

We pick up today where we left off last week with the Shepherds visiting Mary, Joseph & Baby Jesus. We don't know what transpired for the next 7 days but the Luke passage picks up on Day 8 after Jesus' birth with the Jewish Tradition of Name Giving & Circumcision.

Luke 2:21-38...²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, He was named Jesus, the Name the angel had given Him before He was conceived. ²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord *in Exodus 13:2,12*), "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord in *Leviticus 12:8*: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons." ²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.

When the parents brought in the Child Jesus to do for Him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ **Simeon** took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."

³³ The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about Him. ³⁴ Then **Simeon** blessed them and said to Mary, His mother:

"This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the Child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

I think that a simple, to the point Key Principle from these verses is:

God is never in a hurry; He always is right on time. Our job is to learn to wait and trust in His timing and His plan.

Let's go back and review this passage and glean some lessons for us on how to Wait & Trust!

Joseph & Mary were faithful Jewish believers and followers of God's Law. We know this by the material presented in this passage which records two different events separated by about 2 weeks. The first event, recorded in Verse 21, took place on the 8th day after Jesus' birth. As commanded in **Exodus 13:2 & 12**, they brought Jesus to the Temple Court for the Official Name Giving and the Rite of Circumcision. This obedient act sets the stage for Jesus' statement later in His life when He said in **Matthew 5:17,18**... "*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them*".

Just a little bit of side knowledge:

Some have questioned over time: "Why the eighth day?" In 1935, Professor H. Dam proposed the name "Vitamin K" for the factor in foods that helped prevent hemorrhaging in baby chicks. This vitamin is responsible for the production (by the liver) of the element known as pro-thrombin. Production of sufficient quantity begins only on the fifth through the seventh days of the newborn male's life of vitamin K

(produced by bacteria in the intestinal tract). Vitamin K, coupled with prothrombin, causes blood coagulation, which is important in any surgical procedure. On the eighth day, the amount of prothrombin present is elevated above one hundred percent of normal—and is the only day in the male's life in which this will be the case under normal conditions. If surgery is to be performed, day eight is the perfect day to do it. (Holt, L.E. and R. McIntosh (1953), Holt Pediatrics (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts), twelfth edition; and McMillen, S.I. (1984), None of These Diseases (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell).

Between verse 21 & 22 there appears to be about a 25-day (some say 41-day) separation (see Leviticus 12:1-5). This can be deduced by the fact that the Jewish tradition of purification (for the Mother). The actual Hebrew term is *Pidyon Haben* or 'redemption of the first-born' as described in Exodus 13:1-21. It is interesting to note that this reflects a connection to the prophecy "*He shall save His people from their sins*" (Matthew 1:21)

It was law to bring a lamb as a sacrifice, but there was an alternative for those who were poor. They could bring 'a pair of doves or two turtle-doves'. Since this is what they brought we can assume that Joseph & Mary were not rich.

It was at this second event that we are introduced to two people who can teach us some lessons on Waiting & Trusting. These two individuals are Simeon & Anna.

SIMEON:

Luke 2:25-35...²⁵ *Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him.* ²⁶ *It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.* ²⁷ *Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the Child Jesus to do for Him what the custom of the Law required,* ²⁸ *Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:* ²⁹ *"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.* ³⁰ *For my eyes have seen your salvation,* ³¹ *which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:* ³² *a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."* ³³ *The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about Him.* ³⁴ *Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, His mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against,* ³⁵ *so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."*

Lessons From Simeon:

(Adapted from Randall Smith...<https://randalldsmith.com/our-savior-is-born-waiting-for-god-luke-221-38/>)

- **First**, he was a **RIGHTEOUS MAN**. The term "dikaïos" meant he was "approved by God". He was God's man, stationed to do God's bidding by God's hand. He was selected by God.
- **Second**, he was a **DEVOUT MAN** - he actively lived his **God-given role**. The term "eulabēs" is translated "devout" and in other translations it is "God-fearing."

He lived out a practical, daily, "godly respect" for holy things. He walked in practical ways with God.

- **Third**, He was a **PATIENTLY ANTICIPATIVE MAN**. "Coming to the Temple wasn't a drudgery, but one filled with expectation. The text says he was "**looking for the consolation**" but the term "prosdéxomai" literally means he was "*ready and willing*" to receive what God promised. He walked with excited readiness and expectation". (Smith)
- **Fourth**, He was a **HOLY SPIRIT GUIDED MAN** – The Holy Spirit was on him and was leading him. He was very attune to the Spirit's leadership and followed the Spirit's every leading.
- **Fifth**, He Was a **PROMISE GIVEN MAN** - "He carried in his heart a revelation – a promise from God that he could not know if God hadn't told him. The term "xrēmatiszō" is the word "**revealed**" in the verse, but in the language it was a business term "to admonish on the basis of a valid standard" and was used of warnings. He knew God promised something, and he took it seriously and literally". Smith
- **Sixth** – He was a **FULFILLED/BLESSED MAN**. In verses 29-32, we see the joy and satisfaction that Simeon experienced because of his faith and patient obedience and trust in God. He received God's blessing for his faithfulness.
- **Seventh**, He was a **PROPHETIC MAN**. In verse 29-35, we see Simeon speaking forth a prophetic message about Jesus and to his mother Mary. We may not can be exactly sure all that Siemon meant when he spoke these words, but it was a message of mixed outcomes, one that tells us of the destruction of those who don't believe in

Him, and the blessing of those who do. Then he ends with a sad and tragic message giving Mary a warning that she will face pain in the future.

Now what are we to take away from the life of Simeon? There is a lot, but in summary, we should learn from him that Holy Spirit directed, patient, faithful trust and obedience in God will bring us blessing and fulfillment, but also, will help us deal with the inevitable heartache that comes from living in a fallen world. We are to serve and praise God in all circumstances.

The next faithful servant is...ANNA:

Luke 2:36-38... ³⁶ “And there was a prophetess, Anna (shortened form of: Channah, or “Grace”) the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. ³⁸ At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.”

In Anna we find a story that seems to be a contradiction in terms. Anna or ‘Channa’ (Hannah) carries the meaning of grace or favor, however in reality it seems that her life did not seem to live up to her name. She had married and lived with her husband for seven years, then he died. She spent the remainder of her life as a childless widow who lived in the temple courts for the remainder

of her life, probably living off charity. Let’s be honest, that seems to be an unfulfilled life for a woman. However, we should not judge her value or joy based on our expectations. I am sure she had great expectations herself for a happy marriage and a houseful of children. Anna is a portrait of someone who chose to make the best of a bad situation and chose to worship and serve God even in her pain and loss.

Anna’s story teaches us these things, not the least of which is gratitude.

1. We are to love and worship God in all circumstances, good or bad.
2. God delights to use people who the world thinks are insignificant.
3. Age is of no consequence to God.
4. God & God Alone gives us our reason for thanksgiving.
5. We are to live our lives in purity and prayerful dedication.
6. We Need to Understand and Practice Patience.

Let’s come to a close...

God is never in a hurry; He always is right on time. Our job is to learn to wait and trust in His timing and His plan.

Let’s emulate Joseph, Mary, Simeon & Anna and live a life of faithful obedient worship and service no matter the circumstances we find ourselves.

