



CAPITOL COMMISSION®

Energetic Elderly Anna is Thankful for her Messiah!

MAY 13-14, 2026

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Luke 2:36-40 *Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; 37) and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. 38) And coming up that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. 39) So when they had performed all things according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. 40) And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. (NKJV)*

O GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD! CALL UPON HIS NAME; MAKE KNOWN HIS DEEDS AMONG THE PEOPLES! SING TO HIM, SING PSALMS TO HIM; TALK OF ALL HIS WONDROUS WORKS! GLORY IN HIS HOLY NAME; LET THE HEARTS OF THOSE REJOICE WHO SEEK THE LORD! SEEK THE LORD AND HIS STRENGTH; SEEK HIS FACE EVERMORE! ... LET THE HEAVENS REJOICE, AND LET THE EARTH BE GLAD; AND LET THEM SAY AMONG THE NATIONS, "THE LORD REIGNS." ... O GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD! FOR HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER. ... BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING!
1 CHRONICLES 16:6-11, 31, 34, 36

Is Anna the first prophetess in over four hundred years? What is the significance of the meaning of her father's name? Was Anna from one of the ten lost tribes of Israel? How "great" was her age? Did she feel sorry for herself because her husband had died within seven years of their marriage? Had she spent most of her long life in dedication and prayer? Did she live in the Temple? Why is "night" first? Does she tell all her friends about Jesus? What is Joseph and Mary known for? How is Jesus similar yet different from other children?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- MAY 20-21: LUKE 2:41-52 **JESUS' OWN WITNESS THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH!**
- MAY 27-28: LUKE 3:1-9 **JOHN'S WITNESS OF THE CURRENT MESSIAH!**

Never had there been darker days regarding the Roman leadership than the final days of Herod the Great, the ruthless Gentile king ruling over Israel. This event with Anna occurs within the last two months of his thirty-seven year reign of terror over Israel—thirty-four since he had taken Jerusalem from the Persians. Overwhelmed by nightmares, he would often scream for the wife he had loved and her sons, whom he had murdered, then in terror, would attempt to take his own life. His memories of ruthless tyranny and bloodthirsty vengeance would almost drive him to insanity. Additionally he suffered severe pain from ulcers in his colon and infections so severe they bred worms, combined with intensely labored breathing, and revolving convulsions throughout his body. His doctors prescribed special healing baths that were located on the other side of the Jordan River, but its healing effects were in vain. By the time he made it back to Jericho, he sensed that his end was near, so to sooth his conscience he gave money to his friends and soldiers, especially his commanders. The Jews sensed his demise and in hatred of his idolatry imposed upon them, pulled down the immense golden eagle from the gate of the Temple. The two ringleaders and forty accomplices were arrested, tried before Herod in a mock trial, and burned alive publically, but it didn't quench his insane vengeance. He then had the fathers throughout all Israel arrested and imprisoned in the hippodrome in Jericho with orders to his sister to have them all killed immediately after his death, so that the Jews would mourn his passing. He experienced a singular joy five days before he died, in that he received a letter from the Emperor allowing him to execute his son, Antipater, for murdering his half-brothers Alexander and Aristobulus. Within a century, Herod's entire wicked family would be annihilated.

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 8:30 AM –FREDERICKSBURG – PARADISE DINER – 260 WARRENTON RD

THURSDAY @ 8:00 AM –RICHMOND – SHONEY'S, HULL & COURTHOUSE & NOON – LYNCHBURG – PANERA BREAD, 3901 OLD FOREST RD.

Virginia

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*WE GIVE THANKS TO YOU, O GOD, WE GIVE THANKS! FOR
YOUR WONDEROUS WORKS DECLARE THAT
YOUR NAME IS NEAR. PSALM 75:1*

I. ELDERLY COMMITMENT

LUKE 2:36-37

There had been no prophet with a word from God for four centuries and here Anna (meaning “grace”) the prophetess appears, who will once again proclaim the truth in Israel. She is the daughter of Phanuel, earlier spelled “Peniel” (meaning “face to face”), reminding her of when Jacob wrestled with the “Angel of the Lord” and his name was changed to “Israel” (Genesis 32:30). Anna’s prayer life pointed to the name of her father. She also belonged to the tribe of Asher, one of the ten lost tribes. However, before the ten were deported to Assyria and lost, some from the tribe of Asher “*humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem*” (2 Chronicles 30:11). Luke makes it clear that Anna was very old, literally “*having advanced in many days.*” Then he explains how old she really is; she “*had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity.*” The earliest a girl would be married was twelve years old “*and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years.*” It is clear in the original that the eighty-four years refers to the time that she was a widow. Thus, she was at least 103 years old! In regard to her commitment, there are four things that she continually did not withdraw from, 1) the Temple, (meaning she probably lived there); 2) fastings (which she regularly did to intensify her prayers); 3) petitions (specific prayers, maybe exceeding Daniel); 4) serving night and day (notice that night is first, giving it greater emphasis, meaning that she often probably stayed up all night praying with those who needed her help).

*WEeping MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT, BUT JOY COMES IN
THE MORNING. PSALM 30:5*

II. ENERGETIC THANKSGIVING

LUKE 2:38

The moment Anna saw Simeon’s face light up and he took baby Jesus into his arms, she must have known that this was her Messiah! Because her life is characterized by continual prayer she literally “*was (continually) giving thanks (for herself) to God.*” Anna was personally overwhelmed with gratitude by the reality that she was able to see her “*redemption.*” Though she gives thanks personally to God and is characterized by thanksgiving, her gratitude overflows into energetic proclamation as Anna “*was (continually) speaking of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.*” She was only about three things: prayer, presence and proclamation. As a prophetess, Anna continually proclaimed the truth to those expecting the coming of their Messiah. She let “*all*” who looked for His coming know that He had arrived!

*NOW AFTER JESUS WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM OF JUDEA IN
THE DAYS OF HEROD THE KING, BEHOLD, WISE MEN FROM
THE EAST CAME TO JERUSALEM, SAYING, “WHERE IS HE
WHO HAS BEEN BORN KING OF THE JEWS? FOR WE HAVE
SEEN HIS STAR IN THE EAST AND HAVE COME TO WORSHIP
HIM.” WHEN HEROD THE KING HEARD THIS, HE WAS
TROUBLED, AND ALL JERUSALEM WITH HIM. MATT. 2:1-3*

III. EXCELLENT OBEDIENCE

LUKE 2:39-40

The spotlight moves from Anna back to the reason why they had come to the Temple, to fulfill “*all things according to the Law of the Lord.*” Joseph and Mary were very careful to obey the Word of God in every detail. Now that everything prescribed by God had been fulfilled in the Temple, they probably returned to Nazareth immediately to pack up their belongings and move to Bethlehem permanently, so that those looking for Jesus would be able to find Him (Micah 5:2). Jesus grows up just like any other child (Lk. 1:80), except that He had no sin. Additionally, He was “*filled with wisdom*” and “*the grace of God was upon Him,*” He pleased Him.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) In what ways are you committed to prayer and thanksgiving to God?
- 2) Have you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior so you have experienced His redemption?
- 3) Is your thanksgiving to God active so that you tell others about Jesus Christ and what He alone has done for you?