

## **The Promised and Prepared Heart**

In Simeon a True Israelite.

(2005)

“...It is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,” Romans 9:6-7.

Besides clearly opposing all that in our day would be called decision-based salvation in this chapter, here Paul is exhaustively telling his Roman audience that justification was never guaranteed to all the descendants of Abraham simply because they are the descendants of Abraham, but only in Isaac are some blessed through the promises of God to eternal life, that is those who have a true faith in God. Many in Paul’s day said that this would nullify all of God’s promises to Israel. They were wrong; it is God who calls according to His good counsel, and His word cannot fail.

But what of the true “Israel” that Paul refers to in his writings such as in Romans 9? The picture of Simeon in the Bible is a staple in my understanding of such a difficult truth. The Bible says in the OT that, “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes,” Psalm 19:7. The Psalmist, as all true Israelites did, was in constant praise of God’s word and its abiding influence in the life of all those who were found to treasure it. I believe that what this passage says finds a perfect personification in the heart of blessed Simeon. We read of this man in Luke’s Gospel:

“And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just 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. So he came by 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  
Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,  
A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,  
And the glory of Your people Israel,” Luke 2:25-32.

I just love this true Israelite. I smile when I think of Simeon. Have you ever wondered what he may have preached to his friends that afternoon, or for the rest of his life? This is the type of man to whom the Israelite promises truly belonged as it is written in Romans 9:4, that is, to the true circumcised and called of God. Simeon demonstrates for us the heart of all of the seed of Isaac, the seed of promise. God’s particular promise to Simeon, that he would not die before he saw "The Lord’s Christ" is not for you or me but his faith showed the closeness God had with men even under the OT. This man was so well seasoned in preparation for the coming of the Messiah that he was given this blessing and knew it when Jesus was only eight days old. This is God at work in the heart of a sinner, my friends. Read again if you must what this OT Israelite said and consider how much is expressed by him on that perfect day. Anna in Luke 2:37 was also uniquely blessed, but she will have to be another letter.

Simeon saw no miracles wrought by Christ; he did not eat the food of angels, or see the risen Lord. He was an Israelite sacrificing animals and tithing as required under the OT law of works. He was just and devout by the standard of God’s glorious OT. He saw his sin and all that passed to him from Adam. He was not regenerated by the Holy Spirit and yet he was made to see this. This is the heart of the promise folks. Never underestimate the schoolmaster, Galatians 3:24. The Law prepared him. Has it not prepared you? The promise is that men will know God. Simeon would have loved to see the glory of the NT but could not. Simeon was led to the Son of God by a special providence of the Father. He saw the baby and by an extraordinary grace glorified his God in the flesh before Joseph and Mary and rejoiced that the infant in his arms was the surety of his soul, the souls of his selected fathers, and even those of the whole world. This was Old Testament and the glory of God must have flooded Simeon’s hopeful soul that day.

Simeon, in a glorious way, shows me what the heart of the true Jew may mean. Though the OT could not bring about clear conscience and consolation like the NT, it was yet the means of Simeon's love and life in God as an Israelite. The Law was his preparation and we can see how God worked in him beautifully. If David had been at the temple that day would he have praised God for the baby? I speculate, yes. So would Samuel, Daniel, and Ezra. The hearts of all the OT saints were prepared looking forward to the consummation of the age, as your heart, if you are in God's Spirit, is prepared to look back even as you look ahead. It is Christ, it is Christ.

Oh, my friends and family, on somewhat of a side note, let me encourage some of you and reprimand others. There are so many false prophets in our rich American culture selling a bill of goods called gospel that is not gospel. The church was long ago warned of their certain increase such as in 1 Timothy 6. I know there are many life coaches in our cities that've made God's word a marketplace. Every thing they venerate in their snow-white-like mirrors is through the lenses of greed and seed and they've customized the root of all evil from the love of money to the love of the god who gives them money, and in their condemnation see honor in this shame. The Bible would not exist if such faith was true. Never make an apostle a spokesman for a faith that he did not live as an example of. People like Paula White are the modern day John Tetzels selling indulgences using the Bible as their marketplace. Any sound Christian rejects the faith of Joel Osteen after a few hearings. They speak a vision of their own hearts, not from the Lord. If you were to buy a golden toilet they would praise their detestable god for honoring the posterior of his posterity with such a suitable and deserved sanction finding a dozen scriptures to buttress their greed.

These people must come as it is written, but are your hearts prepared? No more Bible reading, no more emails, no more sermons on MP3, just you and the Judge tonight. Are you prepared? Do you despise the things of this world or is your faith a means of gaining you all those things you love? Do not let your hearts be troubled, beloved. There are many churches in America and all around the world that are prepared. They are praising the Lord in the Spirit of holiness aright. I pray you are part of one. They love each other and are each other's strength against such great greedy ungodliness that floods our airwaves on "Christian" TV. They see Jesus in a Roles Royce and it is there that they admire him in 21st century-style-idolatry. The hearts of the greedy sheep are not of the heart of Simeon.

God prepares the heart of His own. He always has and He always will. Consider Simeon and reflect on the promise fulfilled to him and in him some time between 4 and 6 BC. If you are soundly saved from the righteous judgment of the God of heaven then you rejoice in a spirit akin yet greater than that of blessed Simeon who died contented and highly favored.

God bless you all in your faithfulness to Him.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.