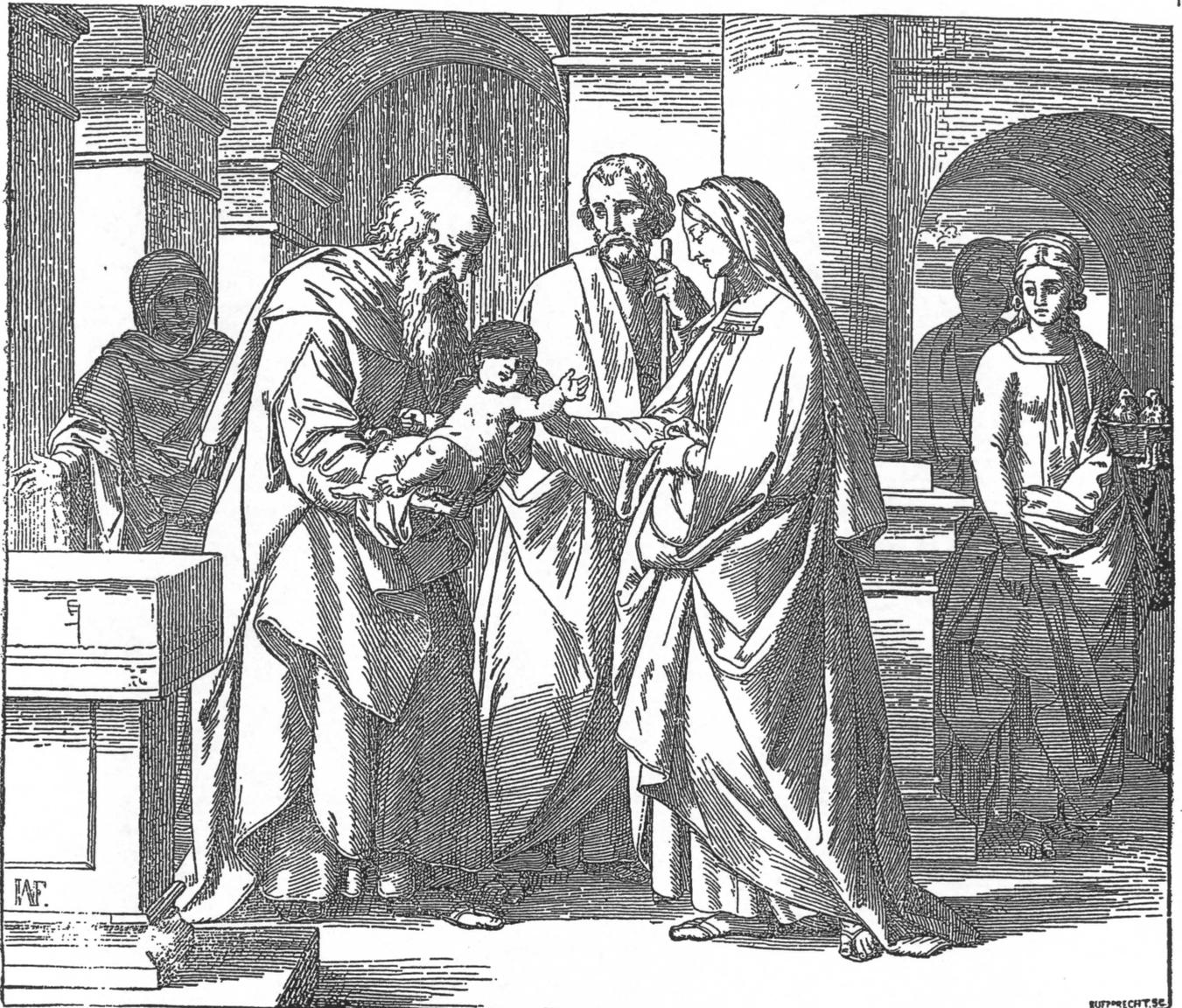


# The Extraordinary Expectation of Saintly Simeon: Luke 2:25-35

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SIMEON TAKING THE CHILD IN HIS ARMS.

## THE EXTRAORDINARY EXPECTATION OF SAINTLY SIMEON: LUKE 2:25-35

### 1A. INTRODUCTION:

While we sometimes universalize the Savior, it must not be forgotten that He was born into a Jewish family which kept the Jewish law blamelessly. As the Apostle Paul so well observes: "to redeem those that are under the law. . ." (Galatians 4:4-5).

Three Jewish ceremonies are involved in the birth of the Savior:

- (1) **circumcision** performed on the eighth day on all the male Jewish infants (Luke 2:21)
- (2) **purification** from childbirth for Mary, 40 days after the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:22, 24) and
- (3) **consecration** of the firstborn as a demonstration of the firstborn belonging to the Lord:

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

As the human parents presented Jesus in the temple, two aged saints, under God's providential direction, were witnessing in the temple, Simeon and Anna. Our present topic focuses on Simeon, a devout, discerning and delightful saint.

### 2A. THE PERSON OF SIMEON: 25-26

#### 1b. His residence: 25

Simeon was a resident of Jerusalem, the holy city, apparently so he could be close to the House of God. Even today Israel's orthodox Jews prefer to make their home in Jerusalem. Thus there is the contemporary adage: "You go to Jerusalem to pray, to Tel Aviv to play and to Haifa to pay."

#### 2b. His righteousness: 25

##### 1c. His significant name:

Simeon comes from Simon or Shamah, "to hear" (and to obey).

##### 2c. His spiritual nature:

##### 1d. He was just:

He was righteous, which involved being justified by faith (Gen. 15:8) and living up to high standards.

##### 2d. He was devout:

He was God-fearing, pious, reverent. He was yielded to God and devoted to His will.

## 3d. He was discerning:

He was a student of the Word of God (OT) and waited expectantly for the promised Messiah. As consolation of Israel, He would bring the Jewish people salvation and deliverance from their oppressors. Simeon belonged to the small number of Jews who actually expected the coming of the Messiah.

## 4d. He was yielded to the Holy Ghost:

As an Old Testament saint, the Spirit was **upon** him. In the church age, the Spirit is **in** the believer. In the Old Testament, the dwelling of the Spirit is **partial** and **temporary**; in the New Testament, it is **universal** and **permanent**.

## 3b. His reliance on the Spirit:

## 1c. The Holy Spirit descended upon him for service: 25

As a man dedicated to God and His Word, he was controlled by the Spirit.

## 2c. The Spirit disclosed information: 26

Simeon received revelation that he would not die before the arrival of the Lord's Christ, the Messiah promised to be sent from God.

## 3c. The Spirit directed his steps: 27

The Holy Spirit not only gave him divine enablement and insight but also led him into the temple at the precise moment Joseph and Mary were bringing in the Child Jesus to do for Him what the law required.

## 2A. THE PRESENTATION OF THE BABE: 27-28

## 1b. The bringing of the babe:

As Joseph and Mary entered the courtyard of the temple, Simeon was divinely directed to the same place. What might seem like a chance encounter was actually an act of God in fulfillment of His promises to Simeon and a reward of this faithful servant of Jehovah.

## 2b. The cradling of the child:

Simeon held the infant who was actually the infinite Creator. What a sight this must have been: the Creator cradled and caressed! Simeon's action showed his affection, adoration and amazement toward Jesus and His Heavenly Father.

## 3b. Gratitude to God: 29-33

Simeon burst out with a prophetic utterance. This song is known as *Nunc Dimittis*, based on the first two words of the song in Latin. The song may be rendered thusly:

Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
you now dismiss your servant in peace.  
For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the sight of all people,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for the glory to your people Israel.

In the song Simeon expressed gratitude for God's graciousness:

1c. For a crowning experience: 29a

The Lord (*despotes*, master, sovereign) who controlled his days on earth allowed His bondservant to see the Savior.

2c. For a fulfilled promise: 29b

God, the covenant-keeping  
Yahweh, fulfilled His Word.

<sup>29</sup> "Welcome Thy servant, Heavenly Master, hails  
This designated token of release  
From earthly toil; I now can die in peace,  
<sup>30</sup> Content that these expectant eyes have gazed  
Upon the promised Saviour, <sup>31</sup> now sent forth  
By Thee among mankind with generous care,  
<sup>32</sup> To illuminate dark souls in Gentile lands,<sup>o</sup>  
And doubly thus exalt Thy chosen race."

3c. For witnessed salvation: 30

1d. God's eternal counsel:

The eternally designated and prophetically anticipated Redeemer had arrived. As the angels had already announced, it would be good news for all people (Luke 2:10).

2d. God's saving concern:

1e. The salvation of the Gentiles:

God's love included the Gentiles who, in their dismal darkness of idolatry, need the light (Is. 46:6; Acts 13:47).

2e. The salvation of the Jews:

The Jews had been blessed with the written Word but also were blessed with the Living Word. The believing remnant in Israel, especially at the second advent, will be more glorious than before (Rom. 11:26; Isa. 9:7; 11:1-12:6; 35:1-10).

4b. The perplexity of the parents: 33

So remarkable was Simeon's prophecy that Joseph and Mary were amazed. Perhaps they grasped more clearly than ever before the inclusiveness of salvation: all the people, the Gentiles, the Jews.

## 3A. THE PROPHECY OF SIMEON: 34-35

## 1b. The prediction for the Child:

The child before him was not just another Jewish infant, but was pivotal for each person's destiny. Those believing in Him would find light and salvation. Those who rejected Him sank into spiritual darkness and eternal condemnation. In the pre-cross ministry, Christ was spoken against as the God-incarnate Messiah (Mt. 11:19; Acts 28:27).

## 2b. The prediction for Mary:

Through the Holy Spirit Simeon is able to discern the deep anguish that Mary will feel as her Son is rejected by the nation's leaders and the majority of the people, culminating in the crucifixion.

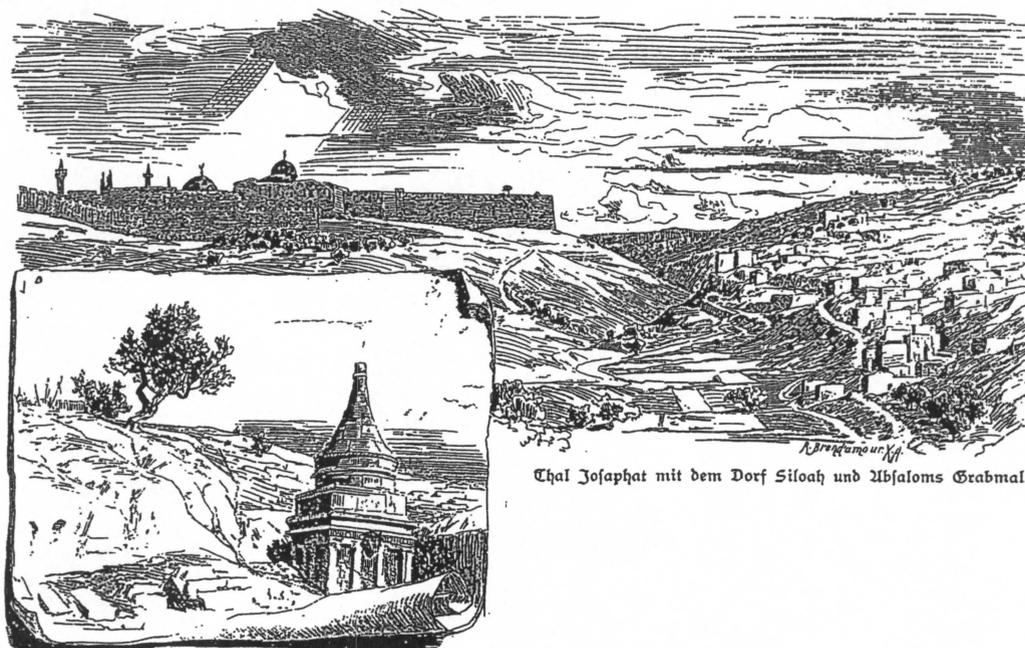
Philip Schaff has well remarked:

The sword that shall pierce the  $\Psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  of Mary, must refer to her sympathizing motherly anguish at beholding the opposition of the world to her Son and especially His passion and crucifixion (*Lange's Commentary*, Luke, 1960, 45).

## 4A. THE PLACE OF BURIAL

An interesting discovery in the Kidron Valley points to the burial place of Simeon. (See page 6). A monumental structure, long known as the tomb of Absalom, was found to have three Greek inscriptions which no one seems to have noticed over the past 2000 years. The tomb in a Greek-Roman style from possibly the first century B.C. must have been that of some nobleman prior to the time of Christ but was reused for later interments.

A scholar saw on an old black and white photo a faint inscription on a horizontal stone high above the entrance. Scaling the front of the tomb of Absalom with a ladder, he made a wet paper impression of the inscription which read, "This is the tomb of Zachariah, martyr, very pious priest, father of John."



Thal Josaphat mit dem Dorf Siloah und Absaloms Grabmal.

Surmising that there might be other inscriptions, he examined the horizontal stone on the southern side. There he found two additional inscriptions: that of James the son of Joseph the brother of Jesus, and that of Simeon. Simeon's epitaph was virtually a quotation of Luke 2:25. "This is the tomb of Simeon, a devout man before the Lord who waited for the consolation of Israel."

How interesting that God preserved the memory of this individual not simply in the pages of the New Testament but also in a stone monument in the Kidron Valley.

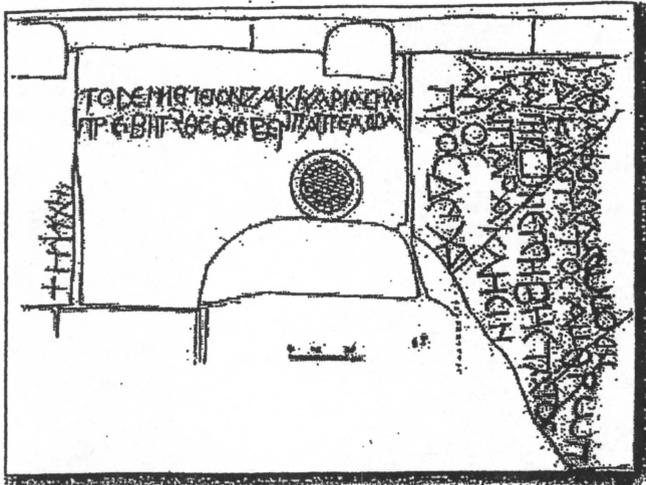
5A. THE PRINCIPLES FOR BELIEVERS TODAY:

- 1b. The Holy Spirit leads very specifically.
- 2b. The promises of God are fulfilled literally.
- 3b. The salvation through Christ is offered universally.
- 4b. The opposition to the Savior continues unabatedly.
- 5b. God's ways are not always understood immediately.
- 6b. The gospel of Christmas endures eternally.
- 7b. Our gratitude for the Savior should be offered continually.

3

## THE TOMB OF THREE NEW TESTAMENT SAINTS

The examination of an old print of the so-called tomb of Absalom in the Kidron Valley led an archeologist to identify three names of N. T. persons who apparently were buried in the tomb.



### Gospel verse found on ancient shrine

#### Inscription refers to Simon from the Bible

This tracing shows two Greek inscriptions uncovered on the facade of an ancient funerary monument in Jerusalem's Kidron Valley. The vertical inscription, found recently, refers to Simon the Just, a devout Jew who the Bible says cradled the infant Jesus.

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM, Nov. 20, 2003 - A barely legible clue — the name "Simon" carved in Greek letters — beckoned from high up on the weather-beaten facade of an ancient burial monument. Their curiosity piqued, two Jerusalem scholars uncovered six previously invisible lines of inscription: a Gospel verse — Luke 2:25.

#### *Adoration and prophecy of Simeon.*

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.



ABSALOM'S PILLAR

However, the inscription does back up what until now were scant references to a Byzantine-era belief that three biblical figures — Simon, Zachariah and James, the brother of Jesus — shared the same tomb.

Had the photograph been taken at any other time of day, he might not have seen the worn inscription. Using a squeeze, Puech deciphered the words: "This is the tomb of Zachariah, martyr, very pious priest, father of John."



*Reynolds Photo*

*(Original Photo.)*

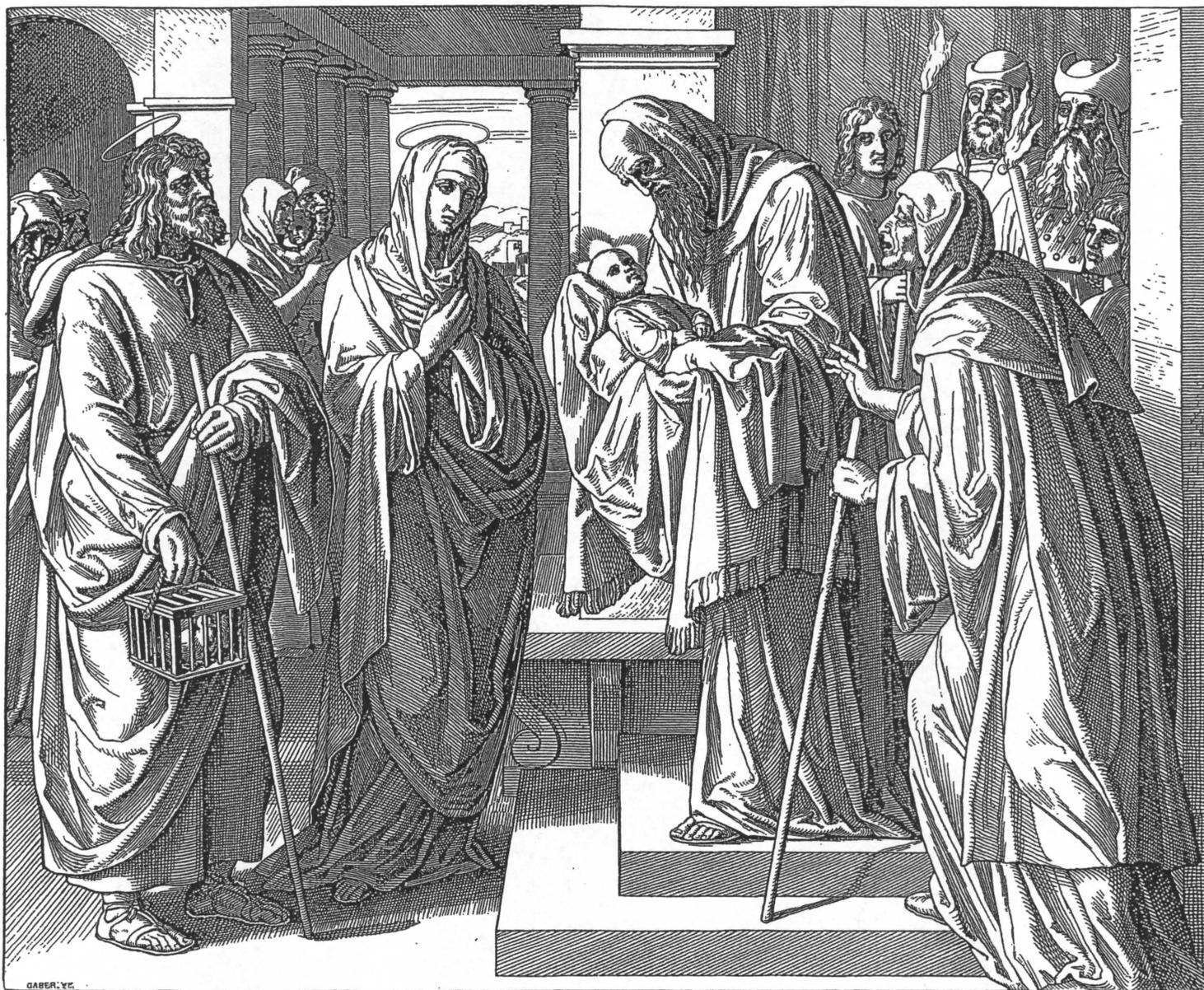
*Tomb of Absalom.*

*St. James.*

*Zacharias.*

THE VALLEY AND TOMBS OF JEHOSEPHAT.

Christi Darstellung im Tempel und Simeons Weissagung.



Ev. Lucä. Kap. 2, Vers 22, 24—40.

# OLD TESTAMENT ANTICIPATION



CRUSHES SERPENT

Gen. 3:15

LION

SON OF DAVID

MELCHIZEDEK

SOVEREIGN

SHEPHERD



ENTHRONED

## CHRIST'S DEITY

What Christ's disciples were unable to see, that the suffering Servant of Jehovah and the promised Monarch from the house of David were one and the same person, individuals like **Mary, Elizabeth, Simeon** and **Anna** joyfully anticipated. Their expectation of the consolation of Israel was richly rewarded by witnessing the arrival of the child born and the Son given (Isaiah 9:6).

## CHRIST'S HUMANITY

BETRAYED

SMITTEN

SERVANT

AARON

SON OF ABRAHAM

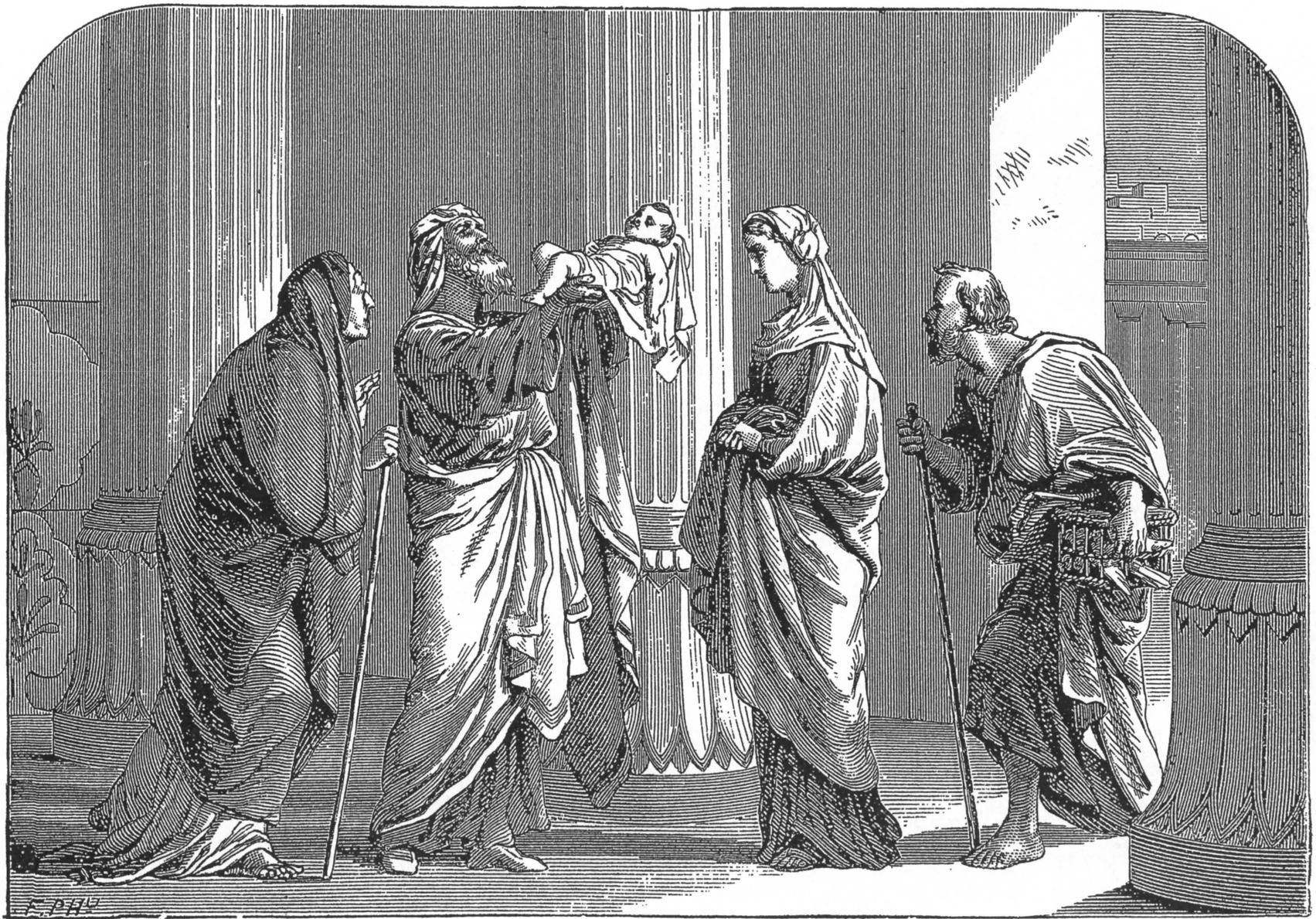
LAMB

HEEL BRUISED

GEN. 3:15



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SIMEON AND ANNA IN THE TEMPLE.