

Speaking to the soul



Prayer

Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel! Luke 2:29-32

Eight days after Jesus' birth, his parents took him to the temple for his circumcision. There is no suggestion that the

people of Jerusalem understood the significance of this moment. All the people at the temple saw was a young couple presenting their baby in the way that people did every day. But two elderly people did understand what was going on. Simeon and Anna had been longing for this day - and it had finally come!

These verses form what is known as the Nunc Dimittis, Simeon's famous prayer of thanks for this miraculous moment. He had been looking forward to this day for so long that he could now die in peace. As a Jew, he recognised that this was a glorious moment for the people of Israel. But it was much, much more. Simeon also recognised that the Messiah had come not merely for the Jews, but for the whole world.

Simeon and Anna understood what was going on because they were people of prayer. They had devoted their lives to waiting on God. Anna was 84 and had been a widow for most of her life. We are told that she was a prophetess and never left the temple, instead worshipping God night and day, fasting and praying. The deep understanding and insight of these two people arose from lives that were shaped by prayer. They knew God so well that they were able to understand what he was doing in the world.

Time and again in these daily devotionals we have been reminded of the importance of prayer as a way of life. Simeon and Anna are a supreme illustration of this and an inspiration to us as we live for God day by day.

QUESTION

What have you learnt from the example of Simeon and Anna?

PRAYER

Lord, thank you that you want me to live in continual partnership with you in prayer. By your Spirit inspire me with the example of Simeon and Anna and help me to share more of my life with you. Amen

Photograph - Choir of Belfast Cathedral Christmas 2024

