



Our Hope is Here
with Pastor Joel McQueen

Simeon's Song: Luke 2:22-38

INTRODUCTION

Regardless of our holiday experience, as human beings we are "HOPE – ers."

Emily Dickinson wrote of HOPE:

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers – that perches in the soul – and sings the tune
without words – and never stops at all.*

We can not help but HOPE. What are you hoping for? What are you waiting for?

THE NARRATIVE CONTEXT

Scripture: Luke 2:22-38

In the 1st century, in Israel, thousands were coming to Herod's Temple bringing their sacrifices, bringing their prayers, bringing their hopes for a better world.

Isaiah had written 700 years prior:

*"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry
to her that her warfare is ended..."*
–Isaiah 40:1-5

Many faithful Israelite believers were hoping for the Messiah and the Consolation of Israel.

THE CHARACTERS

Here in the Temple, we meet two of these faithful Israelite "hope-ers."

Simeon (verses 25-26)
Just and Devout

Listened to/walked with the Holy Spirit

Personal promise from the Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah

Anna (verses 36-37)
A prophetess

Of a great age (either 84 or 105+)

A Prayer Warrior

THE NARRATIVE SET-UP

Why were Mary, Joseph, and Jesus in the Temple? (verses 22-24)

Exodus 13:1-2 and Leviticus 12 required the firstborn sons of Israel to be dedicated to the Lord and for a mother to offer a sacrifice after childbirth in order to be ritually clean.

Jesus was born, under the Law, to fulfill the Law and establish the New Covenant prophesied by Jeremiah, not to abolish the Law.

Mary and Joseph were likely very poor (verse 24)

In Leviticus 12, the normal sacrifice is a lamb and to offer a turtledove and pigeon is the exception for those who could not afford a lamb.

Mary, Joseph, and Jesus did NOT look like anything special.

THE MAIN ACTION

The Miracle Story (verses 27, 38):

Simeon and Anna are both led by the Spirit, at the exact right time, to recognize the baby Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises, Israel's Messiah.

Simeon's Song – the "Nunc Dimittis" is rich with allusions to Isaiah:

"My eyes have seen your salvation." (See *Isaiah 40:5 and 52:10*)

"A light for revelation to the Gentiles." (See *Isaiah 49:6*)

"Glory for your people Israel." (See *Isaiah 60:1-2*)

Simeon is saying, "NOW, our Hope is Here." This baby is the Messiah!

THE MAIN POINT

Jesus is Israel's promised Messiah. Jesus is God's plan of salvation for everyone! (Verses 30-32)

And yet, universal though the offer may be, it is coupled with the fact that those who reject Jesus come under judgement. (Verses 33-34)

Everyone will rise or fall based on what they do with Jesus.

Nobody gets a pass, not even Mary.

Whether people accept or reject Jesus as their Savior, reveals what is in their hearts.

THE CONCLUSION

Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried, and He rose again from the dead (1 Cor 15:1-5). That's the GOOD NEWS! Jesus is the fulfillment of all our hopes in the holiday season.

Don't wait to come to Jesus for forgiveness of your sin and for new life– your Hope is here, NOW! His Spirit is with us. (*John 16:7-11*)

Simeon and Anna recognized the fulfillment of Hope in the face of a poor little baby – Jesus, the Messiah. Are you longing for Jesus, Messiah, to come again? Are you hoping in Him?

THE CHALLENGE

Discuss with your family or a friend one way you are going to cultivate HOPE in Jesus in 2022!

Examples:

Giving something up (like TV or social media) and dedicating that time to prayer.

Getting involved in missions (like the Perspectives class) and learning about what God is doing worldwide.

Sharing the Good News about Jesus with those who do not know Him.

Read through the whole Bible in 2022!

