

Luke 2: 22-40 – Simeon & Anna

Sunday, 4th January 2026

Read Luke 2: 22-24

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord'), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: 'a pair of doves or two young pigeons'.

1. According to the Jewish Law (Exodus 13:2) every first-born male (human and cattle), was sacred to God. In Numbers 18:15-16 we read

¹⁵ The first offspring of every womb, both human and animal, that is offered to the Lord is yours. But you must redeem every firstborn son and every firstborn male of unclean animals. ¹⁶ When they are a month old, you must redeem them at the redemption price set at five shekels of silver, according to the sanctuary shekel, which weighs twenty gerahs.

Parents could redeem / buy back their first born from God. Would you buy back your children and how much would you pay?

Read Luke 2: 25-27

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. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required,

2. What qualities did Luke ascribe to Simeon?

R _____
W _____

D _____
H _____ S _____ W _____ O _____ H _____

These qualities have been described as

- Behaved well towards people.
- Careful about his religious duties.
- Expectant for the coming of the Messiah.
- The Holy Spirit was with him.

List 4 of your qualities (they may be the same as Simeon):

3. Simeon had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would see the Messiah before he died. Are you waiting for a promise from God to be fulfilled? How easy do you find it to wait? Why?
4. Moved by the Spirit indicates a special sensitivity for the movement of the Holy Spirit. How can we be sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit?

Read Luke 2: 28-35

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, ³¹which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.'*

³³*The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. ³⁴Then 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, ³⁵so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.'*

5. Vs 29 – is the start of the fifth song in Luke from that first Christmas. Can you name the people who wrote the first four songs?

- E (Luke 1:42-45)
- Z ((Luke 1:68-79)
- M (Luke 1: 46-55)
- A (Luke 2: 13-14)

'Moved by the Spirit' our friends burst into song. Whilst we might not be able to write a song to express how we feel, what is your favourite worship song and why?

6. Vs 34 – *This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel.* One commentator has written:

... long ago Seneca said that what men needed above all was a hand let down to lift them up. It is the hand of Jesus which lifts a man out of the old life and into the new, out of the sin into the goodness, out of the shame into the glory.

Jesus came down to lift us up – remember Nicola on a ladder at the corps carol service? What are we doing to stop falling down? Do we have any new year resolutions to help us? Can the group help or hold us accountable? How can we lift people up?

7. Vs 35 ... *and a sword will pierce your own soul too.*
 - Like Mary we are not immune from our hearts and souls being pierced.
 - If your heart or soul is pierced today, how can the group help?
 - How did you overcome a pierced soul/heart? Did it make you stronger?
8. Vs 37 The light for revelation to the Gentiles – salvation is not for one nation but for all. In Matthew 5: 14-15 Jesus says:

¹⁴ *You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.* ¹⁵ *Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.*

Through Jesus, Light of the World (John 8:12), we reflect that light to those around us – you are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. At the start of 2026 how can we be that light on a hill in Staple Hill?

9. Vs 33 – The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. When was the last time you marvelled about something that Jesus done in your life and why?

Read Luke 2: 36-38

³⁶ *There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, 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 worshipped 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.*

10. It was 400 years from the end of the Old Testament to the beginning of the New Testament and during that time there had been no prophets. It is interesting to note that God raised a prophetess.
 - How important is it to recognise the role that women play in God's Divine Story.
 - Has the church failed to recognise the important role of women in church history?
 - Do we recognise the important role of women in our church ... in our denomination ... in the broader church (has it been an easy ride for the new Archbishop of Canterbury?)

11. The name Anna means Grace. A commentator has written: -she had known sorrow and she had not grown bitter. Sorrow can make us hard, bitter, resentful, rebellious against God. Or it can make us kinder, softer, more sympathetic.

How can we remain graceful in the face of adversity? Share some top tips.

12. Vs 37 – she was 84. Is there a job for everyone regardless of age? What's your job?

13. Vs 37 – *She never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying.* We might not be 'at the army' night and day, but Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5

¹⁶ *Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray continually, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

We might not be in the temple all the time, but our bodies are the temple of God, and we can worship him just where we are, continually. How easy do we find this or are we too distracted?

14. Vs 38 – she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

- Anna, although 84 years old, spoke out about the child. Whatever age we are, we are never too old to 'speak out about the child.'
- Does this become easier or harder with age?

Read Luke 2: 39-40

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 on him.*

15. Vs 40 – *and the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.* Although this verse is talking about Jesus, can we apply it to our lives? Do we need to grow ... be filled with wisdom ...with the grace of God? If it was good enough for Jesus, it should be good enough for us. How is your growth, strength, wisdom and grace being developed and strengthened? Share some top tips.