



## Simeon Says

### Luke 2:25–38

---

#### **Introduction: King AND Kingdom Come**

Welcome to the second week of our hikoi through the gospel according to Luke. We've called this series *King and Kingdom Come*. As we journey through the longest book in the New Testament we'll see how Luke presents Jesus as the King come to earth to bring about a new Kingdom.

The challenge in this series may just be the little word "and" in our title.

- Some people want the **Kingdom without the King**. They want the fruit of the Jesus' way, justice, equality, peace, renewal of all things – the Kingdom, without having to submit to the King.
- Others **want the King but seem unconcerned about His Kingdom**. Christians often want a personal relationship with Jesus that makes us feel better, but whether anything actually gets better for those less fortunate is of secondary importance.

So the "and" is important.

As we read through the gospel according to Luke we pray that our eyes and hearts would be opened again to the King and Kingdom that has come, and that we would be challenged and inspired because as Grant said last week, this is a story we are part of, we still have a role to

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

play in extending the Kingdom of God today, by believing that Jesus is King, and living as though that is true.

Last week Grant opened up the first chapter of Luke's gospel. The eighty verse trailer for all that is to come. Today we're into chapter 2 and although it's slightly shorter, we're still not going to be able to cover everything in our time together. The 52 verses cover the birth and childhood of Jesus, the manger in Bethlehem, shepherds in the fields, angels in the sky, and boy Jesus in the Temple. So because we can't cover everything we highly recommend that you read along with the series. On our website under resources, you can download a printable bookmark which lists all the readings for this series.

I recommend reading the entire section over the week, maybe you split it up further and read a chunk each day, maybe you work through it with your life group. However you decide to engage, what an opportunity we have as a church community to dive deep into a full gospel account together, let's make the most of it!

Okay with all that being said, hopefully you'll excuse me focusing on the section of chapter 2 that most resonated as I prepared for today. The King has come. He's been born in a manger, visited by shepherds, named Jesus, and now 40 days later Mary and Joseph take 6-week-old Jesus to Jerusalem following Jewish Law which are detailed in verses 22-24, we pick it up in verse 25.

***Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.***

***Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:***

***“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,***

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

***you may now dismiss your servant in peace.***

***For my eyes have seen your salvation,***

***which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:***

***a light for revelation to the Gentiles,***

***and the glory of your people Israel.”***

***The child’s father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”***

***There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. (Luke 2:25-38)***

### **Simeon Says**

So as my sermon title suggests we’re going to focus today on what Simeon says. But before we look at his words, we need to ask the valid question Mary and Joseph probably asked: *‘who are you, and why are you grabbing my baby?!’*

Luke tells us a few things about Simeon the baby grabber:

- He’s righteous and devout.
- He’s received a promise from God that He will see the Messiah before he dies.
- Which means he’s an old man.

But the thing that Luke emphasises most with Simeon is the work of the **Holy Spirit** in him.

Verse 25 – The Holy Spirit was on him.

Verse 26 – The Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he’d see the messiah.

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

Verse 27 – The Holy Spirit directed him to meet Jesus.

Simeon according to the message paraphrase of the passage, “*lived in prayerful anticipation*” – I love that phrase. Here’s a man led by the Spirit, living in prayerful anticipation. Simeon challenges us to be spirit-led intercessors, whatever our age, prayerfully expectant that God will be at work. If I’m honest I’m not sure I’d describe myself that way, but I do want to become that kind of man.

So anyway, all things considered, if a random old man is going to grab your baby, Simeon wasn’t a bad option. Let’s get onto what he says.

### **Nunc Dimittis**

Have you ever watched a musical by accident? You start a movie and before you get 5 minutes in there’s been two songs! The start of Luke’s gospel is a bit like that. Last week in chapter one we had Zechariah and Mary bursting into song, and here Spirit-filled Simeon composes another. These famous songs of praise have been converted to hymns, put to music, and named after their Latin translations. Mary’s is the *Magnificat*, Zechariah’s the *Benedictus*, and Simeon’s is known as *Nunc Dimittis*, meaning “now you dismiss” or “now you let depart” after the words of verse 29: ***you may now dismiss your servant in peace.***

These words are used in the traditional evening prayer of Compline to guide believers as they lay down to rest, surrendering the efforts of the day to the Lord and entrusting themselves to his rest. For Simeon though, he wasn’t talking about going to bed for the night, he was ready for his final sleep. This elderly man had been holding on to the promise of the Spirit, living in prayerful anticipation of this moment. Living with one goal: To see the Kingdom of God break into the world.

Each new day could be the day. As he shuffled around the Temple courts carrying the hopes of his nation in his whispered prayers, he listened for the prompting of the Spirit. Day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. Getting older and more frail. His prayer walk getting slower. Perhaps his memory of the promise of God a bit more foggy. But yet he holds onto the promise.

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

Today could be the day.

And then on a day like any other, two first time parents enter the temple courts and the Spirit whispers, "*Simeon this is the One*".

As Simeon picks up the chosen child, he now holds in his arms, the promise he'd held in his heart for so long. Cradled in his arms was not just his hope, but the hope of the world. The living, breathing, growing King of the world, here to establish the Kingdom that was always meant to be.

And for Simeon, that was enough.

Nunc Dimittis.

You may now dismiss your servant in peace.

I wonder what you're holding hope for? Sometimes we use the phrase "If X happened I could die happy." That's effectively what Simeon said. I've seen Jesus. He's only a baby and there's plenty of the story left to play out – but I know salvation will now unfold. Messiah is here. That's enough. I can die happy and at peace.

So what is enough for you? Is Jesus truly enough for me?

These are the meaning of life level questions that Simeon raises for us.

But Simeon has a few more words before he passes in peace so let's continue as he talks about the Saviour who is revealed, and the Saviour who will reveal. We'll start with revelation to and look at verses 30-32.

### **Revelation to All**

Last week Grant pointed out that Mary's song is cosmic in its scope. Her story was wrapped up in the much larger story of God's Kingdom. Simeon's also thinking far beyond his individual story. His hope is in fact completely unselfish because he's not going to see the story play out.

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

As he holds baby Jesus he's not just rejoicing for himself, or even rejoicing for his nation, he's rejoicing for all nations! I can die happy, he says, because: ***“my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations” (2:30-31)***

He describes the arrival of Jesus as light breaking into the world. A light that will shine for both **Jews** and **Gentiles** (what the bible calls non-Jewish people) but in slightly different ways.

***“a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of your people Israel.” (2:32-33)***

This brings to mind for me the image of **lighthouse**. A good lighthouse is a thing of raw coastal beauty, buffeted by wind and waves. The lighthouse is the pride, the glory, of the coastal town. But its purpose is revelation for all. It is a guiding light to lead ships safely around dangerous coasts and into harbour.

Jesus the King of the Jews is the glory of Israel in a particular way. He was Jewish, from the line of David. He fulfilled Jewish law and prophets. He wasn't a kiwi. But he came to reveal God to **all peoples**. To be the guiding light leading all people who would look to Him, safely home to the Father.

And while we might struggle today with Jesus as the glory of Israel, early Jewish readers, would have struggled way more with Jesus the light for revelation to the Gentiles. This is the theme of **Radical Inclusivity** that runs throughout Luke's gospel.

**Jesus is here.**

**The King has arrived.**

**And the Kingdom is for everyone.**

Everyone you thought was on the outskirts is in.

- Unmarried pregnant teenagers like Mary – they're in.
- Elderly barren women like Elizabeth was – they're in.

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

- Lowly Shepherds – in.
- Elderly widows, like Anna – in.
- Even Gentiles are in.

This is the Kingdom of radical inclusivity. Everyone you thought was on the outskirts, is in. And, in contrast, those who seemed like the in-crowd, the religious elite ones, they might not be as close to God as everyone thought.

Because Jesus is not just revealed to all. He himself **will reveal all**. The King has not just come to be revealed. But **to reveal**.

### **Revelation of All**

After praising God Simeon has some words for the new parents. Let's reread them from verses 34.

***Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." (Luke 2:34-35)***

From this passage we can say that the arrival of the King reveals two things:

- 1. Jesus reveals the value system of the Kingdom.**
- 2. Jesus reveals the condition of hearts.**

The value system of the Kingdom is radically different to that of any worldly Kingdom. This is often called the **Upside-Down Kingdom** or the **Great Reversal**. We're still in the introductory scenes of Luke's gospel, Jesus is still only 6 weeks old, but already things are starting to shake. The foundations of the old way starting to crumble.

Mary sings of the proud scattered, rulers brought down, and the humble lifted up and the hungry filled. Here Simeon prophesies that this child will cause the rising and falling of many in Israel.

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

This child will flip the script, turn tables, and dismantle the status quo. And not everyone will like it.

That's why Simeon foresees the opposition that Jesus will face. And in that way Jesus will not only reveal the hidden things of the Kingdom but reveal the hidden dispositions of individual hearts.

Have you ever heard someone described as having a penetrating gaze? As almost being able to look into your soul. In 2010 Serbian artist Marina Abramovic performed a live exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, called **The Artist is Present**, where she sat at a table and allowed visitors to sit opposite her and share eye contact in silence. They could stay as long as they wanted, some sat for a few minutes, some sat for whole days. In total she locked eyes with over 1500 people.

As strangers sat in front of Marina they found maintaining such focused eye contact highly vulnerable, deeply emotional often being brought to tears by the experience, and it was also described as cathartically confronting.

I love this concept of the artist being present. Perhaps this is a tiny glimpse of the soul revealing gaze of Jesus. If it's powerful connecting with this human artist, how much more when The Divine Artist makes himself present.

As we conclude we're going to listen to a song called **Arrival** which sings about exactly that. It calls us to hail the arrival of the infinite infant God. The Architect who entered the plan. The Playwright who took the stage. The Author who climbed into the page. And The One who sees what lies in each and every soul.

As we remember the arrival of Jesus we wonder at the Creator who entered his creation. Who is so present to his people. Whose gaze is so lovingly intense that we often shy away from full eye contact. As we welcome the arrival of the King and follow his journey through the gospel of Luke, what an opportunity we have to gaze at Jesus! To allow Him to be revealed to us,

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

and to allow Him to reveal to us what's of true value in the Kingdom and the condition of our hearts.

Amen.



**Reflecting on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2025:** Last week Grant introduced us to the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke and three themes that run through the book: God working with the ordinary, God keeping his promises, and God's plans being bigger than we think. Which has most resonated for you this week?

These questions help you think more about this message. We hope they might be a conduit for conversation and reflection, encouraging us to wrestle with how this message might practically work itself out in our lives.

1. Simeon lived in **Holy Spirit led prayerful anticipation of God showing up**. Can you think of someone you know who lives like that? What would it look like for you to live in prayerful anticipation this week?
2. The coming of Jesus reveals the **Radical Inclusivity** of the gospel invitation. This confronted all sorts of cultural barriers. Although we live in a different time, who might still be (or feel) excluded from the way of Jesus or Christian community?
3. **Read 2:36-38**. What stands out to you about Anna's role in the story?
4. **Nunc Dimittis**. Once he sees Jesus, Simeon says he can die in peace. Why do you think he was able to say that? Do you think you could say that? Why or why not?

*Text of a message delivered by Aidan Wivell at Windsor Park Baptist Church on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025.  
The written text may vary from the spoken/video version due to time and flexibility.*

If you'd like to chat with someone about your spiritual journey or anything else going on in your life, please contact us at [care@windsorpark.org.nz](mailto:care@windsorpark.org.nz); **we're better together** and **no perfect people are allowed**.



Below are some further resources that may take the message further and deeper and enable you to explore other viewpoints on the same theme. We also encourage you to engage with the preacher if there are further questions you have or if you'd like clarification on anything. Email [info@windsorpark.org.nz](mailto:info@windsorpark.org.nz) and we'll direct your query to the appropriate person.

1. There are so many valuable resources for you add to your toolbox about the Book of Luke. Jump on **Right Now Media** to check out our **library of Luke related content**. <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/library/custom/46512>
2. The Bible Society have created this **Luke booklet** which you can access for free as a PDF to accompany your journey through the gospel with reflection questions and imaginative exercises. <https://biblesociety.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Luke.pdf>
3. To take a deeper dive into Luke you can purchase a copy of **Reading Luke** by New Testament scholar Frank Dicken which is an entry level academic book on Luke's gospel. <https://www.amazon.com.au/Reading-Luke-Frank-Dicken/dp/1498233619>