

## “Christ Appeared”

### Luke 2

**25** 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. **26** It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. **27** 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, **28** Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

**29**

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

**30**

For my eyes have seen your salvation,

**31**

which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

**32**

a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of your people Israel.”

- Isn’t it interesting that we celebrate the birth of Jesus at the time of year when the days are the shortest...
- Sunrise is at 7:11 and sunset is at 4:42...
- If you love Summer, Winter can be almost depressing with how short the days are...
- People have been debating for years the actual birth day of Jesus. Wether his birthday is December 25th I don’t know; but one thing I do know, it is just like our God to show up in the darkest hour and coldest season...

## On that First Christmas:

### The Lord Appeared to Simeon who Anticipated seeing Him

#### **Vs. 26,27**

**25** 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. **26** It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. **27** Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts.

- I love this account of Simeon and how scripture describes him in these few verses.
- It says Simeon was righteous and devout.
- That He was waiting for the consolation (comforting) of Israel.
- The Holy Spirit was upon him.
- It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

Everything about Simeon is in perfect order:

- He was righteous and devout
- He was waiting for something to happen in Israel, a move of God
- The Holy Spirit was on him
- He Walked not by sight but was lead by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit allowed him to know that he would see Christ before his days were over.

#### **MSG**

“He was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel.”

*“Simeon may have known that there were rumors regarding the coming of the Messiah. The news of John the Baptist's birth and its meaning was widely publicized. The shepherds who heard the angelic*

*announcement may have kept temple flocks, and they may have reported what happened among the people of the temple.”*

**David Guzik**

- Regardless of the buzz about Jesus; it was all confirmation of what God had revealed to him long before...
- Now Simeon experiences the joy of seeing what God put in him come to pass.

### **Simeon Declared**

#### **Vs. 28-32**

**28** Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

**29** “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

**30** For my eyes have seen your salvation,

**31** which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

**32** a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of your people Israel.”

- It is a good to Anticipate what God can do...

#### **Isaiah 40:31**

but those who hope in the Lord  
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.

**Story:** When I was about 19 yrs old, a friend once came to me and asked me this; “Josh what is it you want from the Lord?”

- That question caused me to search my heart, what is it I wanted from the Lord... If he were to ask me that what would my response be...
- Often times we are excited for anything, but if we are not seeking God for something, how will we know when it comes...

- What would you say if the Lord asked you the question he asked the blind man in

**Mark 10:51** “What do you want me to do for you?”

## **John 16**

**23b** Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. **24** Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

- Once I figured out what it was; I set that in my heart and it stirred anticipation in my spirit and God began to move...

The Holy Spirit put anticipation in Simeon’s heart that he would see the Lord before he died and the Lord did that very thing for him...

## **That First Christmas:**

### **The Lord Appeared to Magi who were Looking for Him**

## **Matthew 2**

**1** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem **2** and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

- These Magi are kind of an interesting group mentioned in the Bible...
- We are not exactly sure where they came from other than from the East...
- It’s believed the Magi came from either Persia (Modern Iran) or Babylon (Modern Iraq). The name “Magi” or “Wise Men” was given by the Babylonians, Medes and Persians.
- I believe the Magi were from Babylon and knew to look for the signs that the Messiah had been born...

- The thought is this: These Magi were most likely descendants of those influenced and disciplined by Daniel some 500 years earlier...
- The word Magi also known as Magicians are mentioned 9 times in the book of Daniel. Daniel while in Babylon taught the scripture and on the coming Messiah and what to look for. Daniel's teaching was passed down from generation to generation and when certain prophecies were fulfilled, the star of Bethlehem led them to search for Jesus.
- Simeon anticipated the Lord; The Magi saw the signs and looked for Him...

### **Vs. 9-10**

**9** After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. **11** On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

- These Magi or Wise Men brought gifts to the Lord. It says treasures of Gold, frankincense and myrrh.
- Is it possible that God returned to his Son some of the items stolen from the temple 600 years earlier.

**Here's an interesting thought:** When the Babylonians took over Jerusalem in 587 BC they took all the artifacts of the temple. Found in the Temple was Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. The Temple was full of Gold and Frankincense and Myrrh was extensively used there. Now the same things that were stolen from the Temple are now being presented back to Christ.

- The gifts the Magi gave provided for Mary, Joseph and Jesus during their exile to Egypt.
- Isn't that how an offering works. First off it all belongs to God who allows some of it to fall into our hands. We then give back a portion as a Tithe or an offering. Then he rewards us eternally because we gave back to him what already belonged to him.
- The Lord provided guidance from a star for the Magi who were diligently looking for the Lord...
- When they found the Lord they were overjoyed and they worshipped him...
- They were the first ones to worship Jesus and bring him gifts...
- The Magi were wise to keep a watch out for the Lord in the darkest of times...
- It was in the darkness that God provided a star to guide them... Stars are hard to see in the day but on a clear night they shine bright...
- In the same way God has given us his Holy Spirit and his Word that will also shine bright in contrast to the world...

Jesus says to us:

**Matthew 24:42**

“Therefore keep **watch**, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

## The Lord also Appeared to Shepherds who were not Expecting Him at all

### Luke 2

**8** And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. **9** An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. **11** Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. **12** This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

**13** Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

**14**

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

- It's interesting who God chooses to first show himself to.
- Simeon was a priest, a Godly, devout man. Magi were highly educated and respected, seeking the Lord. But Shepherds were not Priests or Magi.
- Some would say Shepherds were regarded as social outcasts and less than reputable.

*“Shepherds had a bad reputation...More regrettable was their habit of confusing ‘mine’ with ‘thine’ as they moved about the country. They were considered unreliable and were not allowed to give testimony in the law courts.” (Morris)*

- What is interesting about specifically Shepherds in Bethlehem is they were given the unique responsibility of raising lambs for the Temple.

These were sacrificial lambs and had to be cared for and presented without spot or blemish.

- Now the Angel of the Lord appears to these Bethlehem Shepherds to let them know the Lamb of God has come. He is born in Bethlehem, like all good temple lambs, and laid in a stable there. He is the greatest lamb they have ever seen. This lamb will far surpass any lamb they have ever know. He will shed his blood in Jerusalem and will be the last lamb needed and will establish a new covenant with God.

*“It is a lovely thought that the shepherds who looked after the Temple lambs were the first to see the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” (Barclay)*

### **Vs. 11**

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

The Grace of God took those shepherds by surprise...

The Grace of God will take you by surprise...

The Grace of God will even show up when you don't deserve it...

Has God ever been gracious to you, when you didn't deserve it...

Has God ever shown you his goodness, when you didn't deserve it...

That is the Miracle of Christmas...

That God so loved the world that he gave His Son, even when we didn't deserve it...

This is also a reminder to us this Christmas Season:

He will appear to those who Anticipate Him...

He will appear to those who Seek Him...

He can also appear to those who never saw it coming...

## **Closing:**

Lord this Christmas Season

- Put your Holy Spirit in us like Simeon... help us to live with Anticipation. Help us to know what to say when you ask the question; What is it that you want from the me?
- Simeon knew what he wanted from the Lord and he got to see and hold the Lord before he died
  
- Make us wise like the Magi who sought after you... May we also be willing to Worship you and bring gifts to you of what you have given to us.
  
- Move unexpectedly in our lives, like the Shepherds in the field... Lord may 2026 be a year where we witness you moving in the lives of people, like we have never seen before. Will you cause your glory to shine around the unexpected who never saw it coming...

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