

“Anna”

Luke 2:36-40

Sept. 5, 2021

Luke 2:36-40

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

38 At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Deut 19:15

15 on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.

Matt 18:16

16 BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

7 descriptions that define who Anna was (vss. 36,37):

1. Her name

“Anna” – grace. Anna had been graced by God.

2. Prophetess

“prophetess” – she spoke forth the Word of God. She did it in a way that was in keeping with the gender role of women in the Bible.)

1 Cor 14:3

3 one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.

- We have no indication that she predicted the future.
- She had the ability to speak forth God’s Word when the occasion called for it.

- **Note:** Luke wants us to understand Jesus came for all levels of society including women, children, Gentiles, outcasts.

Prophetess appears 9 times in the Bible...

- Miriam - Exodus 15:20

- Deborah - Judges 4:4

- Huldah - 2 Kings 22:14

- Noadiah - Nehemiah 6:14

- Isaiah's wife - Isaiah 8:3

- Elizabeth - Luke 1:41-45

- Anna - Luke 2:36-38

- Daughters of Philip - Acts 21:9

- Jezebel - Revelation 2:20

- Her ministry was in the Temple where she would have ample opportunity to speak forth the Word when ministering to others. She may also have had a women’s Bible study that she taught.

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

3. Daughter of Phanuel

“Phanuel” – the face of God.

Other than that we know nothing.

4. Tribe of Asher

- 1 of the 10 tribes of the northern kingdom.
- Taken into captivity by Assyria in 722 B.C.
- Considered by many as a “lost tribe” that, with the other 9, did not return to Jerusalem but migrated north into Europe and eventually into England.
- Therefore the belief developed that England and the U.S are the 10 lost tribes and have inherited all of the Abrahamic and Davidic promises.
- Called British Israelism. Herbert W. Armstrong (Worldwide Church of God).

2 Chron 30:11

11 Nevertheless some men of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.

- Its all totally false. Anna proves it.
- So the 12 tribes in Rev. 7 all have descendants from each tribe.

2 Cor 4:16-18

16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

- 17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,
- 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
- Anna did not let her age, or being a widow, or impatience dampen her passion to accomplish all she could for God as long as she had breath.
 - A life devoted to God is a life well spent.
 - In contrast think of the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Sanhedrin and the Temple merchants, each “doing” their thing, totally oblivious to the baby, the Savior of the world.

37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

6. Widow.

- Luke contains about 43 references to women, four of whom were widows (Luke 2:36-40; Luke 7:11-15; Luke 18:1-8; Luke 21:1-4).
- She had been a widow for 60+ (possibly 84 years).
- She did not let it depress her or defeat her. She had not become bitter.
- Life is not about what happens to you but how you respond.
- 7. **She never left the Temple.**
- Perhaps she lived there. All her life she served in the Temple.

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

5. Aged.

- Let’s say at age 14-15 she marries.
- At age 21-22, 7 years after her marriage, her husband dies.
- Has been a widow for 84 years – she may be 105 or 106.
- Or she is a widow and is now 84 years of age.
- She is either 84 or 105+
- Genesis 18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, **advanced** in age; Sarah was past childbearing.
- Genesis 24:1 Now Abraham was old, **advanced** in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in every way.
- Joshua 13:1 Now Joshua was old and **advanced** in years when the LORD said to him, “You are old and advanced in years, and very much of the land remains to be possessed.
- 1 Kings 1:1 Now King David was old, **advanced** in age; and they covered him with clothes, but he could not keep warm.

Luke 2:36-40

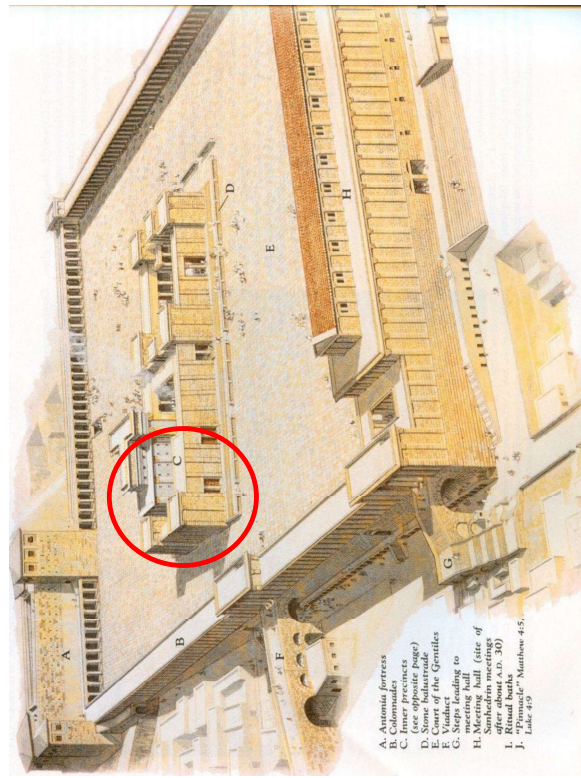
36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

38 At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.



37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

6. Widow.

- She had been a widow for 60+ (possible 84 years).
 - She did not let it depress her or defeat her. She had not become bitter.
 - Life is not about what happens to you but how you respond.
 - 7. **She never left the Temple.**
 - Perhaps she lived there. All her life she served in the Temple.
 - Can you imagine?? Would Anna fit into our society? Do you fit into our society?
 - **Fasting** – setting aside the intake of food in order to concentrate on a very important spiritual matter that you feel deeply about. Takes place during a time of distress and crises.
 - Anna was disturbed in her heart about the spiritual condition of Israel.
- Joel 2:12**
2. "Yet even now," declares the Lord,
 - "Return to Me with all your heart, And with fasting, weeping and mourning;
- **Prayer** – Anna's deep spiritual concern for Israel drove her to bring Israel before God in prayer. She is praying for the deliverance of Israel and the fulfillment of Gods covenants with Israel.
 - So in Anna we find a very credible witness to confirm the Messiah.

38 At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

"at that very moment" – another divine appointment.

Ps 37:23

3 The steps of a man are established by the Lord, And He delights in his way.

Prov 20:24

24 Man's steps are ordained by the Lord,

- Did she ever hear Simeon?
 - First thing she does is break out in thanksgiving.
 - Her prayers and fastings had her in tune with God for this moment in time.
- "and continued to speak of Him to all those . . ."** Here she is prophesying, speaking forth to others. That's just part of the Christian life.
- "looking for the redemption of Jerusalem"** As Simeon did, she was anticipating God's deliverance of Israel through Messiah.
- Small remnant who were looking for the Messiah saving Israel.
 - Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Israel and represents all of Israel.

• **Blessed Assurance**

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

• **Refrain:**

- This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.*
2. Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels, descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
 3. Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Luke 2:36-40

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

38 At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

"If your cup is brim-full, you can't help but slop some of it on others. If you are excited about your relationship with the living God who sent His Son to save you from your sins, people around you will know about it."

- Steven Cole

Luke 2:36-40

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

38 At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

39 When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

- Mary and Joseph were careful to perform every detail of the Mosaic law.
- Luke leaves out 3 other events: (Matt. 2:1-23)
 1. The wise men's visit to the home (not stable) where Jesus was.
 2. Mary and Joseph's flee to Egypt to avoid Herod.
 3. Herod's slaughter of all baby boys 2 and under.
- Verse 39 picks up from there.

40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

- What it would be like to be the parents of a perfect child?
 - It must have been a difficult role at times.
 - Jesus grew as a child and He appeared on the outside to be like any other normal, developing child.
- Isa 53:2**
- 2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground;
- He was never imperfect at any stage, but like a plant, "from shoot to bud to flower to fruit, He was perfect at each stage. Jesus was perfect as a baby, boy, youth, & man.
 - As His brain developed it became capable of receiving more and more of the understanding of the wisdom of God so that finally when He was twelve He had grasped who He was.

Luke 2:36-40

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers.

38 At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

"At each stage He was perfect for that stage, but the perfection of a child is inferior to the perfection of a man; it is the difference between perfect innocence and perfect holiness."

- Alfred Plummer

The Humanity of Christ -

- being born to an unwed mother (Mt. 1:18-19).
- being born in a stable, the worst of conditions (Lu. 2:7).
- being born to poor parents (Lu. 2:24).
- having his life threatened as a baby (Mt. 2:13f).
- being the cause of unimaginable sorrow (Mt. 2:16f).
- having to be moved and shifted as a baby (Mt. 2:13f).
- being reared in a despicable place, Nazareth (Lu. 2:39).
- having His father die during His youth (Mt. 13:53-58).
- having to support His mother and brothers and sisters (Mt. 13:53-58).
- having no home, not even a place to lay His head (Mt. 8:20; Lu. 9:58).
- being hated and opposed by religionists (Mk. 14:1-2).
- being charged with insanity (Mk. 3:21).
- being charged with demon possession (Mk. 3:22).
- being opposed by His own family (Mk. 3:31-32).
- being rejected, hated, and opposed by listeners (Mt. 13:53-58; Lu. 4:28-29).
- being betrayed by a close friend (Mk. 14:10-11, 18).
- being left alone, rejected, and forsaken by all of His friends (Mk. 14:50).
- being tried before the high court of the land on the charge of treason (Jn. 18:33).
- being executed by crucifixion, the worst possible death (Jn. 19:16f).

40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

- What it would be like to be the parents of a perfect child?
- It must have been a difficult role at times.
- Jesus grew as a child and He appeared on the outside to be like any other normal, developing child.

Isa 53:2

2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground;

- He was never imperfect at any stage, but like a plant, "from shoot to bud to flower to fruit, He was perfect at each stage. - Jesus was perfect as a baby, boy, youth, & man.
- As His brain developed it became capable of receiving more and more of the understanding of the wisdom of God so that finally when He was twelve He had grasped who He was.
- He knew by experience what it was like to be a child, boy, teenager, and young man and was perfect at every stage.

40 The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

- This is what it means to be fully human which is required to be the God/Man.

vs 40 = 2-12 years old

vss. 41-52 = 12-30 years old

“grace of God was upon Him” - The goodness and favor of

God was evident in His life, even as a child. God’s special hand of blessing was upon Jesus.

To such a One we give our lives as Anna did, looking for our final redemption when we look upon His face someday in heaven.