**My Eyes Have Seen Your Salvation**

Luke 2:21-40

Key verse 30, 31

“For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:”

**Introduction)**

People are prone to complain about unfavorable situations. But today’s passage shows victorious people such as Jesus’ parents, Simeon, and Anna. May the Lord help us to be more than conquerors. May the Lord help us to make a personal decision to live by faith to the end of our lives.

**1. Read verses 21 - 24. What happens to the child on the eighth day? (21; Lev 12:2-3) What else do Joseph and Mary do for him? (22-24; Lev 12:4-8; Exodus 13:2, 12) What do you think about the way that Mary and Joseph followed Moses’ law?**

**1.1 Read verses 21 - 24.**

21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived. 22 When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2%3A21-40&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24997a)]), 24 and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

**1.2 What happens to the child on the eighth day? (21; Lev 12:2-3)**

* Leviticus 12:2-3 ““Say to the Israelites: ‘A woman who becomes pregnant and gives birth to a son will be ceremonially unclean for seven days, just as she is unclean during her monthly period. 3 On the eighth day the boy is to be circumcised.”
* A woman who gives birth to a son will be ceremonially unclean for 7 days.
* Mary may have suffered by baby blues due to the first delivery.
	+ Just a few days after giving birth, mom may feel moody, weepy and irritable. This is called the baby blues. It’s probably the last thing you expected to feel after the joy and elation of having your baby.
	+ The baby blues are so common that they are considered to be normal. As many as eight in 10 mums experience some changes in their mood after giving birth. It is due to increased level of adrenalin.
	+ You may feel:
		- worried about your baby’s health, even though he’s fine
		- anxious
		- unable to concentrate
		- tired, yet unable to sleep
		- tearful, without knowing why
	+ You’ll probably feel your worst between the third day and fifth day after your baby is born.
	+ God is mindful of mom’s natural hormonal change.
* Circumcision: **Genesis 17** shows how it came out.
	+ 1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. **2** Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.”
	+ **9** Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. **10** This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. **11** You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. **12** For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. **13** Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. **14** Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”
	+ **23** On that very day Abraham took his son Ishmael and all those born in his household or bought with his money, every male in his household, and circumcised them, as God told him. **24** Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, **25** and his son Ishmael was thirteen; **26** Abraham and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on that very day. **27** And every male in Abraham’s household, including those born in his household or bought from a foreigner, was circumcised with him.
* The purpose of circumcision is to deny our desire to live as Abram/Sarai and to accept God’s will and live as Abraham and Sarah(a father and a mother of all nations).
	+ Each person craves to enjoy the life of an ordinary man with petty desires. But God wants us to be his chosen people with God’s promises and covenant.
	+ Abraham needed to consecrate himself to be a covenant member of God’s family.
	+ We must have a circumcision of our hearts if we want to be covenant members in God’s family.
* Romans 2:28-29 read,
	+ **28** A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. **29** No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and **circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit,** not by the written code. Such a person’s praise is not from other people, but from God.
* Romans 12:1-2 also read,
	+ Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by **the renewing of your mind.** Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.
* **\*\*he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.**
	+ It must have been hard for Joseph and Mary to name him Jesus like the case of Zechariah and Elizabeth.
	+ However they obeyed and named him Jesus instead of Joseph Jr.
	+ So from the beginning, they overcame their human situation and obeyed God’s command in terms of naming him Jesus.

**1.3 What else do Joseph and Mary do for him? (22-24; Lev 12:4-8; Exodus 13:2, 12)**

* Lev 12:4-8:  4Then the woman must wait thirty-three days to be purified from her bleeding. She must not touch anything sacred or go to the sanctuary until the days of her purification are over. 5 If she gives birth to a daughter, for two weeks the woman will be unclean, as during her period. Then she must wait sixty-six days to be purified from her bleeding. 6 “‘**When the days of her purification for a son or daughter are over, she is to bring to the priest at the entrance to the tent of meeting a year-old lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a dove for a sin offering.** 7 He shall offer them before the Lord to make atonement for her, and then she will be ceremonially clean from her flow of blood. “‘These are the regulations for the woman who gives birth to a boy or a girl. 8 But if she cannot afford a lamb, she is to bring two doves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. In this way the priest will make atonement for her, and she will be clean.’”
* Exodus 13:2, 12“Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether human or animal.” 12 you are to give over to the Lord the first offspring of every womb. All the firstborn males of your livestock belong to the Lord.”
* if she cannot afford a lamb, she is to bring two doves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering.
	+ Jesus was born into a poor family although He is the Son of heavenly Father.
* In **2 Corinthians 8:9**, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”
	+ God had sent his one and only Son in the likeness of sinful flesh like his brothers.
	+ It was a great humiliation. Jesus took upon himself the impurity of his people in order to save them from their guilt and sin.
* **Hebrew 2:17** reads,  **“**For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. **18** Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.”

**1.4 What do you think about the way that Mary and Joseph followed Moses’ law?**

* Behind these holy ceremonies and regulations is a confession of faith by the parents that their children are not their own, but the children of God.
	+ Likewise we as parents must present our children to God to be His own possession and covenant members of God’s family.
	+ We are praying for this nation to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

**2. Read verses 25 - 32. Who was Simeon and what had happened to him? (25-26) How was he led to meet the child Jesus? (27) How did Simeon praise God? (28-32) What do you think we can learn from Simeon and what he says when he is praising God?**

**2.1 Read verses 25 - 32.**

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. 27 Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: 29 “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismissyour servant in peace. 30 For my eyes have seen your salvation, 31which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”

**2.2 Who was Simeon and what had happened to him? (25-26)**

* Simeon kept his faith before God.
* He was righteous and devout. In that dark time, people were fearful and struggled hard to survive with no meaning.
* He was not stood out from the people. He was an ordinary old man. But he was very special man before God.
* He had God’s hope in his heart. He had a personal relationship with God.
* He is a sincere layman moved by the Holy Spirit.
* He was waiting for the consolidation of Israel.
* He never gave up God’s hope upon the people. Never giving up spirit is very important in serving God. By faith he kept his prayer topic for the Messiah to come to the end of his lifetime.
* It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Messiah.
* God is with those who pray and works in them with the Holy Spirit.

**2.3 How was he led to meet the child Jesus? (27)**

The Holy Spirit personally led him to meet the child Jesus.

**2.4 How did Simeon praise God? (28-32)**

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismissyour servant in peace. 30 For my eyes have seen your salvation, 31which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”

 **2.5 What do you think we can learn from Simeon and what he says when he is praising God?**

you may now dismiss your servant in peace

Simeon is relieved from his duty to wait for the Messiah.

He mentions about God’s salvation, which God prepared in the sight of all nations.

A light for revelation to the Gentiles

God chose Israel to be the light for the Gentiles.

 **Isaiah 49:6,**

he says: “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant

 to restore the tribes of Jacob

 and bring back those of Israel I have kept.

I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,

 that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

One thing we can learn from Simeon’s spiritual song is about his perspective.

He was a mediocre citizen of small nation under the rule of Roman Empire.

Like other people, he could have despaired and complained about the dark situation.

But he had spiritual insight to see through what God is doing to redeem mankind.

He knew where he was standing at from God’s history.

He saw God’s people from God’s point of view.

Rather than being fatalistic or sorrowful, he praised the Lord.

It reminds us of Daniel 12: 7,

**“The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, “It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.”**

May the Lord raise up many righteous and devout men and women in this generation like Simeon.

and the glory of his people Israel

God’s people Israel were chosen and privileged for the glory of God.

Although the Israelites wandered from one place to another, they depended on God and put their hope in the Lord. They were blessed to see Jesus born among them according to the promise given to David.

**3. Read verses 33 - 35. What happens when Mary and Joseph hear what Simeon says? (33) What does Simeon do to them? (34a) What does Simeon say about the child to Mary? (34b, 35) How might Mary’s life become difficult in the future?**

**3.1 Read verses 33 - 35.**

33 The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, 35 so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

**3.2 What happens when Mary and Joseph hear what Simeon says? (33)**

The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him.

**3.3 What does Simeon do to them? (34a)**

Then Simeon blessed them

**3.4 What does Simeon say about the child to Mary? (34b, 35)**

“This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, 35 so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel.

Jesus is the rock of salvation!

The destiny of all men hinges upon how they see Jesus.

**3.5 How might Mary’s life become difficult in the future?**

Jesus’ life of mission would be the cause of his mother’s pain. Especially his death on the cross would be like a sword piercing her very soul.

**4. Read verses 36 - 40. Who is Anna? (36, 37a) What had she been doing in the temple for a long time? (37b) What inspiration can you find from Anna’s life? What does she say about the child to Joseph and Mary? (38) When do Joseph and Mary return to Galilee? (39) What happens to the child as he grows? (40)**

**4.1 Read verses 36 - 40.**

36 There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37 and then was a widow until she was eighty-four.She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. 38 Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. 39 When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. 40 And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

**4.2 Who is Anna? (36, 37a)**

It could have completed Luke’s writing at the story of an old man named Simeon. But Luke further illuminated an old woman named Anna.

Considering her life story, she could have been fallen into statistics in terms of her sorrowful life story.

Amazingly enough, she had lived a devout life before about 6 decades.

It reminds us of our daily bread from Joel 3:2, 14,

“I will gather all nations

 and bring them down to **the Valley of Jehoshaphat.**

There I will put them on trial

 for what they did to my inheritance, my people Israel,

because they scattered my people among the nations

 and divided up my land.”

“Multitudes, multitudes

 **in the valley of decision!**

For the day of the Lord is near

  **in the valley of decision.”**

The valley of Jehoshaphat indicates of the day of judgement (Jehoshaphat means “the Lord judges”).

However it is God who does not decide our destiny but man who decide to live for Jesus right now.

Anna must have made a decision at some point of time after becoming a widow to live for the glory of God.

When she had such a serious decision, she lived a victorious life before God.

**4.3 What had she been doing in the temple for a long time? (37b)**

 She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

**4.4 What inspiration can you find from Anna’s life? What does she say about the child to Joseph and Mary? (38)**

Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Although it is the momentum of meeting the child Jesus, she valued it highly in that her personal decision of faith to live for Jesus turned out to be the right thing she had ever done.

She gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Israel.

She shared the news with others in the temple about Jesus.

May the Lord help us to overcome ourselves and pray for the redemptive work by faith.

**4.5 When do Joseph and Mary return to Galilee? (39)**

When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.

**4.6 What happens to the child as he grows? (40)**

40 And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

**In conclusion:**

 Through this passage we could learn how to present our precious children to our living God. Also we learned how to live victorious lives through two old people. No matter how dark our generation might be, it is possible with God to live by faith to the end. Help us to live in accordance with the living words of God like obedient parents of the child Jesus. Amen.

**On word: For my eyes have seen your salvation!**