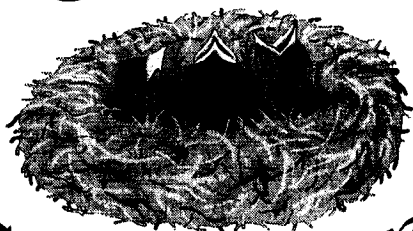


*"They shall
mount up...*

ON EAGLES' WINGS

*... with wings
as eagles."*

Isaiah 40:31



AERY NUGGETS

Simeon

Luke 2:25-32

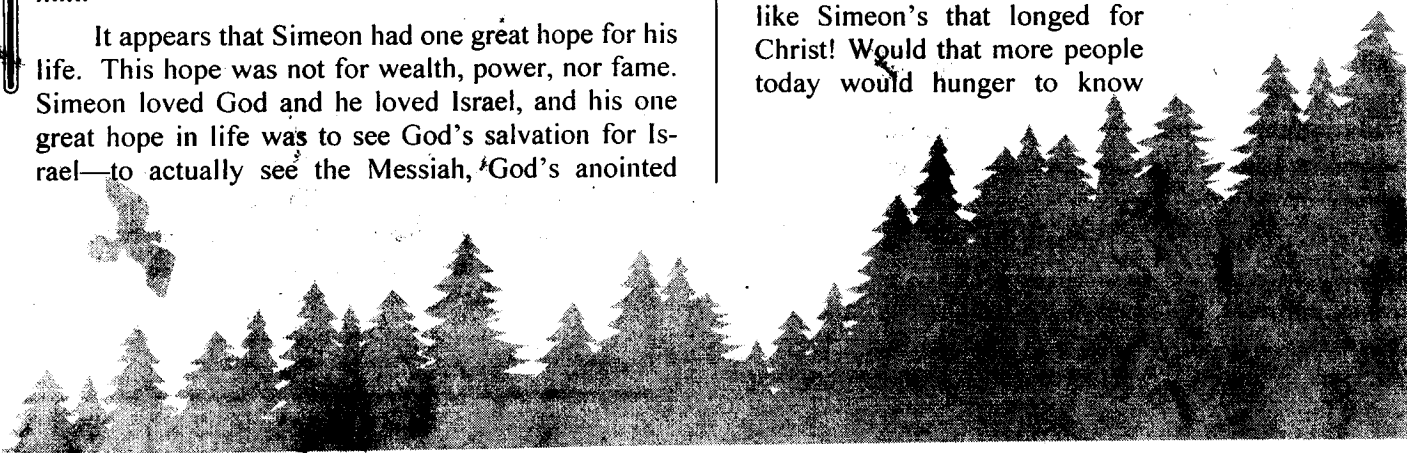
What is your great hope in life? This brief account in Luke 2 is one of my favorite portions of scripture because it tells about the hope of one man who lived in Jerusalem at the time when the Lord Jesus came to earth. The unwavering faith of Simeon, and his utter joy in seeing the fulfillment of the promises of God never fails to lift me up, even when I'm having my toughest days.

What we know about Simeon, I believe, is what we have in these few verses. Simeon was a Jew, living in Jerusalem; and if he was a man of any social prominence, we are not told. I do not believe we know Simeon's age, nor his occupation, nor his aspirations in life. What we know, however, is most recommending; and it is pretty much summed up in verse 25 where we read, "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him."

It appears that Simeon had one great hope for his life. This hope was not for wealth, power, nor fame. Simeon loved God and he loved Israel, and his one great hope in life was to see God's salvation for Israel—to actually see the Messiah, God's anointed

One whose coming had long been foretold in prophecy. I believe that this hope had caused Simeon to be much in prayer and fasting over the years, and God honored this beautiful faith and devotion. We read in verse 26, "And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ."

Do you hunger for the fulfillment of the promises of God? Simeon did, and God gave him the desire of his heart. Simeon would not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. This was the message that God revealed to a just and devout man who truly longed for God's solution for Israel and the world. Isn't it marvelous how God reveals His truth to those who desire and seek Him? Macdonald in his Bible commentary notes Psalm 25:14, "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." To be really honest, there were plenty of others in Jerusalem at the time of Simeon who should have been hungering for the promise of the Messiah as well. Some of these others I speak of were well acquainted with the scriptures, but they seemed unaware of Messiah's coming and they appeared to be unmoved by the prospects (see Matthew 2). How refreshing to see a heart like Simeon's that longed for Christ! Would that more people today would hunger to know



about Jesus!

Simeon had been promised that he would see Messiah, but how would he find the Christ? The Holy Spirit led Simeon at the proper time to where Jesus was. If we are willing to be led by the Spirit, He will show us Christ. In verses 27-32, we read, "And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

I can imagine that Simeon's face beamed as he took up this baby in his arms, and praised God. But hadn't he only seen a baby? At this point, how could he know that he held in his arms the very fulfillment of God's promises, and the hope of all the world? *This is where faith came in.* He hadn't seen any miracles or listened to any of the wonderful words of Jesus as yet; he hadn't seen His work on the cross or the empty tomb. *God had revealed that this child was His Christ—God's answer to Israel and all the world.* He would bring light to the Gentiles who had walked in sin and ignorance over the centuries, and He would be the glory of Israel, though the fullness of this would not be seen for some time to come. Embodied in this child was the fulfillment of God's promises for salvation, and this was verified by God's Word. God's Word was enough for Simeon! "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," (Hebrews 11:1). Simeon rejoiced to see the Christ come into the world; he was satisfied in that, knowing that all else would be fulfilled in God's time. Simeon had been privileged to see and hold the Christ of God, and there was nothing more he needed to see in this world; he was now ready to leave this world with a glad heart, whenever the Lord should see fit to take him. He had no dread of death, because he *knew* that all would now be well.

Simeon was a completely satisfied man, and one full of joy. Yet, none of the circumstances around Simeon had visibly changed when you think about it. The Romans were still occupying Israel, and still imposing their harsh rule; and there were no visible signs that this would change any time soon. But Simeon had joy—he had seen God's solution for the problems of Israel and the world in the person of this child, *so despite the apparent circumstances, he had joy!*

Do we have joy? As Christians, we above all people should have joy. Yet so often, when faced with trials and disappointments, we dwell on the tribulations, and not on *the promises of God.* But we have so many precious promises in God's Word to comfort us, even when noth-

ing seems to be going right! Remember the words of our Lord Jesus in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The peace and joy we seek is not to be found in this world, but in Christ. This world offers us tribulations and disappointments; but we should not be discouraged—Christ has overcome the world!

If you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have so many precious promises to cling to. We know that we are never alone in this world, even though our Lord has gone to the glory and is now at the right hand of His Father—Matthew 28:20 reads, "...and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." We know too that our Lord will come again and receive His own to be with Himself: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," (John 14:3). If you are a believer, then these promises are for you. If you have not yet believed, you will not have much joy or comfort in these words. *But you can come to Christ today and believe,* then you will be able to rejoice with all the children of God in these same promises. We read in John 1:12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." This promise can be yours!

After the disciples watched their Lord Jesus die on the cross, their hearts were troubled; when they saw Him alive after resurrection, they rejoiced, and this rejoicing did not stop when forty days later, He was taken away from them into heaven. We read in Luke 24:52,53: "And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." If we are Christians, we have every reason to be joyful in this world, regardless of the circumstances around us. This same Jesus is alive; and if alive, then we have life and glory before us!

Acts 1:11: "...Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Much love through Christ

Stephen Faulkner

For address correction or free new name addition,

write to:

Leslie L. Winters

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