

The Universal Saviour

“Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

*‘Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.*

*For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:*

a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.’”

Luke 2:28-32 (NIV)

When God chose His people, His purpose was to use them to be a blessing to all nations of the earth (Genesis 12:3; 28:14). Somehow over the centuries many of the Jewish people lost their sense of calling to bless all nations. They were proud of their descent from Abraham (John 8:41). A morning prayer of devout Jewish men in Jesus’ time included the words “...I thank Thee I was not born a Gentile dog...”

The wonderful Jewish man Simeon really got it right as he held the baby Jesus in the temple a few days after His birth and said what he did. Simeon knew that the promised Messiah that would be born into a Jewish family was to be shared with the entire world.

The Gospel Christians

preach and teach needs to include the emphasis of this elderly man in the temple that day. Truly Jesus is the universal Saviour.

What is tragic in the eyes of Christians today is the sad fact that the very people who gave the world the expected Messiah now deny Him and will not consider His claims.

I have some truly great books written by conservative Jewish scholars who are respectful of Jesus and accept much of His teaching, but they fall short of accepting Him as the Christ of God. We need to show respect to Israel as the nation that has produced the Saviour of the world.

Also, Israel is the only nation in history that has been able to maintain their national identity for 2,000

years without a homeland of their own. When we consider other ancient nations – such as the Hittites, the Amorites and others – we cannot find any people now who claim to be of that nationality. Only the Jews kept their identity after being conquered by another nation.

In one way, we owe everything to this tiny nation in the Middle East called Israel. They have blessed the world by giving us our Saviour. No person in human history has had such a profound effect on the world as Jesus of Nazareth. In this New Year let us seek to make Jesus known to all who will listen. He is the universal Saviour.

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