

Simeon and Anna Meet Their Savior – A Baby!

Luke 2:25-38 - December 25, 2011

- **God's Select** _____
Luke 2:25-27

"this man was righteous and devout"

The consolation of Israel is the arrival of the _____

Isaiah 25:9

Isaiah 61:1-3

"it had been revealed to him ... that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ"

- **Spirit-Filled** _____
Luke 2:28-29

- **Eyes That Saw** _____
Luke 2:30-38

"Your salvation"

"A Light of revelation to the Gentiles"

"the glory of Your people Israel"

"appointed for the fall of many"

"appointed for the rise of many"

Luke 23:28

John 1:12

Romans 10:9, 13

Wrap Up

"Waiting" is _____ fulfillment of
promises

Two exhortations

1st – _____ your _____ on Jesus –
treasuring Him above all else

2nd – _____ for His _____

Titus 2:13

I John 3:2-3

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Intro: Christmas and Easter mark out our great salvation.

This morning we are going to examine the life and experience of Simeon. Simeon is one of the most blessed men in history. Because of his faith, the Lord would make him one of the point people in the Christmas story. Simeon will provide Mary in particular what she will experience as the mother of Jesus. Simeon gives a summary of the work and fate of Jesus. In our study this morning we will see that neutrality towards Jesus is not possible. We either surrender to Him or we are at war with Him.

Let's consider the person God chose to tell us more about His Son ...

➤ God's Select MESSENGER

Luke 2:25-26

And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

2:26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

When God wanted us to know about His Son, He chose godly people, humble and spiritually devout people to announce His arrival. **Mary and Joseph, Elizabeth and Zacharias**, the **magi** and the **shepherds** were such people.

Simeon is one of these godly people. During Christ's earthly ministry Jesus silenced the demons when they declared who He was. The Lord wants saints making His name known.

We see the character of godly Simeon – God's special messenger in two short and simple phrases.

“this man was righteous and devout”

Short biographies are the best. And this one is as good as they come. No fluff, no extravagance, no boasting concerning worldly accomplishments. There's no mention of where he went to school, when he married and who he married. No mention of his place of birth or years as a priest. We catch his priorities – the most commendable qualities.

- ✓ When you are *righteous* you are fair, honest and ethical towards **PEOPLE**

This was his outward life ... that which was seen by people

- ✓ When you are *devout* you are pious towards **GOD**

This was his inward life ... that which can only be seen by God.

One without the other is common. But these two must always go together.

What is most important is that which preoccupied his soul ... He was

“looking for the consolation of Israel”

The consolation of Israel **is** the arrival of the MESSIAH.

“consolation” = a person or thing that provides comfort after times of misery and oppression

Isaiah 25:9

And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

Isaiah also prophesied ...

Isaiah 61:1-3

“... the Lord has anointed me **to bring good news to the afflicted**; He has sent me **to bind up the brokenhearted**, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners;
61:2 **To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord** And the day of vengeance of our God; **To comfort all who mourn**,
61:3 To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting ...

The two-fold plan of Jesus

Jesus *comforts* the sinner who repents and *frightens* the sinner who is unwilling to be cleansed

Everyone here as two options:

Turn to Christ and receive His help

Reject Christ and someday meet Him in judgment

My friends, Christmas is:

- ✓ Good news to the afflicted.
- ✓ The best news to sinners who hate their sin ... for the brokenhearted ... those who know their sin and their need of a Savior.
- ✓ Christmas was the most favorable day of the Lord for fallen mankind.

The promises of Isaiah 61 were things Simeon knew he would experience

“it had been revealed to him ... that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ”

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Micah, Malachi ... all these prophets stood with their eyes fixed on the future straining to see and waiting for the consolation of Israel.

But here is Simeon with a unique privilege! What an honor! He is promised sight of his Messiah.

But this promise implied a long time of watching and waiting. Most would have grown weary, but not Simeon. Every day the promise he was given was on his mind. Daily he asked himself ... *is this the day? How will I know? What will be the sign? What will this child look like?*

The Holy Spirit would eliminate those questions as we see the Holy Spirit's leading and a perfectly timed meeting. This was no coincidence! This was a *God-moment ... a Divine encounter*.

Luke 2:27

And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law

Simeon meets the child Jesus!

The greatest treasure in the universe, the Lord Jesus Christ, stood opposite Simeon in the arms of His mother.

➤ **Spirit Filled JOY**

Luke 2:28-29

then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said

2:29 "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word;

Simeon got to experience more than he expected. Not only did he **see** His Savior. He got to hold and embrace His Savior. In his very arms he held our Lord Jesus, hugged Him, and experienced joy off the charts!

The One he had waited for ... watched for ... prayed for ... was in his arms!

He couldn't contain his praise ... for he immediately blessed God! He praised the Father of our Lord.

My friends, we too should constantly thank God for His Son. Praise Him for His salvation through the Lord Jesus.

Simeon's great contentment ...

Simeon did not wish to die. He wished for the consolation of Israel. But all he longed for in life had been fulfilled. He was ready to go and to go with joy.

“depart” in the Greek (vs 29) = to release a prisoner, to untie a ship and set sail, to take down a tent and to unyoke a beast of burden.

The point: God's people are not afraid of death because death frees them from the burdens of this life

Simeon's greatest joy was expressed in the words ...

➤ **Eyes That Saw SALVATION**

Simeon tells us what he saw;

Luke 2:30-32

For my eyes have seen Your salvation,

2:31 Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

2:32 A Light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."

"Your salvation" – God's salvation is Jesus. Salvation would be provided in one and only one Person

"A Light of revelation to the Gentiles" –

Light reveals darkness and darkness is sin. Jesus came to reveal sin that He might save those who want to turn from sin and trust in Him.

Here is a devout Jew standing in the temple boldly declaring that salvation would be going out to the Gentiles. This is quite unusual. This is a missionary minded Jew sharing the heart of a missionary minded God.

"the glory of Your people Israel" – a glory to those who received Him as their Messiah

Mary and Joseph would learn more about their Son.

Luke 2:33-35

And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him.

2:34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed

2:35 and a sword will pierce even your own soul to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

Notice what Simeon tells Mary and not Joseph, an indication that Joseph would die before Jesus started his earthly ministry. Joseph would not see what Mary would see.

"appointed for the fall of many"

Jesus is going to disrupt the souls of many people ... and this will ultimately result in Christ's crucifixion.

"appointed for the rise of many"

And yet many will believe and rise to newness of life ... peace with God.

Mary would learn

Her baby would someday comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.

"a sign to be opposed" = The Lord Jesus and the gospel will always be opposed and spoken against by some ...

Mary's grief to come ...

“*a sword will pierce even your own soul*” = the grief Mary would experience at the rejection, execution and death of her son.

- Her suffering was the suffering of relationship between a mother and a son
- Her suffering has nothing to do with *YOUR* salvation.

BUT DON'T MISS THIS

Jesus did not die to elicit anyone's sympathy.

Jesus doesn't want sympathy. He wants us to place our faith in Him.

When Jesus was on the way to the cross He turned to ladies who were weeping and said,

“Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children” (Luke 23:28).

Though the message is sobering ... the joy of that hour was *off the charts!* What Simeon was experiencing was equal to or greater than the joy of the magi who rejoiced with an exceeding great joy. For Simeon longed for a Savior. And that Savior had come. And that hour of joy was shared by an elderly widow of 84 years.

Luke 2:38

At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The joy and praise of Simeon was sweetened by the voice of Anna. Anna was very much like Simeon in that she was living very close to God. So she too would receive insight about the child in Simeon's arms.

The first thing she did when she met the baby Jesus – she gave thanks to God!

We exist to delight in God by declaring His glory and the authority of His Word while making disciples who treasure Christ above all else.

Anna knew of many who were watching and waiting for the Messiah too. She would share the news with each of them.

Invitation/Gospel

There are some in this room to whom Christ is speaking. And He is doing the very work He did when He walked this earth. You see my friends, whenever Christ comes to a man, there is a fall first and a rising again afterwards. The Lord Jesus pulls us down from our pride and self-sufficiency...and then He lifts us up to a position of eternal safety. This is the great design of Christ's coming: “This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel.”

Today if you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart. Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation. Let Him reach down to you and pull you up to Himself.

He died on the cross to pay for your sins.

He rose again validating everything He said and promised.

John 1:12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

Romans 10:9, 13

that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

10:13 for “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

One of my greatest joys is news that someone has come to Christ ... found salvation in Him. If you are lost in your sin ... Let this be you this Christmas Day.

Wrap Up

If you have lost sight of the Lord’s second coming, you have lost sight of the Lord’s face. Though He’s delayed long, He’s coming again!

Simeon’s waiting ... is to be what we do as well
“Waiting” is **EXPECTING** fulfillment of promises

The world mocks the thought of Christ’s return.

My friends, as believers we should be waiting for the consolation of Israel – which is the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!

We should be like Simeon ... waiting for His return ... longing for His return ... living moment by moment that we might be found worthy and ready for His 2nd coming

My friends, think with me about the numerous promises of God that have been fulfilled concerning Jesus:

- He would come as the Son of God [Ps 2:7] - **Fulfilled** [Lu 1:32,35]
- As the seed of the woman [Gen 3:15] - [Lu 1:26-38]
- A descendent of Abraham [Gen 17:7 22:18] - [Matt. 1:1-17]
- A descendent of Isaac [Gen 21:12] - [Matt. 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38]
- A descendent of David [Ps 132:11 Jer 23:5] - [Mt. 1:1-17]
- Would come at a set time [Gen 49:10 Da 9:24,25] - **Fulfilled** [Lu 2:1]
- Be born of a virgin [Isaiah 7:14] - **Fulfilled** [Mt 1:22,23 Luke 2:7]
- Would be called Immanuel [Isaiah 7:14] - **Fulfilled** [Mt 1:22,23]
- Would be born in Bethlehem [Micah 5:2] - **Fulfilled** [Luke 2:4-6]
- Great persons would come and adore him [Psalms 72:10] - **Fulfilled** [Mt 2:1-11]
- There would be the slaying of the children of Bethlehem [Jeremiah 31:15] - **Fulfilled** [Mt 2:16-18]
- Jesus and His parents would be called out of Egypt [Hosea 11:1] - **Fulfilled** [Mt 2:15]

The odds of fulfilling just eight of these prophecies would be **one in 100 million million**. Jesus promised that He would return – we need to expect it too! It will happen.

We must be like Simeon. We must put our trust in the God whose promises are secure and whose Word is forever settled in heaven.

Two exhortations

1st – **FIX** your **EYES** on Jesus – treasuring Him above all else.

2nd – **WATCH** for His **RETURN** – longing for it!

So when Jesus promised He would return and tells us to watch for it ... we better be about this!

Titus 2:13

looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

I John 3:2b-3

“... when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

3:3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.