

Despotes: "Master"

Scripture Reading — Luke 2:22-32

*“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.”
—Luke 2:29—*

When Joseph and Mary come to the temple in Jerusalem to present Jesus to be consecrated, they meet Simeon, a “righteous and devout” man. Simeon has been waiting a long time to see the promised Messiah, and now he knows that the “consolation of Israel” has come. Taking the baby Jesus in his arms, Simeon praises God, addressing him as Despotes, “Sovereign Lord.”

The name Despotes occurs only a few times in the New Testament, both as a name for God and a name for Jesus. Despotes, “Sovereign Lord,” comes from a Greek word meaning “one who has unlimited power or authority based on supreme ownership.” Our negative-sounding English word “despot” originates from this term, but the Greek word merely stresses the undisputed, absolute power of the master. As a name for God, it stresses that all of creation belongs to him.

In relationships, the counterpart of despotes, “Sovereign Lord” or “Master,” is *doulos*, meaning “servant,” “bondservant,” or even “slave.” The servant Simeon, entrusted by Despotes, the “Sovereign Lord,” watched and waited for the coming Messiah, to announce his arrival. Laying eyes on the child Jesus, he knew he now saw the Lord’s salvation.

What has the Sovereign Lord entrusted you to do? Are you yielding to his authority and carrying out that calling to the best of your ability?

Prayer

Sovereign Lord, you call each of us to serve you. Prompt us with your Spirit to serve you devoutly and righteously in all we do today. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [God](#), [God's Names](#)

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