

General Church Education



Presentation at the Temple

Luke 2:21-40

Lesson 29

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

Presentation at the Temple

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For Parents and Teachers

Near the time of the Lord's birth into the world just a few people remained who were diligently waiting for Him and watching for the signs given in the prophecies. These people believed in Him and loved Him. Our story is about Simeon and Anna who were two such people. Their greatest hope was to see the Lord and to have His prophecies fulfilled in their lifetimes. Because Simeon and Anna had such devotion, the Lord was able to open their spiritual eyes to see the Divine in the Baby Jesus when He was brought to the temple. Each of them gave thanks when they realized who this Baby was. In Simeon's blessing He expressed his joy by saying "his eyes had seen" salvation.

Just as the Lord was born in the darkness of night, He came at a spiritually dark time on earth. Because of all the traditions that had been added to the Word by Jewish religious leaders, it was not possible for even those with good hearts and receptive minds to understand and properly apply the Word to their lives. After the Lord's birth He brought new and more interior truth from heaven. This new truth brings light to the mind so people's eyes are open to understanding spiritual things in a whole new way, and so making salvation possible. Anna, a widow of eighty-four years and a prophetess, gave thanks and then spread the news to all those she could find who were looking for redemption.

Ideas for Children

- The Lord came on earth to save people.
- The Baby Jesus is the Lord God Jesus Christ.
- The Lord opened the spiritual eyes of Simeon and Anna so they could see Him and know who He was.

From the Writings

The heavenly or celestial being of love does not wish to exist for itself but for all, thus to impart all that is its own to others. It is in this that heavenly love essentially consists. Since the Lord is love itself, that is, the very essence and life of everyone's love in heaven, He wishes to give to the human race everything that is His, which is what He meant when He spoke about the Son of Man coming to give His life as a redemption for many. *Arcana Coelestia* 1419

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Words to Understand

sacrifice—to offer something to the Lord

just—honorable and fair

devout—deeply religious, devoted

consolation—being comforted or cheered from sadness

salvation—saved from the power of the hells and evil spirits

destined—known about and determined beforehand

redemption—the rescuing of something

dedicated—set apart for a special purpose, often a religious purpose

Seeing the Lord

In our last lesson we learned that the Roman ruler had decreed that people had to return to their family town to be registered for a census. We learned how the Lord was born one dark night in the little town of Bethlehem, the city of David. The shepherds were told this great news by angels, who appeared in the bright light over the fields where the sheep lay. The shepherds were good people who believed the angels and hurried to Bethlehem to find the Baby Lord with Mary and Joseph. They told everyone they met about this special Baby.

In order to recognize the Lord, people must be ready to receive His teachings and His love into their hearts. In this lesson we will learn about two people who knew and cherished the ancient prophecies. Both of them had lived each day in the hope that they would see the Lord born before they died. We will find out what they did when their spiritual eyes were opened and they recognized the Lord. **Read Luke 2:21-40.**



Ancient Customs

Following the Jewish law, Mary and Joseph had given the Baby a name when He was eight days old. They named Him Jesus, which means Savior, as the angel had told each of them to do.

Having children has always been important. In ancient times people of many cultures would offer a sacrifice to celebrate the birth of a child. The offering was a way of saying they knew the baby was a gift from God and of showing their thankfulness. Jewish people followed the law in Leviticus, given through Moses. Forty days after the birth of a baby boy the parents would go to the temple in Jerusalem. They would stand in the court of the temple and give the priest a lamb and a turtledove or young pigeon. If they were poor they brought two pigeons. Because Mary and Joseph loved the Lord, they tried to do everything that He taught in the law.



At the Temple

Try to picture Mary and Joseph carrying the tiny baby Jesus to Jerusalem “to present Him to the Lord.” They entered the temple—a great building made of marble and gold. Many people came daily to pray, to worship and to give offerings. Baby Jesus was dedicated for a special purpose. He was going to help people. He was going to redeem or rescue them from the powers of evil that threatened to destroy the human race.

Simeon

The Word tells us that when Baby Jesus arrived at the temple an old man named Simeon was led there “by the Spirit.” This means that the Lord had given Simeon an inner message to come. Simeon was a just and devout man. He probably read and meditated on the Word of God each day. The Lord through His Holy Spirit had told Simeon that he would see Christ before he died. So he waited and waited. Because Simeon was a good man the Lord opened his spiritual eyes so that he saw that this Baby was the Lord come to earth, the One he had been waiting and hoping for. Simeon took the Baby in his arms and blessed God. Can you picture this old man holding the Baby upwards and giving a beautiful prayer of thanks?

Simeon was thankful that he could see the prophecies come true because he knew it meant the whole world would change! He knew that new light from heaven would show everyone what was good and right. People could choose what was good and be saved from the forces of hell that brought nothing but falsity and sadness. This must have made Simeon happy. He was old and had waited a long time to see this prophecy come true. Now he was holding the Baby Lord in his own hands. After giving thanks, Simeon said a blessing. Mary and Joseph were amazed at what was

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happening. Simeon could now die in peace.

Anna Sees Jesus

While Mary and Joseph marveled at Simeon's beautiful words, Anna, an old prophetess came in. She was also devout, loving the Lord all her long life. Anna came to the temple every day to worship. Her spiritual eyes were also opened and she immediately knew that this Baby Simeon was holding was the Lord promised from long ago in so many prophecies. Anna gave thanks that she had been allowed to see Him and told everyone in Jerusalem who longed for a king or savior to come and save them from their troubles.

Mary and Joseph Return to Bethlehem

After doing all things according to the law of the Lord, Mary and Joseph took Jesus back to Bethlehem. They prepared to return home to Nazareth. But before they left, more visitors would come to see the Lord. More of the ancient prophecies would be fulfilled.



We Can Find the Lord in His Word

The prophecies telling how the Lord would be born on earth to save people from evil are recorded in the Word. We can find the Lord in His Word any time we want to. We don't have to wait. We can open the Word and learn about Him and all the wonderful teachings He gave to save us from the power of evil and lead us to our heavenly home.

Discussion Ideas

- Waiting is difficult. Patience is needed in many situations. Discuss things we wait for and how waiting can help prepare us to receive what is desired.
- Children love to hear about the time when they were babies. Talk about rituals surrounding each child's birth. Include people who came, baptism, celebrations, etc.

Activity Overview | Presentation at the Temple

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel. Matthew 2:1-6

Songs

Children Can You Truly Tell?

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-children-can-you-truly-tell/>

O Holy Night

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-o-holy-night/>

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

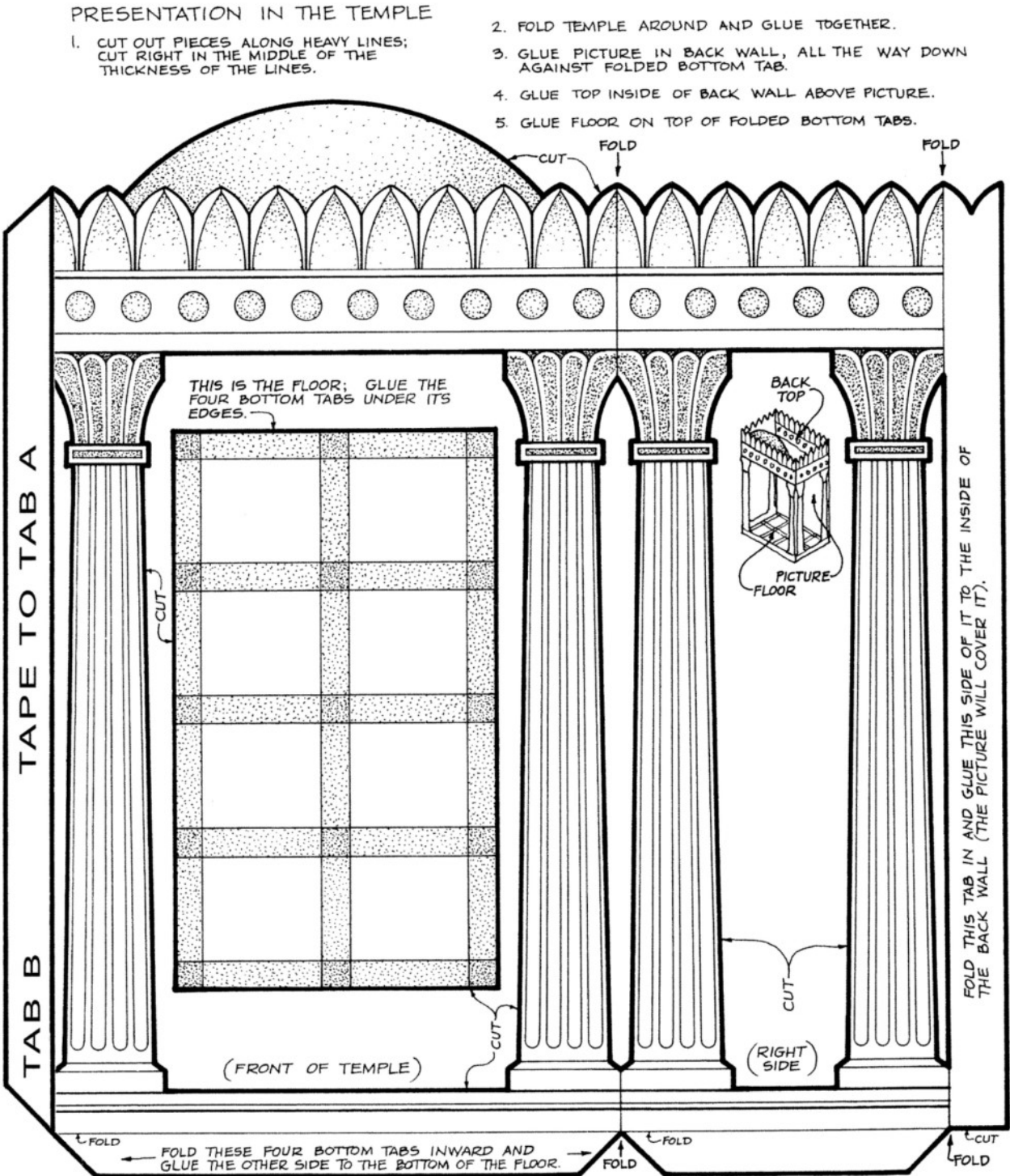
- Activity 1 | Presentation in the Temple Model
- Activity 2 | Circle the Correct Answer
- Picture to Color—Simeon Holds the Baby Lord (Luke 2)

Additional Activity Ideas

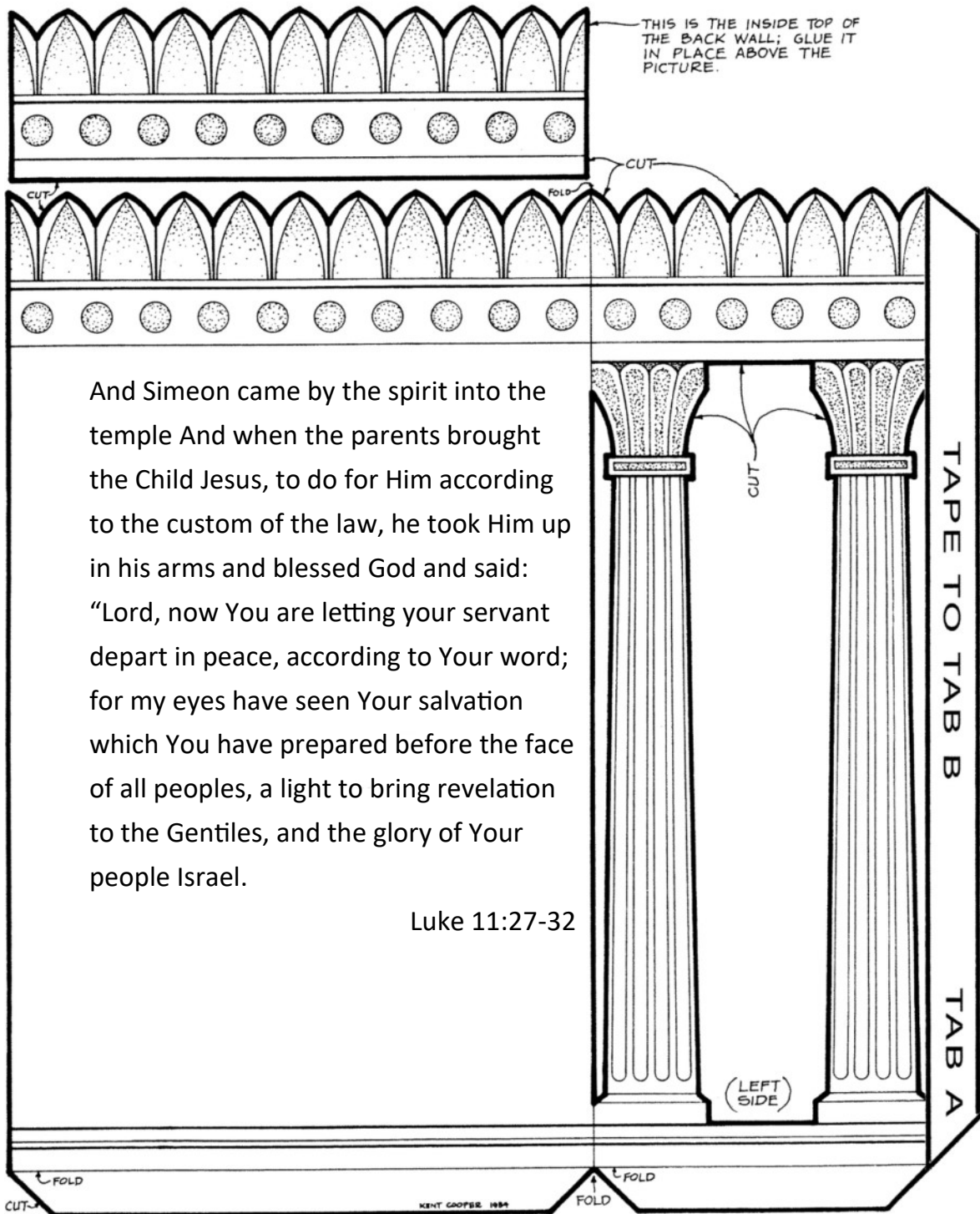
- In this story two old people had their best wishes come true. Think about how they must have felt to witness this great event. We read what Simeon said. What do you think Anna might have said when she gave thanks?
- People wish for different things. What do you wish for? Why do you wish for it?
- Are you looking forward to an exciting event, such as a birthday or holiday? What can you do to “wait patiently” for the day? Notice how you feel about being patient.

Activity 1 | Presentation in the Temple Model

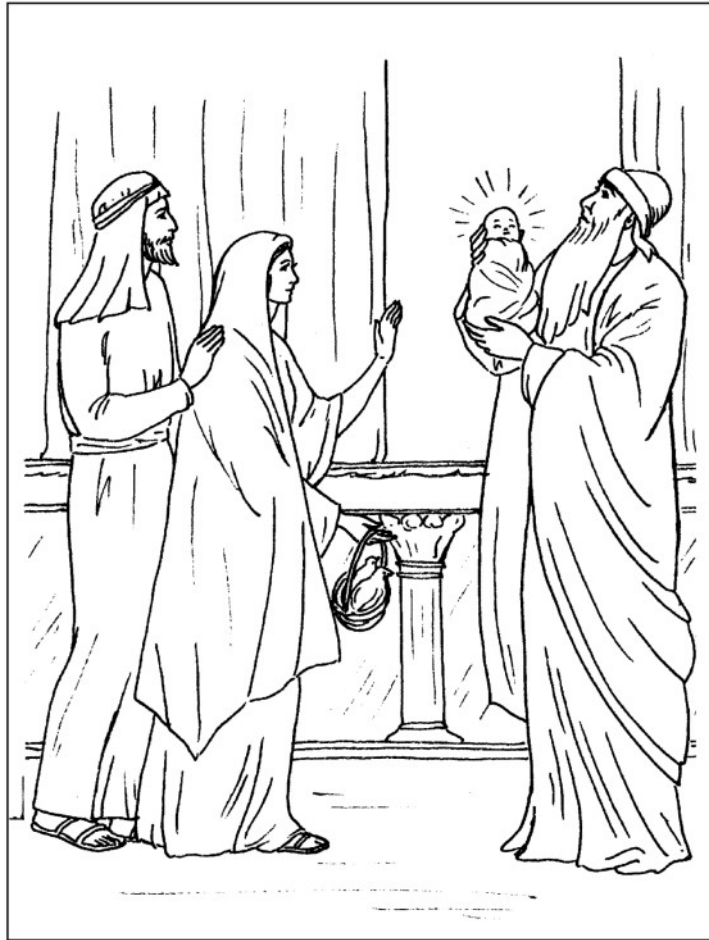
Cut out and assemble a model of the presentation in the temple. You will need scissors and glue or tape. Using a paper cutter to trim the outside edges along cutting lines will speed up assembly.



Activity 1 | Presentation in the Temple Model



Activity 1 | Presentation in the Temple Model



Activity 2 | Circle the Correct Answer

Read each sentence. Circle the word that completes the sentence correctly.

1. How old was Baby Jesus when Mary and Joseph gave Him a name? (one day old, eight days old, two weeks old).
2. The name Jesus means (savior, thankful, king).
3. After forty days Mary and Joseph went to (Nazareth, Galilee, Jerusalem).
4. According to Jewish law, Mary and Joseph brought an offering to Lord at the (tabernacle, temple, church).
5. Mary and Joseph's offering was two (lambs, pigeons, goats).
6. The old man who recognized the Baby Lord was (Joshua, Micah, Simeon).
7. The old woman who waited for the Lord was (Anna, Martha, Ruth).
8. These old people were (devout, dying, lost).

Answers:
1. eight days
old
2. savior
3. Jerusalem
4. temple
5. pigeons
6. Simeon
7. Anna
8. devout

