

MONTH OF JESUS: SIMEON AND ANNA

Luke 2:25-26 ... “And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simon, 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.”

Would you like it if God told you that Christ will return before you die? Would that be exciting to know? If you knew the return of Christ would happen that soon, how would you live? Would you be more likely to share Christ with others and persevere through persecution? Simeon was an elderly man to whom God had promised that the Messiah would come before he died, and that Simeon would actually see him with his own eyes. Do you think Simeon was expecting a grand entrance of the Messiah on a gold chariot and carrying a diamond encrusted sword, ready to slay all of God’s enemies and make the earth perfect? Many Jews believed exactly that; they were expecting the greatest show on earth.

A clue as to Simeon’s expectations is found in today’s verses which reveal he was a “devout” man. A devout believer is one who studies the scriptures and understands, through the Holy Spirit, what they mean. Simeon knew from Isaiah’s prophecies that Christ would appear as a baby, not at the head of an angelic parade with trumpets blaring. Simeon was expecting a baby while everyone else was expecting a victorious king. Verse 27 reads: “So he [Simeon] came by 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, he [Simeon] took Him [Jesus] up in his arms and blessed God...” The Holy Spirit tapped Simeon on the shoulder one morning and said, go the temple and you will see the Messiah. Not only did Simeon get to see the Lord, but he held him in his arms and praised God for his great privilege. Simeon was probably the smartest man on the planet at that moment, and possibly the closest man to God. The rest of this passage reads:

“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.” (Luke 2:29-32) Simeon knew he had been kept alive in his old age so God could fulfil his promise of letting him see Jesus before he died.

In verses 34 and 35, Simeon tells Mary that Jesus’ destiny is to die to bring salvation to many. And, it was not only Simeon to whom God revealed that Jesus was the Messiah. An old lady named Anna was also given special knowledge that Jesus was the Messiah and she then spoke of it to everyone until she died.

The Bible tells us that no one knows the time and date when Christ will return a second time. Most of Israel was not ready when Christ came the first time. In fact, they convicted him of a fake crime and killed him, simply because his arrival did not meet their expectations. Christ has already come once to die for us and protect us from the penalty of hell. If you miss him now, you will not have a second chance to accept him as Lord after he returns. Maybe this month – the month of Jesus’ birth – would be an excellent opportunity for you to become a follower of Christ.

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