

Mine Eyes Have Seen Thy Salvation

The Child Who Brings Consolation, Light, Glory, and Division (Luke 2:25–35)

Series: Luke: An Orderly Account - Dr. Randy White

I. The Consolation Faithfully Awaited (vv. 25-26)

Simeon Waits for Israel's Consolation

- Luke introduces Simeon simply as “a man in Jerusalem.” He is not identified as a priest, Temple officer, or famous teacher. His importance lies in the testimony God gives through him.
- Simeon is “just and devout,” and he is “waiting for the consolation of Israel.” His hope is not an escape from Israel’s promises but their fulfillment through Israel’s Messiah.
- “Consolation” recalls the prophetic promise, “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people” (Isaiah 40:1-2). Israel’s sorrow, sin, and subjection require the comfort God Himself has promised.

The Holy Ghost Confirms the Promise

- “The Holy Ghost was upon him.” The Spirit’s presence belongs to this prophetic testimony and prepares Simeon to recognize what ordinary sight alone could not establish.
- It had been revealed to him that “he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.” His confidence rests upon a particular word from God, not upon a personal calculation.
- Luke never states Simeon’s age. His readiness to die suggests the completion of his appointed waiting, but the familiar portrait of an extremely old man remains an inference.

II. The Promised Christ Providentially Encountered (vv. 27-28)

The Spirit and the Written Law Bring Them Together

- Simeon comes “by the Spirit into the temple.” Mary and Joseph enter because they are carrying out “the custom of the law.” Divine direction and ordinary obedience meet at the appointed moment.
- The parents have not brought Jesus to seek Simeon’s approval. They are obeying what God had written; God supplies the witness who explains the child’s larger significance.
- The Temple setting keeps the scene within Israel’s covenant and prophetic world. The promised King is recognized while His household fulfills Israel’s law.

Simeon Receives the Child and Blesses God

- Simeon takes Jesus into his arms and blesses God. The greatness of God’s salvation is present in a genuinely human child who can be held.
- This act does not make Simeon a priest or complete a required presentation ritual. Luke records a personal reception followed by Spirit-directed praise.
- Simeon blesses God before he speaks to the family. His attention rests first upon the Lord who gave the word and has now brought it to fulfillment.

III. The Salvation Publicly Announced (vv. 29-32)

God’s Fulfilled Word Gives Peace

- “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word.” Simeon speaks as a servant released by his sovereign Master after the promised encounter has occurred.
- His peace rests upon God’s faithfulness. Luke does not say Simeon dies that day, nor does Simeon’s statement promise that every believer will live to see every desired event.
- “For mine eyes have seen thy salvation” identifies Jesus as the embodiment and means of God’s saving provision. The saving work is not yet historically completed, but the promised Saviour has arrived.

God’s Prepared Salvation Reaches the Nations

- God has prepared this salvation “before the face of all people.” The small Temple scene opens upon a public and international horizon already announced by the prophets.
- Jesus is “a light to lighten the Gentiles.” Isaiah had promised that the Lord’s servant would bring light to the nations (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6). Gentile blessing is not an afterthought.
- He is also “the glory of thy people Israel.” The widening reach of salvation does not erase Israel, and Israel’s promised glory does not exclude the nations.
- Simeon announces prophetic breadth without revealing every later distinction concerning the Body of Christ. Light for Gentiles and glory for Israel must both be allowed to retain their stated meaning.

IV. The Sign Divisively Received (vv. 33-35)

The Appointed Sign Divides Israel

- Joseph and Mary marvel as Simeon’s blessing becomes a warning, enlarging the horizon from salvation to Israel’s response.
- “This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel.” Isaiah had already presented the Lord as both sanctuary and “a stone of stumbling,” over whom many would “stumble, and fall” (Isaiah 8:14-15; 28:16).
- “Rising again” can describe standing or restoration opposite falling. Simeon need not foresee Jesus’ death to understand that Messiah would establish some while others stumbled.
- Jesus will be “a sign which shall be spoken against.” Scripture can call a person God’s appointed sign (Isaiah 8:18); contradiction of that sign exposes resistance to the God who gave it.

The Opposition Reveals the Heart

- “A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also” foretells Mary’s anguish as her Son is contradicted. Reproach and wounding words can pierce like a sword (Psalm 42:10; Proverbs 12:18).
- From later history we see the cross as the climactic expression of that anguish (John 19:25-27). Yet Simeon need not know of crucifixion; rejection, division, and conflict already explain his warning.
- “That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed” states the result. Responses to God’s opposed Messiah uncover hidden allegiance beneath outward religion.