

Luke 2:22-52

Verses 22-24:

--*Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD"), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."*

--(22) Mary was to wait forty days (**Lev. 12:1-4**) until her menstrual cycle was normal again before she could be considered clean and able to offer the proper sacrifices.

--(23) Jesus is also brought to be presented. Every firstborn male was the Lord's since the moment the angel of death passed over them in Egypt. Eventually, Levi would take the place of the firstborn from every tribe in dedication to the Lord (**Ex. 13:1-15; Num. 3; 8:15-18; 18:15-16**).

--At this point in Israel's history, each firstborn male would be presented and redeemed for five shekels of silver. It was a reminder that they were still the Lord's and owed everything the firstborn represented (the very continuance of their lives and inheritance) to Him.

--(24) The sacrifice could be a lamb (**Lev. 12:8**) or if poor, turtledoves or pigeons.

Verses 25-27a:

--*And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 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. So he came by the Spirit into the temple.*

--Now Luke, led by the same Holy Spirit who led Simeon, introduces us to this man.

--(25) We are told that he **was just and devout**. **Just** gives us the idea that he carefully followed God's laws. **Devout** gives us the idea that he carefully revered God. Simeon led a life of faith and obedience despite a corrupt system of religion.

--We are told he also led a life **waiting for the Consolation of Israel**. He was looking for the day that God would comfort His people (**Isa. 40**). He was someone who believed in the promises of God.

--How was this possible? By the Holy Spirit!

--(26) The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would have a personal connection to the public works of God.

--We tend not to like waiting, but the Scriptures reveal a life of faith and obedience that waits for the revelation of God, and desires to play a personal part in those things, is pleasing to God!

Psalm 27:14: Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!

Lamentations 3:25-26: The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

Hebrews 6:11-12: And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

--Simeon could have easily lost heart under these conditions, but instead, he waited and walked in the Holy Spirit.

--(27) He came into the temple by the Holy Spirit, and therefore saw in this Babe, and couple, what no others save Anna saw—***the Consolation of Israel!***

--We will only ever truly see Christ through the Holy Spirit, not because we are in a place of worship. God had been preparing a Spirit-led witness for His Son for many years.

1 Corinthians 2:14: But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Verses 27b-32

--***And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."***

--Joseph and Mary are coming in obedience, but they have no idea what God has in store for His own Son. Simeon (aged, as he is ready to die, and likely the reason the parents allow him to take up the child in respect to his position as an elder) intercepts them and takes the child up in his arms.

--The aged, Spirit-filled, waiting saint, now has ***the Consolation of Israel*** cradled in his arms. What Jesus would later do for the children of others (**Mk. 9:36; 10:16**), the Heavenly Father does for His own Son.

--(28) Though Simeon does not bless Jesus. He blesses God for His faithfulness and salvation (**Isa. 9:6-7**). After, Simeon blesses Joseph and Mary directly.

--(29) ***Lord***. . . Simeon was God's servant, and ***now***. . . having seen this Babe, he was ready to ***depart in peace***, knowing the Word of God to him personally and the world publicly was fulfilled.

--What would we need to depart in peace? Simeon, the servant of God, in a time of fulfillment and great hope, not darkness, at the moment of his greatest victory and expectation, not disaster or ruin, is ready to depart. Like Christ, he had finished the work he was given to do.

--(30-32) Led by the Spirit, Simeon sees in Jesus the salvation of God. ***To the Gentiles first!*** And then the glory of Israel beyond. This was always God's plan. (**Isa. 42:6; 60:3; Rom. 11:12+25.**)

Verses 33-35:

--And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

--(33) Joseph and Mary are shocked, likely lulled to sleep by the normality of life after the shepherds (the wise men not having arrived yet).

--(34) Simeon blesses them first, but then also prophesies about the destiny of Jesus Christ. He was going to be a divider in Israel, and **a sign** actively spoken against. (Isa. 8:14; Mt. 12:30; Lk. 4:28-29; Jn. 1:11-13; 6:41+52; 8:13+31-59; 1 Cor. 1:23; 2 Cor. 2:16; Heb. 12:2-3.)

Luke 12:51-53: Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

*Godet (Gospel of Luke, pg. 194): "Simeon discerned, beneath the outward forms of Jewish piety, their love of human glory, their hypocrisy, avarice, and hatred of God; and he perceives that this child will prove the occasion for all this hidden venom being poured forth from the recesses of their hearts. **In order that** has the same sense as **is set for**, God does not will the evil; but He wills that the evil, when present, should show itself: this is an indispensable condition to its being either healed or condemned."*

--Simeon then also warns Mary of the **sword** that would pierce her own soul as well. No doubt, this prophecy, as scary as it might have sounded at first, became a comfort to her. It would remind her, as she stared at the bloody mess of her Son on the cross, that things were not out of control. God was in control. He knew all along.

Verses 36-38:

--Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

--(36-37) God brings another witness on the scene. A well-known, elderly saint and prophetess. Again, we see God has His faithful servants in every dispensation, no matter how spiritually dead the majority might seem.

--We are told that she is **of a great age**. Which means she was either 84 years old, or was wed at likely 14-18, married for seven years, and then widowed for 84, making her 105 or older!

--She was a widow, a condition particularly difficult in those days. Still, instead of turning from God, she committed herself to God, and ***did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.***

--The Holy Spirit reflects on her life with approval.

1 Timothy 5:5: *Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.*

--God commands others to care for and look out for true widows, but He calls widows to trust in Him, turn to Him, serve Him, and look to Him. Anna, in her long loneliness, was always with God. Ever in His house, His service, His presence.

--(38) God uses this prophetess to testify of the validity of Simeon's words and to encourage other hopeful saints.

--Luke takes two of the oldest, godliest saints, and points to them as witnesses of Jesus Christ. May our lives do the same!

Verses 39-40:

--So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

--For the first time on the face of the earth (Adam and Eve were made adults), sinless normal growth happened, and God's grace and favor were evidently on Jesus.

--Theology can surmise upon the growth of God's Son, but inspiration declares it clearly. We don't know how to fully reconcile passages such as: **Mt. 24:36; Mk. 11:13; Lk. 8:45; Heb. 5:8.**

--We do know this Boy clearly grew up in Nazareth, and all his neighbors knew Him in such a normal way that they were stumbled at His claim to be the Messiah.

Mark 6:3: *"Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him.*

Verses 41-50:

--His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."

And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

--(41-42) Here we have the picture of a very devout family. Mary did not have to attend with Joseph, but did.

--(43-45) We are told Jesus deliberately stays behind in Jerusalem. It was a choice. This was not a mistake. This situation would serve as a reminder of His true Father’s will and parentage in His life.

--There would typically be a caravan of people traveling together for protection and fellowship. Women and children in the front and men in the back. Jesus at 12, was in a position to travel with either group.

--Eventually, Joseph and Mary realize that He is missing. A situation that is only funny if you are not a parent and haven’t forgotten about a child.

--(46-48) It seems like Joseph and Mary were one day traveling out, one day traveling back, and one day looking for Jesus.

--The typical teaching style of the day was one of asking questions. Jesus is not teaching, so much as interacting in a way, and asking such insightful questions, that everyone is amazed by the comprehension level at which He is operating.

--Joseph and Mary arrive at the scene and are just as astonished.

--Mary eventually steps in, and with an understandably motherly question, interrupts the scene.

--(49-50) Jesus’ response is one of mild rebuke. The ***you*** is plural, referring to both Mary and Joseph. His life was not theirs. He had other ***must’s*** in His life, which Luke refers to often: **4:43; 9:22; 13:33; 19:5; 22:37; 24:7, 26, 44.**

--Understanding for them came later. Yet God, and Jesus Christ, were gracious.

--We don’t have perfect kids, but we should remember that our children are not our own. I should never hold them back for the Lord’s call on their life. They are not called to be tied to me. They are created to be tied to Him.

Verses 51-52:

--Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

--Did Jesus then exert His own authority over His parents? No! It was a good reminder before His long submission to them.

--Mary kept and pondered these events. No doubt, she is the one who gave these accounts to Luke.

*Ware (The Man Christ Jesus, pg. 57): *"May we marvel, then, at Jesus, who displayed such godly humility as manifested in his submission to his parents at the very point of life when it had become clear to him that he was the incarnate God-man, the Messiah of Israel. May we learn that submission is never rightly understood as a demonstration of the inferiority of the submissive one or the superiority of the one in authority. Rather, may we understand that God's design for all of us is to render willing submission in many relationships in life. In so doing we express something of the quality we see here in Jesus, one that we should rightly seek to emulate."**

--The Greek word used for **increased** here in **52** is different than the Greek word for **grew** used in **40**. The word here has the idea of chopping or beating forward. It describes an active Vs. passive development.

--Jesus, as a young man, was actively choosing the right path of growth.