTATION, Purification of Mary, & SIMEON AND ANNA

This following song is a far cry from Handel, but it expresses in POP-Gospel the message of the Cantic of Simeon. *Enjoy!*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHP-mMZVwUo>

### 1 The Presentation of Jesus

"EVERY first-born MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD" (Luke 2:23; from Exodus 13:2, 12; cf. Num. 18:15-17). Isn't JESUS the first-born?

The background for this is the Pascal Lamb. In Egypt those who applied the blood of the Passover Lamb to their door posts and lintel lived. The redemption of the first-born was required because the first-born were spared by God and **thus belonged to Him**. When an Israelite family redeemed their first-born, they were acknowledging **this child belonged to God, was a gift from God. And Jesus 'belonged to God' more than anyone.**

[see below] In a similar way Hanna, Samuel's mother, gave him back to God as a Nazorite.

### 2 Purification of Mary

Almost all primitive cultures regarded BLOOD as SYMBOLS of both LIFE and DEATH, So the Goddess of Life, usually the MOON, is also the goddess of DEATH. How many women in primitive cultures died giving birth, new life?

[Google: *Maya moon goddess* for info and pics.]

If you lose blood you die; when you are born there is blood. When a girl is capable of bringing forth a new LIFE she sheds some blood each month. That is why the MOON GODDESS (30 days) is in charge of life and death. They also believed that contacting blood makes a person "unclean", that is, unfit, for Temple Worship. Mary too had to be ritually "clean" again.

Then we also have **The Presentation of Jesus at the Temple** with Simeon and Anna!

At the presentation of Jesus at the temple both Simeon and Anna appear and speak words of divine inspiration, identifying the Christ-child as God's Messiah. They RECOGNIZE the Messiah in this little child. How? The grace of the Holy Spirit! Luke says nothing about the ceremony itself. It isn't important. His focus is on Simeon and Anna. Day and night she was in the temple, praying and fasting. What was she praying and fasting for? Luke does not tell us, but clearly, like Simeon, she was looking and watching and waiting for the Messiah. See the rays of grace in the one IKON?

### 3 Simeon

How could Simeon recognize Jesus, a boy as the Messiah? Luke is not interested in how he recognized Jesus, but that Simeon **did recognize** him because he was a godly man, a man filled with the Spirit of God. The salvation which Simeon saw, was not for him alone, so he adds that God's Saving Action (*salvation*) will be seen and shared by many including Gentiles (v. Isaiah):

"a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and glory for your people Israel."

### 4 Anna

First: Anna and Hannah are two forms of the same name. So the reference to Hannah's dedication of Samuel (in 1 Samuel 1-2) is clear. Hannah dedicated Samuel and he became a **\*\*Nazorite**, Hannah gives Samuel, at his birth, to the Lord 'for as long as the child lives'. Consequently, Samuel lives with the Prophet Eli at the **tent of meeting**. Jesus, in a similar manner, was dedicated to God in the TENT of God, the Temple built by Herod. Tent = Tabernacle = Temple. He, like Samuel, belonged to God permanently.

This is what I wrote on the Feast of The Holy Family DEC. 28

*... what had been spoken through the prophets. . .He shall be called a **\*\*Nazorean**. What does **Nazorean** mean? Some questions?  
Which prophet? Probably means prophets in general not one particular one. Remember Matt wants to show that Jesus IS the XT, who fulfills all that the prophets preached.  
And -- He shall be called a Nazorean?  
1 possibly means only that he comes from Nazareth, a most **INSIGNIFICANT** small village. In Galilee! Think a small hamlet in WV. How insignificant. God picks the least likely!*

*2 possibly from Isaiah 11:1: But a **shoot** shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a **bud [netzer]** shall blossom. Shows that Jesus IS that **shoot** of Jesse, Father of DAVID and XT.*

*3 That he is, like a **\*\*Nazorite [ LIKE SAMUEL!!]** totally dedicated to God. A **Nazorite was consecrated and bound by a vow to God, to not cut his hair, eat meat, or drink alcohol, OR MARRY.** Xt is totally dedicated on the Cross.*

*4 Maybe all Three! God chose David, the youngest and **LEAST** likely; Jesus is a **BLOOMING FLOWER** from Jesse's branch **LIKE** King David; and Jesus is totally bound to God.*

As a side light, Samuel could not cut his hair, could not drink, and had to remain celibate. Well as often happens (even today!) some find this dedication hard. Think Politicians, bad Priests today (like Malachi's Levites), and Movie Stars. Just look at the Grocery checkout magazines. So Samson failed to live up to his Mother's dedication of him. He was done in by his passion for Delilah. Sold out for sex! Not the first or last time. BUT that is NOT the story's end. He repented. As his hair grew back, so did his strength, and his VIRTUE. And he brought down the whole Philistine (read Palestinian) Temple—sacrificing HIS life in the process.  
[See the connection w XT?]

more info at

<https://bible.org/seriespage/5-psalm-simeon-and-announcement-anna-luke-221-40>

To summarize it all:

Yahweh was present to His People in His Temple.

In the desert it was a simple TENT (*Taberna* in Latin, which gives us *TABERNACLE*.)

In Jesus' time it was the glittering gold of Herod's Temple, largest building in the Roman Empire. XT is the NEW Temple, the new Presence of God, with and for His People.

Malachi says God will purify his priests (and people) to offer a worthy sacrifice in His Temple.

Be prepared to stand pure before God—to worship God in His Temple.

Handel wrote "And He Shall Purify the Sons of Levi"—HOW? In a purifying FIRE.

The Psalm says Welcome the King of Glory—BUT He is not how you expect Him to look!

Epistle to the Hebrews:

XT is the one who came to help us **MEN**, not **Angels**, prepare for His Temple. XT can help US because HE **IS ONE OF US!** XT is the Perfect Priest, who has offered the Perfect Sacrifice—HIMSELF! So XT, with Malachi's Levites made perfect, will offer it with US.

LUKE is the only one who tells us about the **Presentation**. A lot of ideas here in this story.

Mary and Joseph do everything required for the Temple. They fulfill the Law. In ancient cultures blood is a symbol of both 'life and death', so those cultures surround Birth and Blood with ceremonies. **Circumcision** + blood. **Menstruation** + blood. **Birth**—in water + blood.

Simeon and Anna recognize this **baby** Jesus as the Christ-Messiah-God, in His Temple—because of their lives spent with God in His Temple and by God's grace. *Not how you would expect Him to look. A little baby!*

Finally everyone: Joseph, Mary, Jesus, Simeon and Anna melt into everyday life. Like us.

The Mayan Moon-goddess

Ixtel

We can see her  
ON THE MOON!

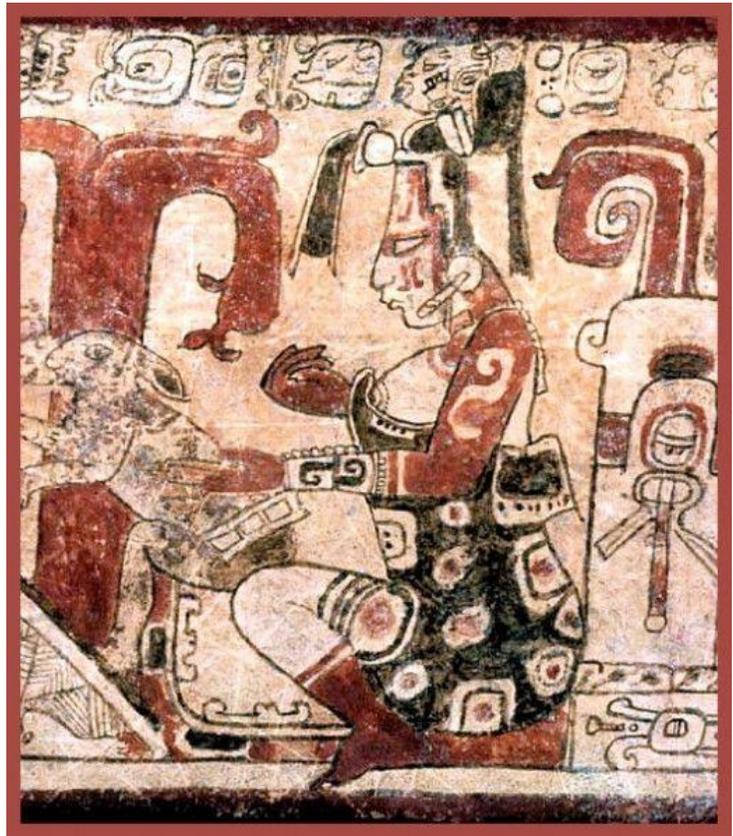
Her special symbol  
is the RABBIT  
because it has  
a gestation period  
of 30 days!



And a modern version

From Cozumel

note RABBIT in both



Did you see her sitting on her Crescent MOON?

