

Celebrate

Luke 2:25-38
Dr. Paul Cannings

A. Be A True Worshipper (v. 25):

1. Behold - In the midst of talking about Joseph and Mary's obedience to the law, the scriptures stop and requires our attention to be on a righteous and devout man name Simeon.

a) Luke records the inspired reaction of Simeon to the bringing of Jesus into the Temple. We always seem to think of this man as old, though there is no evidence apart from his cheerful readiness to die (29). Attempts to identify him as a priest or an important citizen are without foundation. The name was a common one. We know nothing about him apart from this story.

2. There was a man – In the midst of all the corruption that took place in the temple, Joseph and Mary however, still lived righteous. There was another person who the Lord considered to be continuously living righteously; Simeon.

a) He lived “in Jerusalem,” whither Joseph and Mary had gone (v. 21), and thus away from Bethlehem where the shepherds had spread the story of what they had heard and seen (v. 18). Even here in Jerusalem, the center of Jewish religious corruption, there lived some of God’s true people. His name “Simeon,” which was quite common, is introduced as were the name Nazareth and the name Joseph in 1:26, 27, unlike that of Zacharias and of Elisabeth in 1:5. [\[1\]](#)

3. Righteous – Simeon conditioned himself to consistently live by the righteous standards of God no matter what was taking place around him. Because he was committed to live by the righteous standards of God no matter how corrupt it was around him, that mindset led him to live a life of faith.

4. Righteous – Simeon's fervent commitment to live in conformity to the righteous standards of God caused him to be considered by God to have a righteous character.

a) He was “righteous” as God judged him, “devoted” as his life appeared to men; he was far more than just “churchly” but was truly a genuine son of Abraham. [\[2\]](#)

5. Devout – Simeon was not just a righteous man but he was deeply committed to and faithfully worshiped the Lord God. This means all Levitical laws were faithfully obeyed.

a) Simeon was "righteous and devout." With utmost circumspection such men take hold of the duties God has assigned to them. They are conscientious in their planning, aiming always to advance their own and their neighbor's welfare, to the glory of God. The combination "righteous and devout" may well indicate that Simeon conducted himself in such a manner that his behavior both with respect to men (he was righteous) and God (he was devout) was the object of God's approval.

6. Waiting; Looking – Simeon's commitment to a righteous and devout life, in the midst of much corruption in the temple, caused him to constantly, habitually expect that there is going to be a day when God once again, powerfully acts favorably towards Israel. This was the focus of his life each and every day.

7. Consolation – In the midst of Roman oppression, desolation, disease, low life expectancy, corrupt temple worship, and heavy taxation, Simeon lived by faith believing that the Lord would come and encourage Israel, providing comfort and words of exhortation (meaning words that uplift them when life is so heavy).

a) The "consolation of Israel" comes from Isaiah 40, where the prophet announces Israel's "comfort" (= salvation) after her exile. The phrase represents the salvation, peace, and forgiveness Israel will receive in the messianic era. It finds a parallel in the "redemption of Jerusalem" in 2:38.^[3]

8. Had been revealed - Simeon comprehensively, clearly understood divine revelation concerning the what He was going to do for Israel.

9. Holy Spirit - The Holy Spirit did not just in pregnant (1:35) Mary but He was very engaged in the Christmas story and of God strategically redeeming His people.

10. Would not see death – God promised Simeon that he would not experience death before the Holy Spirit revealed to him the Lord's Messiah.

11. Before he had seen - Simeon would live until one day he fully experiences a complete divine physical encounter with the redemption of Israel, the Lord's Christ.

12. The Lord's Christ - Simeon's is provided a full divine understanding that he will see the anointed One, the true High Priest of Israel before he dies.

a) This phrase is equivalent to the Old Testament expression "the LORD's Anointed" (see comments on 1:32; and comments on 2:11) and carries the sense, "Yahweh's chosen agent of redemption." Luke elsewhere uses similar expressions- "Christ of God" (9:20; 23:35) and "his Christ" (Acts 3:18; 4:26).^[4]

B. Be Spirit-Led (vs. 27-28):

1. Come - Simeon set his mind to what was revealed to him and presented himself in the temple expecting what God said to come through.

2. Spirit - At this particular moment in Simeon's life, he did not come to the temple in fulfillment of his commitment to the righteous standards of God or because of his

commitment to be a devout worshipper of God. Simeon came because it was the Holy Spirit's time to fulfill what He had revealed to him.

a) If the spirit of prophecy had departed from Israel since the time of Malachi, according to the opinion of the Jews, the return of this Spirit might be looked upon as one of the tokens of the Messiah's advent.^[5]

3. Spirit - This meeting of Joseph, Mary, baby Jesus and Simeon was divinely orchestrated. Joseph and Mary came as righteous people in fulfillment of the law and a righteous man is led to them by the Holy Spirit creating a powerful moment of worship.
4. Temple - Even though God's place of worship was corrupt, the temple was still God's place of meeting. It was also a place that Christ did not just come as a baby but also at 12 and had a zeal for it. This created no change.
5. The parents brought - Joseph and Mary decisively, purposefully, based on the law, brought Jesus into the temple.
6. To carry out – Joseph and Mary were completely committed, on their own initiative, and purposely came to the temple to faithfully execute the requires of the law.
7. He took Him into His arms – Simeon deliberately made himself take baby Jesus into his hands.
8. Blessed God - Because this is a promise provided by God and is fulfilled by God (a Spirit led meeting) Simeon loudly praised God. Simeon did not praise Christ He praised God, the Creator the One who has a covenant with Israel and is the One who provided this promise to Simeon and fulfilled His redemptive plan for all mankind.

C. Celebrate! ...God is Faithful (vs. 29-32):

1. Said – Simeon was verbally loud saying what is expressed in verses 29-32.
2. Now the Lord – Simeon viewed the Lord as “having absolute ownership and uncontrolled power, unlimited authority” to do whatever He decides. With the fulfillment of ~~the~~ God's promise to Simeon and baby Jesus in His hands (high rate of babies dying in his day) it is vividly obvious that God is totally in control no matter how chaotic things may seem in Israel and the temple.
3. You are releasing - This powerful God is now continuously causing Simeon to depart earth at his best experience of worship and with hope ~~of~~ that God would fulfill His promises to Israel. A devout worshipper and faithful attender of the temple is at the pinnacle of his worship experience.

4. Bondsman – Simeon viewed himself as owned by God, a slave (this is the lowest word for a slave) unto to God, willing to do whatever God tells him to do. He has totally given himself over to God.

a) All three words show that the figure is that of the manumission of a slave, or of his release from a long task. Death is the instrument of release. ^[6]

5. For my eyes have seen – Simeon, without seeing everything Christ will do and the day when Israel will be restored, says he has a complete knowledge and full experience of God delivering Israel from the oppression of Rome, the corruption of the temple and all that God has promised to provide Israel. "The just (righteous people) live by faith" (Habakkuk 2:4), and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7-8).

6. Salvation - Simeon, being a righteous man, knew what the Word of God said about the Messiah, so he fully acknowledges that holding Jesus in his hands meant that all God said about redeeming Israel is for sure going to happen.

7. Salvation - "When Simeon took the baby Jesus in his arms, he realized that Jesus was the means of salvation and said that his eyes had seen *tó sōtērión sou*, thy salvation (Luke 2:30)." ^[7]

8. Presence - All of Israel will now know that salvation has come for Israel because of the presence of Jesus Christ.

9. Light - The understanding and exposure of salvation is unquenchable and will be a full revelation to all the world because Jesus is born.

10. Glory of your people - Israel will be seen in all that it is supposed to stand for and be as a great nation unto God because Jesus is born.

a) Jesus was not just one more Jewish child, but was pivotal for faith. Those who believed in him rose to new heights; those who rejected him fell into darker despair. ^[8]

b) All people -- As a Gentile himself, Luke was careful to emphasize the truth that salvation was offered for the Gentiles (v.32) as well as for Jews. (NASU)

^[1] Lenski, R. C. H. (1961). [*The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*](#) (pp. 143–144). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House.

^[2] Lenski, R. C. H. (1961). [*The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*](#) (p. 144). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House.

^[3] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [*Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 345). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

^[4] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [*Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*](#) (Vol. 1, pp. 345–346). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

^[5] Lange, J. P., & van Oosterzee, J. J. (2008). [*A commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Luke*](#). (P. Schaff & C. C. Starbuck, Trans.) (p. 44). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

- ^[6] Plummer, A. (1896). [*A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*](#) (p. 68). London: T&T Clark International.
- ^[7] Zodhiates, S. (2000). [*The complete word study dictionary: New Testament*](#) (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.
- ^[8] Pfeiffer, C. F., & Harrison, E. F. (Eds.). (1962). [*The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: New Testament*](#) (Lk 2:32). Chicago: Moody Press.