

Simeon

by Jeff Smith

Running Time: 3-4 minutes

Themes: Perseverance, Patience, Blessing, Christmas

Scripture Reference: Luke 2:25-35

Synopsis: Simeon's promise is fulfilled as he finally sees the Messiah. An optional ending provides suggested music to go with the monologue.

Cast:

SIMEON—Male, 60+

Production Note: This piece includes an optional ending with music.

(SIMEON is feeding the pigeons in the courtyard of the temple. This is something he does daily as he goes out into the day to examine the courtyard.)

SIMEON: Here pidgy, pidgy. Here pidgy . . . come and get something to eat. Dometrius, is that you? Come here my feathered, weathered friend. You look tired . . . and old. I suppose it happens if you live long enough. I used to think old was always 15 years older than I was. But, now . . . So what brings you back this day of days? Have you come to rest? Hmmmph. No rest for you here my friend. Do you see that box over there?

(He points offstage.)

The trumpet chest third from the left? It might as well be a coffin for you, but to us it is a collection box for a burnt offering. Then a priest will count out the coins, take you and a couple of your friends around the neck and . . .

(SIMEON pantomimes a slicing motion on his neck.)

Look now into the Court of the Priests and see the blood of your brothers rise up as an offering unto the Lord. Sacrifices . . . grisly business.

(He prays.)

"But he who avenges blood, he doesn't ignore the cry of those afflicted."

Ah, nowhere is safe, Dometrius. Out there are soldiers, horses, spears, armor. Out there, Rome rules with an iron grip and they punish resistance ruthlessly. We can only watch as they confiscate our homes, violate our women, and demoralize our nation. Be glad you're a bird and not a Jew. What it is like? Oy. I can describe to you in three words . . . Suff-er-ing. We are God's chosen. Hmmmph. Sometimes, I wish He would choose someone else.

(SIMEON prays.)

“Hear our just cause, O Lord.” God, heed my cry.” Give ear to my prayer, which is not from deceitful lips. Let Your judgment come forth from Your presence. Let Your eyes look with equity.” The Psalms, Dometrius. We shall pray down our enemies with the Psalms. I will teach them to you so that you can defeat your foes, also. What news do you bring from far away places? Have you seen the star that shines over Bethlehem? It first appeared 41 days ago. Don’t look surprised. Everyone pays something. I pay attention. What else am I to do, eh? I’m surprised you haven’t seen it at night. Perhaps you can’t see at night? It is a sign, Dometrius. “Yet you, oh Bethlehem, though you be small among the nations, yet shall you be the birthplace of a King.” Birthplace of a King, Dometrius. And I have heard talk, villagers, merchants, travelers, they speak of shepherds who tell of angels announcing the birth of the King—a Savior. Perhaps, the long awaited, Messiah? Shhhh. But Dometrius, this is the thing . . . the shepherds were led to Bethlehem by the angels, to a baby born in a manger. A baby? Perhaps a baby-King? *(Pause)* So, do you see it now? Ah foolish bird. It’s the Law of Moses. A woman who gives birth to a child is unclean for 40 days of her impurity. But after this period she must offer up a lamb as a burnt offering and—a turtledove or *pigeon*—we’ll pray that it is a turtledove, Dometrius . . . as a sin offering. We shouldn’t talk of such things, huh? But, it *could* be today. A woman, carrying a child, enters the Temple area through the North side, the Gate of the Women, and then heads East, to the area of the colonnades to the trumpet chest to deposit her offering. Hmm?

Come here old bird. We will wait together. Rest awhile.

Ending #1:

(Something seems to leap in SIMEON’S spirit and he looks up from feeding the pigeon. Perhaps it is the sound of a child crying. He sees Mary and Joseph enter the temple area with the baby in their arms. He slowly rises as he speaks. Note: Mary, Joseph and the baby do not need to be real characters acting out this part. SIMEON can pantomime his motions ‘as if’ they were visible to the audience.)

O God the procession of my God and King comes into the sanctuary.

A woman . . . and her husband with a Child, newly born—climbing the steps . . . 10, 11, 12 . . . through the Gate of the Women on the North Side . . . They travel . . . East . . . towards the treasury and . . . third box on the left.

(He moves towards them. He “hands” the pigeon to Joseph. He speaks to Mary as he holds out his arms.)

Please, may I?

(He takes the ‘child’ and looks upon it. He speaks to Mary and Joseph but does not take his eyes off the ‘child’ until he mentions that sword that will pierce Mary’s soul.)

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.

(He speaks to Joseph.)

Take the pigeon and give him to the priest. Tell him Simeon says, “He is an offering without blemish to cover your sins . . .

(SIMEON looks at the child.)

. . . and the sins of the world.

(SIMEON returns the child to Mary and they depart.)

Now Lord, dismiss your servant in peace.

(Lights fade as he exits.)

Optional Ending #2:

(SIMEON *sings verse one of the song, Welcome to Our World*)

(Then SIMEON stops and looks up. He sees the woman carrying a baby just as he has always visualized it in his dreams and in his mind. He slowly rises up from where he sits to feed the pigeon. SIMEON speaks during verse two of the song. He makes a commentary on their movements as if he knows where they are going before they get there saying:)

O God the procession of my God and King comes into the sanctuary.

A woman and her husband with a Child, newly born—climbing the steps . . . 10, 11, 12 . . . through the Gate of the Women on the North Side . . . They travel . . . East . . . towards the treasury and . . . third box on the left.

(He moves towards them. He “hands” the pigeon to Joseph. He says to Mary:)

Please, may I?

(SIMEON *sings verse three.*)

(Then SIMEON says to Mary during verse four of the song:)

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.

(SIMEON *sings the last verse.*)

(Then SIMEON says to Joseph:)

Take the pigeon and give him to the priest.

Tell him Simeon says, “He is an offering without blemish to cover your sins (SIMEON *looks at the child.*) . . . and the sins of the world.

(SIMEON *returns the child to Mary and they depart.*)

Now Lord, dismiss Your servant in peace.

(He exits as lights fade.)



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