

Luke 2:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

(As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

Analysis

The parenthetical 'As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord' quotes Exodus 13:2 and grounds Jesus's presentation in Scripture. The phrase 'openeth the womb' designates firstborn males belonging to God, remembering His sparing of Israel's firstborn at Passover. Jesus being 'called holy to the Lord' is ironic—He is inherently holy (the Holy One, Acts 3:14) yet designated holy by ceremonial law. This demonstrates that Jesus, though divine, entered fully into human legal and religious obligations. His consecration to God foreshadows His complete dedication to the Father's will (John 4:34; 17:4).

Historical Context

Firstborn consecration remembered the Passover (Ex 13:14-15) and required either service in the sanctuary or redemption through sacrifice (Num 18:15-16). Jesus, as true Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7), would ultimately redeem all God's firstborn through His own blood.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What is the significance of Jesus being designated 'holy' by law when He is inherently holy?
2. How does firstborn consecration to God foreshadow Jesus's complete dedication to the Father?
3. How does Jesus's presentation as firstborn relate to His role as Passover Lamb?

Interlinear Text

καθὼς	γέγραπται	ἐν	νόμῳ	κυρίῳ	ὅτι	Πᾶν	ἄρσεν
(As	it is written	in	the law	of the Lord	G3754	Every	male
G2531	G1125	G1722	G3551	G2962		G3956	G730
διανοῖγον	μήτραν	ἅγιον	τῷ	κυρίῳ	κληθήσεται		
that openeth	the womb	holy	G3588	of the Lord	shall be called		
G1272	G3388	G40		G2962		G2564	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 13:2 (Parallel theme): Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.

Numbers 3:13 (References Lord): Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the LORD.

Exodus 22:29 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

Exodus 34:19 (Parallel theme): All that openeth the matrix is mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male.

Numbers 18:15 (References Lord): Every thing that openeth the matrix in all flesh, which they bring unto the LORD, whether it be of men or beasts, shall be

thine: nevertheless the firstborn of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem.

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