

Luke 2:36

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

Analysis

Anna, a prophetess (Ἄννα προφῆτις, Anna prophētis)—The feminine form prophētis appears only here and Revelation 2:20 in the NT, indicating a woman who spoke God's words. Her Hebrew name Hannah means 'grace,' fitting for one who announced Messiah.

The daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher—Luke's genealogical precision establishes authenticity. Asher, one of the northern tribes largely lost after Assyrian exile (722 BC), demonstrates God's preservation of remnant from all twelve tribes, contradicting the 'ten lost tribes' myth. **She was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity**—Brief marriage, likely in her teens, followed by decades-long widowhood, positions Anna as model of covenant faithfulness through life's sorrows.

Historical Context

Female prophets in Israel included Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4), and Huldah (2 Kings 22:14). Anna's continuous temple presence was possible for widows with no family obligations. The Court of Women in Herod's temple provided space where devout women could pray and worship without entering restricted male courts.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Anna's decades-long faithfulness as a widow model perseverance in serving God through difficult life circumstances?
2. What does God's inclusion of both a male prophet (Simeon) and female prophet (Anna) reveal about His valuing of women's testimony?

Interlinear Text

Καὶ	ἦν	Ἄννα	προφῆτις	θυγάτηρ	Φανουήλ	ἐκ
And	there was	one Anna	a prophetess	the daughter	of Phanuel	of
G2532	G2258	G451	G4398	G2364	G5323	G1537
φυλῆς	Ἀσήρ·	αὕτη	προβεβηκυῖα	ἐν	ἡμέραις	πολλαῖς
the tribe	of Aser				age	was of a great
G5443	G768	G846	G4260	G1722	G2250	G4183
ζήσασα	ἔτη	μετὰ	ἀνδρὸς	ἐπτά	ἀπὸ	τῆς παρθενίας
and had lived	years	with	an husband	seven	from	virginity
G2198	G2094	G3326	G435	G2033	G575	G3588 G3932
αὐτῆς						
G846						

Additional Cross-References

Acts 21:9 (Prophecy): And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

Exodus 15:20 (Prophecy): And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

Genesis 30:13 (Parallel theme): And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher.

Revelation 7:6 (Parallel theme): Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

Acts 2:18 (Prophecy): And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Psalms 92:14 (Parallel theme): They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

Job 5:26 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

1 Corinthians 12:1 (Parallel theme): Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Kings 22:14 (Prophecy): So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they communed with her.

Judges 4:4 (Prophecy): And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.