

Luke 2:25-31 – Ready for Jesus

Handfuls, GreekLexicon, TSK, Gill, Geneva, Robertson, Poole, JFB, Trapp, Henry, Rienecker, Vincent, Calvin, Gaebelein, Vincent,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Ever waited eagerly for a package from Amazon only to be disappointed when it came? Maybe the color of the thing you purchased wasn't right, or it didn't fit, or it didn't work like it should, or the quality was poor? That left you feeling so disappointed, didn't it?

But, beloved, **before Simeon physically held Jesus** he knew he would not be disappointed. Simeon knew who Jesus was and he knew what Jesus would do. You see, Simeon had faith (信心) in Jesus! No wonder **he was filled with joy and praise and grabbed that baby in his arms!** No wonder he was ready for Jesus. You will hear today about this today.

Our headings:

Awaiting Jesus

Accepting Jesus

Our goals: That, **you will be refreshed with the true joy of Christ's coming, knowing that his birth was the beginning of your new life.**

Awaiting Jesus

25 And behold, **there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon**, and this man was just and devout (虔诚), **waiting for the Consolation (安慰者) 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.**

1. Who was this Simeon?

a. Simeon was likely the son of the famous Jewish scholar Hillel, and was the first one who was called Rabban – a special scholarly title (学者的头衔) . Only 7 people were given this title.

b. Simeon was a scholar who succeeded his father as president of the college his father founded. He could not be easily fooled by superstitions (迷信) or customs (习俗) .

c. Simeon waited with great anticipation (期盼) for the appearance of the Lord Jesus, based on his knowledge.

d. Simeon was put out from a religious academic group because he argued against their view which stated that Christ's kingdom was going to be an earthly temporal (physical) kingdom.

2. Simeon prepared for The Advent (降临) of Christ by listening well to God's Word.

a. Simeon knew the Word of God from the Old Testament.

As a result of reading the Word of God, he believed in the coming Messiah. In fact, the name Simeon means "hearkening" or "listening." He listened to (and knew by heart) passages like these:

Isaiah 49:6 Indeed He says, "It is too small a thing that **You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;** I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles (外邦人) , That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth."

Isaiah 52:10 The LORD has made bare His holy arm In the eyes of all the nations; And **all the ends of the earth shall see The salvation of our God.**

Simeon didn't have to see Christ to be saved (for he was saved), but he looked forward to Jesus' coming.

b. Simeon knew the Word of God from the Holy Spirit. He spoke directly to Simeon. Luke says Simeon was "filled" with the Holy Spirit. God gave him a special promise. **God revealed to Simeon that he would not die before Jesus came. He would physically meet him.** Simeon's

preparation was not candy cane, lights, mistletoe (槲寄生), egg-nog (蛋酒), turkey-baking, Santa Claus and waiting for presents under the Christmas tree. The Advent had a much richer and deeper meaning to him.

3. Simeon prepared for The Advent by being just and devout.

Some devout men are not just and some just men are not devout. Simeon was devout and just.

“Devout” refers to the purity of his worship of God or the 1st table of the law (Laws 1-4).

“Just” refers to the way he dealt with his fellow men –in an honest and open way, or the 2nd table of the law. (Laws 5-10)

4. Simeon prepared by waiting patiently for the birth of Jesus.

He knew that Israel was in a mourning state. That is why Jesus was called the “**Consolation of Israel.**” He would bring consolation to Israel. He would set the mourning prisoner free and heal the brokenhearted. This is why we sing: “Comfort, comfort, ye my people.”

27 So he came by the Spirit into the temple...

5. Simeon prepared for the advent by being led by the Holy Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit led him in all areas of his life. He could have been sleeping late that day when Jesus’ parents brought him to the temple, but God rewarded him – honored him. God’s Holy Spirit gave him the desire to be there in the temple that day.

6. Lessons:

a. Only the Christian who knows God’s Word knows the way of salvation and the way of sanctification (成圣) . Enjoy God’s Word for your sanctification. Share God’s Word for the salvation of others.

b. A man who is faithful to God’s law can count on God’s blessings on his life, family, church, and nation. Obedience to God is Christian gold. Obeying today will not help you to see the Baby Jesus, but you will see the sinner saved and sanctified.

c. Pray that God’s Holy Spirit guide you every day of your life and everywhere you go. Don’t leave home without him! This means you must know God’s Word – as God’s Holy Spirit uses God’s Words to teach you.

Accepting Jesus

27 ...And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, 28 he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said:

1. Jesus’ parents, also led by God’s law and God Spirit, brought the child Jesus to do as God required parents to do for the 1st male child.

They could have come when Simeon was off duty, but the Spirit was directing them to come at the time Simeon was there.

And God wanted Simeon to be a witness...and then Anna to be a witness after. And this would encourage the parents and confirm what the child would do. (They had the angel before, plus Zechariah and Elizabeth, and now Simeon and Anna.)

2. So what did Jesus’ parents have to do for Jesus at the temple?

a. Jesus’ parents did not bring him for a “dedication” ceremony“奉献”礼仪 as Baptist 浸信会 and Pentecostal 灵恩派的 churches do. These dedicate a baby while holding him up like a human sacrifice. **Dedication of a child or person to God meant to “be trained and disciplined.” It is not a one time ceremony!** What Baptists and Pentecostals do resemble a pagan (异教) ceremony of offering a child as a sacrifice.

b. Jesus’ parents came to bring the offering of an animal as a substitute (redemption) for Jesus. Instead of Jesus being sacrificed to God, the animal became a substitute (代替) .

3. Simeon accepted their poor redemption offering.

Because Christ's parents were poor so **they brought doves**. The rich brought bulls and sheep. This boy Jesus likely had cheap clothes, a tired mother, and an old father. He came from Galilee, the most backward place in the country. Join that with the token of 2 small doves, while other parents brought bulls and sheep, **it is amazing that Simeon still said what he did. Simeon's faith was based on the promises of the Word of God**. Simeon walked by "faith, not by sight."

5. Simeon then took the child up in his arms, a symbolic gesture of the offerer giving over the sacrifice to the priests.

This is why I personally like the symbol of the minister holding the baby during baptism, but that is not commonly done today in Reformed churches.

6. You can see the joy this revelation of Jesus brought to Simeon.

Many prophets wanted to just see Jesus, but Simeon was able to literally take him up in his arms. **Isaiah 51:2** Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you; For I called him alone, And blessed him and increased him." 3 For the LORD will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the LORD; **Joy and gladness will be found in it**, Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

Christ's coming was the main purpose of the Old Testament so when Jesus came before Simeon's eye and he came into his arms it surely was extra-special. **Simeon's waiting was rewarded. It was joy unspeakable. Imagine the honor of this man of faith!**

29 "Lord, now You are **letting Your servant depart in peace**, According to Your word; 30 For my eyes **have seen Your salvation**

7. You can see the hope that Simeon had.

Some shepherds knew somewhat of Jesus' arrival and they told it to others, but it seemed that the shepherds only took him for some important baby. They did not get the full sense that that baby was the Savior of the world. But Simeon knew what most people didn't and he saw God in human form and he held him!

8. You can see Simeon's readiness to die

a. He was ready to die because he had faith in the coming Savior.

b. He was ready to die because he could not imagine any greater joy than personally meeting his Savior. This was the highest point of his life.

c. He asked God to literally "release him." (Letting your servant depart...) This word means to release someone whose ransom has been paid – as a slave. You have probably heard someone say: "I done all I can do, it is time for me to go home." So Simeon's bond between body and soul became weaker. He was ready to move on. There could be no greater joy in this life. Only heaven would be greater and sweeter.

31 **Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,**

9. Simeon then pronounced that Jesus would be available to bring salvation to all the nations of the world.

"Before the face of all peoples" mean that all men will see – experience God's salvation.

10. Lessons:

a. Jesus came as your redemption – to redeem you so you don't have to go to hell. That was why he was called the Lamb of God slain (被杀) for the sins of the world. Like the animals of redemption of the old covenant (圣约) that had to die to set the newborn free, Jesus had to die to set you free.

b. Based on the fact that Christ was your redemption Lamb that was dedicated to God for you, the Baptist view of dedicating a child is imitating what should not be imitated anymore. It was the animal that was offered to God. So offer (and plead) Christ's blood for your child! Don't offer your child like a sacrifice to God. Put God's mark- (Circumcision割礼 before) baptism洗礼 on your child now. Show what God promised to do through Christ. Teach your child to accept what Christ did!

c. Once you have met and accepted Jesus by faith, you are ready to die. You may not die right away, but the full fare has been paid to this all-inclusive paradise in the presence of your Savior.

Conclusion:

Simeon had real joy because he already believed in the coming Savior and he waited patiently for him. He **lived a devout and just life** before God and men. He **listened to and was guided by the Holy Spirit** throughout his life. Then Simeon's joy was overloaded (充满的) when he received a **promise that he would personally see the coming Messiah (弥赛亚, 受膏者)**. He loved holding a newborn, but he would love holding a newborn who would save the world from sin and misery. With such great joy, Simeon was ready to die in peace. Nothing on earth would match that joy. But don't get lost in the emotion of the times.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. The Lord did come. He did not stay a baby. He grew up and lived and died for you, and then he triumphantly (得胜地) rose again from the dead and ascended to heaven. He continues to clean you out by his Word and Holy Spirit now.

2. You can count on him coming again to take you, his children, to his kingdom in heaven forever. Wait with patience.

3. This news of your salvation, sanctification, and glorification must bring you great joy.

4. Share this joy with those who don't have it. This is your duty. **Speak of Christ to all men.** Acts 13:47 "I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth."

If you are not a Christian, you will have to die for your own sins unless you accept the substitutionary 代替性的 death of the Lord Jesus. Yes, he did come. Yes, he did live, obeying God's law perfectly. Yes, he did die. If you don't accept his life and death you won't go to heaven, you will go to hell.