

## Anna, A Model for Our Age

Lk. 2:36-38

### Introduction:

1. There is a brief description in Lk. 2:36-38 of a woman named Anna.
2. When Joseph and Mary presented Jesus at the temple when he was eight days old, Anna was there.
3. She stands out, to me, as a model of a life given in service to God. There are some things about her that I would like to call to your attention. I hope that you will be impressed with her life and choose to be like her.
4. Reading of the text.

### Discussion:

#### I. The Holy Spirit's description of Anna (Lk. 2:36-37).

##### A. A prophetess.

1. A woman who acts as a mouthpiece for God.
2. The word "prophetess" occurs only one other place in the N.T. (Rev. 2:20) in reference to a Jezebel who called herself a prophetess, but who did not speak God's word.
3. A plural form of a word in the same word family occurs in Acts 21:9 of Philip's daughters who prophesied.
4. But Anna stands in good company with Miriam (Ex. 15:20), the sister of Moses and Aaron, Deborah (Judges 4:4), who delivered Israel from the Canaanites and Huldah (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chron. 34:22), who predicted the destruction of Jerusalem during the days of king Josiah.

##### B. The daughter of Phanuel.

1. Nothing really known of this man.
2. This name sometimes spelled "Peniel."
3. The place where Jacob wrestled the angel was named Peniel; for, he said, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life is preserved" (Gen. 32:30).
4. Not to make too much of this, but Anna had now seen God face to face.

##### C. Of the tribe of Asher.

1. One of the more insignificant tribes of Israel.
2. Their territory was in the far north of Israel on the coast.
3. They never overcame the Phoenician influence.
4. During the Judges period they did not join the battle against Sisera (4:2), but did come to the aid of the of Gideon against the Midianites (6:35; 7:23).
5. During the days of the coronation of David, 40,000 fighting men came from Asher (1 Chron. 12:36).
6. But later their tribe is missing in the lists of tribes of Israel (1 Chron. 27:16-22).
7. A. C. Schultz (ZPEB) says, "Apparently, the only Asherite of any significance was the prophetess Anna."

- D. Advanced in years. 84 years old.
  - 1. Lived with her husband for 7 years.
  - 2. Then as a widow to the age of 84.
  - 3. Evidently, she had been without her husband for many years.
- E. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

## II. Observations about Anna.

- A. She had an insignificant beginning.
  - 1. She did not let this stop her.
  - 2. She was amongst the remnant of those from the so-called “lost tribes of Israel” that were faithfully looking for the coming of the Messiah.
  - 3. Isn’t it comforting to know that God does not overlook individuals who may be surrounded by unbelievers?
- B. She had experienced hardship in life.
  - 1. She had only lived with her husband for seven years after their marriage.
  - 2. No mention of any children or grandchildren.
  - 3. She had her share of grief. She could have developed a “backward look,” remembering, dwelling on the pains of her past.
  - 4. She is 84 years old. If typical, she had the aches and pains and difficulties of age.
- C. She served. She had a “forward look.” Not just a “heavenly look.” She labored in the here and now.
  - 1. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.
  - 2. She was purposeful. She had work that she wanted to accomplish.
  - 3. Her work was significant. It involved the work of the Lord. Illustration of older lady in Cleveland, Ohio who excitedly took me into her class room. She was teaching a class of very young students. She showed me their work on the walls and things she had made to teach her students. She spoke confidently of “my class.” How old are you Miss Ella? 84. Can’t do this without preparation in the younger years.
  - 4. I am not sure we (our society) are doing the best thing when we restrict the older to insignificance. We all need purpose to our existence. Anna had found objective in serving in the house of the Lord.
  - 5. I am afraid our concentration is on youth and the aged are practically neglected.

## III. Anna was evangelistic (Lk. 2:38).

- A. The text says, “at that very moment” Anna came up.
  - 1. Simeon was a righteous and devout man who served at the temple. Text does not state he was a priest or had any official office at the temple.
  - 2. The Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord’s Christ.
  - 3. He had taken Jesus into his arms and thanked God for what He was doing through this child.
  - 4. Simeon said to Mary, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in

- Israel, and for a sign to be opposed—and a sword will pierce even your own soul—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”
5. It was at this time that Anna came up and began giving thanks to God.
  - B. What was she giving thanks for? Not specifically mentioned, but implied from the context that she is giving thanks for God’s work through this child.
  - C. She spoke of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.
    1. She was evangelistic.
    2. She pointed people to Jesus as the redemption for Jerusalem.
    3. Do you believe that Jesus is the redemption of Jerusalem? A light of revelation to the Gentiles? The glory of the people of Israel? Then tell them of Him.
    4. With gentleness and kindness tell them of the one who gives meaning and hope to life.

Conclusion:

1. Anna, only Asherite of any significance is a model for our age.
2. She stands out as what people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century need to be.
3. She stands out as an example of what older people need to be.
4. She stands out as an example for what young people need to become.
5. Will you join her ranks?