

Sabbath Rest
Simeon
By Robin Davenport, Guest Writer

Today's Treasure

At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, "Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!"
Luke 2:25-32 NLT

I have always been amazed that Simeon recognized Jesus as the Messiah when He was presented in the Temple at eight days old. Jesus had never spoken, performed a miracle, or declared Himself to be the Messiah. The scripture reveals some insight into how Simeon knew this baby was the Son of God. Simeon was righteous, devout, and eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. He was in communion with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was upon him and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. The Spirit led him to the Temple that very day when Joseph and Mary came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required. I love these words, "Simeon was there." He was right where God purposed for him to be. He was in the presence of Jesus.

Simeon praised God that he could now die in peace. The years of anticipation of the Messiah and communication with the Lord had culminated as his eyes beheld God's salvation, light, and glory. He had seen God's salvation for all people! He had seen Jesus. Jesus brought such peace that Simeon could now enter his eternal Sabbath rest with no regrets or anxiety.

Simeon had learned the value of practicing Sabbath rest. How do I know that? He was righteous, devout, and in communion with the Holy Spirit. His focus was on the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue

Israel. Waiting is defined as the state where a person is ready and willing to receive all that is hoped for. Simeon was ready and willing to receive the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He knew that his eternal peace and salvation for the world was found in the eagerly anticipated arrival of the Messiah. He was reaping the harvest of practicing Sabbath rest. A time to be still and know that He is God.

LIFE GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

In our busy lives filled with activity and the pursuit of success, we forfeit the treasure of communication with the Lord. We miss his promptings to stop and listen. Our priorities get all jumbled up, and we focus on temporal things that have no eternal value. We get bogged down with weights of sin that make us feel dirty and guilty. We dismiss the promise of Jesus that He will return and set up his kingdom. We lose the awe of the resurrection and what it means for us and loved ones who have died in Jesus. We lose the beauty and peace of the secure eternal hope we have in our Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But if we practice Sabbath rest as Simeon did, we stop and listen when the Holy Spirit speaks to us. We know His voice, and we know where to be when He directs our paths. We are where Jesus is just as Simeon was there. We are aware and grateful that we live in the righteousness of Jesus. We cast off the weights of sin that so easily bog us down. We live in His presence and eagerly anticipate His return. And most of all, when our time comes to enter eternity, we can enter peacefully without regrets or anxiety. For we know that God's salvation has come to the world.

I recently listened to an interview Greta Van Susteren did with Rev. Billy Graham in 2011. Rev. Graham was 92 years old. He was asked if he had his time to do over again, if would he do anything differently. He replied, "Yes, I would study more, pray more, and travel less. I would take less speaking engagements. I took too many. If I had it to do over again, I would spend more time in meditation and prayer and telling the Lord how much I love him." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rhf3vat1jNU>

PRAYER

Father, Thank you for the gift of Sabbath rest. Help us to guard our time and our hearts so that we practice Sabbath rest. Help us to love You with all our heart, mind, and strength and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Thank You for making a way for us to be in Your presence and in communion with You. May we never take this gift for granted. Thank you for the gift of salvation and eternal life. May we never lose our

awe of what You have given to us. Thank you that when my time comes to enter eternity, I will enter peacefully because of Jesus.
In Jesus' name. Amen