

"My Eyes Have Seen Your Salvation"

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Date: 24 December 2014

[0:00] Have you ever experienced so much anxiety that you can barely breathe? Have you been so overwhelmed by your circumstances that you can't sleep, you just can't turn your mind off?

Or maybe you feel trapped. There's no way out. You're stuck. Stuck in this apartment. Stuck in this house. Stuck in this neighborhood.

Stuck in this job. Stuck in this joblessness. Stuck in this job. Stuck in this job. Stuck in this job. Stuck in a cycle of addiction. You're stuck in hopelessness. You're stuck in helplessness.

Maybe you feel under constant threat. Threatened by your boss. Threatened by bill collectors.

Threatened by your neighbors. Threatened by your kids. Threatened by a diagnosis.

Cancer, diabetes, mental illness. Threatened by the diagnosis of a child. Maybe you feel threatened. Well, you along with the rest of us have tasted the oppression of living in a sin-strained world.

[1:08] Everyone experiences life under the oppression of sin. No one escapes it. No one. Sin within.

Sin without. Sin without. Sin without. We all experience it. What you long for is deliverance.

What you long for is what the Bible calls salvation. Sin without. Sin without. So on this Christmas Eve 2014.

Where are you looking for salvation? where do you look for deliverance where do you look for relief where do you look for escape and this Christmas Eve I'm going to point your gaze to God's provision for our deliverance God's salvation salvation has a name Jesus in Luke 2, 22-33 we read about a surprising run-in at the temple in Jerusalem in Luke 1 we learn that Jesus was miraculously conceived in a virgin Mary in a town called Nazareth and then in Luke 2 we learn that God sovereignly orchestrates international events to get Joseph and Mary down to Bethlehem so this little baby would be born in the hometown of David he's a descendant of David he'd be a king it would fulfill Micah 5, 2 the passage Ben read earlier and then tonight we're going to look at an event that took place a month after that a month after the birth of Jesus

Joseph and Mary bring Jesus from Bethlehem up north to Jerusalem to present him to God at the temple in Jerusalem Jerusalem was the capital of Israel and at the heart of Jerusalem was the temple it would have been glorious to see the temple represented God's presence among God's people Joseph and Mary bring Jesus to the temple out of obedience to the Old Testament commandment to present the firstborn son to the Lord they're obeying God's word and when they bring this month old Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem they have no idea that someone's waiting for them someone is watching for them his name was Simeon Luke 2, 25 and 26 tells us some things about this man Simeon at this point he was an old man he was godly

[4:18] Luke says he was righteous and devout he was quote unquote waiting for the consolation of Israel end quote which means he was looking for the Messiah the long promised king who would deliver his people from oppression we learn something else about this Simeon that the Holy Spirit was upon him and the pattern we read in the Gospel of Luke and in Acts Luke wrote Acts as well is that when the Holy Spirit comes upon someone they speak they declare they announce something about Jesus there's one more detail about Simeon you need to know and we read about it in verse 26 it's this the Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would see the Messiah he would see the Lord's Christ with his own eyes before he died and so as an old man he's starting to wonder so here's the scene in verse 27 the Holy Spirit leads Simeon into the temple complex and Simeon takes a spot overlooking those coming into the temple he's looking for someone he's looking for a child born to us to us a son is given he's looking for

that boy scanning the crowd he's looking he knows by the Holy Spirit leading him that today he will see the consolation of Israel and the whole world he'll see him with his own eyes as Joseph and Mary walk up the stairs into the temple they have no idea there's an old man filled with the Holy Spirit looking for their baby boy they're just seeking to dedicate their son as God commanded in his law while they walk up in Simeon season the Holy Spirit must have sung to Simeon's soul there he is he's the one you know it's moments like these in the Bible you're reading along and you just kind of want more detail like what did what did Simeon do did his eyes well up with tears did his mouth drop did he clasp his hands and cry out he has come did he rush did he run towards Mary and Joseph and snatch that baby out of Mary's hands or was he a slow mover kind of that mix of tears and laughter at the same time oh oh oh he's here when Jenny and I adopted our daughter

Mary we were flying back to the states from China and there was a group of older Chinese women who were sitting in a row next to us and they kept on looking down at us and Mary who was in our lap and when we leveled out one of these women unbuckled got up walked right over to us and grabbed Mary right out of Jenny's arms and brought her to the row of Chinese and we just watched as our baby girl got passed down the row we knew these women were delighting in our daughter and we also knew there was no way out at 35,000 feet neither Jenny and I will forget that moment and neither would Mary and Joseph forget this moment Simeon filled with the spirit holding this one month old baby in his arms and he speaks a prophetic word of fulfillment it's directed at God as he looks at this little baby this is what he said

Lord now you are letting your servant depart in peace according to your work for my eyes have seen your salvation for my eyes these old eyes have seen your salvation what was Simeon looking at?

was he looking at the first national bank of Jerusalem? no God's salvation isn't money was he looking at Jerusalem hospital?

no God's salvation isn't health was he looking at the Jerusalem board of trade? no salvation wouldn't come with a robust economy was he looking at a military parade?

[9:35] no God's salvation wouldn't come through military might was Simeon looking at the temple? this towering religious structure?

no it wasn't a building God's salvation was the baby God's salvation was his baby this old man was holding Simeon was looking into the face of God he was looking into the face of God's anointed one Emmanuel God with us the Messiah the only one this little seven pound boy the only one who could save us from the oppression of living in a sin strained sin sane sin soaked world this little boy this one month old boy whose birth we celebrate tomorrow he would grow and he would live a life that none of us ever could

Jesus lived a life fully pleasing to God every second of every minute of every hour of every day always pleasing to God fully pleasing to God every moment it wasn't just the absence of sin it was the fullness of pleasing God every day of his life and then he died on a cross as a substitute he gave his perfect life to pay for the sins we have committed against God and against others he lived a perfect life and died and then died in the place of sinners but he didn't stay dead God raised him from the dead and with his resurrection Christ triumphed over the triple threat those big three oppressors sin death and the devil Jesus routed them he routed him through his death and resurrection and when he comes back he's going to finish what he started he's going to ultimately and finally complete what his death and resurrection began when this baby comes back he's going to complete it no more sin no more death no more devil far as the curse is found for everyone who trusts in

Christ alone they are brought into this triumph we share in what Christ has done for us victorious triumphant our oppressors are routed he's the great deliverer this baby in Simeon's arms God in the flesh Emmanuel he alone is God's salvation for all people so here we are tonight Christmas Eve 2014 a long way away from when this baby was born but he's alive where are you looking for deliverance where are you looking for rescue have you yet to see with eyes of faith that this Jesus in Simeon's arms is God's salvation that he's holding out to you receive him bow before him he's our deliverer king joy to the world the Lord has come let earth receive her king let every heart your

heart tonight tomorrow morning let every heart prepare him room let every don't gosh