

The Sunday within the Octave of Christmas  
St. Luke 2:33-40  
December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## The Things Which Were Spoken

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Sermon Text:**

“And His father and His mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning Him; and Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary His mother, ‘Behold, this Child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against; yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.’”

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Lord God, heavenly Father, Who by the mouth of Simeon didst declare that Jesus Christ is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, we beseech Thee, enlighten our hearts with true knowledge of Thy Son, that, in adversities and perils, we may not be offended in Him, but cling to Him, and rise through Him, and abide in Him; Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, in the previous section, the section of this chapter from the Evangelist St. Luke which we hear on the Festival of the Presentation of our Lord and the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we hear the words at which our Lord’s parents, St. Joseph and St. Mary, find occasion to marvel. They were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning Him. These things were spoken by St. Simeon, who had taken the Child up into his arms. Simeon calls this Child in the words which we know as the Nunc Dimittis, which we sing at the end of every Divine Service, “thy (that is, the Lord’s) salvation” and “a light for revelation to the Gentiles” and “the glory of thy people Israel.” This Child, a mere forty days old, is praised by Simeon as being the Anointed One of the Lord. He is the Christ. It is no wonder that His parents marvel at the things which were spoken of Him, for how can one not wonder that the Lord God dwells in our flesh.

Here is a baby, about a month and a half old, who must depend upon His parents for protection and sustenance. Who sucks at His mother’s breast. Who must be carried in people’s arms. It is this Child of forty days old Who is the Creator of all things. It is He Who sustains all the earth. It is He Who sends rain and sun to fall upon mankind. This Child Who has humbled Himself to be cared for by His own creation. This Child, Who is God the Lord, has humbled Himself to dwell in our flesh, and subject Himself to being a part of His own creation. He has even humbled Himself to be subject to the Law which He gave to mankind.

He is unable to be presented at the temple without the aid and assistance of His parents. He was unable to circumcise Himself in the flesh. His parents, who were righteous and obeyed the Law of

God, who desired to faithful to the Lord God, had to bring Him to one who could circumcise Him, and bring Him to the temple to be presented as the firstborn Son of Mary and Joseph. He could not offer the sacrifices required by the Law. His parents had to do it, and this revealed that they were righteous and just. As we would say, "they were good Christian parents" who raised their Child in the faith, who brought Him to church, who taught Him the holy Scriptures, who taught Him hymn and chant and high thanksgiving for they believed that these things were life and salvation for all who heard and believed.

All these things His parents had to do for Him, because He was a helpless baby, still unable to walk or crawl or talk. This is what one would see when they looked at this Child: another Jewish baby boy. So, to hear St. Simeon talking about this Child in such glowing terms; to hear him speak of this Child as the Lord's salvation, and the light of the Gentiles and the glory of the people of Israel, was truly something at which to marvel. For in looking at this young infant one would tend to forget that this Child was the Creator of all things. Moreover, this Child would become the Savior of mankind.

This is why He is the Light of the Gentiles, why He is the Lord's salvation, why He is the glory of His people Israel. And while His parents are marvelling at what St. Simeon said about Him in the words of the Nunc Dimittis, he goes on to tell His mother, Mary, that this Child was set for the falling and rising of many in Israel. He would be a sign spoken against. He would suffer death on a cross that would pierce the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary like a sword. For this is why He came. He came to save mankind by His own works and merits. He came to redeem mankind from sin by paying the penalty of sin with His own innocent suffering and death on the tree of the cross. This what Simeon sees in this Child: The Anointed One of the Lord, the Christ, the One Who would redeem mankind from their sins. This Child was the Lord God in our flesh.

How easy it is to marvel at the things that were spoken concerning Him! For one only sees a Child, but this Child is the Lord and Creator of the whole universe. The Lord God is enfolded in the arms of Simeon. Behold the Lord of All concealed in the flesh of a tiny infant! Behold the Savior of mankind, the Lord God in our flesh, as a helpless Child under the care of His earthly parents.

But it really should not be any wonder for them or us that these things were said concerning Him. For these words of Simeon are just an extension of everything that has been said about Him since the promise of a Savior was first revealed by the Lord God. The Scriptures and the Prophets had foretold the coming of this Child. They had preached that a Savior would be born to mankind. They had preached that a Virgin would conceive and bear a Child; that He would receive the throne of His father David. This Child would be the Savior of the Jews. The Anointed One, the Messiah, would rescue His people from their enemies.

Their enemies were not the enemies of flesh and blood, or other nations or tribes. No, their enemies were spiritual enemies, the devil, the world around them, and their own sinful flesh. Their enemies sowed sin and death into the world. The devil revealed his power over mankind by their daily and constant falling into temptation and sin. Moreover, this promise of a Savior would not be just for the Jews, for this Savior would be for all mankind, for both Jews and Gentiles alike. Even as St. Simeon says in the previous section of St. Luke's Gospel. He would be a Light to the Gentiles as well as the glory of His people Israel. This Child was promised to be the Savior of all mankind. These are the things spoken concerning Him.

This is why we should also marvel at the things spoken concerning this Child just like His earthly parents St. Joseph and St. Mary did. For here is our Savior in the tiny package of a forty-day-old baby boy. Here is the Savior of all mankind, the Creator and Lord of all things, humbly dependent upon His own creation, in order that He might save and redeem His creation. In this Child we have the promises of the Lord God fulfilled. In Him the long-expected Savior of the world finds its fulfillment. How can such a wonderful thing be found in such a humble package? The Lord of Heaven and Earth lies in the arms

of Simeon, and subjects Himself to the care and protection of His earthly parents.

Because of the care of His parents, both physical and spiritual, this Child would do just as St. Luke writes at the end of our Gospel pericope. He would grow and wax strong, become filled with wisdom, and have the grace of the Lord God upon Him. Even as we will hear about next Sunday when we hear about the Lord + Jesus as a Boy of twelve-years-old both asking questions and answering teachers of the temple in His wisdom. In this Child of forty-days-old we find our Redeemer from sin, death and the power of the devil. He is the One Who was promised from of old. He is the One Who will suffer and die and pay the penalty of our sins with His own innocent suffering and death.

It is this Child which will grow up and offer up His Body and Blood as food and drink in bread and wine for the remission of all our sins. Therefore, my dear friends, let us come and see our Lord + Jesus no longer enfolded in the arms of Simeon, but here at this altar where He gives us to eat and drink of His very Body and very Blood for the remission of our sins. Through this meal we are granted faith to cling to our Savior and have increased in us love for our heavenly Father, and fervent love for one another. Thanks be the Lord God for His wonderful and marvelous gift of a Savior! Who at forty days old had many wonderful things spoken concerning Him; things that reveal our redemption and salvation in Him alone. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*