**“Salvation Seen”**

Psalm 111

Exodus 13:1-3a, 11-15

Colossians 3:12-17

Luke 2:22-40

 Christmas 1, Dec. 26, 2021

“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for **my eyes have seen Your Salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples**, a Light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel.”

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

Now that the gift wrapping is likely in all of our dumpsters for the Christmas event, **Who the “Child is” that we did all of this for** may be (for some) the **only lingering issue**. In just **1 day**, the Church Year ventures **40 days hence** to **learn more about that**. What’s been parent’s and shepherd’s exposure announced by angels now becomes some other faithful people prodded by the Holy Spirit. **A man named Simeon** we **still hear from**, the liturgy of **our own experience with the Christ** **using his words to express ours**. The fact is: in this baby, God came to His people, physically showing-up and taken to His Father’s temple. And He **is** (as Simeon reminds the whole world), **the “fall or rising of many” / a “sign opposed”**, and yet **“Salvation” to those not “opposed”** … a “mixed bag” He is even still today to a world that we’re familiar with.

**Text**

On the 40th day past the one that we celebrated yesterday, Jesus and mom **fulfilled the Law** by **presenting themselves at the Temple in Jerusalem for the Rite of Purification and Presentation**. **Mother** (after childbirth) was to **be proclaimed cleansed** from the bloody experience of childbirth. **Firstborn Son** was to be **presented and consecrated to God as we’re still supposed to be doing in our time**. The **bloody sacrifice** of two turtledoves or pigeons was to be, then, a **minimal appropriate offering** **to secure this blessed cleaning**. But the **blood of the baby, Himself, is still what that all pointed to, and the only sacrifice appropriate to secure any of our purification**.

The Old Testament is fulfilled in the New constantly in Christ Jesus as the anticipation of faithful people **here** is satisfied. Simeon “**waited for the consolation of Israel**” and Anna (with “others) “**waited for the redemption of Jerusalem**”. This **active anticipation** is Old Testament saving faith by very definition. And these 2 represented **all in that posture**. From this moment onward the buzz of the Temple had to be that **the wait was over: the New Covenant in the Messiah’s arrival was the baby that got presented on that day of consecration**.

See, **what Jesus (even as a child) meant to believers was** “**EVERYTHING**”. **Simeon could “die in peace” then, Anna spoke-of-it “giving thanks”, and “the thoughts of many hearts would be revealed” because of God’s Christ arriving as promised**.

And “the thoughts of many hearts gets revealed **in our day?** Holiday “let down” may be part of it, back to normal church attendance may reveal the devotion of the heart, radio stations and TV channels move to other topics, store shelves re-gain their seasonal aisle space, and décor goes from colorful and light-filled back to **another** business oriented accent. Work resumes and school-days return. **“Business as usual” gets defined** … and that by a culture’s “**business** **as** **usual**”.

**We**, though, have **celebrated** Christmas for a **beyond-Christmas reason**. “The child **grew** and **became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon Him**”. And **that’s our point of celebration**. It’s **why believers bask in an afterglow that doesn’t dim: because Christmas put into motion the rest**.

You heard **about PEACE** in the Christmas message. Angels said that there **is** (in Christ) “**PEACE** **on earth and GOODWILL toward men with whom God is pleased**”. Well, it’s that **PEACE** that got **won by the grown-up Jesus, with God the Father’s favor being upon Him yet sacrificing Him as the One perfect / spotless yet shedding divine blood to pardon every sin confessed**.

Simeon called that what it was: “**Salvation**”, and he was **Holy Spirit led to do that in that divine Child**. And he announced his **appreciation** of God’s faithfulness in delivering Salvation in the Savior and letting him actually see Him-promised with his own eyes before death, also acknowledging **our** “**seeing**”**: “You’ve prepared, God, this Salvation** **in the face of all peoples**” … that **includes us**.

## Application

The rest is, just, **our response to all of it:** **“the thoughts of our hearts revealed” because of the Good News**. **Simeon** was “devout” and practicing “righteousness”, **Anna** faithful in the Temple and “did not depart from it” the text tells us, “worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day, giving thanks after seeing her Salvation in the Christ child and speaking of Him to all others so waiting for Him”. **We** will resume **our** “business as usual”, but with that “**usual**” maybe **continuing to be developed through the aftermath of the Christmas fact**.

**“What Child is This” to you**? That’s still yet to be **fully explored and built upon**. **GROWTH** is **the way God intends it to be**. ….

There’s a prayer (actually our Collect for today) that asks God’s Holy Spirit to **direct our growth:** “Grant, O God, that **we may ever be alive in Him” (growing more and more in that ‘life’ each day), and all that” in Him who made Himself to be like us**”. “**Let the PEACE OF CHRIST rule in our hearts**” our Epistle begs of the Lord to do in us. “**Let the** **Word of Christ dwell in us richly**”.

It’s appropriate that, through this **divine Word** (presented to us even in the forms of bread and wine in our **Meal of** **Holy Communion with Christ’s saving body and blood**). We’ll respond Simeon did because **no clearer sight of Salvation (and taste of it) can we have in this life**. We get **the gift that is shown us to see of everything from the Annunciation through Christmas then onto an Ascension after Good Friday and Easter**.

**Simeon** “took the Child up into his arms and blessed God”. **We** “take and eat and take and drink and receive forgiveness, life and the Salvation of Christ. Our appreciation and praise is the thanksgiving of a “eucharist”. “Lord, now you are letting your servant (**us**) **depart in PEACE, according to Your Word**; for **our eyes** have **seen (even tasted)** Your salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a Light for revelation to the Gentiles (**us**), and for glory to Your people Israel (**also us by faith**).” **For this**, Father, we “thank You that for His sake **You have given us pardon and PEACE in the Sacrament**.” In +Jesus’ name. Amen.

May the **PEACE OF GOD keep** your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.