

Luke 2:33-35. the Words of Simeon to Mary.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Simeon's words to Mary reveal the dual nature of Christ as a stumbling stone and a rock of offense, yet also a source of salvation and redemption.

Scripture: Psalm 40:2, Luke 2:32, Luke 2:34, Romans 10:3, 1 Peter 2:8

Topics: "Christ's Destiny", "Salvation Rejection"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delves into the profound encounter of Joseph, Mary, and Simeon, where Simeon prophesies about the destiny of Christ as a light to the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. Simeon also forewarns Mary of the sorrows she will endure as the mother of the Savior, emphasizing the pivotal role Christ plays in the fall and rising again of many in Israel. Through Simeon's words, the rejection and acceptance of Christ are explored, illustrating how pride and self-righteousness can hinder individuals from receiving salvation.

Transcript

Both Joseph and Mary marveled at the things spoken of Christ by Simeon. The things that made them marvel were that he should be "a light to enlighten the Gentiles," as well as the glory of Israel; for God's goodness to the Gentiles was a mystery long hidden from the Jewish nation. But we happy Gentiles have experienced it, and some among us have found Christ to be a light to enlighten our darkness.

Simeon blessed Joseph and Mary--and then he addressed Mary in particular, and prepared her for all the shame and sorrow that her Son should undergo; for what he had said before might have led her to think that joy only was to be his portion, and that all men would immediately do him honor. But this was not to be the case. So great would be the agonies of the Son, that a sword would pierce through the mother's heart. And was not the soul of Mary thus pierced, when she beheld her Son expiring on the cross?

Simeon's words concerning the child demand attentive consideration--"This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." Let us inquire into their meaning, for all that concerns our Savior is very important to us. How was he the fall of many in Israel? Does Christ make men fall? Simeon here compares Christ to a stone over which many stumble and fall. Paul says, in 1 Cor. 1:23, that Christ was to the Jews a stumbling-block, or something over which they fell. How was it they fell over him? Through pride. They would not believe that their own righteousness was worthless in God's sight, and that Christ's righteousness alone could be accepted. This is the account Paul gives of Christ's rejection by the Jews. His words are, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own

righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God--for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one who believes." Rom. 10:3, 4.

And what is the reason that any still refuse Christ? Is it not because they do not feel their need of his righteousness? Is it not because they feel satisfied with their own performances, and imagine that God is satisfied also? And when they are told that they are sinners, they answer in their hearts, if not with their lips, "We are not such great sinners as others are!" People in this state of mind fall over Christ as over a stumbling-stone--they cannot receive him, because they do not desire his salvation. Peter, in his Epistle, says that Christ was to such people, "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to those who stumble at the word, being disobedient." 1 Peter 2:8.

But Simeon said also that the child was set for the rising again of many in Israel. Many of those who fell over him at first, afterwards believed, and rose from sin and death by Christ. Many of the priests who joined in crucifying the Savior were afterwards obedient to the faith. Acts 6:7.

The poor penitent sinner rises by Christ; that is, he finds in him a rock on which to set his feet; he finds in Christ one who can forgive his sins, and save his soul; then he can say with David, "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Ps. 40:2.

Simeon next declared that Christ should be set for "a sign which shall be spoken against," (verse 34.)

We should observe that the words, "Yes, a sword shall pierce through your own soul, also," are between parenthesis; they might be left out without hurting the sense. Let us read the sentence without them, that we may better perceive the meaning, (verses 34, 35.)

"A sign which shall be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Had Christ not been spoken against, many who despised him would have followed him. The people applauded him until they heard the scribes and Pharisees speak so much against him; then they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him."

True religion is still spoken against. People must often give up the favor of the world, if they would be faithful to Christ. For a time, perhaps, they may profess to be religious, and lose nothing by it--but something soon occurs to try them, and to reveal the real state of their hearts. Is a young person willing to lose an opportunity of a good settlement, or a tradesman the favor of a rich customer, or a gentleman the respect of his acquaintance, sooner than disobey his Lord? Then their faithful thoughts are revealed. Christ is now like a king disgraced; only those who really love him will be faithful to him. But when he comes in his glory to take possession of his kingdom, he will not fail to remember those who are now cast out for his sake.

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