

Anna

“Women Who Dared”



“There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage.”

Luke 2:36 NIV

How old do we have to be before we do not have a mission to tell others about God’s love and his salvation? The Bible tells about many young people who did great works, especially in the Old Testament, but there were also several older people who were also called by God.

Occasionally a person seems to appear out of nowhere and become well known in a particular field. Anna was that kind of person. Anna was a prophetess.

God spoke to others through Anna. She lived a life seeking to see the Messiah.

By our standard if she were alive today

we would probably think she was a bit odd. Her values were clearly out of sync with modern America and we would probably think she wasted much of her life.

We know that Anna was married for only seven years and had remained a widow for eighty-four years, so she must have been around one hundred years old when she was finally able to see an answer to her prayers. Authorities seem to think that she was childless also.

She lived in the Temple and was known for her unwavering devotion to God and one who seemed to have a crown of glory. But she wasn’t just the cleaning lady or occasional cook at the Temple. She worshipped and prayed daily. God spoke to her and she went out and told about God’s truths as to what had happened and what was going to happen.

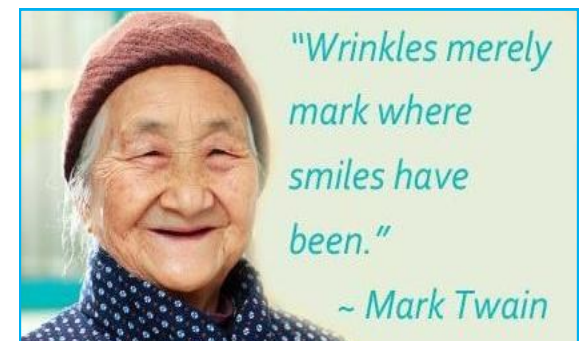
There must have been times when people scoffed at this “old woman” who just prayed and lived at the Temple. They must have scoffed at her as she told what was going to happen and how the Messiah was coming to the people.

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.
Isaiah 40:31

Today we would just look at her as a strange old woman who really didn't know what she was saying. After all, she was constantly praying and nothing was happening. There must have been times when she wondered what her mission was, or did she know. We don't know. We do know that we also have a mission sometimes that we do not understand. We may be called to do something that some people think is foolish or certainly unnecessary. But Anna never seemed to fail in her devotion according to several Scripture references.

Then one day her miracle happened. A couple took a child to the Temple to be dedicated. It wasn't just an ordinary couple. It was Mary and Joseph. When they arrived they were met by Simeon who was given the privilege of declaring that this was truly the Messiah that had long been expected. Simeon had been told by the Holy Spirit that he would see the Messiah before he died.

But Simeon wasn't the only one in the temple that day. Anna was there also. When Simeon was praying she broke into an anthem of praise to God, and



then went out and talked about the child to all who would listen to her and were also waiting for the Messiah to come and the freeing of Jerusalem. Simeon held the baby and asked God to



release him (Simeon) that he would be able to see his salvation, but he also told Mary and Joseph that the child

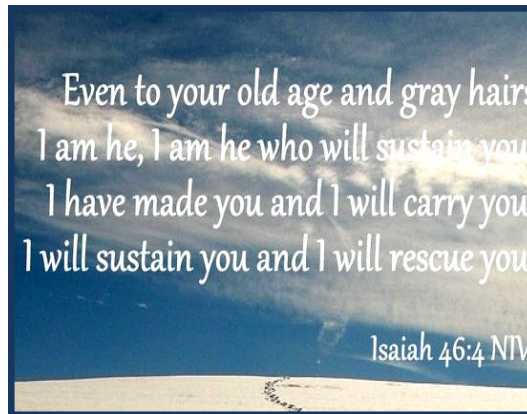
would not have an easy life. He would be misunderstood and contradicted and a sword would be thrust through his body and he would be rejected by man.

These must have been very difficult words for Mary and Joseph to hear, but they and Anna knew that this was indeed the Messiah they had prayed for and they had a real mission to make this birth known.

Simeon and Anna must have wondered why there had to be negative things happen to this new born baby they had waited for, and why God would allow this to happen to one who was to be their Messiah, their long awaited Savior.

Anna didn't look back in anger or regret. She looked forward with hope. She had known heartache and loss.

She waited patiently for the birth of the Messiah, the Savior of her people. Instead she went into the streets rejoicing and telling people the good news. We have that same mission today. I have had the privilege of knowing people who worked in the church doing various tasks until their dying day. They may have just always prayed when asked or baked a pie or cake for a dinner. Sometimes, some of us wondered if that person should still be driving to church, but they were dedicated and we always knew that particular seat would be taken on a Sunday morning by a dedicated person of age in years but still engaged and eager in Christ's mission.



“For even young people tire and drop out, young folk in their prime stumble and fall. But those who wait upon GOD get fresh strength. They spread their wings and soar like eagles, They run and don't get tired, they walk and don't lag behind.”
Isaiah 40:31

Prayer: Lord, we are so fortunate to have the good news that our Savior did come to the earth. He bled and died for our sins, and promised us eternal life with Him. Help us to be like Anna and continue throughout our life to fulfill Your mission of spreading the good news of Christ's birth to others. Amen

1. What is the byproduct of waiting on the Lord?
2. In what area of life do you need strength
3. What dream has God planted deep inside you? What prevents you from realizing that dream?
4. Can you envision how you might have felt if you had been in Anna's situation?
5. Are you wasting your life or investing it in the things that really matter?

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