

## Simeon's Prayerful Song

**Text:** Luke 2.22–35

**Theme:** The unchanging God of the Old and New Testament has sent His Son Jesus to be our Savior

### Introduction — Is the God of the OT the same as the God of the NT?

- many would say “Yes, indeed, He is”
- but others would argue that God of OT is God of Mt Sinai—anger, burning wrath, thunder
- wholly other and so different from us we can never comprehend or understand Him

### Joy of Christmas and coming of Jesus into world is it brings both OT & NT together

- without OT, cannot understand reason for Jesus' coming
- without NT, never see fulfillment of promises made in OT
- faithful reading shows us God has not changed from testament to testament
- after all, this Jesus, being born in manger in Bethlehem is God
- and Hebrews 13.8 tells us this truth
- **Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.**

### So, let's look at Simeon's prayer, from Luke 2

- as we do, we'll have greater sense of truths of God & Jesus
- then we will join with him of old, in prayer
- this, in turn, will help us await our Lord's second advent, the Consolation of Israel

*Let's go to the Temple in Jerusalem and see how...*

## **I. CHRIST MAKES AN APPEARANCE**

- the Temple held a key and central place of importance to people of Israel
- from the temporary tabernacle to the more permanent temple, place where God dwelt
- God's presence was vital to OT saints
- His presence in fire and cloud led thru wilderness, day & night
- when this pillar stopped, the people stopped; when it moved, they moved
- eventually, God took up residence in temple, built by Solomon
- yet this too crumbled eventually; signifying God's withdrawn presence for a time

### **1. His people still sought His presence**

- Simeon spent considerable time at Temple
- **Luke 2:26-27 And it had been revealed to [Simeon] by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple..."**
- I'll mention her now, but not focus upon her: Anna
- she, too, waited at Temple for sign of Messiah's coming
- this is where God's presence was to dwell
- place where God would bless His faithful people

### **2. Holy of Holies**

- place where God met with high priest once a year

- no one to enter at any other time
- God's presence so holy, none could withstand it
- yet, God comes into the Temple, but not into the Most Holy Place this time
- Joseph & Mary not struck down
- Simeon & Anna endure the sight
- God in the flesh has entered in and His people stand in His presence

### **3. Don't miss this detail**

- God, come in the flesh; Immanuel—God with us
- and they were not undone
- same God of OT, that would have struck down likes of Uzzah for even touching the ark
- Isaiah cried out, in presence of God's holiness, "Woe is me, I am undone!"
- yet, this same God, now come in human flesh, condescends to appear
- form of a humble servant, an infant now, and soon to grow into adult man

### **4. Has God changed then?**

- OT God of such holiness, struck down and destroyed
- NT God of love & mercy
- yet Christ comes into temple, God in flesh
- doesn't undo OT; instead fulfills its promises
- Eve no longer awaiting the Offspring—He is here
- Abraham waited and saw this day from afar in promises of God; now here

- John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.
- King David would have a greater son who would be his Lord
- this One would sit on throne to rule Israel & was now here

## **5. Waiting is over**

- for Simeon, all days of patient, faithful waiting done
- like a tiny picture of Israel's waiting and hoping
- God was shining His face upon Simon in face of Christ
- peace was filling Simeon's heart so he knew he could now die in same peace
- do you have this peace? Peace with God because Jesus has come
- have you trusted Him to forgive, to cleanse, to make you new?
- has His light shone on you and you have seen this great light?

*God is always faithful to His promises...*

## **II. ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD**

- note how Simeon frames his prayer in v. 29—"according to Your word"
- Covenant-making & keeping God to Adam & Eve, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
- even to David and all His people—this God is same and faithful
- Jesus is God, only begotten of God
- "Yes" and Amen to all God's promises
- all this: according to God's Word
- runs through this text
- v. 22: Mary goes to Temple according to Law of Moses

- Joseph & Mary brought their son to present Him to the Lord...as is written in Law
- they would offer a sacrifice, according to what is said in the Law of the Lord
- what a beautiful sight: they performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, v. 39

### **1. Mary & Joseph, a couple of faith**

- four times, it is said they did all according to God's words
- they were devoted to God and did the same with their firstborn son, Jesus
- Mary & Joseph repeatedly obey the Lord & His Word

### **2. Not Mary's righteousness that is celebrated & praised here**

- against the teaching of one large branch of the church, Mary was not pure of sin
- she knew she was a sinner; it's why we saw previously that she calls her son Savior
- but neither does Simeon rejoice in Mary's faithfulness
- **Luke 2:30-31 for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,**
- promises of God to save His people according to His word now appears before him
- Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that he would see Lord's Christ before he died
- "the Lord's Christ"—Christ, a title of great honor
- the anointed one, the messiah, the promised One of God

- and Simeon was now beholding this One
- even though just a newborn babe, this was God in the flesh, truly God, truly man
- righteous man of Psalm 1 who would obey God's law & will, now in His arms
- He would be perfectly righteous messiah to ascend David's throne, God-man of Psalm 2
- His people incapable of coming up to Him on Mount Sinai
- so God of Sinai came down from holy mountain
- God proves Himself faithful to His Word

### **3. Do you trust God and take Him at His word?**

- do you look to this life-sustaining book as often as you can?
- do you see His faithfulness, His promises being fulfilled in Christ?
- we see it here today, in this short text
- but it is everywhere else you look
- God has promised His Son...have you trusted your life and life-to-come with Him?

*God of both testaments here, and yet we also see...*

### **III. A SWORD THAT PIERCES**

- really & truly cannot understand NT without OT
- far too many references, allusions in NT back to OT
- Christ's coming makes no sense: manner in which it came about, it's timing, none of it
- if you don't have OT; and OT is here in this scene before us

## 1. Divisions caused by this One who was just born

- nothing new though
- think Joseph: given visions from God, yet brothers hated him because of them
- God made Himself known in powerful ways, even through His servant, Moses
- yet Israel regularly spurned his leadership: think Korah and his sons rebelling
- this is what Word does: it will divide
- **Hebrews 4:12-13 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.**
- God's word has two edges
- that way in OT; won't be any different in NT

## 2. Hear it in Simeon's prophecy to Mary

- **Luke 2:34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed**
- all through Jesus' ministry, this came true
- many Israelites would repent and believe
- but how many stumbled on this Rock of God's truth?
- how many would reject & revile Him?
- even Mary knew this, as she sang & prayed

- **Luke 1:52-53 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.**
- wisemen would come to worship Him, all the while Herod the king sought to kill Him
- even hanging on His cross, one thief rejects while the other believes even as he dies

### **3. The way it will be, even today**

- as Paul said, **“For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?”** 2

Corinthians 2:15-16

- oh, that all would embrace light of gospel; but woe to those who do not
- left to ourselves, we flee from light & try to hide in darkness
- if God does not do a work in us by His Spirit, we would all perish
- but His grace is truly amazing and in Christ He draws those whom He has predestined
- this is only way we come out of darkness into His marvelous light
- apart from Christmas—Jesus’ Advent—we’d never know this, experience its power

### **4. And so, Simeon prophesies to Mary**

- a sword shall pierce your own soul
- later, we’ll see this happening, in a brief glimpse at the cross



- there she stands, on the sidelines, as her Son bleeds out on the cross of Rome
- Jesus, carrying out perfectly His Father's will, dies before His mother's very eyes
- Mary would have felt the rejection, the ridicule, the rebellion against her Son
- He was despised by men, well acquainted with suffering, ultimately crucified

### **5. God uses Simeon to warn and prepare Mary's heart**

- she held all these things in her heart, meaning she never forgot what was said this day
- yet there is hope in them as well
- they would learn that Simeon was waiting for the Consolation of Israel
- he prayed in parents' presence: this is God's salvation
- yet, even as years later, Mary watched her son die, she would reflect back
- this one dying was more than her earthly son
- He was Son of God, dying to redeem them from their sins
- dying to save them and make them His very own

### **6. This is consolation, this is hope, this is salvation**

- look back with eye of faith, we know Jesus is born
- a child is born, a Savior is given
- here is our hope
- yes, He may cause a divide within you
- but pray it is cutting away your old sin nature and its fleshly desires

- pray that it would not cut with judgment but instead come with life

### **Conclusion – We Need The Whole Bible to Rejoice At His Coming**

- God never changes; same in OT as in NT as in whole Bible
- gospel is meaningless in NT without knowing and seeing gospel in OT
- we, with Israel, stand at foot of Sinai and we cannot ascend into God's presence
- His holiness, wrath; our sin and rebellion prevent us from approaching
- yet, here is this God, lovingly sending His Son in the flesh
- a child, humble, meek, lowly, comes and fulfills all God's righteousness
- this is reason for Simeon's hope, joy, and peace
- is He the reason for yours this day?
- like all other songs we've been hearing this Advent season, I pray you can sing this too

### **Luke 2:30-32**

**for my eyes have seen your salvation  
that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and for glory to your people Israel.**