

Luke 2:31-35 – Joy to the World – the Lord has come and will Save!

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: **All of the Old Testament prophets spoke of the coming and work of Jesus.** And he did come. Simeon knew he would come. **And Simeon confirmed he came.** But he was not the only one who confirmed the Lord's coming: Mary, the wise men, Elizabeth, Zechariah, John the Baptist, Anna, the disciples, the Pharisees, the shepherds, and angels! **They all unequivocally confirmed Jesus had come!**

Prophecies of his coming were great and it brought joy. **Confirmation he came was great** and it brought joy. But there was more! **The work Jesus would do would bring even greater joy!** You will hear about that today.

Our headings are:

The Lord Jesus will Call the world with the Gospel

The Lord Jesus will Convict the world with the Gospel

Our goals are: That you **recognize the joy you have as a Christian was bought at a great price** and that it was **graciously given**, so you will then **show your appreciation by your faithful worship and service to the Lord.**

The Lord Jesus will Call the world with the Gospel

32 **A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,** And the **glory of Your people Israel.**" 33
And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him.

1. Simeon confirmed Jesus would call others to himself with the Gospel.

2. The Gospel would enlighten the whole world of who God is, who man is, how man fell into sin, and how man could be restored with Jesus' work.

3. This was a pleasant prospect for the Gentile world – an enlightenment for the entire world.

Simeon had studied the Old Testament and knew of God's promises to the Gentiles– that Gentiles would come into God's kingdom and be enlightened. Prophecies like...

Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; **For your light has come!** And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. **3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.**

Psalms 43:3 **Oh, send out Your Light and Your Truth!** Let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your tabernacle.

Simeon knew the Greek world thought it was more enlightened than everyone else with its schools and philosophers, but in reality, they were in great spiritual darkness and badly needed light.

Later, Jesus himself would say that he was the Light of the World – not just for the Jewish nation...

This is why back in Verse 30 and 31, Jesus is called "Your Salvation," and that Jesus was God's "**means of salvation prepared for all peoples.**"

4. Along with Gentiles joining in, Simeon saw a glorious restoration of Israel, a people that had wandered from faithfully serving the Lord.

Simeon certainly had verses like these in mind...showing Israel's rehabilitation.

Isaiah 60: 19 "The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. 20 **Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended.**

Men like Simeon mourned for the sad spiritual state of Israel, but were now comforted.

And this truth of the return of Israel was confirmed by Saint Paul in Romans.

Romans 11:5 – Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

5. How would Christ bring about these glorious changes to the Jewish and Gentile world?

Christ would be a light – a bright light- to the nations...not a small candlestick as they had in the temple. This is what Malachi wrote about...

Malachi 4:2 – But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.

This verse speaks of Christ's death and resurrection.

6. When did this light come?

This light came when Jesus commanded his disciples to preach the eye-opening Good News to all the world – beginning in Jerusalem, and going to the ends of the earth.

7. Lessons:

a. The call of the nations is what the church should be doing today. And you can see this here at New Horizon today. You don't need faith to see this! Just open your eyes! Look around today, right here!

b. Are you playing your part of telling the world Jesus has come, Jesus was confirmed, and now Jesus is calling all men to himself? That is what Christmas is about – that's the real meaning of Christmas.

c. But make sure you are preaching and supporting the preaching of the full Gospel...make sure what you are doing is not moralism, traditions, or culture! The world needs to hear the full Gospel: God's holiness, man's sins, and Christ's work.

The Lord Jesus will convict the world with the Gospel

34 Then **Simeon blessed them**, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the **fall** and **rising** of many in Israel, and for a **sign** which will be spoken against 35 "(yes, **a sword will pierce through your own soul also**), that the **thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.**"

1. Before describing the convicting work of Jesus, Simeon blessed Mary, Joseph, and Jesus.

(Blessing is part prayer and part promise from God.)

2. He then described that specific work Jesus would do (He moved from the general work to the specific).

a. Jesus had the huge job of condemning those who would reject him. In verse 26, Jesus is called "**the Lord's Christ.**" That is Christ's name from Psalm 2 – which say those who would not "kiss the son" would face consequent judgment. God would pierce the heart of the wicked, exposing their sins.

Psalm 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*,

Those who rejected the piercing of their souls would fall and die in their sins.

1Peter 2:7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," 8 and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

The Jews would reject him (a sign that will be spoken against). (The word "sign" means "an archer's target." Jesus would be the target of many in Israel. Many would beg for him to be executed. Many rejected his lowly birth, his parentage, his education, his low family position, his miracles, his friends, his obscurity...being born and raised on the poor side of Judah, and his suffering. And because of their rejection of Jesus, he would bring the sword to those who reject him.

b. Jesus had the huge job of constructing the largest kingdom the world has ever known of those who accepted the Good News of his work. Yes, the same sword would prick the conscience, leading to spiritual healing! Yes, Mary and Joseph had been given the privilege of raising this child...a child that would be the cornerstone for a superstructure the world had never seen. Jesus-Chief Cornerstone! And all those new believers, stones, would build up into a vibrant, expanding church.

c. Jesus' mother would have struggles in the future. Mary and Joseph would struggle to raise a family. Joseph would die while Jesus was young. Mary would become frustrated with Jesus in his work and try to stop him. Mary would mourn when her Son was being crucified. And finally, when Christ was abused on the cross **it was a sword in Mary's bones.** Simeon wanted them to be prepared. (This was just a word play of the work of the sword.)

3. Lessons:

a. Do you bless the Christ, knowing what he did for you? If Simeon could bless the child even while seeing him as a baby, how much more ought you not to bless him who now sits at the right hand of the Father and rules all things on earth? Simeon knew of God's promise to comfort Israel. Isaiah 51:3.

b. Do you see why evangelism in life and language is essential? Without it your friends and family will go to hell?

c. Jesus must be praised for his salvation but also for his condemnation of the wicked!

Conclusion:

Jesus came with the specific goal to bring joy to his people who were languishing in sin and restored them to a true relationship with God. They are now being built into a strong, indestructible building. Jesus also condemned those who rejected his salvation in eternal condemnation.

Brothers and Sisters:

1. Because Christ's birth speaks of life – eternal life, and it speaks of death...with eternal consequences, you must never ever romanticize his birth. His coming brought true joy and eternal death!

2. Thank him for his humiliating birth – so that he would be a fit sacrifice for your sins.

3. Use Christ's life and work to advance evangelism so others can gain true joy. And don't mince words!

Friend, if you are not a Christian think of Judas and Peter. Judas despairs of his sin, committed suicide and went to hell. Peter repented of his sin, Christ forgave him, restored him, and he is in heaven. But if you think you are great and good like he, he will repel you. If you think you need help and want to hold on to him, he will hold on to you, take away your sins, and give you new life.