

NOTES FOR FURTHER STUDY

**Supplemental Texts**

Ex. 19:5-6; Isa. 8:14; 11:2; 40:1-5; 42:6; 49:6; 51:3; 52:9-10; 61:1-2; Joel 2:29-32; Matt. 2:23; 21:44; Luke 1:6, 38, 68; 3:4-6; 2:52; 4:18-19; 23:51; John 1:14 Acts 2:17-21; 13:47; 26:23; 1 Cor. 1:20-25; 2 Cor. 2:16; 1 Pet. 2:7-8

**Study Summary**

The story of Jesus' early years continues with the foreshadowing of His mission to bring salvation for the people of Israel and all the world. The prophecy of Simeon contains the first mention of Gentiles in the coming salvation of God (v. 32) within the Gospel of Luke and the first hint of His death (v. 35 "and a sword will pierce your own soul" likely speaks to Mary's pain due to the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus). The Spirit reveals that the coming mission of Jesus will bring both salvation and judgement: salvation to those who see Him for who He is and judgement on those who reject Him. This revelation is received as good news to all those who look forward to God's redemption.

In this passage we see how Christ does what Israel failed to do as He shines as a light to all the world. He is the true Servant of the Lord, whose light brings comfort to those afflicted and trapped in darkness, but also reveals the hidden sins of the heart. It is only by God's grace that we have come to recognize and accept this Suffering Savior. As His followers we wait, in the strength and power of the Spirit, for the day He will return to set all things right.

**Historical & Theological Background**

**Theology:** Throughout the Gospel of Luke and Acts the work of the Holy Spirit in the redemptive plan of God takes centerstage. The Bible presents the work of the Holy Spirit in four different categories: God's power in creating all things, "God's sustaining power immanent in all life," the activity of God among "His covenant people," and "His presence in many types of revelation, charismatic wisdom and invasive speech."

In the life of the believer the Spirit is both revealer and teacher, the One who reveals the truth of Christ's identity and continues to mediate His presence, forming the believer more and more into the likeness of Christ. Just as He was active in the first creation the Spirit is active in the new creation. Indwelling God's people, the Spirit grows in us the fruits of the Kingdom, connecting us to the Risen King and our fellow brothers and sisters in this new family of God. He also enables/empowers us to join in the mission of the Kingdom, guiding God's covenant people in joining in His work of bringing life out of death and restoring the broken.

DISCUSSION PRIMER

This passage is full of examples of God's people responding to the work of the Spirit in their lives. Take some time this week to take stock of your priorities and sit before God, asking the Spirit how He would like to lead you in the coming new year. Come to group ready to share.

TEXTUAL INVESTIGATION

LUKE 2:25-40

**Big Idea:** The Spirit Reveals the Mission of the Messiah

**Fallen Condition Focus:** Failure and Inability

- What is Simeon waiting for (v. 25)?
- Why does Simeon go to the temple courts (v. 27)?
- What does Simeon say about the salvation Jesus will bring (v. 3-32)?
- Why are Joseph and Mary amazed at these words (v. 33)?
- What does Simeon say about the judgement Jesus will bring (v. 34-35)?
- Whom does Anna speak to about Jesus (v. 38)?
- What descriptions are given of the growing child Jesus (v. 40)?
- **Gospel Connection:** Where Israel failed to shine as a light among the nations (Ex. 19:5-6) Jesus comes as the fulfillment and culmination of God's plan to save all peoples. Read 1 Cor. 1:20-25. How is the cross of Christ both the wisdom and the power of God? Why do some fail to see this? (See 1 Cor. 2:10-16)

TEXTUAL INTERSECTION: How does the text intersect with our lives?

- What comfort should we glean from the finished work of Christ?
- How has the salvation we have in Christ brought you consolation?
- What challenge does the gospel present to our world? To our neighbors who do not know Jesus?
- Who in your life needs to hear this message of salvation and judgement?
- Do you find it difficult to wait on God? Why or why not?
- Do you expectantly look forward to Jesus' Second coming? If not, what would it look like for your future to inform your present?
- What is the role of the Spirit in the life of the believer? (See HTB)
- Would you characterize your life as one lived under the guidance of the Spirit? Why or why not? What might it look like for you to follow His lead more closely in your daily life?

REPLICABLE QUESTIONS

Read **Luke 2:25-40** and explore together what the passage reveals about:

- |                                       |                               |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1) The character and purposes of God? | 4) Our identity in Christ?    |
| 2) The fallen human condition?        | 5) Our obedience to Christ?   |
| 3) The gospel of Jesus Christ?        | 6) Our relationship to others |

TEXTUAL APPLICATION: "So, what now?"

Have each participant identify a personal take-away in light of this study. Is there . . .

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|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| • a command to obey?  | • a beauty to behold?  | • a mission to fulfill? |
| • a promise to claim? | • a truth to believe?  | • an example to follow? |
| • a sin to repent of? | • a service to render? | • a person to tell?     |