

Simeon

A Poetic Meditation on Luke 2:22-35

I cannot believe it!
I cannot believe it!
Too long I dared not believe it,
Too long I feared to hope for it!

Yet my eyes have seen it,
My own eyes beheld it!
Long have I dreamed of this day,
How many years for *this* did I pray.

Oh, my loving God how kind You are,
To grant me this grace promised from so far.
Who am I to deserve such as this,
You sustained my life so *this* day I would not miss.

When He promised me that I'd see this day
I was stunned silent to imagine the way,
My soul leaped up in joy and faith
My heart nearly stopped as I considered such grace.

Could it possibly be,
That a man such as me,
Would be able to see,
The highest day of history?

He gave me that promise in a dream of the night
At a time in my life when all I wanted were wings to take flight.
So sad was my soul, so hopeless my spirit
So lonely my body, that I wanted none near it.

Why did He wait? For what did He delay?
When would His justice, our enemies repay?
When would His right hand bring wickedness to an end?
How long before He our Comforter would send?

It was in that dark night of doubt and despair
That He sent His gracious Spirit gliding on air.
He awakened me from sleep that night
With words of promise that brought me delight.

Though I was old and advanced in years
God had heard my prayers and seen my tears.
The voice of God is not easily heard,
But awesome it was and I remember every word.

"Hail, Simeon devout and right,
The Lord has heard your complaint this night.
You will not taste death's final travail,
Until your eyes behold The Consolation of Israel."

The reality of that precious promise made my soul quake,
I sat bolt upright and full awake.
In utter awe my body shook,
For into these things angels and holy men longed to look.

Yet here was given a sweet promise for me,
That the Messiah of Israel, my eyes would see.
All these years we'd waited so long,
I learned in a moment my doubts of Him were wrong.

Now that promise came several years ago,
And I must confess, I'll have you know,
Though I knew His promise was true and right,
I began to grow weary, waiting day and night.

Today began like any other day,
It fact it was normal in every way.
I always did what I was required to do,
I was to serve at Temple from nine to noon.

As I walked to work there were concerns in my heart
Whether my service at Temple played any significant part.
You see, even the holy things when seen every day,
Loose their glorious luster in these eyes of clay.

Yet one thing I've learned in my eighty years
Is to pray to my God through joy or tears.
I was praying to Him all along my way,
When His Spirit revealed that this would be the day.

Another thing I've learned, I'll just pass along,
It comforts my soul to pray in song.
So in nervous hope I sang in my spirit,
But an angelic choir, somewhere near, I could hear it.

I looked all around expecting heaven's glory,
But no one else was aware of this unfolding story.
In fear and trembling I entered the Temple court,
I walked slowly forward, leaning on the wall for support.

When quietly to my right, appeared a young family,
I sensed that God almighty was standing beside me.
I looked at the father and the young mother too,
But it was that little baby... I didn't know what to do.

The Spirit within me nearly burst my heart,
I trembled and shook and nearly came apart.
There welled up within me such an overwhelming joy,
Tears filled my eyes as reached for that baby boy.

With the biggest smile ever seen on my face,
I lifted Him up between earth and space.
I swung Him around then tenderly held Him near,
Lest I scare the little lad and He shed a tear.

But He seemed quite content and smiled just a bit,
But when I looked at the mother, she thought I'd lost my wits.
Then these words came to me, no doubt from God,
I spoke them loudly, which for me, was quite odd.

I held Him gently close to my chest,
In my arms was God come in human flesh.
I ignored the crowd that had reverently drawn near,
Turned my faced to heaven so the world could hear.

"Oh Blessed Lord, in peace I can now depart
For You have granted to me the desire of my heart.
My eyes have seen the Lord's salvation,
A brilliant bright light to the Gentile nations.
You have sent Him forth for all to see,
For Israel Your chosen, incarnate glory."

When I opened my eyes I was surprised to see,
Father and mother starring a whole in me.
It was clear they wondered at the words I said,
And the crowd stood silent, like sculpted columns of lead.

Then the father dropped to his knees,
Gazed at their baby and said, "Who could this boy be?"
But the eyes of the mother, black like a well,
Guarded treasured mysteries not meant to tell.

Her eyes were filled with wonder and delight,
Yet circled around with holy fright.
She knew this boy possessed a glow,
That began in heaven, like God's rainbow.

As I handed Him back, she took Him with care,
Arranged his blanket and tousled His hair.
She looked at me and smiled with grace,
I smile too, then turned my face.

I turned away, didn't hold her stare,
I had to tell her what I couldn't bare.
The Spirit within me was speaking again,
To remain silent would have been a sin.

But how could I tell her such painful words,
I didn't want this moment disturbed?
There's more to that child than could be seen,
A little baby boy and a newborn king.

The coming of a new king will cause some to rejoice
But only those of a similar voice.
For others a new king can be a bitter pain,
Evil men always reject a righteous reign.

So I blessed the young family, especially the child,
I pulled them close and tried to smile.
I opened my mouth, the speech not perfected,
And I spoke to the mother, as the Spirit directed.

"Listen dear lady, O favored one,
I have a message about your Son."
"Speak on!" She said with clear voice,
"God will give me strength to endure His choice."

"Right you are, what you say is true,
But this message I have means pain for you.
This child you hold
Has been foretold
By all the prophets since the days of old.

He has been appointed by the hand of God,
To wield both the scepter of blessing and the judgment rod.
He will become Isaiah's cornerstone,
The only sure foundation is Him alone.

Some will accept Him, few, not all,
Most will reject Him and be crushed by the fall.
Those who accept Him will be able to fly,
They will soar on the heights and never die.

All of Israel will be divided over Him,
To some a godly preacher, to others a teacher of sin.
To those in spiritual darkness He will be a Great Light,
To the professing bright ones, He will be a Dark Knight.

The religious leaders will oppose His life,
They will fill His days with constant strife.
They will malign His name and your name too,
Cruel and unspeakable things they'll do.

His life will be a sign to this wicked generation,
Like a sword they will pierce Him without hesitation.
But the Spirit of God will protect His soul,
Til every word of the Law has reached its goal.

Yet in the end He will be judge,
In the face of evil He will never budge.
His wisdom and power for a time will be concealed,
But by your Son all thoughts of every heart will be revealed.

All these things your eyes will behold,
Like a sword through you, it will pierce your soul.
And may God forgive me if too much I've told."

She quietly bowed her head as a tear formed on her cheek,
I wanted to say a thousand things but I couldn't speak.
Her husband held her as her lips silently moved,
She was praying. So I did too.

After a moment, she looked up,
And the husband gave me to two turtledoves.
He presented five shekels, the redemption price,
I turned and offered the sacrifice.

After I washed, with the traditional words I prayed,
They then turned and slowly walked away.
They wound their way through the crowd,
When they'd passed through the gate, I wept out loud.

I wept. I collapsed on the Temple steps
and I wept for joy.
Then I laughed and I laughed.
The salvation of Israel I had held in my arms.

The hope of Israel has finally come,
The Holy and the Righteous One.
The long forgotten promise is true,
God said, "I will make My dwelling among you."

The God of promise who is always near,
Has entered human flesh and this day is here!
O promise of promise, how can it be,
That finite man has embraced eternity?

Can He who is without time,
Take on a body like yours and mine?

Can He who does not slumber or sleep,
Become a little child with midnight dreams?

Can He who is without beginning or end,
Be born in the town of Bethlehem?

Can He who is Spirit and without form,
Don human fabric and with flesh be adorned?

Can He whom no one has ever seen,
Descend visibly into humanity?

Can He who is holy and righteous and just,
Live in our space and become one of us?

Abraham's promise at last has come true,
Messiah is born, the Joy of the Jews.
The dwelling of God is now with men
As a tiny baby He has entered in.

I never imagined He would come like this,
This joy of mine is hard to express.
What joy divine floods my soul,
I want this joy, the whole world to know!

Today I held the Sovereign King,
From the depths of my soul I want to sing!
I do not care what others will think,
For my life is today approaching the brink.

The end of my days is drawing near,
And I want one thing to be crystal clear.
This baby's coming, foretold long ago,
Is a messaged intended to cover the globe.

Salvation, it's true, is of the Jews,
But God had in mind the Gentiles too.
For all the world, is this glorious news,
For every human being, including you.

During these fast and fretful days,
Don't neglect to stop and sing His praise.
That little baby born the King,
Came to free our souls so we could sing.

Today my singing soul's complete,
'Cause my soul, it's Savior did meet.
Something happened when I lifted Him in the air,
It's as if that boy took my every care.

But more than cares, something deep within,
That little baby, took away my sin.
Won't you with me embrace the joy,
Open your heart, worship the Savior-boy.

And now in peace I can depart,
Full of days and full of heart.
I embraced the Savior in my arms today,
Won't you do the same before *you* go away.