

Lk. 2:33-35 “The Child Appointed”

For the Children: Parents often want their children to take up a particular type of work when they grow older. They might decide while their child is quite young, that their little genius is going to become a doctor or a lawyer or a minister. Things don't always work out that way. But when God appoints a future for His Son, while Jesus is still a baby, you can be sure that it will happen. God appointed Jesus to be the Messiah who would save many people; be opposed by many and even killed; but to rise to glory and eventually judge those who have opposed Him. **Questions:** Why was Simeon's prophecy about Jesus important? Does the opposition to Jesus show that He is not in control of the world? Why has God allowed all this opposition to His Son?

Introduction:

First Point: Simeon's Interaction with Joseph and Mary

- 1) **Amazing Words:** Joseph and Mary are amazed at the fact that an ordinary man prophesies, but also at what he says – especially about salvation coming to the Gentiles through the “appointed Child.” However, the OT had already foretold this (Is. 9:2, 42:6 etc., as cited by Simeon).
- 2) **Blessed Parents:** Simeon blesses Joseph and Mary. Mary is not given pre-eminence over Joseph here, as in Roman Catholicism. Nevertheless, she was a godly and greatly-blessed woman. See BCF 18. What a blessing it was to have the care of a perfect child, to see Him growing in knowledge, Wisdom and grace, and His sense of His Messianic calling. See Lk. 2:41ff.
- 3) **Mary Singled-Out:** Mary is singled out in some of what Simeon says, for Joseph would presumably have died by the time Mary would witness her Son's death. Jn. 19:26-27 implies that Joseph had already died by this stage. In addition, Mary was to remember all these things, including Simeon's important prophecy, treasure them in her heart (2:51), give witness to them to Luke, so he could include these details in his Gospel for all to read from that time on.

Second Point: Simeon's prophecy Regarding the Christ

- 1) **Fall and Rise:** Simeon applies OT Messianic prophecies to the infant Jesus. The OT already made it clear that the Messiah was appointed for the fall and rise of many – both in Israel and among the nations (Is. 8:14). Those who rejected Him would “fall” and perish – ultimately, in hell. Those who believed in Him would rise to eternal life and glory. The context of opposition to the Messiah in Lk. 2:34b-35 confirms this interpretation.
- 2) **A Sign to Be Opposed:** This is the first time since Jesus' birth that Joseph and Mary heard that the Messiah would bring salvation amidst violent opposition from within Israel. Though He was a sign of God's saving work and love for His people, yet many in Israel would be hostile. They would even kill Him. In v. 35, the “(broad)sword” that would pierce Mary's heart was seeing her Son crucified. See Jn. 19:25. Of course, OT passages like Is. 53 had already foretold this – though the Jews were confused about the suffering of the Messiah.
- 3) **Hearts Revealed:** The increase of hostility against Jesus – then and now- does not lessen His claim to be the Messiah. For it was *appointed* by God. It is part of His way of bringing out what lies in the heart of the sinner. Being confronted with Christ/the Gospel causes a reaction in sinners, either in the direction of death, or of life (2 Cor. 2:16). This is God's purpose.

Conclusion:

