

THE DEDICATION

CORE PASSAGE: LUKE 2:25-38

CONTEXT

According to Mosaic law, every firstborn son was to be consecrated to the Lord and redeemed with a sacrifice (Exodus 13:1-2,11-15), and every woman was to present a sacrifice in the temple a certain number of days after childbirth (Leviticus 12:1-8). So Joseph and Mary brought the infant Jesus to the temple, so that even as a baby, He fulfilled every requirement of the law. At the temple, two faithful, elderly people had been waiting for the Messiah, and now they would wait no more.

KEY CONCEPT

Jesus is the only hope of salvation for the whole world.

As you examine Luke 2:25-38:

- Contemplate Simeon's identification of Jesus as God's salvation and a light for revelation to the Gentiles.
- Recognize that Anna's devotion to the Lord led her to the moment when she saw and worshiped the infant Jesus.



TIMELINE

The Angel Foretells the Birth of Jesus,
the Son of God (Luke 1:26-56)

SESSION STUDY: Mary and Joseph
Take Baby Jesus to the Temple in
Jerusalem (Luke 2:21-39)

Young Jesus Remains in His
Father's House (Luke 2:40-52)

Jesus Is Born in Bethlehem
(Luke 2:1-20)

Wise Men from the East Search for
the Promised King (Matthew 2:1-12)

Daily Readings

- Day 1:** Luke 2:21-24
- Day 2:** Luke 2:25-32
- Day 3:** Luke 2:33-35
- Day 4:** Luke 2:36-38
- Day 5:** Luke 2:39-40
- Day 6:** Psalm 27



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to access this session's
Scripture passages.

JESUS CAME TO BRING SALVATION TO JEWS AND GENTILES, BUT AT A COST.

Underline all the references to the Holy Spirit.

25 There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking forward to Israel's consolation, and the Holy Spirit was on him. **26** It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he saw the Lord's Messiah. **27** Guided by the Spirit, he entered the temple. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform for him what was customary under the law, **28** Simeon took him up in his arms, praised God, and said, **29** "Now, Master, you can dismiss your servant in peace, as you promised. **30** For my eyes have seen your salvation. **31** You have prepared it in the presence of all peoples—**32** a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory to your people Israel." **33** His father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. **34** Then Simeon blessed them and told his mother Mary, "Indeed, this child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed—**35** and a sword will pierce your own soul—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."



Simeon was a man who loved God very much. At some point in Simeon's life, the Holy Spirit told him that he would see the Messiah before he died. We do not know how long Simeon waited to see "Israel's consolation" with his own eyes (v. 25). Maybe a matter of days; maybe decades.

Simeon had to wait to see the promised Messiah, and Israel would have to wait three decades more for their salvation to be fulfilled in Jesus's death and resurrection. Yet Jesus came to give light and hope to all men—Jew and Gentile alike.

What are you faithfully and prayerfully waiting for God to accomplish in this season of your life?

Simeon's reaction to seeing the Messiah is one of the most poignant moments we see in the early life of Jesus. Simeon was so satisfied that he said the Lord could "dismiss [him] in peace," meaning death, because his entire life had been leading up to that glorious moment (v. 29). Nothing could surpass the satisfaction Simeon received in seeing God incarnate, the consolation of Israel and hope for the Gentiles—in short, God's salvation for the whole world.

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

SALVATION: Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Yet along with the promise of Simeon's words came a dire warning. Up to this point, Mary had only heard of the salvation and hope that Jesus would bring. But Simeon warned of the opposition Jesus would face during His ministry, for which Mary too would suffer as His mother (vv. 34-35). Simeon's prophecy echoed Isaiah's prophecy of the Servant of the Lord: "But he was pierced because of our rebellion, crushed because of our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5).

How have you experienced suffering as a part of God's call on your life?

SERVING GOD MEANS RECOGNIZING JESUS AS GOD'S PROMISED REDEEMER.

Underline Anna's two responses to having seen Jesus in the temple.

36 There was also a prophetess, Anna, a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well along in years, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, **37** and was a widow for eighty-four years. She did not leave the temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayers. **38** At that very moment, she came up and began to thank God and to speak about him to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

“One immediate fruit of patience is peace: A sweet tranquility of mind, a serenity of spirit that can never be found except where patience reigns. And this peace often rises into joy. Even in the midst of various temptations, those who are enabled in patience to possess their souls can witness not only quietness of spirit but triumph and exultation.”¹

—John Wesley (1703–1791)

Key Concept: Jesus is the only hope of salvation for the whole world.



Perhaps no sooner had Simeon returned the infant Jesus to His mother's arms, we see another witness to Jesus's messiahship enter the scene. In the first couple of verses, we get a glimpse of Anna's godly character and devotion to the Lord's service. No doubt many religious people overlooked the birth of Jesus and didn't see anything out of the ordinary in this firstborn Son brought for dedication, but Anna was not one of them.

Anna was an older widow. Though she lost her husband at a young age, God had blessed her with many years of life, and she had devoted those decades to the Lord's service. She could have allowed her age or widowhood to be an excuse to focus on her own needs. Yet day and night, she served God in the temple with fasting and prayers.

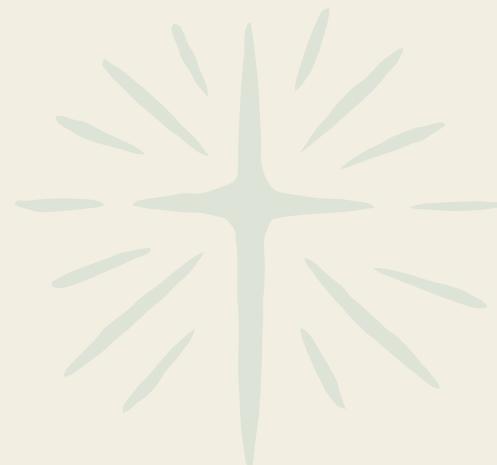
How have you seen those older than you serve the Lord with devotion?

Anna's loss of her husband and the subsequent difficulties of being a widow did not deter her from continuing to be faithful to the Lord, nor did these experiences hinder her ability to see the salvation of God coming into the world. Her devotion to God and His promises

was rooted in the faith she had in the Word of God in spite of the sum of her circumstances.

Much in the same way the shepherds worshiped and then became proclaimers, we see the same sort of rhythm from Anna. She first thanked God at the sight of the Messiah, and then she told anyone she could about the good news she had witnessed with her own eyes (Luke 2:38).

Why do worship and proclamation (evangelism) go together?



GOSPEL CONNECTION



At the temple, even as an infant, Jesus was recognized as the Messiah, the One who would fulfill God's promise of salvation.

FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

Read Luke 2:25-38. Record ways each person below showed their faith in God's promises and how faith was revealed in their obedience.

	FAITH	OBEDIENCE
SIMEON		
ANNA		

How might Simeon's and Anna's testimonies about the infant Jesus have encouraged Mary and Joseph?

How can we follow in the faithful and obedient steps of Simeon and Anna?

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HEAD

What are some things we can do to help us patiently wait on the Lord?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE



Read and pray through Psalm 27. Thank the Lord for the gift of Jesus—our light and our salvation (v. 1). Pray for boldness to share the gospel of Jesus in the world (vv. 2-3). And finally, pray for patience to wait on the Lord for the fulfillment of all His promises (vv. 13-14).



HEART

How does the gift of Jesus for our salvation address the distractions and discouragement in your heart?

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HANDS

How will you encourage an older or younger believer in their faith this week?

