

# Light Brings Salt

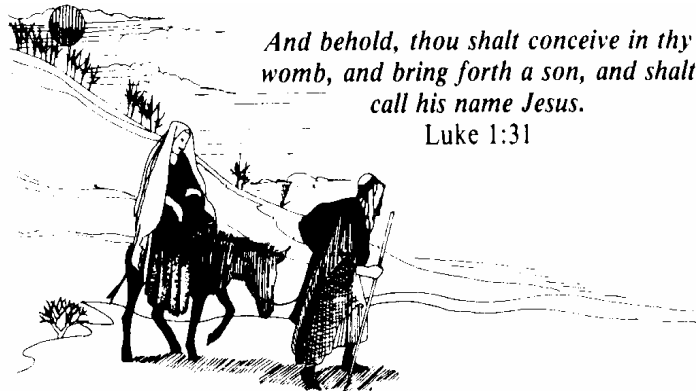
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## Iron Range Bible Church

*Dedicated to the Systematic Exposition of the Word of God*  
*"Sanctify them in the truth: Your word is truth."*



*And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.*

Luke 1:31

### Seeing God's Salvation

Excerpted from an article by Dr. Fred Moritz

Christmas delights the human senses. For days before the holiday, our homes are filled with the smells of the season. Cookies, pies and cakes bake in the oven. Candies simmer on the stove. On Christmas day the aroma of the special meal fills the house. We eagerly anticipate the tastes of these special treats, in spite of the extra calories they bear!

The majestic sounds of Christmas cheer and bless us. Carols retell the Christmas story in verse and turn our hearts toward Christ. The noble strains of Handel's Messiah impart a sense of awe at the greatness of God and His love revealed in Christ.

We see the spectacular sights of the season. Malls are lavishly decorated. Streets festooned with tinsel glisten in the sunlight. At night festive lights fill cities and neighborhoods with their charm. We erect trees in our homes and lade them with beautiful ornaments. Manger scenes, wreaths and garlands adorn our homes both outside and in. Beautifully wrapped gifts accumulate under the tree. Christmas saturates our senses.

The first Christmas, however produced far more spectacular sights and sounds than we will ever know in our holiday celebrations. That Christmas began, according to Luke 2, with the sight of the overwhelming light of the glory of God startling the

shepherds. The angel of the Lord appeared, and they heard the glad announcement of the Savior's birth. The praise of the angelic chorus crying "Glory to God in the highest" could never be equaled by human choirs. Amid all those sights and sounds, God revealed Himself to mankind.

I fear we are too often distracted from what we really need to see in the Christmas story. The old prophet Simeon saw the real substance of the Christmas event: And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, "Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart In peace, according to Thy word; For my eyes have seen Thy salvation, Which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Thy people Israel." (Luke 2:25-32).

The greatest sight of Christmas is God's own gift of salvation in Christ. Simeon saw it. Our world today perishes in sin and needs desperately to see that greatest sight of Christmas. We who know Christ

must focus our gaze on Him who is God's salvation. Then we must show Him to the world.

**Salvation Promised:** When Simeon held the Lord Jesus and proclaimed that he saw God's salvation, he realized the fulfillment of God's promises. Simeon was "just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel." He understood that through the preceding centuries God had promised a redeemer. He knew God told Adam and Eve of the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). He looked for the blessing on the world through Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). He longed for the "Prophet" greater than Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15). He eagerly anticipated the King who would sit on David's throne (2 Samuel 7:12-14, 16). He expected the virgin's son (Isaiah 7:14) and looked for the "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6, 7). He trusted God to keep His Word.

But Simeon understood more! God had let him in on a secret! The Holy Spirit had promised Simeon that he would not die before he saw the Messiah (Luke 2:26). Then the day arrived. Led by the Spirit of God, he went up to the temple, where he met Mary and Joseph as they brought the baby Jesus. We are not told how Simeon knew, but when he saw the little family, he perceived this baby was the Lord's Christ. He saw God's salvation. God had indeed kept His promises to Israel, to the world and to Simeon! The secular world has largely forgotten the meaning of Christmas. We who are Christians must remember that God sent a Savior to the world. By faith we have seen Him and trusted Him for our eternal salvation. We must fix our attention on Jesus. He must be first in our thinking at this season, or our celebrating is as empty as the world's.

**Salvation Personified:** Taking Christ "up in his arms," Simeon told the Lord he was now ready to die: "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Jesus is the Messiah, God's salvation! Israel was the nation through which God gave Christ to the world, but the nation of Israel does not save! Being Jewish saves no one. Every Israelite must come to God through the Son of David, as must every Gentile.

Mary was the woman God chose to be the human mother of Christ, but Mary can never save anyone. The Bible never suggests that Mary has special power or influence with Christ. Nowhere does the Bible tell us to come to God or Christ through Mary. Bible-believing churches proclaim the message of salvation in Christ, but no church has the power to save anyone from sin. Jesus alone is the Savior. The Bible consistently teaches that Jesus alone is man's Savior from sin. The angel who informed Joseph that Mary

would be Christ's mother revealed: "He shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

The angel who announced Christ's birth to the shepherds heralded: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). The Samaritans acknowledged Jesus as "the Christ, the Savior of the world" (John 4:42). The apostles preached, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Have you received Christ as your Savior? No work you do can save you. No church you join can save you. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that **believe** on his name" (John 1:12). "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). Friend, you must realize that God sent Jesus to be your Savior because sinful men cannot save themselves. You need simply to believe that Jesus' death on the cross was all that was necessary to provide forgiveness for your sins and for your standing before God as a righteous one.

**Salvation Prepared:** Simeon rejoiced that in Christ he had seen God's salvation. He also worshipped God because He had "prepared" that salvation. God had made detailed preparation for the birth of Christ and for the salvation of men from sin. Before the creation of the world, God purposed to send Christ to be men's Savior (2 Timothy 1:9, 10). God sovereignly worked in human history, and Christ was born in the fullness of time (Galatians 4:4). God even arranged the place of Christ's birth (Micah 5:2).

God prepared His salvation "before the face of all people." Jesus is the Savior for all men. Sadly, not all will be saved. But the Scriptures are clear that salvation is provided for all in Christ, and all who believe Him are saved. God ordained that "he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9). Christ "is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe" (1 Timothy 4:10).

Jesus the Savior is "a light to lighten the Gentiles." He is the "light of the world" (John 8:12). He brings the light of God's glory to man's mind, which has been blinded by Satan (2 Cor. 4:3-6). And, Simeon added, Jesus is "the glory of thy people Israel." He is the glory of God who will bring light to His people Israel (Isaiah 40:1-5). God prepared salvation for all men. We who know Jesus rejoice that He came. We are responsible to proclaim that message to all people-Jew and Gentile alike. If you are not saved, please understand that God prepared salvation in Jesus for you! If you will believe in Him, you will be saved today.

**Conclusion:** God promised a Savior and He kept His Word. Simeon saw God's salvation when he held Jesus the Savior. God prepared salvation and sent Christ for all men. He sent Christ for you. Look to Jesus today. He is the Savior whom God promised. There is salvation in no other! The Christian celebration of Christmas is a privilege garnished with responsibility. We must focus our attention on Christ and on the salvation God intends all men to see. We need to show God's salvation in Christ to the lost around us this Christmas season.

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## Creation Moments

### Peanut Butter and Green Diamonds

*Isaiah 40:28*

*Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. There is no searching of His understanding.*

Perhaps you have recently read one of the many news articles about an amazing new process for making diamonds. The new process uses simple heat to make diamonds out of anything that has carbon in it.

Diamonds are made of carbon atoms - that black stuff in soot - which are tightly arranged into the careful rows of a crystal. The result is a clear crystal, harder than anything on earth. Artificial diamonds have long been made using a great deal of heat and pressure. But the new process, using temperatures as low as 250 degrees (F), condenses carbon atoms out of vapor in low pressure. The new process is much cheaper, and is able to place a diamond coating on various materials. Long wearing machine parts can be diamond coated, as can ball bearings, making them permanently lubricated. Watch crystals, coated with diamond to make them scratch resistant will be marketed by Seiko.

Now diamonds can be made cheaply and easily out of most anything. One researcher even made diamond out of peanut butter, although he reported that the diamonds had a greenish tinge to them because of the nitrogen in peanuts.

We have only begun to scratch the surface, so to speak, in learning about the wonderful abilities the Creator built into the material world. We are only beginning to discover the depths of His wisdom. Such discovery is in keeping with His instructions to us to subdue the earth.

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## A Frog's Creative Broadcasting Solution

*I Corinthians 14:33*

*For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.*

If you live in a large city, especially one that is surrounded by other large cities, you know that the radio dial can become very crowded. To prevent the radio dial from turning into incomprehensible gibberish, radio stations are assigned a frequency on which to operate.

This orderly arrangement is also found among many animals. Male birds will often stake out a territory so that their mating call does not interfere with other males of their kind. Frogs too, have mating calls, but often many species of frogs are found in the same swamp. They avoid interfering with each other by each using a unique frequency for their calls. Otherwise no one's call could be clearly understood. This orderly arrangement is evidence enough of the Creator's Hand.

But there are two South American frogs, often found in the same locations, which use the same frequency. How can they do that? One frog calls only above water while the other frog uses his call only under water. Since the surface of the water is an effective barrier for sound, neither call interferes with the other.

Frogs could have never gotten together and agreed on limiting themselves to unique frequencies. What should be clear, especially in our technological age, is that the Creator Himself set up this arrangement for the good of everyone.