The Prophetess Who Spoke of Jesus

I. The Prophetess Who Spoke of Jesus

A. Luke shows wonderful people as he introduces us to Jesus.
   1. First, we meet Zacharias and Elizabeth, the future parents of John.
   2. Then, we meet Joseph and Mary, and you know who their son was.

B. After Mary gave birth to Jesus,
   1. His parents took Him to the temple in Jerusalem
   2. that they might present Jesus according to the custom of the Law, and
      a) Simeon the prophet met them and
      b) blessed God for being able to hold salvation in his arms.

C. Then the young couple,
   1. along with their son,
   2. met a prophetess named Anna,

   36 Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a 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 in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 2.36–38).

   a) Luke said much about this woman.
   b) Let us think on what he said and what we can learn.

II. The Prophet and the Prophetess
A. We meet Simeon first in the narration, and
   1. Luke records more of Simeon’s actions than of Anna’s and
   2. records his words, but
      a) Luke told us more about the woman and
      b) what made her a wonderful person,
         (i) hence why God used her
         (2) to speak of Jesus to everyone looking for redemption.

B. They were both up in years, but
   1. while the text hints at the old age of Simeon,
   2. Luke gives more details about Anna’s age,
      a) which happens rarely in the Scriptures with women,
      b) although we have plenty of men’s ages in the Bible.

C. Simeon prophesied of Jesus,

   29 “Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,
      According to Your word;
   30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation
   31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,
   32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,
      And the glory of Your people Israel.”

   Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this
   Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which
   will be spoken against 35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also),
   that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed” (Luke 2.34–35).

D. Luke then spoke of Anna
   1. giving thanks to the Lord and
   2. of her speaking of Jesus to people.
III. The Character of the Prophetess

A. Her role:
   1. Prophetess

B. His family:
   1. Daughter of Phanuel
   2. Of the tribe of Asher
      a) We will look at her age in a few moments, but
         (1) she was of a great age, and
         (2) I wonder whether she fulfills Deuteronomy 33.25,
            a) which spoke of the tribe of Asher,
               25 "Your sandals shall be iron and bronze;
                As your days, so shall your strength be."
               (Deu 33.25)
      b) When we learn of her age,
         (1) what she did at her great age amazes us,
            a) so that as her days,
            b) so was her strength,
               i) taking her beyond 80 years of age,
               ii) as Moses said,
               10 The days of our lives are seventy years;
                  And if by reason of strength they are eighty years,
                  Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow;
                  For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
                  (Psa 90.10)
      c) Why do people speak of the ten lost tribes of Israel.
(1) True, the Lord had dispersed them among the nations, but
(2) obviously some had come back to Israel, or
   (a) never left because they were the poor of the land
   (b) that the Assyrians had left in the land.

   d) Barnabas was of the tribe of Levi.

3. She had been married, but Luke did not name her husband or any children

C. Her age:
   1. Of a great age, and then Luke hints at her age:
      a) She had been married seven years
      b) She had been a widow for 84 years!
   2. That total 91 years, but
      a) she did not marry as an infant.
      b) How old was she when she married?
         (1) If she had been 20,
         (2) she was 111 years old when she met Jesus.

D. Her spiritual life:
   1. Did not depart from the temple
      a) Samuel stayed at the temple with Eli.
      b) Singers occupied the temple always,

         33 These are the singers, heads of the fathers’ houses of the Levites, who
           lodged in the chambers, and were free from other duties; for they were
           employed in that work day and night (1Ch 9.33).

   2. Served God with
      a) fastings and
      b) prayers
(1) night and
(2) day

(a) Could this have been the secret to this woman’s age?
(b) She knew what was important in life!

3. She did not waste her time with
   a) useless,
   b) unproductive,
   c) unedifying,
   d) non-God-glorifying activities.

   (1) May her Lord, who is our Lord,
   (2) grant us more older people with her spiritual devotion.

E. The New Testament mentions other prophetesses, but

1. it only names Anna.
2. She was a special woman of God!

IV. The Mission Field of the Prophetess

A. Simeon spoke of the Gentiles, but

B. Anna spoke to the people of Jerusalem,

1. speaking of things that the Lord had revealed to her,
2. that is why she was a prophetess.

   a) She prayed to God endlessly, and so
   b) God spoke to her.

   (1) Pray without ceasing,
       (a) along with fasting, and
   (2) see what happens in your life.

C. She was not a grouchy, complaining, negative, bitter old woman, but
1. she had hope and
2. she built hope in others.

Exhortation:

I. Devote yourself to God,
   A. as Anna did, and
   B. see how God uses your life.