

**Jesus is the light of the nations!**

Malachi 3:1-4

Psalm 24:7-10

Hebrews 2:14-18

Luke 2:22-40

In the first reading we hear a prophecy of a messenger to come, most likely Elijah in the Old Testament and then adapted by Jesus to identify John the Baptist in the New Testament. There is also a clear indication that a transformation of purification must take place if the priests and the people are to endure the one to come.

The Psalmist speaks of the king of glory, the Lord of hosts whom the people recognize as having sovereignty over the created world. Ceremoniously the faithful approach the temple triumphantly acknowledging the strong and mighty Lord who has saved them in many battles.

In the second reading Paul makes it clear that Jesus shared in our very human nature with all of its weaknesses and frailty and his sacrifice as high priest brings freedom from the fear of misunderstanding what life after death truly means. **Jesus changed the nature of death** for us and is continuously able to help all of us in our personal trials and tribulations.

In the Gospel Joseph and Mary bring the child Jesus to the temple with an offering associated with poor people, namely two birds, and he is consecrated and presented to the Lord as was religious custom. Simeon, a just and devout man was present and was with the Holy Spirit as he took Jesus in his arms and prophesied that this child was to be a light for revelation and glory to Israel. Joseph and Mary were both astounded of what was being said about him.



**The Father turns darkness into light through  
The good news of the Son  
and the Holy Spirit,  
all are pointing to eternal life.**

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*The man who realizes that death can come at any time and so is always ready for it is indeed blessed. If you have seen a person die remember you too will travel the same path. In the morning realize it is possible that you will die that evening; in the evening don't depend that you will be alive in the morning. Hence, always be ready so that it does not take you by surprise. "Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect (Matt 24:44)." When you are in your last hours your past life may appear quite differently as you realize the many opportunities you have missed for improvement. The man who will have no such qualms will indeed be happy and lives not by worldly values but desires advancement in virtue, welcomes discipline, understands when penance is needed, is an obedient servant, and accepts adversity in building up the Kingdom of God. Such a man "proves himself as an authentic servant of God by resolute perseverance in times of hardships, difficulties and distress (2 Cor 6:4)."*

(Adapted from Thomas of Kempis, Book 1, Chapt23)