

**A Historical Study On The Book Of Luke**  
**Teaching #22: Joseph and Mary Were Under Law, Not Grace – Part Three**  
**Simeon’s Prophecy: Jesus, A Sign Spoken Against**  
**Luke 2:33-35**

In our previous studies, we learned that Joseph and Mary followed the requirements of the law.

1. Joseph and Mary had Jesus **CIRCUMCISED** according to the law.
2. Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the temple for Mary’s **PURIFICATION** according to the law.

Note: The *temple* is mentioned about **20** times in Luke. In Luke 19:41-44 and 21:5-6, Jesus makes a startling announcement that the temple would be destroyed. It was destroyed in AD 70.

Arising in the place of the physical temple of law is now the spiritual temple of grace where each person who believes becomes a spiritual, living stone in the spiritual temple of God that is being built throughout all nations all over the world. From this spiritual temple of grace, the good news of God’s grace flows throughout the world (Ephesians 2:11-24; 1 Peter 2:4-5; Revelation 21-22). For more insight into the spiritual temple of grace, read my new blog, *Are The New Heaven And Earth Already Here?*. [CLICK HERE to read](#)

3. Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the temple for **PRESENTATION** according to the law.
4. Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the temple to offer a **SACRIFICE** according to the law.
5. Simeon praised God at the temple for the **SALVATION** Jesus will bring to Israel and the Gentiles.

In this study, we will continue with the words of Simeon.

Let’s continue the examination of Simeon’s painful words to Mary.

**Luke 2:33-35**

*The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, **and to be a sign that will be spoken against**, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”*

- The Child will be a **SIGN** that will be spoken against.
  - The Christ would distinguish himself from others and identify himself as the Messiah/Christ through signs.
  - Two signs** would mark Jesus as the Messiah, so that everyone would know he was the Messiah/Christ.
  - Yet these two signs, authenticating Jesus as the Messiah/Christ, would result in people speaking against him (rising up against him).

-These two signs are the miracles of Jesus and the grace of Jesus.

-The miracles Jesus performed and grace he provided were described in the Jewish Scriptures but were despised by many.

Let's take a look at these signs.

**Sign #1: The Miracles of Jesus.**

The Jewish Scriptures described a Messiah/Christ to come who would be like Moses.

### **Deuteronomy 18:15**

*The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me [Moses] from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him.*

Stephen, after being arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin (the ruling assembly of Israel), proclaimed that Jesus is the one who God raised up to be like Moses.

Let's read the words of Stephen.

### **Acts 7:35-52**

*"This is the same Moses they had rejected with the words, 'Who made you ruler and judge?' He was sent to be their ruler and deliverer by God himself, through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. **He led them out of Egypt and performed wonders and signs [miracles] in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty years in the wilderness.** "This is the Moses who told the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your own people.' He was in the assembly in the wilderness, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received living words to pass on to us. "But our ancestors refused to obey him. Instead, **they rejected him** and in their hearts turned back to Egypt...You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. **And now you have betrayed and murdered him.***

Stephen's point to the Sanhedrin was that the people of his day rejected Jesus as the Christ, the one to come and would be like Moses, performing signs and wonders. Just as the people of Moses' day rejected Moses, though he performed signs and wonders, the people of Jesus' day rejected Jesus, though he performed signs and wonders. The signs and wonders, miracles, were signs identifying Jesus as the Messiah/Christ.

The rejection of Jesus by the Sanhedrin of his day is seen in **John 11:45-53**. Though they were witnesses to his miracles, they rejected him and the spoke against him, plotting to have him killed, just as Stephen spoke about.

### **John 11:45-53**

*Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then the chief priests*

and the Pharisees called a meeting of the **Sanhedrin**. “What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “**Here is this man performing many signs**. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation.” Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.” He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. **So from that day on they plotted to take his life.**

Remember, Simeon told Mary that many in Israel would speak against the sign of miracles accompanying the Messiah/Christ.

### **Luke 2:33-35**

The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, **and to be a sign that will be spoken against...**

Not only did the people in Israel speak against **the sign of miracles**, they also spoke against **the sign of grace**.

**Sign #2: The Grace of Jesus.**

The Jewish Scriptures foretold that the Messiah/Christ would speak words of **grace**. Psalms 45:2 says about the Messiah/Christ:

### **Psalms 45:2**

*You are the most excellent of men and **your lips have been anointed with grace**, since God has blessed you forever.*

When Jesus spoke in his home town synagogue, the people initially recognized that he spoke with words of grace, but then immediately spoke and rose up against him, seeking to kill him by pushing him off the cliff. They fell over Jesus as the Messiah/Christ, spoke against him, then rose against him to kill him. This seems to be what Simeon told Mary would happen to Jesus.

### **Luke 4:22-30**

*All spoke well of him and were **amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips**. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked...All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. **They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff.** But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.*

When speaking in the synagogue (Luke 4:16-19), Jesus said he was the one of Isaiah 61:1-2 who would proclaim the year of the Lord’s acceptance (unconditional acceptance – unmerited favor, joyful welcome = grace).

### **Luke 4:16-19**

*He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:*

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, **to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor** [grace, unconditional acceptance, joyful welcome]”*

During the life of Jesus, he joyfully welcomed sinners into his presence. He unconditionally accepted the tax collectors and prostitutes. The Pharisees spoke against (Simeon said Jesus would be spoken against) this grace flowing from Jesus.

### **Luke 5:30**

*But the Pharisees and their scribes complained to Jesus’ disciples, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?”*

### **Matthew 11:19**

*The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at this glutton and drunkard, **a friend of tax collectors and sinners!**’ But wisdom is vindicated by her actions.”*

### **Luke 15:1-2**

*Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “**This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.**”*

The Pharisees and teachers of the law were furious with Jesus for the grace he demonstrated to the sinners, tax collectors, and prostitutes. They hated him for his grace.

So not only did **they reject the miracles Jesus performed, they also rejected the grace he demonstrated.**

The miracles and grace were signs pointing to Jesus as the Messiah/Christ.

However, many people in Israel spoke against Jesus, his miracles, and his grace, just as Simeon told Mary they would.

Speaking against the grace of Jesus **revealed the thoughts of their hearts**...the self-righteous attitude they had as they looked down on others who “were not as righteous as they were.”

This leads us to back to Simeon’s painful words to Mary.

### **Luke 2:34-35**

*Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, **so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed.**”*

- The Child will **REVEAL** the thoughts of many hearts.

As many people in Israel spoke against the grace flowing from Jesus to the tax collectors, sinners, and prostitutes, the self-righteousness hearts of many were revealed.

In **Luke 7:36-50**, a certain immoral woman, probably a prostitute, was drawn to Jesus because of his grace. She believed in him as the Messiah/Christ and experienced forgiveness and peace with God. However, the Pharisees were disgusted with Jesus for his grace to her. This revealed their self-righteous hearts.

In **Luke 15:1-31**, the Pharisees recognized that the older brother symbolized and revealed their self-righteous attitude toward sinners and their anger toward Jesus.

In **Luke 18:9-14**, Jesus told a story about a sinful man and a Pharisee to reveal the self-righteous attitude of the Pharisees.

In **Luke 19:1-9**, Jesus went to the home of a Zacchaeus, a tax collector. This frustrated the people.

As Jesus related to sinners with grace, it revealed the self-righteous attitudes of those who rejected him as the Messiah/Christ, which is exactly what Simeon told Mary would happen.

The final set of painful words Simeon spoke to Mary were:

#### **Luke 2:34-35**

*Then Simeon...said to Mary, his mother: "... **And a sword will pierce your own soul too.**"*

- The Child will **PIERCE** the soul of Mary.

From his childhood through adulthood...from his childhood through his crucifixion, Mary's soul would be pierced. Mary would experience excruciating emotional pain as she watched Jesus be continually rejected, slandered, and abused, then ultimately nailed to a cross.

Mary watched **Isaiah 52:12-53:1-12** play out before her eyes, which pierced her soul, causing tremendous emotional pain. These verses describe the rejection and death of Jesus, but also records his resurrection.

Just as the words of Simeon caused Joseph and Mary to **marvel**, when he spoke about the salvation Jesus would bring, his words, also, would cause Joseph and Mary **misery**, as they saw the rejection he would experience.

**In our next study, we will continue with how Joseph and Mary were under the law and not under grace as we examine Anna's praise to God in the temple when she saw Jesus.**

Thanks for being a part of this Bible Study!

Brad's New Book, **Toxic Discipleship** is now available on Amazon. [CLICK HERE](#)

*All verses are NIV unless otherwise noted.*

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