

Jesus: The Greatest Hope and Expectation

Introduction

What is your and my greatest hope and expectation about celebrating Christmas? Is it gathering with friends and family? Is it receiving gifts and giving gifts? Is it singing Christmas carols or looking at the multi-colored lights? All of those things are good, but if those are the main things, then we've set our sights too low. So the main theme of this message is that **Jesus is the greatest hope and expectation.**

A man named Simeon and a woman named Anna, who may not be familiar names in the Bible, are mentioned in the story of Jesus' arrival, His Advent, in [Luke 2](#). If you read closely the details of their stories, Simeon and Anna will be remembered because of the high hopes and expectations they had in Jesus above all else. So again, the main theme of this message is that **Jesus is the greatest hope and expectation.** Simeon knew this well.

Jesus: Simeon's Greatest Hope and Expectation

Simeon was a righteous and devout man, waiting for the consolation of Israel. In other words, he was waiting for the one who would bring comfort to God's people. Note in [Luke 2:26](#) that it was the Holy Spirit's revelation to Simeon that he would see Jesus, Israel's consolation.

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.

[Luke 2:26](#) (ESV)

As Charles Spurgeon, a renowned preacher in the 1800's said, "He [the Holy Spirit] takes the things of Christ and reveals them to us." So, Simeon came in the Spirit, trusting God's promise of Jesus' arrival. Scripture indicates that Simeon took Jesus in his arms and blessed God ([Luke 2:28](#)). After waiting, perhaps decades, his hope and expectations had been fulfilled in the arrival of the Christ Child. Imagine Simeon's delight when he held Jesus in his arms.

Recently, my wife and I experienced the wonderful privilege of holding our first grandchild in our arms. What a God-given gift our first grandson is! But that pales in comparison to what Simeon experienced. He was holding Jesus, God Himself in the flesh. Simeon's arms cradled the good news for all people, Jesus, the only hope for anyone to be saved from sin. Take a look at [Acts 13:47](#).

I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.

[Acts 13:47](#) (ESV)

The Bible says that Mary and Joseph marveled at all that was said about Jesus ([Luke 2:33](#)). He is to be marveled at; this God-Man who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. Yet, He fully relates to our sufferings and temptations ([Hebrews 2:18](#)). His mercies are new every morning; great is His faithfulness ([Lamentations 3:22-23](#)). Much like Simeon, a woman named Anna persevered in

patience, trusting God's faithfulness. She saw Jesus as the One worth waiting for hopefully and expectantly.

Jesus: Anna's Greatest Hope and Expectation

Anna was a prophetess and was well-advanced in years. She worshiped and fasted day and night and didn't depart from the temple ([Luke 2:36-37](#)). Scripture states that "at that very hour", in other words when Mary, Joseph and the Christ Child arrived at the temple, she began to give thanks to God and spoke of Jesus to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. Here's [Luke 2:38](#).

And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.
[Luke 2:38](#) (ESV)

Imagine, if you will, what it must have been like for Anna to finally experience the coming of the Messiah, the Anointed One. Much like Simeon, Anna praised and thanked God for Jesus, whom she celebrated by sharing with others the good news of His arrival.

Good news is worth sharing! Anna had waited so long and so expectantly for Jesus. She probably shared the good news of His arrival with zeal. How zealous are you and I to share Christ?

Good news is also worth receiving. Why is Jesus good news? Listen and meditate on the following truths: He came a lowly infant, God with us. He walked humbly as a man, not to be served, but to serve. He died as a cursed criminal, making many sinners righteous. He rose from the dead, validating sinners made saints. He will come again with His saints, all things to be made new. That's really good news! Have you received the good news, which is Jesus Himself? Is Jesus a stumbling block or a folly to you; or is He the cornerstone of your life?

If you haven't done so, you can receive Him by simple faith through God's extravagant grace and mercy. The Bible says repent and believe. In other words, turn away from sin and turn toward God. Jesus is the only way to find peace with God and hope for tomorrow. He truly is the greatest hope and expectation.

Jesus: The Greatest Hope and Expectation

In the closing portion of today's text from the book of Luke, we see the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem after the Passover ended, while his family returned home. He stayed in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions ([Luke 2:41-46](#)).

Now, for a 12 year old boy to be separated from his parents for three days is a bit alarming and disturbing. But what was even more astonishing was Jesus' understanding of the Scriptures and his answers to the teacher's questions. Take a look at [Luke 2:47-48a](#).

⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ And when his parents saw him, they were astonished.
[Luke 2:47-48a](#) (ESV)

How about you and I? Are we amazed and astonished with who Jesus is? In fact, are we amazed and astonished that God Himself in the flesh would come down from glory and rescue broken and needy people like us in a world of chaos and turmoil? Do we find assurance in Jesus' first Advent and do we look forward to His second Advent with hopefulness and expectancy?

Because when He comes again some glorious day, it will not be as the lowly infant King, but as the mighty conquering King ([Revelation 19:16](#)). Jesus will make all things new. There will be a new heaven and a new earth. God's dwelling place will be with His people. There will be no more sorrow or sadness; there will be no more death or pain because all of the former things will have passed away ([Revelation 21:1-5](#)). That's good news for all people. That's Jesus, the greatest hope and expectation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I'd like to share some of the words from an old hymn titled *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus*, which was written by Charles Wesley in 1744.

Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Do those words written so long ago resonate with you and me? Is the true longing of our heart to see Jesus as our joy, as well as our greatest hope and expectation? If not, we've set our sights too low. Both Simeon and Anna had high hopes and expectations of celebrating Jesus at the first Advent. They were not disappointed because God is faithful. So too, may we look forward to celebrating His second Advent with the same hope and expectation at every Christmas and all year round. Come soon Lord Jesus; yes, come soon. Amen.