

GOD'S PROPHETESSES IN SCRIPTURE

IV. Anna: God's Servant Who Supported A Godly Man's Ministry

(Luke 2:21-38)

I. Introduction

- A. When God created the first woman, He made her to be a helpmeet for the first man, Genesis 2:20-23.
- B. Four women were prophetesses of the Lord whose ministries are recorded in Scripture, and their ministries involved specific relationships with men, revealing God's idea of a woman's being a man's proper helpmeet.
- C. We view each prophetess in her ministry to learn God's lessons on a woman's godly role as a helpmeet.

II. Anna: God's Servant Who Supported A Godly Man's Ministry, Luke 2:21-38.

- A. Since the life of Christ occurred during the dispensation of the Law (Galatians 4:4), the last prophetess of the Lord under the Law before the dispensation of the Church was Anna in Luke 2:36-38.
- B. Her ministry complemented the prophetic ministry of the elderly man Simeon of Luke 2:25-35 who met Joseph and Mary as they were come to the temple of the Lord to fulfill their duty under the Mosaic Law to offer an appropriate sacrifice for the Infant Jesus Who was Mary's firstborn son, Luke 2:22-24.
- C. Simeon affirmed to Joseph and Mary that Jesus was the Messiah in Luke 2:25-35, and right after he had stated this truth, the prophetess Anna came up and gave thanks to God for the arrival of Jesus as the infant Messiah, and she shared news of His arrival to all in Jerusalem who hoped for Messiah's Kingdom, Luke 2:36-38.
- D. The very actions of Simeon and Anna in their ministries reflect the proper role of a man and a woman in relating to each other, with Simeon as the man and Anna as the woman who was a true helpmeet to Simeon:
 1. Simeon lived in Jerusalem (Luke 2:25), and the Holy Spirit led him to enter the temple to meet the Infant Jesus and His parents and affirm to them Jesus' identify as Messiah (Luke 2:27-35). In contrast, Anna spent much time in the temple serving God with fastings and prayer, but *though* she was *already there*, Anna was *not* led of God to be the *first* to meet Jesus, but to do so *after* Simeon, Luke 2:36-38.
 2. Simeon fulfilled the Deuteronomy 19:15b role of the first witness, and Anna that of the Biblical second witness, that the truth of Jesus' identify might be affirmed through them in accord with the Law.
 3. Simeon aggressively took up the Infant Messiah Jesus in his arms and blessed God as a male leader where Anna did not gather the Infant Jesus up in her arms, for she was a woman who was not Jesus' mother, so she took the more passive role of confirming the words of the man Simeon, Luke 2:28, 38.
 4. Simeon emphasized the First Advent of Christ's suffering and death and Anna rounded out the ministry of Christ by speaking of His subsequent Second Advent in establishing His kingdom, Luke 2:32-35, 38.
 5. Simeon mentioned Israel's sinful coming rejection of Jesus where Anna rounded out the ministries of Christ by speaking of God's later blessed, gracious salvation of Israel through Christ, Luke 2:34-35, 38.
 6. Simeon began the declaration about Jesus to His immediate earthly family members while Anna spread that news about Christ to all the other believers who lived in Jerusalem, Luke 2:33, 38.
 7. Simeon asked God to let him die in peace now since he had seen God's Messiah where Anna continued the work begun by Simeon in broadcasting to other believers news of Messiah's arrival, Luke 2:29-30, 38.
 8. Simeon and Anna were both elderly people, culturally respected for their age (Luke 2:26-29, 36-37), so their testimonies added great weight to the affirmation that Jesus was the Messiah!

Lesson: *The roles of a man and of woman as his helpmeet were displayed in specific ways in the ministries of elderly Simeon and Anna in their meeting of the Infant Jesus in the temple: Simeon was led of God to take the initiative to meet the Infant Jesus and His parents first while Anna followed later; Simeon was the first witness, Anna the second witness Biblically to confirm Simeon's witness in fulfillment of Scripture; Simeon as the man aggressively took up the Infant Jesus where the woman Anna passively only spoke of Him; Simeon emphasized Christ's First Advent, and Anna rounded out Christ's ministry by speaking of His Second Coming; Simeon highlighted Christ's suffering, and Anna rounded out that message, speaking of the hope of His reign to follow; Simeon mentioned Israel's sinful rejection of Christ where Anna rounded out that word, mentioning Israel's later redemption; Simeon addressed Jesus' parents, and Anna broadened that address to other believers; Simeon prepared to die after meeting Jesus, and Anna continued the work begun by Simeon, and both Simeon and Anna as culturally respected elderly people saw their testimonies used of God to Israel about the Infant Messiah Jesus!*

Application: *May we men and women follow the pattern of God's roles for us in ministry as men and women in the pattern set by God's use of Simeon and Anna that we might be effectively used of Him for His glory.*