

# Presentation in the Temple: Fourth Joyful Mystery

Advent is our four-week preparation season for celebrating Christmas.

Christmas has its season, too. Here is a list of its holy day feasts and (using older calendar dates)

December 25 – Christmas Day (Begins Octave of Christmas- eight-day celebration)

January 1 – Mary Mother of God – Jesus' Circumcision (Luke 2:21 "When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.)

January 6 – Twelfth Day of Christmas - Epiphany – Arrival of the Wise Men

*Mystery: Why 12 days of Christmas? (Why the 4 more after the 8<sup>th</sup>?)*

*Possible Answer?: Wrapped up (has to be Christmas!) in the symbolism of Twelve*

December 26 - Day after Christmas is Feast of First Martyr St. Stephen, & the next day is..

December 27 - St John Evangelist the one apostle not martyred (some call 27<sup>th</sup> 'Apostles' Day)

St John is the one who lives to tell the whole story of apostles (**Gospel to Revelation**)

**Therefore**, 12 days of Christmas leads to Epiphany's recognition of Jesus by the Distant Kings (Psalm 72) humbling themselves. Who will lead and govern? Apostles-Kings? The 12 apostles parallel the 12 ruling tribes of OT (sons of Jacob). This fulfills the prophecy Luke 1:33 'he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'

Also, Matthew 19:28 Jesus tells apostles, "I say to you that you who have followed me, in the new age, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory, will yourselves sit on twelve **thrones**, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

*But even more leading 12's in Rev 22:2 "On either side of the river grew the tree of life that produces **fruit twelve times a year**, once each month" 12 days-fulness of time Alpha-Omega*

& the 2<sup>nd</sup> Presentation in Temple at 12 years old Luke 2: 41-42 "Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was **twelve years old**, they went up according to festival custom."

Keep in mind too, John writes strongly on the **theme of light/darkness** (Christmas Symbolism)

January 13 – Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (*Further Epiphany of Christ as Lord at Jordan*)

February 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> Presentation in Temple (Purification of Mary & Consecration of First Born)

Luke 2: 22-23 "When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,"

**What is this visit?** Purification because of contact blood impurity, and consecration of first born

Relevant OT passages: Circumcise on 8<sup>th</sup> Day, Consecrate on 40<sup>th</sup> Day, Purification of Mother 40<sup>th</sup> day

Genesis 17:10-12 "every male among you shall be circumcised.....That will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. Throughout the ages, every male among you, when he is eight days old, shall be circumcised...."

Leviticus 12:2-4 "Tell the Israelites: When a woman has a child, giving birth to a boy, she shall be

unclean for seven days, with the same uncleanness as during her menstrual period. On the eighth day, the flesh of the boy's foreskin shall be circumcised, and then she shall spend thirty-three days more in a state of blood purity; she shall not touch anything sacred **nor enter the sanctuary till the days of her purification are fulfilled.**"

Exodus 13:2 "Consecrate to me every firstborn; whatever opens the womb among the Israelites, whether of human being or beast, belongs to me."

& Exodus 13:12-13 "very newborn that opens the womb; and every firstborn male of your animals will belong to the LORD. Every firstborn of a donkey you will ransom with a sheep. If you do not ransom it, you will break its neck. Every human firstborn of your sons you must ransom."

*Are we confused yet over the days and times of feasts? Christmas Controversy?*

A major controversy in early church (200's) was establishing the proper date of Easter.

1<sup>st</sup> Easter Controversy - Easter relation to Passover; For Hebrews, Passover was 15<sup>th</sup> Day of Nisan (Ex 12:18). Some said, 'It's settled: The 15<sup>th</sup> Day Nisan'. Others said, 'Okay but should we celebrate Lord's resurrection on a **weekday** or on closest **Sunday** (also Lord's Day!)? Rule of 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after full moon after spring equinox-Nicea  
A background controversy was that Synoptic gospels say Last Supper was celebrated as Passover Meal (making Jesus' death day Passover) & John says Last Supper was day earlier (so Jesus was killed on Day Lambs were prepared for Passover).

John Burial of Jesus on the "Day of Preparation" (Jn 19:38-42)

Mark Burial of Jesus - Preparation Day for Sabbath (Mark 15:42-47)

-Prepared Passover (Last supper Meal-Mk 14:16, Mt 26:19, Lk 22:13)

A 2<sup>nd</sup> controversy came up between East and West regarding reform of Calendar

***West kept to Gregorian Reform of Calendar in 1582, East kept earlier Julian Calendar***

-This amounts to a bout a 13 day gap between the two calendars.

So, what do we do? Celebrate!

Galatians 4:9-11 "but now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and destitute elemental powers? Do you want to be slaves to them all over again? You are observing days, months, seasons, and years. I am afraid on your account that perhaps I have labored for you in vain."

Colossians 2:16-17 "Let no one, then, pass judgment on you in matters of food and drink or with regard to a festival or new moon or sabbath. These are shadows of things to come; the reality belongs to Christ."

Romans 14:5-6 "For one person considers one day more important than another, while another person considers all days alike. Let everyone be fully persuaded in his own mind.

Whoever observes the day, observes it for the Lord. Also whoever eats, eats for the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; while whoever abstains, abstains for the Lord and gives thanks to God.

Why prolonged celebrations among the Hebrew People?

Leviticus 23:5-6,8 "The **Passover** of the LORD falls on the fourteenth day of the first month, at the evening twilight. The fifteenth day of this month is the LORD's feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On each of the seven days you shall offer an oblation to the LORD."

Leviticus 23:34, 36 "Tell the Israelites: The fifteenth day of this seventh month is the LORD's **feast of Booths**, in which shall continue for seven days. For seven days you shall offer an oblation to the LORD, and on the eighth day you will have a declared holy day... it is the festival closing..."

2 Maccabees 10:1 When Maccabeus and his companions, under the Lord's leadership, had recovered the temple and the city,.....3 After purifying the temple, they made another altar. Then, with fire

struck from flint, they offered sacrifice for the first time in two years, burned incense, and lighted lamps....<sup>5</sup> On the anniversary of the day on which the temple had been profaned by the foreigners, that is, the twenty-fifth of the same month Kislev, the purification of the temple took place. The Jews ***celebrated joyfully for eight days*** as on the feast of Booths, remembering how, a little while before, they had spent the feast of Booths living like wild animals in the mountains and in caves.

Why follow laws about dates, tradition, etc? Hmmm, Example of Jesus?

Galatians 4:4-7 "When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, ***born under the law***, to ***redeem those who were under the law***, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir.

Matthew 3:13-15 "Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him.

Luke 2:51-52 "He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and ***was obedient to them***; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man."

Luke 4:16-17 "He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

John 7:2-3, 8-10 "But the Jewish feast of Tabernacles was near. So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples also may see the works you are doing....You go up to the feast. I am not going up\* to this feast, because my time has not yet been fulfilled." After he had said this, he stayed on in Galilee. But when his brothers had gone up to the feast, he himself also went up, not openly but [as it were] in secret."

Luke 5:13-14 "Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I do will it. Be made clean." And the leprosy left him immediately. Then he ordered him not to tell anyone, but "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed;\* that will be proof for them."

Luke 17:14 "And when he saw them (ten lepers), he said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." As they were going they were cleansed."

Matthew 22:41-46 "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus questioned them, saying, "What is your opinion about the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They replied, "David's." He said to them, "How, then, does David, inspired by the Spirit, call him 'lord,' saying: 'The Lord said to my lord, "Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies under your feet"' (***Psalms 110:1***)? If David calls him 'lord,' how can he be his son?" No one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare to ask him any more questions."

John 10:32-38 "You, a man, are making yourself God." Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"' (***Psalms 82:6***)? If it calls them gods to whom the word of God came, and scripture cannot be set aside, can you say that the one whom the Father has consecrated and sent into the world blasphemes because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? If I do not perform my Father's works, do not believe me; but if I perform them, even if you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may realize [and understand] that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."

## Canticle of Simeon – “Nunc Dimittis”

**Luke 2:29-32** “Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

Sound Familiar? The Battle Hymn of the Republic: “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord: (then goes on to quote Revelation Rev 14:14-19 & Jeremiah 25:30-31) “He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored; He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword: His truth is marching on.”

Also, Jesus on the Cross saying in John 19:30 “When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, “**It is finished.**” And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.”

Canticle of Mary “Magnificat” Luke 1:46-55 “My soul proclaims the greatness (Magnifies)”

Canticle of Zechariah “Benedictus” Luke 1:68-79 “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel...”

### *Other Biblical Canticles-Songs-Hymns (placed into Liturgy of Hours)*

The First Song of Moses -Exodus 15:1-19

The (Second) Song of Moses - Deuteronomy 32:1-43

The Song of Miriam (response to Moses)- Exodus 15:21

The Prayer of Hannah I Kings 2:1-10

The Prayer of Habakkuk -Habakkuk 3:1-19

The Prayer of Isaiah - Isaiah 26:9-20

The Prayer of Jonah - Jonah 2:2-9

The Prayer of the Three Holy Children - Daniel 3:26-88

Several songs/hymns appear in New Testament: Paul uses hymns (Phil 2), & Revelation 4:8, 11

## Who are Simeon and Anna?

Simeon- Luke 2:25 “man in Jerusalem ..... was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the holy Spirit was upon him.

Luke 2:26 “revealed to him by the holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord. And verse 27 “He came in the Spirit into the temple”

Anna – Luke 2:36 “the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.... advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer.... verse 38 “she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.”

### ***Simeon awaiting consolation of Israel & Anna awaiting redemption of Jerusalem***

Isaiah 40:1-2 “Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her service has ended, that her guilt is expiated..”

Amos 9:11 “On that day I will raise up, the fallen hut of David; I will wall up its breaches, raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old,”

Isaiah 66:13 “As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; And you will be comforted in Jerusalem.”

Isaiah 51:3 "Indeed, the LORD will comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places And her wilderness He will make like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the LORD; Joy and gladness will be found in her, Thanksgiving and sound of a melody."

Zechariah 1:17 "Again, proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.'"

Isaiah 57:18 "I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners,"

Jeremiah 31:13 "Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance, And the young men and the old, together, For I will turn their mourning into joy And will comfort them and give them joy for their sorrow."

## Anxiety of racing thoughts? God stills our storms.....

Psalms 94:19 "When cares increase within me, your comfort gives me joy."

Job 15:11 "Are the consolations of God too small for you, Even the word spoken gently with you?" *God whispers comforts to your soul. Listen.*

Lamentations 3:26-28 "It is good to hope in silence for the LORD's deliverance. It is good for a person, when young, to bear the yoke, To sit alone and in silence, when its weight lies heavy,"

Psalms 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God."

Psalms 73:16-17 "Though I tried to understand all this, it was too difficult for me, Till I entered the sanctuary of God and came to understand their end...."