



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Luke Sermon Series

Supports Session 4: Anticipated

Sermon Title: "Simeon's Christmas Carol"

Passage: Luke 2:29-32

Connection to Luke 2

On the eighth day after His birth, Jesus was circumcised according to the law. Then it came time for Mary's purification according to the law, and since Jesus was the firstborn, He was to be presented to the Lord according to the law. Joseph and Mary were obedient to the principles presented in the Old Testament. So, in the sovereign plan, they were in the temple on the day in which two others, who had anticipated and longed to see the one who would be the Messiah, Simeon and Anna, were also in the temple.

Introduction/Opening

Sometimes people long for things they believe will satisfy them. An infomercial convinced them it was the best gadget ever made. They order the gadget and wait in anticipation. In some cases, the item never quite lives up to the hype of the sales pitch. Other times, the item exceeds their expectations. They might even begin to sing the praises of that item, reaching out to the manufacturer to let them know of their joy over the product. But they don't know how they'll react until the item arrives.

Simeon was anticipating the consolation of Israel. God in His sovereign plan prepared Simeon for this moment in time. The Holy Spirit revealed to him that he would not die until he saw the Lord's Christ. How many times had this godly man seen little boys brought into the temple to be presented to the Lord only to be disappointed and yet hopeful at the arrival of every little boy?

But this day was different. The Holy Spirit brought him to the temple on that day. Perhaps Simeon was awakened by a jolt from the Holy Spirit and sensed in his soul that this was *the* day he would see the Messiah with his own eyes. He would hold in his arms the Seed of the woman, the promised blessing in the covenant with Abraham, the fulfillment of the law, the end of the Old Covenant sacrificial system, the Suffering Servant, the Sun of Righteousness, the consolation of Israel, and a light to the Gentiles. He would break out in song, praising the Sender of the Messiah.

Outline

This song has been named the *Nunc Dimmittis*. This refers to the opening comment by Simeon: "You can dismiss your servant in peace." Simeon was now ready to depart because the promise given to him was now fulfilled. Simeon noted some truths about Jesus.

1. He understood the Person of Jesus.
 - a. The promise to him was that he would see the Lord's Christ before he died.
 - b. The priest who circumcised Jesus did not know. Many others in the temple paid no attention to this little boy and did not know.
 - c. Simeon knew by God's revelation.

2. He understood the purpose of Jesus.
 - a. Simeon said his eyes had seen the Lord's salvation.
 - b. The Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that this baby boy would be the salvation of all who would believe in Him.
 - c. He also said that the salvation would come at a cost. This salvation would cause the rise and fall of many in Israel. Jesus would be opposed, and a sword would pierce the soul of Mary.

3. He understood the plan of Jesus.
 - a. He will be a light of revelation to Gentiles and the glory of the people of Israel.
 - b. The message of salvation will be for all who would believe.

Conclusion

There were clearly messianic expectations in Israel at the time of the birth of Jesus. Some of these were connected to an overthrow of Roman rule and reclamation of the Davidic kingship in Israel.¹ Should believers not be anticipating the Messiah today? Paul declared "Besides this, since you know the time, it is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep, because now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is nearly over, and the day is near; so let us discard the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light." (Rom. 13:11-12)

Should believers not be recognizing the Messiah today? As believers come together in worship, should He not be the center of that worship? Should believers not be proclaiming the Messiah? With all the tools and opportunities available in media and personal contact, churches and individuals have no reason to keep from proclaiming the Messiah to others. May the Lord help His people today to follow the example of Simeon, offering praise to the Father for His salvation.

Neil Gant is a native of Memphis and now lives in East Tennessee serving as Pastor of the Oakwood Baptist Church in Knoxville since March of 2019. He has served in pastoral ministry for over thirty-nine years. He has been married to the former Lea Gillespie for over thirty-nine years and they have one adult daughter named Anna. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Blue Mountain College and both his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2020 by Holman Bible Publishers.

1. Craig A. Evans, "A Closer Look: Messianic Expectations," *The Exchange* (blog), March 7, 2012, accessed May 22, 2020, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2012/march/closer-look-messianic-expectations.html>.