**Our Father, Through the Sending of the Son**

Based on [Luke 2:22-40](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Lk2.22-40) and [Galatians 4:1-7](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Ga4.1-7)

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This gospel is about how Joseph, Mary and Jesus travelled to Jerusalem forty days after the Nativity, in order for the purification of Mary, and the presentation of the firstborn, both required by the Law of Moses. In doing these things, two elderly prophets, Simeon and Anna, recognize infant Jesus to be the Christ, the redemption and salvation of Israel. This salvation will come through suffering, but will end in glory for the people of God.

When a child is born, and the mother and father get a first look at their newborn. And one of the many thoughts going through the mind of the parent is, “What will become of this child?” Imagine the child is a boy. Will he grow up to be handsome? Will he take after his father or his mother? Will he do good in the world. Will there be tragedy? Will he marry? And the reverse happens as well. When the child grows up, the parent thinks about how this adult was once a little child, and how you never knew then what he would become and how he would turn out to be who he is today.

When Jesus was born, his parents must have wondered, but they had much more information than the average parent. An angel had told Joseph and Mary that her child would be from the Holy Spirit, and will be the **saviour**. Shepherds had been informed by angels to go and find him, because he is the **saviour**. And on the day of his presentation at the Temple, two elderly Prophets acknowledge him to be the **savior**. Jesus’ parents knew that he was a child of immense importance, who God’s people had been waiting for. But the prophet, Simeon, has even more to say about his future.

First, Simeon calls the Christ child “a light to the gentiles.” What does this mean? The Israelites--as God’s chosen people--were supposed to be the light to the Gentiles so that God’s salvation would reach all people (Is. 49:6). **By observing God’s commands the other nations were to look upon Israel and say, “look at their ways, their God must be great,” and come to Him. Instead they failed.** So in the fullness of time this child was born, the messiah. And he is the nation of Israel reduced to one. In his flesh he will bring glory to the whole nation, a glory that Israel could not attain themselves. In this way, Mary’s child would be a light to all people; and the glory of God’s Chosen people.

Then Simeon blessed the holy family, and then he says more about the child. What follows are more somber predictions about his fate. He says, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel.” **This means that, based on their reaction to Jesus, people will either stand or fall.** This child will the stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greek. The saviour comes not to bring peace but a sword dividing families. This is a hard teaching, then and today. In a society that values material comfort, peace and safety above all things, Jesus is a threat. Because Jesus is the truth, and there can be no concourse between truth and falsehood, between righteousness and wickedness. Whoever is not for him is against him, and the world, and its prince is against him.

Finally, Simeon says the infant Christ is to be *a sign that is opposed*. This means he will be rejected by his own people. Also, he says to Mary, “**and a sword will pierce through your own soul also.”** This means Mary will suffer great sorrow on account of this child. This is because of how he will suffer and die in her lifetime.

In short this Christ child will be the savior of the world, but through his salvation he will be the center of much controversy. And it must be this way, because that is how hearts will be revealed. God reveals hearts by how they react to Jesus. **Many will say “Lord, Lord” with their lips. However, hearts are revealed when they have to choose between Jesus on the one hand, and ease, comfort, carnal security on the other.** Many will prove faithless, either revealing their hypocrisy, or else falling away for having too much invested here.

Simeon was sent in and by the Spirit to prophesy beforehand, that Mary and Joseph might know the full implication of raising the Christ. They heard these wonderful and terrible things to come for their newborn son. So much to consider, but it boils down to this: It is through great controversy and opposition that this child will grow up to save God’s people.

As parent’s, I’m not sure how you take such news. Scripture says that Mary and Joseph “marveled” at what was said about him. They were either extraordinarily impressed or disturbed. Perhaps both. The greatness that their child would achieve, his destiny to save many people will come at a cost of great personal suffering for himself and his mother.

Simeon’s prophecy was very general, but e know the details of that suffering. That this child would grow up to be loved for his miracles, but abandoned for his hard teachings. The religious authorities would meet him with rage, resentment, opposition, until finally they would plot to kill him. He was to be betrayed by one of his friends for thirty pieces of silver, deserted by his disciples at the hour of his capture. He would be tried in the middle of the night, and worthless men would bear false witness against him.

He would be taken before the governor of Judea who, instead of executing justice, would execute him. He would be stricken, smitten and afflicted, mocked by his captors, forced to carry his own cross. He would be nailed to it amongst thieves, suffer and die a shameful death, though he did nothing wrong. Mary was blessed above all women with the honor of bearing and raising the son of God, but how can a mother be expected to bear such grief over her son?

His mother didn’t know all of these things, but His Father did. Not Joseph, but his true Father, God almighty knew it all. In fact, scripture says about Jesus “***It was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief***.” It was part of his father’s plan, wrought before the foundation of the world to save his people, and through the redemption of his Son, make Himself Our Father.

So *when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,* ***5****to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”*