

She Spake of Him

Faithful Waiting Becomes Thanksgiving and Testimony (Luke 2:36–38)

Series: Luke: An Orderly Account - Dr. Randy White

I. The Waiting Life Still Serves God (vv. 36-37)

God Names a Witness Others Might Overlook

- Luke introduces Anna as a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser. Her testimony belongs within Israel's history and God's promises to His people.
- Aser is Asher, one of Jacob's sons (Genesis 30:12-13). Her tribal identity remains identifiable in Jerusalem.
- Anna joins Simeon as another named witness to the child. His testimony is followed by hers, showing that expectation of God's redemption extends beyond one man's personal hope.

Long Sorrow Has Not Ended Her Service

- She had lived with her husband seven years and was now an elderly widow. Her brief biography establishes a life marked by loss.
- "About fourscore and four years" naturally reads as about eighty-four in the KJV. Either an age or a widowhood-duration reading emphasizes long devotion.
- Luke does not suggest that bereavement was easy or that faithfulness removed its sorrow. He shows that widowhood and age had not brought her service to God to an end.

Prayer Is Part of Her Service

- "Served God with fastings and prayers night and day" gives spiritual weight to activities that may attract little public attention. Her prayers are service directed toward God Himself.
- "Departed not from the temple" portrays her constant devotion there. Luke identifies no private room or exemption from ordinary physical needs.
- Psalm 27:4 expresses the desire to dwell in the LORD's house and behold His beauty. Anna's life likewise centers upon God, rather than treating worship as an occasional interruption.
- Paul also values a widow who "trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day" (1 Timothy 5:5). Different settings share this recognition of prayerful dependence.

II. The Promised Redeemer Calls Forth Thanks (v. 38a)

A Long Life Meets a Particular Moment

- "Coming in that instant" joins Anna's arrival to Simeon's encounter with Jesus. Luke brings the witnesses together around the same child, in the same Temple setting.
- Mary and Joseph have come to fulfill the law; Simeon has come by the Spirit (Luke 2:27). Anna's arrival supplies another testimony within this convergence of obedience and divine purpose.
- Her years of devotion did not purchase this encounter. The Redeemer comes because God keeps His promises; Anna's thanksgiving acknowledges His gift rather than claiming payment for her service.

Thanksgiving Answers God's Faithfulness

- She "gave thanks likewise unto the Lord." Simeon blessed God when he received the child (Luke 2:28); Anna joins his praise.
- The greatness of this moment lies in who the child is. Simeon has said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:30). Anna's response belongs to that same revelation of God's provision.
- Jesus' saving work is not yet historically completed. Thanksgiving begins because the promised Redeemer has arrived, without implying that His suffering, resurrection, and reign have all occurred.

The Hope Is Greater Than One Woman's Relief

- Anna is thankful in a scene concerned with "redemption in Jerusalem." Luke directs attention beyond her personal circumstances to God's promised intervention for His people.
- Zacharias had blessed the Lord God of Israel for visiting and redeeming His people (Luke 1:68). Anna's thanksgiving continues that expectation; it does not introduce a different story of salvation.
- Isaiah 52:9 calls Jerusalem's waste places to sing because the LORD comforts His people and redeems Jerusalem. Anna sees the child through whom God's promised deliverance will come.

III. The Thankful Witness Speaks of Him (v. 38b)

The Child Becomes the Subject of Her Speech

- Anna "spake of him." Luke moves from what she offered to God in thanksgiving to what she said to others about the child at the center of the encounter.
- Luke preserves Simeon's words but does not record Anna's speech. We can preach the significance of her testimony without inventing a prophecy or placing an imagined quotation in her mouth.
- The narrative gives her name and history, then turns our attention to Him. Her long faithfulness matters because it leads into testimony about the Redeemer, not merely admiration for her endurance.

She Speaks to Those Awaiting Redemption

- Her hearers are "all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Luke identifies shared expectation, without counting or naming their group.
- Simeon waited for "the consolation of Israel" (Luke 2:25); these people look for redemption. Comfort and deliverance meet in the same Messiah, whose arrival answers the hope of both witnesses.
- Jerusalem is a real city in Israel's prophetic story. The language should first retain that covenant setting before we draw broader lessons about trusting God and speaking of Christ.

Faithful Hope Finds Its Focus in Christ

- The passage moves from service to thanksgiving to testimony. Anna's waiting does not end in praise of waiting itself; the person of the Redeemer becomes the reason for her gratitude and speech.
- Her age does not silence her witness, and her loss does not make her testimony insignificant. Her service retains its dignity.
- We do not share Anna's precise moment in Israel's history, but we can thank God for His faithfulness and speak clearly of Christ. Pauline instruction likewise joins thanksgiving with gracious speech (Colossians 4:2-6).