

## SIMEON'S PROPHECY

### **TEXT: LUKE 2:21-35**

#### **Introduction:**

1. We are introduced to this interesting man named Simeon in Luke 2:25. Simeon was a popular name in Bible times.
2. Simeon was one of the twelve tribes of Israel, going back to the second son of Jacob and Leah.
3. In Acts 13:1, "Simeon that was called Niger" is mentioned as one of the leaders of the church at Antioch.
4. But the Simeon we are looking at this morning is found only here in Luke 2. We know very little about this Simeon who appears in the temple in Jerusalem when Mary and Joseph were there to present the baby Jesus to the Lord (Luke 2:21-24).
5. By the way, Luke 2:24 says Mary and Joseph went to the temple "to offer a sacrifice."
6. This was a sin offering, an offering for the purification of Mary, "of a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons" (2:24).
7. That was all they could afford because they were very poor.
8. The fact that Mary had to offer a sin offering reminds us that Mary was a sinner just like all men and all women are sinners.
9. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
10. We do not know much about Simeon, but apparently he was much different from the other rabbis in Israel. We know from Matthew 2 that Herod gathered all the chief priests and scribes together and demanded of them where Christ should be born.
11. They told Herod that Micah 5:2 predicted that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, but these men had no interest in going there themselves.
12. But Simeon was different. Luke 2:25 says he was "waiting for the consolation of Israel."
13. In other words, Simeon was patiently waiting for the Messiah to come.

#### **I. THE HOLY GHOST WAS UPON HIM (2:25).**

1. Three times we see the power of the Holy Spirit was upon Simeon (2:25, 26, 27).
2. Under the power of the Holy Spirit, Simeon prophesied (2:34, 35).
3. We see here that Simeon was led by the Holy Spirit (2:27).

4. The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah (2:26).
5. Simeon not only had the privilege of seeing the Messiah, he had the great joy of holding Him in his arms (2:28).
6. Simeon, being "just and devout" (2:25), and being led by the Holy Spirit was undoubtedly a good student of Scripture.
7. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God. You will recall how the Lord revealed to Elijah the prophet that it would not rain for three years and six months.
8. Elijah would know that from Deuteronomy 11:16, 17, where it says that if God's people turned to other gods, He would shut up heaven and there wouldn't be any rain.
9. "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; And then the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you."
10. And Daniel the prophet understood by reading Jeremiah the prophet that the seventy years' captivity in Babylon had nearly run its course (Dan. 9:2; cf. Jer.25:11, 12; 29:10-14).
11. In that same chapter, Daniel made a fascinating prophecy regarding the Messiah and the last days. Simeon would certainly be familiar with that great Messianic prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27).
12. Daniel's prophecy involves seventy weeks of years (490 years).
13. The 490 years began with "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" (Dan. 9:25). This took place in 445 BC when the Persian king Artaxerxes gave a decree authorizing Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem to rebuild Jerusalem.
14. Dan. 9:26 says, "And after threescore and two weeks (69 of the 70 weeks) shall Messiah be cut off."
15. Simeon could then deduce that the Messiah would be "cut off" 483 years after King Artaxerxes' decree. Furthermore, Simeon would conclude that if the Messiah were to be cut off as a young man, then he would have to be born soon.
16. It is not possible to say how much Simeon understood about the Messiah being "cut off." But he knew that it would be heartbreaking for His mother Mary (cf. Luke 2:35).
17. Mary was there by the cross when Jesus was crucified. She was there when they drove the nails through His hands and feet. She was there

- when one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water (John 19:34).
18. So Simeon said, "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also" (2:35).
  19. Simeon did not know how long he would live, but he knew he would not die until "he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26).

## **II. THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL (2:25).**

1. "The consolation of Israel" (2:25) was the promise of the long-awaited Saviour, the Messiah (cf. 2:11, 26).
2. Way back in the Garden of Eden, the LORD said to the serpent, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).
3. Then later on, Jacob prophesied that the Messiah would come through the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10).
4. Later, it was revealed that He would come through the lineage of King David (II Sam. 7:13; Jer. 23:5, 6).
5. And David Himself wrote many prophetic Scriptures regarding "the consolation of Israel."
6. Many of these Psalms are what we call "Messianic Psalms."
7. One of the most well known of the Messianic Psalms is Psalm 22. Psalm 22:1 says, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
8. One thousand years before the cross, David wrote in Psalm 22:16, "They pierced my hands and my feet."
9. Micah the prophet said the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (5:2).
10. And Isaiah the prophet said he would be born of a virgin (7:14).
11. All of these prophecies were accurately fulfilled, and now Simeon was waiting to see "the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26).
12. The Lord Jesus came into this world for "all people" (2:31).
13. "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (2:32).

## **III. SIMEON'S PROPHECY**

1. Simeon predicted "the fall and rising again of many in Israel" (2:34).
2. Usually people would say, "rise and fall," but Simeon put the "fall" first. Referring to Himself, our Lord said in Matthew 21:44, "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

3. The chief priests and Pharisees understood our Lord was referring to them, and so they sought to lay hands on Him (Matt. 21:45, 46).
4. Many in Israel fell because they disobeyed their law, and despised their prophets, and finally they even crucified their Saviour.
5. In Matthew 10:34, Jesus said "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."
6. This statement has puzzled certain people, because the angels proclaimed our Lord's birth by saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).
7. But what Simeon said is that the Lord Jesus Christ will divide men. Those who deny Him will fall. Those who receive Him will rise (Luke 2:34).
8. The prophet Isaiah said the Lord would be a "sanctuary" to those who believe. But for those who did not believe, He would be "a stone of stumbling" and "a rock of offence" and a gin and a snare (Isa. 8:14).
9. "And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken" (Isa. 8:15).
10. Peter referred to Isaiah's prophecy in I Peter 2:8, when he said Christ is a "stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence" to those which stumble at the word.
11. Therefore, Simeon was describing two groups of people: those that are saved and those that are lost.
12. I remember when we first purchased this old fish store. I often had to run down the street to the hardware store for supplies. One day the man at the store said, "The nightclub people are not happy that a church moved in next door to them."
13. I asked the man what he meant. He said to me, "They are going down, but you people are going up." I thought that was pretty good theology.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Simeon said to Mary that Christ would be "a sign which shall be spoken against" (Luke 2:34).
2. Our Lord's birth was a "sign." The prophet Isaiah said this over 700 years before His birth. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).
3. The angel told the shepherds, "And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12).

4. The shepherds looked for the sign, and believed the sign, but many people have rejected the sign.
5. Simeon said that Christ would be "a sign which shall be spoken against" (Luke 2:34). Christ was "spoken against" time and again while He ministered on earth.
6. And Christ was "spoken against" when they crucified Him. The Bible says that the passersby spoke against our Lord as He hung dying on the cross.
7. "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads" (Matt. 27:39).
8. The chief priests and the scribes and elders mocked Him (Matt. 27:41).
9. "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth" (Matt. 27:44). One thief repented and was saved. He rose up to Paradise, while the impenitent thief fell straight down into hell (cf. Luke 2:34).
10. Jesus was spoken against during the apostolic era. The Book of Acts tells us how the early Christians were persecuted and put in prison for preaching the Gospel of Christ.
11. And Jesus has been "spoken against" all throughout history. Every year at Christmas time, various newspapers and magazines run big articles attacking the Christmas story.
12. Public schools allow Muslims to celebrate their Ramadan holiday, but Christmas is no longer allowed in most schools. It is now called "winter break."
13. Christmas carols have been replaced by songs about Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer and Frosty the snowman.
14. Yesterday, in honor of Christmas, Channel 13 (affiliated with the Public Broadcasting Service) featured the movie, "Elmer Gantry," about a crooked preacher. Ho ho ho!
15. "That the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (2:35b).