

# Are YOU a Simeon or a Herod?

Service: Sunday, 12/31 at 10 AM

Church Year: First Sunday after Christmas – 2017

**Catechism Study** resumes on January 3 at 11 AM & 7 PM

**Regular Service Schedule** resumes on January 7 & 8

**Introduction**: Dear friends: What do you think about Jesus? That's a good question to ask others – **to** begin a spiritual conversation AND **to** find out if the person is a **Simeon** or a **Herod**, one who wants to *embrace Jesus* or one who wants to *kill Jesus!*

**Last week** we remembered Jesus' birth; **today** we focus on a unique encounter at the temple when He was 40 days old.

1. **Mary's Purification**: <sup>22</sup> **And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") <sup>24</sup> and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."** // As commanded in [Leviticus 12](#), a woman bearing a son was to wait 40 days; then bring the required sacrifice – *a year old lamb **and** a pigeon or a turtledove* – to the tent / temple. For those who could not afford a lamb, they were to bring two pigeons **or** two turtledoves. Since Joseph and Mary brought the lesser sacrifice, we know they had **not yet** received the gift of gold from the wise men; I will mention that later.

2. **Simeon**:

- a. The man: <sup>25</sup> **Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout [God-fearing], waiting for the consolation [comfort] of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.** // Simeon believed God's OT promises, so he was waiting for the first coming of the Messiah – *even as we believe and are waiting for Jesus' second coming!*
- b. The revelation: <sup>26</sup> **And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.** // Simeon must have been *excitedly* watching for the Promised Christ to appear, *since he was told he would see the Messiah before he died!*
- c. The encounter with Jesus: <sup>27</sup> **And he came in the Spirit [guided by the Spirit] into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law,** <sup>28</sup> **he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,** <sup>29</sup> **"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;** <sup>30</sup> **for my eyes have seen your salvation** <sup>31</sup> **that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,** <sup>32</sup> **a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."** // Those words spoken by Simeon are what we call the **Nunc Dimittis**, which means **Now Dismiss** – and the first two words in the Greek! For Simeon he saw the Christ, *so he was ready to depart, to die in peace.* For us – *in the Supper* – we receive the

actual body and blood of the Christ, *so we are ready to depart, to die in peace!*

- d. The encounter with Joseph and Mary: <sup>33</sup> **And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. <sup>34</sup> And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed <sup>35</sup> (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.” // “Based on their reaction to Jesus, people will either stand or fall (cf 1 Peter 2:6, 8)” (TLSB).** Those who are like Simeon – *who looked forward to the Christ and embraced Him*, they will rise! But for everyone else, *they will fall*:
- i. For the Herod-like people who want to kill Jesus, *they will fall*.
  - ii. For those who deny that Jesus is the Son of God, *they will fall*.
  - iii. For those who kindly reject Jesus, *they will fall*.
  - iv. For those who pretend to know Jesus, *they will fall*.
  - v. For those who try to add to Jesus’ saving work, *they will fall*.

So let us be like Simeon – *looking forward to the Christ and embracing Him when He comes!*

3. **Anna:**

- a. The woman: <sup>36</sup> **And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived**

with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, <sup>37</sup> and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. // So Anna was very devoted to the LORD and, *considering the information given*, was probably very close to the LORD for 60+ years – *worshiping, fasting, and praying day and night!* She was a bit different in comparison to most or all 21<sup>st</sup> century believers, *but a good model for us as we move into 2018!*

- b. The proclamation of Jesus: <sup>38</sup> **And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.** // Since the people sinned, God promised the Savior; so *when Anna saw the Savior*, she thanked God for keeping His promise; *let us be thankful too!*

**Conclusion:** <sup>39</sup> **And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.** <sup>40</sup> **And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.** // Luke got right to the point, *so he told about the return to Nazareth*; however, based on Matthew **and** Luke, this is the order: Birth in Bethlehem > at the Temple at 40 days > return to Bethlehem > wise men visit/bring gifts > flee to Egypt to escape Herod's soldiers > return to Nazareth. Let us pray: Dear Holy Spirit, as You guided Simeon and Anna to Jesus, *so keep us trusting in Jesus until He comes again!*

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