

GOSPEL PEARLS

Our only purpose in life

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And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were finished, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (just as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every first-born male will be dedicated to the Lord) and to offer a sacrifice (according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons). There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking forward to Israel's consolation, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he saw the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the

Spirit, he entered the temple. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him up in his arms, praised God, and said, "Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace, as you promised. For my eyes have seen your salvation. You have prepared it in the presence of all peoples— a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory to your people Israel. His father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and told his mother Mary, "Indeed, this child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed— and a sword will pierce your own soul—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." There was also a prophetess, Anna, a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well along in years, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and was a widow for eighty-four years. She did not leave the temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayers. At that very moment, she came up and began to thank God and to speak about him to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had completed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The boy grew up and became strong, filled with wisdom, and God's grace was on him. (Luke 2: 22-40)

Jesus's presentation in the temple is a prefiguration of His voluntary offering to the Father through His death on the cross for our Salvation. In this way, Jesus shows us that our life is not destined to end with our body in a tomb, but with God our Love and source of true happiness. This is so, because God is eternal and is our only purpose in life. Have we given this any serious thought to this during Christmas week?