

As we enter 2013...there is no neutrality with this King!

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There are many fascinating parts to the Christmas story, but one of the most compelling phrases in the story is found in Luke's account. A man named Simeon is a minor character in the Christmas story, but Luke includes him and his words of prophecy concerning the baby Jesus.

Upon seeing the baby, Simeon is immediately convinced that in Jesus, salvation has come; but also, in Jesus, a King has come. And with this King, there is no neutrality.

In Luke 2, Joseph and Mary take the baby Jesus to the temple to have him consecrated according to the Law of Moses. At the temple was Simeon, an old man, who had been waiting his entire life for the Messiah. Simeon had been given a promise that he would see the Messiah before his death. This is the day! Simeon sees the baby Jesus and he knows!

Simeon takes the child in his arms and he praises God! Luke 2:29-32—"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Jesus has been born for the salvation of sinners, both Jew and Gentile! This is good news! But then, Simeon turns to Mary and predicts that Jesus' birth will be the cause of salvation for some, yet for others, death and destruction.

In Luke 2:34 we read that there is no neutrality with Jesus. Simeon tells Mary, "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel." Jesus birth will be the cause of many falling and many rising.

There is no neutral when it comes to Christ! What you do with Jesus will be of eternal significance! You will either rise (be saved from your sin) or you will fall (be condemned for your sin) based on what you do with Jesus. His birth, perfect life, death for our sins, resurrection from the dead, exaltation, and reign as Lord have eternal significance to your life.

What Simeon is saying is that Jesus comes as a King to rule and there is no middle ground when it comes to His reign. We will either embrace His reign or we will reject it. Many will rise and many will fall at the birth of this King.

This statement from Simeon prompted Daniel Renstrom to write a most unusual Christmas song about this dangerous king. Renstrom writes, "Many will rise and fall at the birth of this king. Those who oppose, stumble on this stone; the birth of this dangerous king. But many will hear; believing in fear; will hope in this dangerous king." Jesus' birth was the birth of a dangerous king.

As we enter 2013, you cannot be neutral about Jesus.

Jesus has come to us with love, grace, and mercy. He is a friend of sinners! He has come to us with an offer of freedom from sin's grip on us and freedom from sin's penalty, God's

condemnation; He has come to save us and be our Savior.

But Jesus has also come as a King! He comes to rule your heart. Jesus comes to us with demands. He comes to call the shots in your life. He has not come to play games, but to save you from yourself and rule your life. There is no neutrality with this King!