

**Series Series:** The Canticles of Advent

**Sermon title: Nunc Dimittis**

**Scripture reading:** Luke 2:22-35

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

December 24, 2021/ Christmas Eve Service

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Well, it may seem odd that tonight on Christmas Eve, we take a look at the last of our '**Canticles of Advent**' (declarations of praise), which happens to take place AFTER Jesus is born. Seems out of place a bit.

But Simeon's song has something to teach us about this baby Jesus.

Let's take a look at the full passage of **Luke 2:22-35**

**22** And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord **23** (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") **24** and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."  
**25** Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout,

waiting 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 do for him according to the custom of the Law, **28** he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

**29** "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; **30** for my eyes have seen your salvation **31** that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, **32** a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel." **33** And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. **34** And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed **35** (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

Let's simply break this passage down.

**Verses 22-24** tell us of the setting and occasion in which this 'song' of Simeon takes place.

Joseph and Mary and Jesus have come to Jerusalem to be faithful to 2 Old Testament Laws:

- (1) **Mary's purification**- day 40 **Leviticus 12:1-8**. This is for ritual cleansing after childbirth.
- (2) **Jesus's presentation**- Jesus as the firstborn was to be consecrated to the Lord as given in **Exodus 13:2-12**.

What we are to really see in these verses is that Jesus was born (as **Galatians 4:4**) says, "when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law"

Jesus was no lawless bandit who came to call people to rebel against the Law of God. His family was very religious and devout and kept the law.

They were also poor. We see this in **verse 24** as they presented a pair of turtledoves or 2 young pigeons. They were supposed to present a lamb. But of course, we know they did present a lamb.

### **The Lamb of God.**

In **verse 25**, we are introduced to a man named Simeon. Simeon means 'heard' and boy did he hear from God the Holy Spirit.

It was revealed to him that he wouldn't die until he had seen the Christ face to face!

God has orchestrated the times in such a way that he enters the temple 'in the Spirit' at the time that Joseph and Mary and Jesus are there.

He takes Jesus in his arms, literally cradles him in his arm. **Can you imagine?** Simeon held God the Son in the hook of his arm. Blows my mind.

Let's take a look at Simeon's words.

The traditional title '*Nunc Dimittis*' in Latin comes from his first words....which means "Now send/release/dismiss".

### **He gives 2 BLESSINGS.**

(1) Blesses God **verses 28-32**

(2) Blesses Joseph & Mary **verses 34-35.**

### **BLESSING 1.**

#### **I. Jesus is salvation for ALL NATIONS.**

**28** he took him up in his arms and **blessed God** and said, **29** "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; .....

**30** for my eyes have seen your salvation **31** that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, **32** a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

Simeon, through the Holy Spirit, proclaims good news. Jesus IS salvation. He doesn't bring salvation. Simeon says he has '[seen your salvation](#)' when he sees this baby in his arms.

God has '[prepared](#)' he says...Jesus as salvation!

Those words remind me of **Hebrews 10:5** which says, "[Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, "Behold, I have come to do your will, O God."](#)

Jesus the baby grew up and sacrificed himself on the cross, as an offering for the sins of all who would believe in him.

And Simeon goes on to say that this salvation, this Jesus is for all nations...Jews and all other ethnic groups in the world.

**31** "[You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,](#)  
**32** [a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.](#)"

This is taken from **Isaiah 49:6.**

“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant  
to raise up the tribes of Jacob  
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;  
I will make you as a light for the nations,  
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

**People in all nations are striving to keep evil away,  
to make their sins be erased, to find happiness, to  
find meaning in life, to find hope of life after death.**

There is good news.

Jesus is a light for those from all nations who are in  
spiritual darkness.

Jesus is salvation.

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Now, you'd think that everyone would want to receive  
Christ.

But many in the world stumble and struggle with Jesus  
Christ.

**Could this really be true?**

God really took on human flesh and lived a sinless life,  
died on the cross, rose from the dead, ascended into  
heaven and I must believe this in order to have eternal  
life?

Let's look at Simeon's second blessing to Joseph and Mary.

## **BLESSING 2.**

### **II. Jesus is a stone of stumbling.**

**34** And Simeon **blessed them** and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed **35** (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

Simeon's second blessing highlights the fact that Jesus will be hard for some to accept and some will be opposed to him. Even Mary will experience some kind of pain in her heart and soul because of Christ.

This passage echoes a common theme in the Old Testament, that the Messiah will be a stone of stumbling.

**Isaiah 8:14** says that Jesus will, "**become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling**".

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Simeon song is a declaration of truth about Jesus Christ.

God prepared and set apart Jesus to become a man and suffer and die in his body on the cross to pay for the sins of all who would believe in him.

To many, among all the nations Jesus is light and salvation. Millions and millions have turned to Jesus to have their sins taken away by the Lamb of God.

To many others, Jesus is offensive, a stone people stumble over and fall. He is simply too good to be true.

**I pray that all of you will find him to be your Savior. Take him in your arms like Simeon did, hold him close and trust him with all your heart.**