

# The Blessed Hope

*An important lesson learned from Simeon*



LUKE 2: 25-32: And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking 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 carry out for Him the custom of the Law, 28 then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace,  
According to Your word;

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His heart was beating fast; quickened by an awakening of the Holy Spirit that echoed back to an earlier day... an earlier promise that was seared into his soul by God: "Simeon you will not see the darkness of your death until you see the Light of the world. Look and keep looking! Behold He is coming..."

The whole world changed for Simeon that day...

All things final

now looked temporary...

Everything substantial

now seemed as a shadow of things to come...

The grip of tyranny  
now appeared to be slipping...  
The monopoly of sin, death, and demonic evil  
now appeared usurped...  
The promises of God once distant  
now pressed in upon his soul with imminent urgency.

The world changed for Simeon that day...

Each new dawn might be the world's last...  
Every man's face might be *His* face...  
Any incident might be a sign for his coming...  
Simeon was now a seeker...  
his nights would be an occasion for disappointment...  
his mornings an opportunity for new hope...

The world changed for Simeon that day... and his daily, hourly,  
and minute-by-minute challenge would be that his world would not  
change back to what it was before...a life without expectation.

And so it was that his aging heart was beating fast as he scanned  
the Temple court for a man of stature... a command- ing presence  
... a self-authenticating bearing and authority that betrayed a  
messianic identity. Instead his soul leapt within him when his gaze  
fell upon a nondescript couple that cradled a 6-week-old child in  
their arms. Unbelievably, it was not the father but the baby who  
commanded his attention. He took the child into his arms and  
looked through the veil of his flesh *into the face of God*.

My heart is quickened this Advent season by the opportunity to  
look into the face of the Child Messiah as the Holy Spirit  
challenges me to confess aloud what I see...

I see in Jesus the Promised One of God who is  
the *Son of Abraham*  
in Whom all nations on Earth can be blessed;  
the *Son of David*  
Who establishes & reigns over a Kingdom that has no end;  
the *Messiah*  
Who comes to deliver His people from bondage;  
the *Suffering Servant*  
Who bears the punishment my sins deserve;  
the *Son of Man*  
Who came to serve and give His life as a ransom for many.

I see in Jesus *the Lamb of God*

Who makes atonement and takes away the sin of the world;  
Who overcomes the reproach of my sin;  
Who covers over my shame;  
Who forgives me of my guilt;  
Who reconciles me to God and others.

I see in Jesus *the Son of God*

the Creator who has become a Creature;  
the One in whom all things hold together;  
the One by Whom and for Whom I was made;  
the One whose face is the face of the invisible God;  
the One who exemplifies all we were meant to be; and  
the One who is like what we, by His grace, shall be.

I see in Jesus *the Love of God*

that reaches out to the outcast;  
that invites the overlooked;  
that befriends without prejudice;  
that satisfies the hungry and satiates the thirsty;  
that will never leave, forsake, or abandon me.

I see in Jesus *the Power of God*

that stills the wind and calms the waves;  
that heals the sick;  
that breaks the strongholds of evil;  
that delivers the afflicted;  
that liberates the oppressed and harassed;  
and that baptizes us with the Holy Spirit.

I see in Jesus *the Blessed Hope of God.*

When He returns it will be:  
the end of death, decay, and evil;  
the finish of injustice, corruption, prejudice, and greed;  
the termination of sin's despair, depravity, and defilement;  
the close of insignificance, estrangement;  
abandonment, and futility;  
the end of *now* and the beginning of forever;  
the fulfillment of our unfulfillment;  
and the final joy in Whom I shall take pleasure.

I see in Jesus *the Once and Future Lamb of God*

Who will wipe every tear from the mourning;  
Who will overcome every advocacy of evil;  
Who will vanquish the ravages of sin;  
Who covers all shame with the robes of his righteousness;

Who will welcome the poor and broken;  
Who will light all eternity and dispel night forever.

I see in Jesus *our Coming-King*:  
Resplendent is His majesty;  
Triumphant is His victory;  
Magnificent is His authority;  
Jubilant is His shout;  
Death-defeating is His roar; and  
“It is Done” will be His song!

I confess along with Martin Luther, “I have no other God than the one who once rested on Mary’s lap.”

This Christmas who do you see as you look into the face of the baby Jesus? Is He your blessed hope? Do you have assurance that He can be your consolation too? If you are uncertain why not take a moment to pray, “Jesus come into my life and be my blessed hope and consolation.”

With expectation for the Coming-King,

*Pastor Mark*