



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

Revealed by God for Peaceful Departures December 31st, 2017

(Luke 2:25-40)

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 upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 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 now dismiss your servant in peace.
³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,
³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people,
³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

³³ The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶ There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

1. Share a time when you had a really stressful holiday travel experience. Do you think you would have felt less stressed and afraid on that journey, if God had promised you "You will safely arrive at your destination" before you left?
2. Much of the language used in this sermon text has a "visual sight" sense to it (Note how many times you read "eyes" or "see" or "revealed.") Why would God inspire Luke to use such language for this account, especially in light of the Christmas season just celebrated?
3. Re-read Luke 2:33. Then, go to your Bible and read Luke 2:41-52. In both accounts, it seems like Mary and Joseph are a bit amazed and surprised to hear these reminders of who Jesus was. Why do you think it would have been so hard for them to keep this truth in mind, even though they knew very well who Jesus was? Would you say Jesus' humanity also serves as a stumbling block for people today?
4. Read the description of the life of the Prophetess Anna in vs. 36-38. In what ways would you say Anna had a difficult life? How did Anna have peace in her life, even in the midst of her difficulties? How can we apply the same lessons to our own lives?
5. We sing the Song of Simeon (*Nunc Dimittis*) as a regular part of our worship liturgy. The most common places where we sing the Nunc Dimittis is immediately following the reception of Holy Communion, and during Evening Prayer Services. Why are those two incredibly fitting places for us to sing this song?