



Grace Fellowship of Morehead, KY

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Who Were Simeon & Anna?

Messages preached on Wednesday, December 20th and 27th, 2023

We often take a look at the BIG players in the Christmas story. Mary, Joseph, Jesus, Shepherds, the Innkeeper (smile), the three (and only three) wisemen (again smile)...

Tonight, I want to take a look at a couple characters that are not often talked about...because they were not at the manger...they didn't come around until 40 days after His birth, while He was being dedicated at the Temple.

Simeon and Anna, two very special people who were led by the Holy Spirit to show up at that Divine moment.

Two people who had LONG believed that they would live to see the arrival of the Messiah before they left this world.

Simeon

First we will start with Simeon. The only time we read about him in Scriptures...so this is the main spot where information can be gathered...other than Jewish history (which we will look at too).

NOW: Mary and Joseph had come to the temple to dedicate Him to God...purification!

So this is talking about Mary and Joseph...doing what they are doing...

"Behold" – bewilderment, shock, amazement and wonder.

So, this came out of nowhere! I guess Mary and Joseph were expecting your everyday, run-of-the-mill dedication...and this man shows up!

NOTE: I am convinced that Mary knew a lot...but had no idea all that giving birth to Jesus would entail.

Luke 2:25-33

25 And, behold, there was a **man in Jerusalem**, whose name was **Simeon**; and the same man was **just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel**: and the **Holy Ghost was upon him**.

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

So we see a couple things about this man, Simeon.

1.) He lived in Jerusalem.

Jewish writers note that there was indeed a man named Simeon who was alive and of GREAT NOTE in Jerusalem.

He was the son of Hillel. Hillel was the president of the Sanhedrin for 40 years. He was the first ever to be given the title of Rabban, which was a Jewish title of honor for presidents of the Sanhedrin.

Rick Renner describes him as a "celebrity-type theologian in Jerusalem.

This SIMEON eventually succeeded his father and became president of the Sanhedrin. He was HIGHLY revered in Jerusalem.

HE WAS HONORED above all others as THE GREATEST SCHOLAR and theologian of his time.

He was believed to be endowed with a spirit of prophecy and anointed with discernment of signs of the times. Very aware of timing in the Bible.

REMEMBER: This time period, before Jesus, was considered the silent years. Not a lot of revelation coming forth. Apparently, this man was different.

2.) Waiting for the consolation of Israel.

“Consolation” – bringing comfort, encouragement, solace

NOTE: Israel had been harassed and oppressed by Rome for a LONG TIME.

They believed that the coming of the Messiah would bring relief...bring a reversal.

NOTE: They had no idea that it would be in the spiritual context.

“Waiting” – pictures an expectation. To embrace, to completely and fully take something in without hesitation.

IN OTHER WORDS: He knew that he knew.

It really presents the fact that Simeon had engaged his faith on seeing the Messiah.

He had received a promise from the Holy Spirit and HELD ONTO IT that he would see the Messiah with his own eyes.

3.) He was a just man!

“Just” – righteous, just, correct, upright, virtuous or one that keeps the commands of God.

NOTE: In a time where there were MANY “religious” people who were NOT upright and just...Simeon was! He lived by God’s Word.

4.) He was a devout man!

“Devout” – pious, having respect for God, God-fearing.

We, sometimes, look at piety with contempt, because it seems bad.

HOWEVER: The truth is that piety is simply dealing with sincerity. Serious about what he does!

5.) The Holy Spirit was upon him.

Again, not many, at that time, were sensitive to the Spirit of God moving. **But He was!**

THEREFORE #1: He operated in the gift of prophecy. God spoke to Him.

THEREFORE #2: He was where he was suppose to be on the day he was suppose to be there.

Vs. 26 – God was revealing things to him that was not revealed to just anyone.

Simeon Blessed Jesus

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

NOTE: Some have mistakenly believed that Simeon was old because of this verse.

HOWEVER: There is nothing in this verse or in church history that suggests that fact.

History confirms that Simeon was NOT an old man at this time...he was simply saying, “That promise that God has given to me has come to pass.”

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And Joseph and his mother **marvelled** at those things which were spoken of him.

NOTE: This just proves the point that Mary knew...but she didn’t really know all.

I want to set your focus on this man...He heard things others didn’t hear...He experienced the power of the Holy Spirit unlike others...He received the promises of God.

Amongst silence...He experienced and heard!

What is his key?

1.) He lived righteously.

UNDERSTAND: Old Testament people were not righteous like we are righteous...they lived righteously.

NOTE: New Testament people are the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of God in Christ Jesus...but it also ***demand a righteous walk, not to earn anything...but because it is who we are!***

BELOVED: Living right will open you up to a lot of things God gives.

2.) He respected God...His system...His ways...above all.

Even when no one else was honoring God's system...Simeon did!

BELOVED: It should be our number one priority in life to honor God's Word...His ways. If He says to do it...that settles it. If we see things happening...it doesn't matter. His way is the only way!

3.) He aggressively held on to the promises of God by faith.

He refused to let go...even though time had passed. He kept looking, kept believing.

* Like the woman with the issue of blood...she said and kept saying.

* Like the Syrophenician woman...she wouldn't stop until she got what Jesus had.

* Like the centurion...he was satisfied with the Word, that was all he needed.

Anna the Prophetess

So, Simeon is standing there with the baby and here walks into the temple another highly respected person.

Luke 2:36-38

36 And there was one **Anna, a prophetess**, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she ***was of a great age***, and had ***lived with an husband seven years from her virginity***;

37 And she was a ***widow of about fourscore and four years***, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

What do we know about Anna?

1.) She was a prophetess.

She operated in that office of a prophet...and she was a female.

2.) She had been married for seven years and he had passed away.

So, she had been a widow for 84 years.

So JUST doing the math we know that adds up to 91 years...so she was past 100 years of age.

She literally had been waiting for this promise for a LONG time.

3.) She lived on the temple premises.

That is where she lived.

"Departed" – to not step away from

THEREFORE: She didn't take ONE step away from the Temple.

Apparently, she not only prophesied...but she also instructed others in what she was hearing from the Lord, especially concerning the coming of the Messiah.

UNDERSTAND: She was so excited and expectant to see the Messiah that she WOULD NOT leave the temple grounds IN CASE she would miss the moment when He appeared!

It was her WHOLE LIFE!

4.) **She had a life of serving God, fasting and prayers.**

“Prayer” – a request for a specific need, usually based on rights or legal position.

THEREFORE: She prayed according to the promises of the Word of God.

We know the ONE thing she focused on was the Messiah’s appearance.

5.) **She gave thanks!**

She had received what she had been believing for her whole life!

The promises that she had held onto from the Old Covenant had come to pass...and her natural response was to give thanks.

PERHAPS NOTE: Faith gives thanks before the manifestation.

So, she had set her heart on seeing the Messiah. She received her hearts desire!

What is her key?

1.) **She knew her legal position in Him to ask according to His Word...and believed it.**

BELOVED: That is what we often miss. We know what His Word says...but we think in terms of maybe He won’t give it to me.

Galatians 3:13,14,29

We have been given the same authority that Jesus had to do what He did.

Acts 10:38 – “...for God was with him.”

2.) **She lived with expectation of His promises.**

Romans 4:18-21

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

3.) **She remained in a place to see the answer...the light.**

She knew when the Messiah would be born...they would have to bring him to the temple.

So, she stayed at the temple...day and night...year after year...because she wasn’t going to miss this ONE MOMENT.

One of my favorite statements is, “One Word from God can change your life forever!”

UNFORTUNATELY: Many of us get so busy with life and stuff that we miss those MOMENTS...

we stay home from church...we skip our Bible reading...our prayer time.

We can’t figure out why we are not receiving that Word...that moment!

BELOVED: Stay faithful for those moments and you won’t miss them when they happen.

Conclusion

One more point...the Messiah was coming ONCE and He caught a lot of people sleeping.

UNDERSTAND: He has promised that He is returning again.

QUICK QUESTION: Are you ready? Are you living every day in preparation for His return? Are you sharing it with others (like Anna)?

REMEMBER: If He has promised it...He will come, just like He did the first time.