

In Nomine Iesu

Midweek Advent 3 2025

Jesus is the Seed of Abraham – Genesis 12:1-3 & Luke 2:25-32

“Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”

“Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

‘Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation
that you have prepared in the presence of all
peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.’”

Grace be to you and peace from God the Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Israel’s salvation and the blessing to all the families of the earth. Dear fellow redeemed in Christ:

“Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel.” What an interesting word that Luke uses here: consolation. The word in Greek is “paraklesis,” which refers to the result of what a “parakletos” does. Let’s use some English examples, a consoler, consoles, a comforter comforts, a helper helps. What is interesting is that the word, “parakletos,” is the word Jesus used with His disciples on the night He was betrayed. He used it to refer to the Holy Spirit, the Helper, the Comforter or, as we sometimes say, the Paraclete, who would come to them after His resurrection.

What is interesting is that after using this word Luke tells us in rapid succession first, the Holy Spirit was upon Simeon, and that second, the Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ, and that third, the Holy Spirit had led him into the temple that day. I doubt very much that there is any coincidence here that Luke uses the word and then immediately begins emphasizing the connection to the Holy Spirit.

It is little wonder then that the evangelist Luke included Simeon’s words in his gospel account, just as he did the words of Mary, the words of Zechariah, and the words of the host of angels proclaimed to the shepherds on the night of Jesus’ birth. It is little wonder also that all four of these proclamations, Mary’s, Zechariah’s, the Christmas angels’, and Simeon’s found their way into the worship life of the early church in the form of **the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus*, the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, and the *Nunc Dimittis***. And it is also of little wonder that the Christian Church has retained these revelations as part of her regular worship life

to this day so that they can continue to assure you that the blessing promised to Abraham for you is yours!

Consider for a moment the supreme irony in these glorious revelations and how they ended up being such a major part of the time we spent in the presence of God. God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Holy One of Israel, chose the only one of the four evangelists who was a Gentile, St. Luke, to record these words. He did not choose Levi, the tax collector, whose name was changed to Matthew, nor Mark the young man who had gone into the garden to witness the arrest of Jesus and was nearly arrested himself, nor John, who leaned against Jesus at the last supper, stood with the women at the foot of the cross, and ran to the tomb on Easter morning. No, He chose Luke so that the full import of His promise to Abraham, the father of all the faithful, would be clear to “all the families of the earth.” They would know that the blessing intended for them when father Abraham received the promise, is theirs.

Abraham, of course, would not see this blessing in his lifetime, though he would see the One who came to tell him that Sarah would have a Son the very next year; neither would Isaac, though he would see the ram caught in the thicket who saved him from being sacrificed on the altar; and neither would Jacob, though he would see the One who stood at the top of the ladder that reached to heaven as the angels of heaven ascended and descended on it. Each was given a glimpse of the coming One.

So too for Moses, Joshua, David, Isaiah, and Daniel - to name only a few - God would pull back the veil that separates earth from heaven and give them a brief glimpse of the One who was to come and be the Seed of Abraham in

whom all the families of the earth, all the nations, would find to be the great blessing God promised. But after each such revelation, the veil was pulled into place once more. And they too would have to live as Abraham had: by faith in the word of promise.

But it was different for Mary, for Elizabeth and Zechariah, for the shepherds, and for Simeon. As the Father had once more pulled back the veil, He did not close it entirely now. In fact, each time He opened it a little wider; for Mary who was daily reminded throughout her pregnancy; for Elizabeth as she felt her own unborn child move within her in the presence of the mother of the Christ; for the shepherds who that night were told where – **where on earth to look!** – and ran off to find exactly what the angels promised; and finally for Simeon, who not only saw the Child, but took up the Child up in his own arms. The promise once given was now being fulfilled.

Again, let us take note that it is Luke, the Gentile, who is given the great privilege to proclaim to us Gentiles the glory of the people of Israel that God had promised to us when He called Abraham to be the bearer of the Messianic Seed and the father of all the faithful. It would be his privilege also to carry that same promise to many nations along with St. Paul. It was his privilege also to end his gospel this way: “Then [Jesus] led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.” (Luke 24:50-51)

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He was carried up to heaven to the right hand of God, as we confess in the creed, so that He, true man and true God, could be with all the children of faithful Abraham. Dear

friends, you hear Simeon's words everytime you come to this place to receive the same One Simeon held in his arms in Jerusalem's temple. Here He continues to bless you as He did the apostles who witnessed His ascension, blessing you with His body and blood for the forgiveness of your sins, so that you too go from here, having communed with Him, free to depart **in peace**, whether from this place back to your own home here on earth or to the home reserved for you in heaven. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria