

Candlemas drama

By Chrys M Tremththanmor

[Anna is at the front of the church, Simeon up in the balcony]

Anna

Simeon? Simeon? Where are you, Simeon?

Simeon

[answering from the balcony]

I'm up here, Anna.

Anna

What are you doing up there? You know today's a special day.
Why aren't you down here in the Temple?

Simeon

Oh, Anna, why bother? You know he won't come today.

Anna

The Messiah might come today.
And you'd better be down here to meet him!

Simeon

Oh, well, if you insist. Okay, I'll come down.

Anna

[bridging the time]

Honestly, that man. He knows how important this is.
How long have we both lived here, here in the great Temple in Jerusalem?
Everyone comes to the Temple.
They come here to give thanks to God,
to ask forgiveness for their sins,
and they come here to give thanks when a baby is born.
And you, Simeon, of all people should be ready.
You know God promised that you would see the Messiah,
the King of the world, come here to us.

[Simeon joins Anna at the front of the church]

Simeon

But I've waited so long, Anna.
It was years ago when God told me that I wouldn't die
until I'd seen the Messiah, the King of Kings, God's own son,
with my own eyes. So I've come here, day after day,
watching the people come with their offerings,
and with their babies.
But I haven't seen the baby which God has promised to us.

Anna

Trust in God, Simeon. God keeps his promises.
I too have been waiting all these years for this special baby.
But I feel that today is the day. Today we will see the Messiah for ourselves.

Simeon

Surely we should be able to recognize him by his parents?
Look, what about these?

[footballer and wife come up through aisle]

Anna

Who's that?

Simeon

That's the footballer who plays forward for Team Jerusalem.
Don't you recognise him?

Anna

You know I don't watch football.
I'd be more interested if he played for the Saints...
I don't think his son is the Messiah.
We're not expecting God's son to be a sporting hero.

[footballer and wife go to side chapel, politician and wife come up]

Simeon

Oh, this is more promising.
The Mayor of Jerusalem and his wife! He's very popular.
Could this baby be the Messiah?

Anna

Somehow I don't think the Messiah will be a politician.

They're too worried about keeping people happy.
I don't think the son of God will worry about being popular.

[politician and wife go to side chapel, businesspeople come up through the aisle]

Anna

They look rather important.
Didn't they invent that new cart wheel?
They gave a large donation to the Temple last year.

Simeon

I don't think the Messiah is going to be a rich man.
Their baby isn't the one we're looking for either.

[businesspeople go to side chapel, doctor and nurse come up the aisle]

Anna

Oh, maybe this baby is God's son!
Remember what the Prophet Isaiah told us about the Messiah?
'People who are blind will have their sight again,
people who are deaf will hear,
lame men and women will be able to jump like deer,
and those who couldn't speak will have their voices back again.'
If the Messiah is to be a healer,
maybe he would be born to a doctor and a nurse?

Simeon

We know that the Messiah will be a healer,
but I don't think this baby is him. They look too wealthy.
I think God has something else in mind for his Son.

[doctor and nurse go to side chapel, king and queen come up the aisle]

Simeon

Even kings and queens come to the Temple.
Do you think our new King would be born as a prince?
Could this be the Messiah?

Anna

I've spent many years talking to God, Simeon.
From what I know about God, he likes to be subtle.
He comes quietly, and I think he wouldn't choose royalty for his only Son.

[king and queen go to side aisle]

Simeon

Is that all? No more babies?
See, I told you we wouldn't see the new king today.

[Mary and Joseph start up the aisle]

Anna

But look, there's one more family coming.
Look, over there, that carpenter and his wife.

Simeon

But they're poor. How can they be the parents of the Messiah, the king?
Next thing you'll tell me is that the Messiah was born in a stable!

Anna

But I tell you, this baby is the one. He is the Messiah. I can tell!

[She gestures to Mary and Joseph, and they stop in front of her and Simeon.
Simeon takes the 'baby' from them]

Simeon

Oh, God, now I can go in peace.
With my own eyes I've seen your salvation;
it's now out in the open for everyone to see.
A man who will show your light to all the world,
and will bring glory to your people Israel.

[Simeon turns to Mary and Joseph]

This child will be both failure and victory,
he will be misunderstood and contradicted,
and the pain he will suffer will hurt you too.
But he will bring light into the darkness and, through him,
God will be revealed to the world.

Anna

[takes the 'baby' from Simeon]

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace to those he chooses.
I have waited long for this day, the day when the Messiah,
the King of the world, comes to earth.
The Word has become flesh and lives amongst us,
and we see his glory, the glory of the Father's only son,

full of grace and truth. Glory to God in the highest,
and glory to his only Son, Jesus!