

30 Days Together
“Immanuel - God With Us”
#30daystogether

Day #29 – Dec. 24th

Text: Luke 2:21-40

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.

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 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), 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.”

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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

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

The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. 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, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

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, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. 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.

When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

Devotion: Tim & Jen Haberling

Throughout Luke 2:21-40, we feel incredible hope in the heaviness of waiting, exactly what Advent is all about. God waiting until such a time as this to send His Son to earth as a babe. Mary and Joseph waited eight days to name Jesus, then waited even longer to take Jesus to the temple; and prior to this scene, they waited expectantly based on the messages from the LORD through the angels. Simeon had been waiting, full of hope, to meet his Savior. Anna waited in the temple, worshipping, fasting, and praying. It’s as if the whole world were holding its breath, waiting for the surprising future God had planned.

All of these examples show us hope in the promises of God. All of these folks anticipated a future that is greater than their realities – not tied to their current circumstances, but based on the past faithfulness of God, they were hopeful for the future He had in store for them. They were expectantly waiting for a Savior, their King, for Jesus.

As we experience this Silent Night, eager to celebrate the birth that changed the world, we also wait, eagerly anticipating the future return of our King, who restores all things, including our broken world. Our bold hope is not optimism based on odds or circumstances; it's hope in a living Savior who comes into our world and who will come again.

REFLECTION:

- How might the faithfulness of God through your life given you hope for the future?
- What gives you strength and patience during times of waiting?
- How does the tension and expectation of waiting turn your eyes to Jesus and His promises?

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord, help us wait, with our eyes on You and all the incredible ways You surprise us through Your faithfulness. In our expectation of Your coming again, give us hope grounded in Your promises. Holy Spirit, speak to us like you did Mary, Joseph, Simeon and Anna. Guide our worship, our prayers, and our anticipation to be honoring of You. Thank you, Lord, for your son Jesus, who gives us hope and joy and peace. Thank you, Jesus, for your boundless love and salvation. Praise to you, our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace! Amen.