

Series: Good News of Great Joy

Sermon: The Presentation of the Messiah

Scripture: Luke 2:21-40

Teacher: Jeff Norris

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Luke 2:21-40 (ESV)

21 And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” 25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting 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 do for him according to the custom of the Law, 28 he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

*29 “Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;*

30 for my eyes have seen your salvation

31 that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles,

and for glory to your people Israel.”

33 And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. 34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, 37 and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. 38 And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40 And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

"In a religious milieu that has fixated on using Jesus to provide seekers with their most convenient lives here and now, Advent is a particularly awkward intrusion. Advent links our hearts with those of ancient prophets who pined for a long-promised Messiah but passed long before his arrival. In the process, Advent reminds us that we, too, are waiting. Even on this side of Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday, there is brokenness in our world no cart full of Black Friday bargains can fix; there is hunger in our souls no plateful of pumpkin custard can fill; there is twistedness in our hearts no terrestrial hand can touch. 'The whole creation,' the apostle Paul declared, 'has been groaning together for redemption.' (Romans 8:22) In Advent, Christians embrace the groaning, recognizing it not as hopeless whimpering over the paucity of the present moment but as expectant yearning for the divine banquet Jesus is preparing for us. In Advent, the church admits, as poet R. S. Thomas puts it, that 'the meaning is in the waiting.' And what we await is a final Advent yet to come. Just as the ancient Israelites awaited the coming of the Messiah in flesh, we await the coming of the Messiah in glory ... Advent is a proclamation of the sufficiency of Christ through the discipline of waiting." - Timothy Paul Jones, *Why Celebrate Advent?* (December 1, 2015 - The Gospel Coalition)

Who will you be as you wait in this life?

Simeon (v. 25-32)

What do we know about Simeon?

1. He was righteous and devout. (v. 25)
2. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel. (v. 25)

"To be sure, conditions were bad, very bad, in Israel at the time of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. Think of loss of political independence, cruel King Herod, externalization of religion, legalistic scribes and Pharisees and their many followers, worldly-minded Sadducees, the silence of the voice of prophecy, etc. But in the midst of all this darkness, degradation, and despair, there were men who were hopefully looking forward to, and earnestly expecting, 'the consolation of Israel.' There were such men...and women too!" - William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary, Luke*, p. 165.

3. The Holy Spirit was upon Him. (v. 25)

Luke 2:29-32

Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.

Anna (v. 36-38)

What do we know about Anna?

1. Her name means *Grace*.
2. She was a prophetess. (v. 36)
3. She was the daughter of Phanuel (v. 36)
4. She was of the tribe of Asher. (v. 36)
5. She was old. (v. 36)
6. She was a widow. (v. 37)
7. She did not depart from the temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day. (v. 37)
8. She spoke of Jesus to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. (v. 38)

Luke 2:33-35

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

Who will you worship as you wait in this life?