

—{1}. **Luke 2:29–32** **A New Babe, A New Year**

A. Introduction

1. Today, December 30, is the last Sunday of 2007, and with it
 - a. we conclude this series of messages on the incarnation
 - (A) of God entering the world as Light – Pastor Willard
 - (B) of God declared by Jesus Christ – Pastor Fast
 - (C) of the Son of God being born to the praise of God
 - (D) of God entering humanity
 - (E) and, today, our title is (in its longer form), ‘with a new babe comes a new year and a new age for mankind’
 - b. December 25th is now past
 - (A) for many, thoughts of the Bethlehem Babe have ended
 - (B) the celebrations and festivities have wound down
 - (C) the remains of the turkey have found their way
 - (1) into casseroles
 - (2) into sandwiches
 - (3) and, along with the bones, into the stewing pot in preparation for soup for the cold days ahead
 - (D) the wrappings of the presents have been disposed of (for us, the gaily coloured cloth bags, especially sewn for holding presents, have been set aside for next year)
 - (E) the socks, shirts, ties and sweaters have found their places in dressers or hung in cupboards
 - (F) so, as it were, one age – the year 2007 – has ended
 - c. in less than 40 hours, a new year, a new age will begin
 - (A) just one week after Christmas
 - (B) 2008 will enter – brand new, spanking clean
 - (C) and complete with an extra day to boot!
 - (D) a clean slate on which we each can write a fresh story

2. so also, the story of the Babe in Bethlehem
 - a. did not end with the return of the shepherds to the fields
 - b. that was only a beginning
 - c. the story continues with Mary pondering their words
 - d. and, in keeping with the ancient covenant that God gave to Abraham many centuries before, we read in Luke 2:21, “[And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was *then* called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.](#)”
 - e. thus, a week after His Birth, the Incarnate Son of God, there is ushered in a new age, a new era
 - (A) accomplished by this babe now named Jesus – Saviour
 - (B) fulfilling each and every demand of the law
 - (C) so that He should be the spotless Lamb of God
 - (D) the perfect sacrifice for my sin and yours
 - (E) a sacrifice whereby we can enter through faith by His grace into a brand new, spanking clean relationship with God – of eternal life – just as God promised before the times of the past ages (Titus 1:2)
 - (F) A New Babe – A New Year – A New Era for Mankind
 - (G) the obedience of the Incarnate Son of God continued:
 - f. as, after 40 days, we read in the next verse in Luke 2:22, “[And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord](#)”
 - g. at which point Mary and Joseph would redeem Jesus at the price of 5 shekels of silver (Numbers 18:15-16)
 - h. and an offering would be made for Mary’s purification
 - i. this is what brought these three to the temple, to meeting Simeon which is recorded in today’s Scripture reading, « Luke 2:25–40 »
 - j. the words spoken by Simeon are
 - (A) prophetic, foretelling the suffering to come; and,
 - (B) preaching, proclaiming the message of salvation;
 - (C) as such, they describe with personal application
 - (D) the character of the New Era for a Man, for a Woman, for a Child; that were being ushered in by

this New Babe, God's dwelling amongst men

(E) this is truth that we can take into the New Year, 2008, which lies before us.

(F) lets spend a few moments looking at this man Simeon, then at the salvation message which he proclaimed

B. Simeon

1. it is easy for traditions and assumptions to become accepted as Biblical truth – Dave Coulter passed on a booklet of Christmas trivia and I have only had time to scan the questions briefly
 - a. but I did notice some items that illustrate this:
 - (A) the assumption that the angels sang to the shepherds
 - (B) the assumption that Gabriel is an archangel
 - (C) the assumption that it was Gabriel who appeared to Joseph because he appeared to Zechariah and Mary
 - b. and, while these assumptions might be true, none of them can be confirmed by the words of Scripture.
2. so with Simeon, it is easy to make assumptions
 - a. first, that he was a priest because it was in the temple that he met Mary and Joseph and the baby, Jesus
 - b. second, that he was old
 - (A) mainly because of his willingness to face death
 - (B) but also because of the association of this story with that following of Anna, the prophetess, who was, in fact, extremely old
 - c. but though these both may indeed be true, neither of them is stated in the Bible
 - d. so, just what do we know about Simeon?
3. well, what we do know has a bearing on the message he gives
 - a. first, we know that he was '[righteous and devout](#)', verse 25
 - (A) now we quite rightly deny that a person can ever gain acceptance with God through doing good works, by keeping the law of Moses: "[because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.](#)" (Romans 3:20)
 - (B) yet we find in Scripture men and women similarly described as '[righteous](#)' or '[devout](#)', such as

Cornelius, Zacharias and Elizabeth his wife

- (1) just, living in practical righteousness to fellow-men
- (2) devout, obedient and fervent in worship
- (3) the 11th chapter of the book of Hebrews explains what made this possible: faith

b. next, he was 'looking for the consolation of Israel'

(A) this is one of a number of phrases, such as

- (1) the salvation of Israel
- (2) the hope of Israel
- (3) used to express the same eager desire, namely,

(B) that he expectantly awaited the promised Messiah

(C) this was not uncommon at that time; many so waited

(D) but Simeon was different: "... it had been revealed to him ... that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." (verse 26)

c. third and finally, 'the Holy Spirit was upon him'

(A) he had a special anointing of the Holy Spirit by God

(B) as shown in the revelation he had about seeing Christ

(C) as shown in that the Holy Spirit had impelled him to come to the temple

(D) and as shown in his recognition that this child, Jesus, was the Lord's Christ, the promised Messiah

d. so the words that Simeon speaks are those of a godly man who walked with God and under the direction of the Holy Spirit; they are prophetic truth

4. Simeon describes the new era ushered in by the coming of this Child, the salvation age as it were; salvation that for him

a. was Promised

b. was Personal

c. bringing Peace

d. embodied in a Person

e. was Prepared

f. was Pervasive

g. would suffer Persecution: in the Christ, in Mary, in others

h. let's consider some of these, but not necessarily in order

C. Salvation is embodied a Person

1. look at Simeon's words in verse 30:

a. 'For my eyes have seen Your salvation'

b. what was Simeon holding in his arms?

c. what was he looking at? ... what did he behold?

d. did he see great hosts led by God sweeping away the army of Rome and freeing Israel politically?

e. no; he was looking at a 6-week old baby, cradled in his arms; helpless, maybe even tired or hungry, maybe asleep

f. and by the revelation of the Holy Spirit of God and by the eye which sees spiritual truth by faith

g. he saw God's salvation

2. because salvation is God Himself as well as a work of God:

a. "The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him." (Exodus 15:2)

b. "The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defence of my life; Whom shall I dread?" (Psalms 27:1)

c. "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

3. because salvation is embodied in the Person of Jesus Christ

a. we can see that our works of self-righteousness are totally useless in trying to gain God's acceptance

b. and we can see that we can have assurance of salvation because it depends upon His almighty power, not ourselves

D. Salvation was Promised

1. for Simeon this was also very Personal Promise

a. the promise was very explicit

b. he should live to see the Lord's Christ

- c. and deemed this a very special privilege
2. but there were promises of the Messiah which were broader
 - a. applying to many peoples, "The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them." (Isaiah 9:2)
 - b. Jesus applied Isaiah 61:1 & what follows to Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favourable year of the LORD ... To comfort all who mourn, To grant those who mourn *in Zion*, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. ..."
3. and with this salvation was a Promise of Peace
 - a. for Simeon this, too, was most personal
 - (A) his heart's desire satisfied by holding the Christ-child
 - (B) this man who had walked with God in life
 - (C) now in complete peace was continuing that journey through the gateway of death
 - b. Peace is promised, too, when Christ enters one's life
 - (A) He is the 'Prince of Peace,' Isaiah 9:6
 - (B) "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Too* little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity. ... This One will be *our* peace. ..." (Micah 5:2, 5)
 - (C) "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," (Romans 5:1)
 - (D) this truth we shall explore further in the coming weeks as we shall be looking at Paul's letter to the Ephesians
4. for the fulfilment of these, and many other promises, Israel and the world was waiting; and is waiting as 2008 approaches

E. This Salvation was Prepared

1. In the wisdom, goodness and foreknowledge of God
 - a. in His sovereign power, He is a God of preparations
 - b. nothing happens by chance; nothing is unprovided for
 - c. history is not, as some would teach, a series of mistakes and a series of mankind's actions to which God reacts
 - d. He is the God that in Isaiah 46:10 is "Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'"
 - e. when we look at Ephesians, I think that we shall discover that the church is not a second-best choice because the Jews rejected their Messiah but rather God's eternal plan
2. and the salvation that is found in Christ was Prepared
 - a. speaking of the redemption we have, Peter says that it is "... with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you" (1 Peter 1:19-20 NAS)
 - b. so that, "... when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (Galatians 4:4-5 NAS)
 - c. and "Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, 'sacrifice and offering you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; ... then I said, 'behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of me) to do your will, O God.'"" (Hebrews 10:5, 7 NAS)
 - d. in that body, Jesus Christ offered a sacrifice, so that those believing in His name, a prepared people, will one day go to the prepared place – "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." (John 14:2 NKJV)

F. Well we have not exhausted Simeon's words

1. but let me conclude with this truth: the salvation that God has prepared, that is found only in Jesus Christ, is Pervasive
 - a. it isn't some local cult, conjectured by a few people, off in some remote region

- b. but this message of salvation is for all mankind
 - c. it is universal in its scope, pervasive in its extent
 - (A) 'Your Salvation' verse 30, who is Jesus Christ
 - (B) is the same as the 'which (or maybe better, 'who') you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,' verse 31
 - d. this salvation, this Jesus, Bethlehem-babe, Nazareth-man
 - e. is both and one at the same time as ^{-(2)}}.
 - (A) this 'Light of revelation to the Gentiles'
 - (B) this 'Glory of Your people Israel'
2. for those outside the commonwealth of Israel
- a. those who, unlike the Jews, were not 'entrusted with the oracles of God' (Romans 3:2)
 - b. those who, as we read before from Isaiah 9:2, were living in darkness: the darkness of sin, the darkness of not knowing the one true God, the darkness of fear and death
 - c. Jesus Christ, Light of the world, God's salvation
 - d. is come to open their eyes that they may be saved
3. for the people of Israel
- a. those who through God's choosing were His people
 - b. who named Him as their God, but lived as if He were not
 - c. this Jesus, salvation of Israel
 - d. is the Glory that they have claimed to worship
 - e. the Glory that redeemed them from Egypt by power
 - f. the Glory that was His Presence first in the tabernacle and at a later time in the Temple
 - g. Now the Lord, whom they seek, has suddenly come into the temple of His body to dwell amongst them
4. God's salvation in Jesus Christ, prophecies Simeon, is for both Jew and Gentile; it is pervasive, for all mankind

G. May this pervade all of you through faith, to know, as did Simeon, the peace that passes all understanding that comes from this salvation, this Saviour, from being in Christ, both today and through the coming years. I welcome you, if you are concerned, to speak to me about this or other spiritual matters.

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Various other English versions of the Holy Bible may be used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in {braces}. The versions are identified as:

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| ASV | American Standard Version of 1901 |
| AV | Authorized (King James) Version |
| ERV | The Revised Version of 1885 |
| NAS | New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation |
| NIV | New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society |
| NKJV | New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers |
| NLT | 1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust |
| NRSV | New Revised Standard Version © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. |
| PHIL | New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips |
| RSV | Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. |
| WEY | The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth |

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, www.holwick.com. Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick's database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. Note that I disagree, here, with the NIV translation, and with the NAS and AV's unnecessary and distracting insertion of 'the' before 'glory,' though being aware of the arguments for each. Grammatically, 'light' and 'glory' are in apposition to 'which' and thus to 'salvation'.