

James Chapter One

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

Four Old People Welcome Jesus Into the World

In all four cases these old people are pictures as very devout and godly saints

Elizabeth and Zechariah walked in all the commandments of the law and were righteous before God (Luke 1:6)

Simeon is looking for the consolation of Israel (2:25)

Anna is looking for the redemption of Jerusalem (2:38)

Who is Anna?

She was a prophetess and was a widow who did not re-marry and lived until she was 84 or 104 either way you do the math
She did not depart from the Temple
She fasted and prayed
Until the final hour she gave thanks to God and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Anna's Character Profile

She was old but not helpless

She knew pain but not bitterness

She knew limits but not uselessness

She knew loneliness but not emptiness

She stayed faithful and fruitful to the end of her life (Luke 2:36a)

The Second Reason Why God Chose Old People

Luke 16:16 Jesus says,

"The law and the prophets were until John, since then the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached."

We no longer live merely in the era of promise with the law and the prophets awaiting the consolation of Israel. Now we live in the era of fulfillment when the kingdom of God is preached as present and powerful, albeit not yet consummated.

Simeon assigns two tasks to Jesus

Simeon is fulfilling Isaiah's prophecies in Isaiah 52.10

The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”

Simeon assigns two tasks to Jesus

As the light of the world he brings revelation to the nations

He brings glory to Israel

Simeon's warning: Is whether a person has a heart humble
enough to trust Christ

Alone for salvation or whether the person is haughty and must be
humbled

Newness and Continuity

Number One

For Luke the era of the law and the prophets has grown old like Simeon and Ann is passing away. Christ and the message of his kingdom have come

Newness and Continuity

Number Two

Luke depicts this new era as marked by an amazing outpouring
of the Holy Spirit

In the Book of Acts but he also shows that this same Spirit
was at work in a similar
though not identical way in the old era in Elizabeth, Zechariah
and Simeon

Newness and Continuity

Number Three

The new era of the Messiah salvation would spill over the boundaries of an unbelieving Israel and reach all nations of the world.