

The Song of Simeon

In the order in which the songs of Luke appear, the song of Simeon is last, having been given after Christmas. However, we will look at this song today.

Turn with me in scripture to Luke 2:25-35.

²⁵ 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.

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.

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,

²⁸ then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

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

³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your salvation,

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

³² A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES,

And the glory of Your people Israel."

³³ And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him.

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

This account is what we find so often in scripture, we have people who suddenly appear in the narrative of scripture, fulfill their purpose in the narrative and then drift back out never to be heard of again.

Simeon was a very common name in the days of Jesus' birth. It is much a common name as John. So, we don't know anything of this man's background. All we know of him is what we have in this passage. What this passage teaches is worthy of our attention.

This passage teaches us:

The Character of the Man, Simeon

The Gospel presents the credentials of Simeon. Remember, this is not what is found on Simeon's resume. It is that which is testified of him by others.

Righteous

There are two ways of looking at that trait. Both apply to this and any person who follows Christ.

He was right in that he was in right standing with God. It is not that he worked to get to that position. It is that he recognized his sinfulness, and looked forward to the coming of one who will

forgive his sin once and for all. The sacrificial system that was presently in state was not enough. There had to be One who will come to forgive sin, take away the guilt, and give life abundantly. What Simeon looked forward to has happened as is now available to us. Christ died once for all, the just for the unjust so that He might bring us to God. Through Christ alone is forgiveness of sin. Through Christ alone is the ridding of guilt of sin. Through Christ alone is right standing with God. This righteousness is also called positional righteousness. It is a position that God has placed you in because of your faith in Christ.

The second way of looking at this trait is that he was righteous in his everyday life. This is known as practical righteousness. Because he was right before God positionally, he was right with God practically, that is in everyday living.

This does not apply only to Simeon or any "elite" Christ followers. This applies to all Christ followers.

Ephesians 2:8-10

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, not as the result of works so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Devout

The NT word is an interesting word. It is also translated cautious or conscientious.

Should that not be the way of us? Because we are right before God through Jesus Christ, we are live daily lives conscientiously, not in fear, but in sense of alertness to the Spirit of God to guide us to live daily in the ways of the Lord.

One thing was a motivator for Simeon to live devoutly, cautiously, conscientiously. We will reveal that in a moment.

Holy Spirit controlled

Because Simeon was righteous, Holy Spirit empowered him to live righteously. Because Simeon was alert and cautious, the Holy Spirit empowered Him to live cautiously, devoutly. Because of Simeon's righteousness, devoutness, and controlled of Holy Spirit, God showed him things that were to come. Do you know why? It is because Simeon was completely obedient and completely submissive to God's leadership in his life. Because of this fact, Simeon was at a place where he welcomed what God showed him no matter what.

Such a person as this is not idealistic in New Testament days. It really is expected for those who are followers of Christ.

One man who lived this way was my pastor in my high school years, Paul Dexter Johnson. In his last day at Hodge Baptist, God had revealed to him that he would see a revival come to his church. Pastor Paul did hope it would come to Hodge. He preached his heart out, but it became clear that Hodge would not be that church. Through a series of divine events, he was moved to Emmanuel Baptist Church in Vicksburg, Mississippi. It was there on the Sunday that he preached the trial sermon God poured our His Spirit on that church in revival.

Now, I want to go back to something I said. One thing was a motivator for Simeon to live devoutly, cautiously, and conscientiously. That brings us to the second thing this passage teaches us. The one thing that motivated Simeon was...

The Consolation of Israel

The consolation of Israel is the comfort that can only come from the Promised One. His comfort is not earned. It comes by grace and by the redemption from the Promised One of God. The consolation of Israel is the fulfillment of the Messianic Hope. Through Jesus Christ came the consolation and the redemption of God's people Israel. It is that which Simeon and even Anna were looking for. Such is the true nature of the First Advent. Both Simeon and Anna were granted the privilege of recognizing and receiving the Christ into their very arms.

A Promise Given

As I said, this promise could only be given to Simeon because of his Holy Spirit controlled life. Because he had been given the promise of not seeing death until he saw the Messiah, it was the motivator for him to live cautiously, conscientiously, and devoutly before a holy God.

A Promise Fulfilled

The song of Simeon is all about the promise fulfilled. Look again carefully at Simeon's song. As Simeon held the child in his arms, this song is a sweet song of praise for God's faithfulness to His servant, slave Simeon. Now you are releasing your bondservant. Simeon is about to taste death, but it is not a dread, but something he looks forward to. For it will usher him into the very presence of God the Father.

A Prophecy for the Ages

The song has a prophecy for the ages to come. It contains the redemptive mission of the Messiah. Simeon has seen the Savior. Jesus will be a light to the nations and the glory of the people of Israel.

Those who have walked in darkness have come to behold a great light. Those who live in the land of darkness will come to have the light of life.

On the first Sunday of advent, Pam shared about the meaning of advent. Advent season during Christmas is in relation to the first coming. Christ has already come. He had made provision for redemption from sin. He has already made the way clear for us to be sons of God through adoption into the family of God.

As Simeon prepared his heart for the first coming, are we preparing our hearts for the second coming of Messiah? As he lived righteously, devoutly (cautiously and conscientiously) walking in the Spirit, are we doing the same?

The Bible calls us to live in that kind of anticipation.

Hebrews 9:28 – So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him.”

2 Timothy 4:8 – “Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.”

As God stirred the hearts of Simeon and Anna a longing for the coming of the consolation and redemption of Israel in their day, God longs to stir up a longing in our hearts for the final consummation and redemption of Israel.

There is another aspect of God preparing hearts. God has been in the process of preparing hearts of some of you in this room by the longing for comfort and redemption for your own lives.

In the beginning, God created everything to be perfect. There was no sickness, disease, sadness. Everything lived in harmony.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Man rebelled against a loving God and believed Satan's lie. Sin entered into the world and into every human heart. The Bible says that by one man, Adam, sin entered into the world and death, by one man, for all have sinned. Everything is now distorted and broken. Everyone is guilty before God. All have sinned and come short of God's glory. The Bible also says there is none righteous, no not one. The Bible says there is a price to be paid because of sin. That price is death.

Jesus, who is God, came to rescue people by his life, death, and resurrection. By faith alone in Him, anyone can have their sins forgiven and enjoy eternal life with Him.

Christ died for sin, once for all the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God.

Everything will be restored to the way that it was supposed to be and those who trust in Jesus will get to enjoy eternity in the new heaven and earth.

Revelation 21:4 - and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

God invites you to be part of His story.

- Admit your need to God.
- Ask Him to forgive you of your sins.
- Trust in Jesus alone to rescue you.
- Follow Jesus, the King of your life, in faith from this this day forward.