

THE BOOK OF LUKE

"Christmas Gift"

Luke 2:24-35

Dec 30, 1984

INTRODUCTION

1. Traditionally, Christmas is a time for gifts. This is also true from a Biblical perspective. It is the time for the gift from glory.

2. One may consider giving Him gifts. There is also the consideration of His gifts to us. While there are many, the greatest is His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. A unique expression of the Gift of Jesus is that concerning Simeon. The Lord was brought to Jerusalem for the first-born sacrifice (vv. 23, 24 cf. Ex. 12:3; 34:19; Num. 18:15, 16). Mary's confinement had been fulfilled (v. 22 cf. Lev. 12). The account about Simeon took place in Jerusalem. Mark the facts:

1. A GODLY MAN vv. 25-27

a. His character v. 25

Truly here is a "man of God." He is noted to have two distinct characteristics: 1) He was just. This indicates he was in the fullest sense of O.T. description right with God (cf. Rom. 4:3). It is a positive aspect of his person. 2) He was devout. The term is only used by Luke (cf. Acts 2:5; 8:2; 22:12) in the N.T. It means to take hold well, therefore, reverently. He had watchfulness regarding evil. Indeed, Simeon was a man of proven character.

b. His attitude v. 25.

The verb "what" means to have expectancy for something. Being a compound verb, the attitude expressed is toward or face to face. All of this relates to Israel's "consolation" (same word often used of the Holy Spirit). Quite obviously this is the Messianic hope (cf. Acts 28:20).

c. His secret vv. 25-27

The key to Simeon's great witness is the Holy Spirit. Consider:-

1) The Holy Spirit "upon him" (v. 25). This was the O.T. arrangement. There was no permanent indwelling of the Spirit under the law (cf. Psa. 51:11).

2) The Holy Spirit - revealed to him (v. 26). It was proper before the completed Bible to have revelation. Now, it is unnecessary because we have God's revelation (Scripture). The content of the revelation to Simeon is dramatic (cf. Pet. 1:14).

3) The Holy Spirit brought him (v. 27). While Jesus' parents came in obedience to the law, Simeon came directed by the Holy Spirit. What an amazing truth as a forgleam of the present Dispensation of Grace (cf. John 16:13).

2. A FULFILLED WORD vv. 28-32.

With Jesus in his arms, Simeon declared (pres. act. ind.) "thou art letting" (commonly called Nunc Dimittis). It noted Simeon as a slave to the Lord (despot in Greek). He now asks to be relieved of his sentinel duty, hence this life. The revealed Word of God (v. 26) had been fulfilled. It was applicable in three directions:

a. For the word--salvation vv. 30, 31.

"Salvation" suggests an apparatus fitted to save. The verb "prepared" connects with this sense. The whole O.T. was a preparation in the face of the people. God did His work of salvation openly for all to see.

b. For the Gentiles--light v. 32.

A veil lays over the Gentiles. Christ becomes the light in the darkness for them (cf. 2 Cor. 4:3, 4). Note: Jews do not have double blindness.

c. For the Israelites--glory v. 32.

Simeon referred to Israel as "thy people," a matter so often rejected in non-dispensational circles. There is no glory for Israel apart from Messiah.

NOTE: These amazing declarations about Jesus by Simeon caused Mary and Joseph continued wonder (imperfect).

3. A PROPHETIC MESSAGE vv. 34, 35.

a. About Israel v. 34.

Some will fall; others will rise over the Lord Jesus. The turn of the nation depends upon their attitude toward Messiah (cf. Rom. 11:12).

b. About Mary v. 35 a.

No wonder Mary is called "mother of sorrows." The cross experience for Jesus would affect her too (cf. John 19:25).

c. About the world vv. 34, 35.

Jesus will be a sign (a pointer) spoken against (pres. pass. part.). It was going on then and still is. Why? To unveil the thoughts of many hearts. A decision must be made concerning Messiah.

CONCLUSION Are you for Him or against Him. He stands as the Great Divider of men. Is He life or death to you? Answer!