



# Simeon

## “Loyal Followers”

*“And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.” Luke 2:26*

When we think of the Gospel of Luke, chapter 2, we usually think of the Christmas story that we have heard for so many years. But before Luke finished that chapter we all know so well, he tells us about the baptism of Christ and a man called Simeon. From his story, we know that he was a devout follower who believed even though he had not seen Christ, but he believed that God was sending His Son to redeem our world that had become very corrupt. In fact, he believed so strongly that God promised him in a message from the Holy Ghost that he would not die until he had seen God's revelation to Israel. In just three verses about Simeon we see the words “Holy Spirit” three times.

The Jewish people were fully aware of the prophecies of the coming of a messiah from the lineage of David, but many of them expected a grown man that would be hailed as a King of the Jews, not in mockery, but as the redeemer of their people. This must have been a wonderful promise to Simeon, but I wonder if he expected this King to appear to him as a baby?

Mary and Joseph took the baby Jesus to the temple as was the “custom of the Law” Luke 2:27 and presented him to Simeon. Immediately Simeon knew this was the Christ, the Redeemer of his people. He took the child in his arms and blessed him, but the blessing contained something unusual. Along with his announcement blessing the baby, he said: “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Thy people Israel.” Luke 2 29-32. Simeon was now ready to leave this earth. He had seen the Saviour. In fact, he had held the Saviour in his arms. He was ready to accept death and walk with God. What a wonderful privilege. But we can also hold the Saviour in our arms. We have been offered the same promise.

He continued and told Mary and Joseph that the child would see the rising and falling of Israel and a sword would pierce through their soul. I wonder what Joseph and Mary thought about this. Surely God had prepared their hearts, but what a strange baptism.

For us, it is important to note several things. Notice that the prophecy and blessing is for both Jew and Gentile. In His kingdom, there would be no Jew or Gentile. This was a new world, a spiritual world. I think the people at that time thought the king they were expecting would be for the Jews alone. God's mission was to the entire world. He came for all who would believe. Simeon believed. He was willing to accept the promise however it was revealed.

We think of Heaven and wonder how it will be. Many people have written about the second coming and what Heaven is like, but the passages we see in the Bible are sketchy. Are that way on purpose? Do we have to have the faith of Simeon that whatever it is, it will be good? Jesus told his disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them, and then he would come and take them to it. But how long was it going to take? What was this place like? Our finite minds want details, but those details aren't for us to know now. We don't understand because we can't see the entire scope of things, and that is good. We would really mess things up. We read in the Bible of many people who took things into their own hands rather than waiting for the Lord to reveal his plan. They didn't have patience, and we are often guilty of the same thing. We want to see everything right now. The Bible tells us that we need to wait on the Lord.

Paul wrote to the Philippians “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.” But we only know this world so we don't want to die. If we have faith, we realize that the next world is without pain and sin, but we don't know it, and we aren't very patient. Simeon had faith, but he was also given a great gift that we can have also.

In John 14:1-4 we are told “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” I believe that promise is for me just as it was for the disciples when they were questioning Christ before His death. They didn't understand. I don't think Simeon fully understood everything, but he had faith and that faith made him whole.

There is a wonderful Gospel song, “*Precious Lord, take my hand*” that can serve as our prayer to be like Simeon and many others. Some of the lyrics are:

“Precious Lord, take my hand. Lead me on, Let me stand.  
I'm tired, I am weak I am worn.  
Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light.  
Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home

When my way grows drear precious Lord linger near  
When my life is almost gone. Hear my cry, Hear my call  
Hold my hand lest I fall  
Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home”

Prayer: Dear Lord, You have promised us Eternal Life if we accept You as our personal Saviour, yet we so often let our human frailty play a huge role in our decisions. You have promised us many things, yet we doubt. Help us to have the faith of Simeon and Paul and know that You are waiting for us and that our life after this earth will be one of blessings we cannot not even imagine. Then, help us to declare Your glory to others so that they may also come to know You and trust in You. Amen

1. What do you want to be like at the end of your life?
2. Do you have the confidence that the Lord will take your hand and lead you to the place He has prepared for you?
3. What do you want to have accomplished?
4. Are you willing to be as patient as Simeon?
5. Do you know someone who seems to be filled with the Holy Spirit and approaches life and everything about it with praise and thanksgiving?

© Gail Kennedy Keffer