

Simeon & Anna

In Scripture

“AT LAST, ALL-POWERFUL MASTER, YOU GIVE LEAVE TO YOUR SERVANT TO GO IN PEACE, ACCORDING TO YOUR PROMISE. FOR MY EYES HAVE SEEN YOUR SALVATION WHICH YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ALL NATIONS, THE LIGHT TO ENLIGHTEN THE GENTILES AND GIVE GLORY TO ISRAEL, YOUR PEOPLE.”
Luke 2:29-32

In the Bible there are many people who are called to great acts in older age, long after they thought they were even capable. God shows us time and again that age is not the problem, faithfulness of heart is all that matters. Two such older people are Simeon and Anna whom we hear about in Luke 2: 25-38 at the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

Simeon is a mysterious man. We do not know about his tribe, his family, was he married with children? What was his job? The only things we know are that he was a man of faith and hope. It was the Holy Spirit who had revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he had seen God's Anointed One. It was the Holy Spirit that directed Simeon to the Temple on the particular day that Jesus' parents brought him to be presented to the Lord. Recognising Jesus to be the Messiah, this elderly man took the child in his arms and blessed God. After a lifetime of seeking him, we can hardly imagine this moment. A very patient old man who at last held Christ in his frail arms in deep joy. He was now ready to die.

Simeon's prayer is recited every day in Night Prayer (Compline) by Christians around the world.

For more information about Simeon and Anna - www.godwhospeaks.uk/presentation-of-jesus-in-the-temple-reflection/

AND COMING UP AT THAT VERY HOUR SHE BEGAN TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD AND TO SPEAK OF HIM TO ALL WHO WERE WAITING FOR THE REDEMPTION OF JERUSALEM.
Luke 2:38

Anna the Prophetess was married at 14 and widowed at 21. As a young widow, she could easily have remarried yet Anna remained single and lived out her long life in the Temple.

At the age of 72, tradition claims that Anna was made responsible for the care of Mary at the Temple from the day of her own presentation there - when she was 3 years old until her betrothal to Joseph.

She was the only woman in the Temple to greet Jesus when it was time for his Presentation and Anna proclaims Jesus as the redeemer of Jerusalem.

Unlike Simeon, Anna is not just visiting the Temple for the day; she's there all the time. According to Luke 2:37, Anna "never left the Temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day". Perhaps she was part of an order of widows who had specific religious functions in the Temple.

Luke is the only Gospel that records Anna's role here because Luke sees the correlation between the Temple's significance with the Messiah's fulfilment of the Temple's purpose - namely to worship God first in a physical place and then through Christ in a physical being.

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