

# Waiting: Luke 2:22-38

Sunday, December 3, 2023  
Covenant Church  
Pastor Zack Phillips

## First Sunday in Advent

### Luke 2:22-38

**22** When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord **23** (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), **24** and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

**25** Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. **26** It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. **27** Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, **28** Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

**29** “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;

**30** for my eyes have seen your salvation,

**31** which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

**32** a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.”

**33** And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. **34** Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed **35** so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

**36** There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, **37** then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. **38** At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

I. We are terrible at waiting

II. But “waiting” is the keynote of the Christmas story—and of Scripture more broadly

A. In the Christmas story

- Elizabeth was “very old” before receiving a child
- Simeon seems to have waited a very long time (“now you are dismissing your servant in peace”) for the messiah (Luke 2:25-25)
- Anna the prophetess had been waiting 84 years to see the “redemption of Jerusalem” (Luke 2:36-38)

B. In Scripture more broadly

- A man who had been ill for 38 years seems to have been hoping/waiting a long time to be healed by the waters of the pool of Beth-zatha (John 5:1-9)
- Hannah, Samuel's mother, waited "year by year" for a child (1 Sam 1:7)
- Israel waited forty years to reach the promised land (Exod 16:35; Num 14:33-34)
- Israelite people of Jeremiah's day waited seventy years for exile to be over (Jer 29:10)
- Jesus has been "coming" (1 Cor 16:22) "soon" (Rev 22:20) for some 2,000ish years
- How about all the 67ish generations of Christians since Jesus' ascension who haven't witnessed his glorious Second Coming?

III. Let us...

A. ...Let God work on us

**Rom 8:28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.**

**Phil 1:6 I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.**

**Gal 4:4–5 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.**

Marc H. Ellis, *Peter Maurin: Prophet in the Twentieth Century*; Catholic Worker Reprint Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003).

B. ...Rejoice that He is the One patiently waiting for us!

**2 Peter 3:8–9 But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.**

C. ...Pray for outcomes but trust in Him

D. ...Realize that the time is shorter now than when we first believed

Parable of the Talents (Matt 25:14-30//Luke 19:11-27) ● Parable of the Watchful Slaves (Luke 12:35-40) ● Parable of The Faithful or Unfaithful Slave (Luke 12:41-48) ● Necessity for Watchfulness (Mark 13:32-37//Matt 24:36-44//Luke 21:34-36) ● Parable of the Ten bridesmaids (Matt 25:1-13)

E. ...Discipline our desires through prayer

*Question: What is one thing that God may have said to you through this sermon?*