



LUKE 2:25-35; JOHN 12:23-26

LESSON: A MISSION FROM BIRTH (CHRISTMAS) — December 19, 2021

INTRODUCTION: LUKE 2:22-24

There were several ceremonies after a baby's birth.

First: Circumcision (cutting the foreskin) of a boy child and his name was given on the eighth day after birth.

Second: Redemption of the firstborn son. He is to be presented to God one month after birth. The parents buys back through offerings.

Third: Purification of the mother had to be followed after childbirth, described in the Old Testament in Leviticus 12. (40 days for a son, and 80 days for a daughter after the birth, for the mother was ceremonially unclean and could not enter the temple). Mary's forty-day purification was over.

At the end of her time of separation, Mary and Joseph made the trip to Jerusalem with Jesus to the temple to consecrate or dedicate their firstborn son to God, just as had been done in Exodus 13, and much like we do in church today when we dedicate a baby to the Lord. Mary and Joseph were to bring a lamb for a burnt offering, and a dove or pigeon for a sin offering. If the individual could not afford a sheep, then two doves or pigeons could be offered instead. Apparently because they didn't have much money, Mary and Joseph brought two birds.

LESSON: I. A BLESSED ENCOUNTER LUKE 2:25-28

2:25 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. Simeon was a man in Jerusalem who walked closely with God. He walked so closely that God was able to use him in a most magnificent way to encourage Joseph and Mary. Five things are said about him personally.

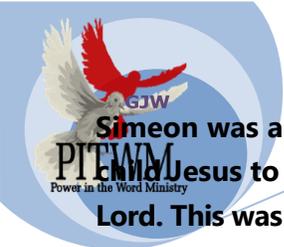
1. **Simeon was a just and devout man.** The word "**just**" (*dikaios*) means righteous, well-behaved, living as one should live. He treated other people as he should: justly. The word "**devout**" (*eulabes*) means cautious and careful in relation to God. It means reverence for God, being pious or religious.
2. **Simeon was a man who looked for and waited for the coming of the Messiah** (Matt.1:18). This is what is meant by "*the waiting for the consolation of Israel.*" Faithful believers among the Jews felt that Israel could find consolation only in the Messiah. The consolation of Israel would fulfill the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants. Jesus was to remove sorrow and comfort the nation! They "*waited for the kingdom of God*" (Mk.15:43).
3. **Simeon was a man filled with and led by the Holy Spirit;** The Holy Spirit was upon him continually. This shows just how closely Simeon was living to God.

2:26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

4. **Simeon was a man who was given an unusual promise.** Apparently, Simeon was constantly studying the Scriptures, in particularly searching the prophecies concerning the coming salvation of the Messiah (1Pt.1:10). We don't know how old he was, but at some point, **the Holy Spirit revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah.** He had a promise that God would keep.

2:27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,— It's nothing like the nudging of the Holy Spirit! Again,





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Simeon was a man led by the Spirit to go to the Temple. This was the day the parents were to bring the child Jesus to the temple. A first-born child was to always be taken to the temple to be dedicated to the Lord. This was after the custom of the law (also 2:22-24).

2:28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,—This was the day God's promise comes true for Simeon. He had been waiting a long time. ¹Day by day he had prayed for the Lord Christ to finally appear. What are you praying for, that's taking a long time? Like the children of Israel—430 yrs. Like Simeon—until it was revealed to him. Year after year his prayer went unanswered when he thought it would come. But even as he grew older, his anticipation grew stronger because he knew he couldn't live forever. It was coming! We are truly living off of someone's prayers that have prayed for us, but now they are dead and gone from us. But God is fulfilling their prayers. That day Mary and Joseph came into the temple. ²There was nothing outwardly to distinguish them, no marks or signs that indicated they were anything other than another poor young couple coming with their newborn son. And there were many in that temple with their babe, however, Simeon was able to recognize, see, and hold God's Salvation—Jesus, for he was led by the Spirit of God.

5. Simeon was a man who saw and held the Messiah. He took the child up into his arms and he first blessed God who is the Blessor. Then he proclaimed Him to be the long-awaited Messiah.

This could not be compared to any gift given to us by man. In all his life he did not want for anything else like he wanted this. This so overwhelms me just thinking of it. We all know how we feel holding a newborn baby in our arms, but to know that this particular baby would save us from the damnation of sin and hell is a whole nother level; and see our loved ones in the by and by; and live forever with the Savior is pure JOY!

II. BLESSING AND SORROW LUKE 2:29-35

2:29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:— Once Simeon had embraced the Messiah, he broke out into song. The song is called the "*Nunc Dimittis*" being known by the opening words of the song in the Latin. In this, he's saying that he was now ready to die in peace. He called himself God's servant. He trusted God all the way and God kept His promise.

2:30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,— He truly blessed and praised God for seeing God's salvation for the people. His eyes had seen Christ the Messiah, the One who comes to save! God in His mercy has comforted Simeon, therefore, he couldn't help but give honor and reverence to God.

2:31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;—The child God sent for salvation was prepared for all people. He was prepared for this mission from the beginning of time, before we even knew about time, but the manifestation of His mission is seen at His birth by Simeon, and is now prepared before the face of all people. The Messiah had come for all. A child is born, a Son is given... Prejudice and favoritism were unknown to God, for He was not willing that any should perish.

2:32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. Jesus was to be the light to the Gentiles; the unbelievers of the world. This simply means that He came to be the Revelation of God, to reveal the way, the truth, and the life to men. And He was to be the glory of God's people Israel (the Jews) who He first comes to; who were to be the believers. In this baby, Simeon sees the fulfillment of all the hopes and dreams of the Jewish people across the centuries (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Micah...).

¹ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/1991-12-22-The-Cradle-And-The-Cross-Simeons-Song/>

² <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/1991-12-22-The-Cradle-And-The-Cross-Simeons-Song/>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>



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2:33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. The parents marvelled at the blessings and predictions. The predictions would amaze anyone, but they were given for an additional reason. Joseph and Mary needed to be assured, encouraged, and strengthened. They had been through a lot and still, there would be more experiences to go through because of the child! In the *Nunc Dimittis*, first, the song (2:29-32); then a personal word of prophetic blessing to Mary (2:34-35).

2:34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, **Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;—** Simeon gives a prophetic blessing which may baffle Mary. He wanted her to pay close attention to this child, for He would be the cause for many falling and many rising. He would be the Great Divider of Men to fall and rise again! This child was to be what the Scripture calls the "stone of stumbling" and the "chief cornerstone."

1. Many would stumble and fall over Him in Israel. They would not notice, look, study, prefer, choose, believe, or trust Him, and the salvation He brings. They would simply choose another way other than God's way.
2. Many would rise because of Him. They would take notice, choose, and believe Him and the salvation He brings. Therefore, He would become their foundation their cornerstone.
3. Many would speak against Him. The child's fate was sealed. Jesus is set to be opposed and eventually killed in His 3yr. ministry. Jesus was a sign of both God's love and judgment. And therefore, He was to be a sign that will be spoken against.

This would be like the preacher saying after reading the scripture, "*it's yours to accept or reject.*"

2:35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) **that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.** Mary may be happy at this moment in time but there will come a time when she will experience sorrow. When many speak against Him, the hidden thoughts of many hearts will be revealed, but it will also be like a sword that pierces through Mary's own soul. She will experience deep sorrow at the cross, seeing her Son, the only begotten Son of God, rejected and killed by men. This certainly revealed the inner thoughts of men's hearts. This also conveys to us when a woman gives birth to a child, there is sorrow in the pain of birth, but afterwards there is blessings in the pain of life.

III. HOUR OF GLORY JOHN 12:23-26

12:23 And Jesus answered them saying, **The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.** Jesus answers Andrew and Philip with the hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified, meaning to return to His glory in heaven. In order to return He had to die first. Therefore, the hour referred to His death. The hour is a set, fixed time in the purpose of God. And this is how we have to look at our hour also—set and fixed time in the purpose of God to be upon this earth. But, Jesus' glory would not be like how we would see the glory of an earthly king or emperor. Jesus' glory would be the glory of the cross. God would exalt Him as King for his kingdom is in heaven. He had done exactly what God told Him to do—dying for the sins of the whole world. The point: before glory—death is a necessity.

12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.** Truly, truly Jesus says and gives a picture of His death: a corn of wheat has to fall into the ground and die. In order for it to die, it has to abide alone in the earth before rising, which then is able to bring forth much fruit (many believers). If there is no resurrection, man would still be dead in his sins. Jesus would have died for nothing. He would not be the Son of the



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Father who raises Him from the dead. Resurrection had to come for us to have eternal life. This is a beautiful picture of the necessary sacrifice of Jesus. Before fruit—death is a necessity. This also goes for anyone who's looking to gain the ladder of success.

12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. The man who loves his life (in **this world) shall lose it, which means the man who loves himself is lost. Loving this world and the things of this world will cause us to lose eternal life, for it causes you to be an enemy of God. And the man who hates his life (in **this** world) shall keep it and gain eternal life which means the man who is an enemy to his own life shall save his life. Jesus tells them that man must lose his life to gain eternal life.**

12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. If a man is ready to serve Jesus, let him follow Jesus, because where Jesus is, there will His servant be, for the servant goes wherever He goes. And if a man is ready to serve Jesus, His Father will honor him.

SUMMARY: LUKE 2:25-35

Simeon is introduced in this passage. It says that he is a just and devout man in Jerusalem, which speaks of his personal walk with God and integrity among men. It was time for the child to be dedicated and offered up for God's keeping and care. Forty days had passed since the birth of Jesus which was the Law's requirement of a woman's purification after giving birth to a son to enter into the temple. The parents, Joseph and Mary bring the child to the temple. Somewhere in the temple, they come across Simeon. Just who Simeon was is not known. Some think he was a priest, but Scripture does not say. We do know that he was a man that loved God very much and walked closely with God. By this time, we can assume that he is an old man, for he had been waiting on the promise of the Lord for a long time. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Christ! And he being led by the Spirit on this day sees the blessed child with His parents. He took the baby into his arms and blessed God for Him. Simeon was ready to die in peace, for God's Word had come to pass; death is no longer an enemy, for his eyes had seen God's Salvation; the One prepared for all people; the light to the Gentiles, and the glory to the people of Israel (Jews). The parents marveled at the song of praise from Simeon. He continued to bless them, then prophesied to Mary—the child was to be the cause of many falling and many rising in Israel. He will be a sign which men will refuse to acknowledge and pain like a sword will go through Mary's own soul.

SUMMARY: JOHN 12:23-26

23 Jesus answers Andrew and Philip with the hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified, meaning to return to His glory in heaven. The hour is a set, fixed time in the purpose of God. 24 Truly, truly Jesus says and gives a picture of His death: a corn of wheat has to fall into the ground and die. In order for it to die, it has to abide alone which then is able to bring forth much fruit. This was a beautiful picture of the necessary sacrifice of Jesus. 25 The man who loves his life (in **this world) shall lose it, which means the man who loves himself is lost. And the man who hates his life in **this** world shall keep it and gain eternal life which means the man who is an enemy to his own life shall save his life. 26 If a man is ready to serve Jesus, let him follow Jesus, because where Jesus is, there will His servant be, for the servant goes wherever He goes. And if a man is ready to serve Jesus, His Father will honor him.**

