

Anna & Simeon

Ryan: So far, we have had Mary and Joseph tell us about how they came to be together in a perfectly normal relationship. There was nothing strange or supernatural about that. But then something supernatural did happen to Zechariah and Elizabeth, and the result is that there is a baby on the way. Well, that's all very nice, but I guess what we're looking for are clues that something really big is going to happen. So, perhaps Anna and Simeon can help us. These are two people who are really plugged into the supernatural. Let's listen into their conversation and see if they have any sense that something big is coming.

Anna: Hello, Simeon. What are you seeing today?

Simeon: I am seeing people, Anna. People who are lost. It's remarkable just how much like sheep they are! You can see the more adventurous individuals wondering off on their own. You can see groups huddling together, anxious not to stand out from the crowd. There are children crying out for their parents, whilst other people just sit around, their minds elsewhere as they eat their sandwiches. You can see all of life in this Temple courtyard.

Anna: Yes. I love it here.

Simeon: So, when did you start your daily visits to the Temple Anna?

Anna: It was when my husband became ill, I came here every day to pray for him.

Simeon: Ah, yes. How long ago was that now?

Anna: About sixty years, I suppose.

Simeon: Wow! Was it as long as that? So, I realise this sounds like a stupid question, but were you praying that he would be healed?

Anna: Yes. I was feeling desperate in those days. I didn't want him to die. I was afraid to be left on my own...and I did love him very much.

Simeon: But he didn't get better.

Anna: No, he passed away. But thinking back to that time, I don't think my prayers were wasted. I believe that God was able to use them to change him from a man in fear, desperately trying to hold onto this world, to a man at peace with his situation. Ready to fall into the arms of God.

Simeon: That's good! So, after he died you just kept on coming to the Temple to pray?

Anna: Well, no, not exactly. I didn't see things then as I see them now. At first, I just didn't want to talk to God. I was angry with him, and I did think then that my prayers had made no difference, or worse, that God had just ignored me. It took many years for me to realise that no prayer is lost with God.

Simeon: Yes, I know what you mean. So what brought you back to the Temple?

Anna: Well, the anger with God gradually subsided, and I began to remember the peace I had found being in God's presence here every day. So, I came back, believing that God had some purpose in me being here. It felt like I had already started on an important journey, although I had no idea where it was going to lead me.

Simeon: And how has the journey been for you?

Anna: I suppose you could say it's been a journey of discovery. A journey that has taught me about life; about prayer; about God. Gradually, God has shown me how much he loves me. How much he wants to spend time with me. But also that he has a job for me to do, praying with people who come into the Temple. People who need help getting connected with Him.

Simeon: It is a wonderful thing that you do! But I lack your courage to go up and ask people if they would like me to pray for them. Instead, I tend to look at people and talk to God about what I see. I ask him to open my eyes so that I can see things that are hidden. Things that God wants me to talk to him about.

Anna: Oh yes, and is that how God spoke to you about the Messiah we're all waiting for?

Simeon: Yes, one day, when I was sitting in this exact spot, I saw a young couple bringing their new baby to be presented to God. There was nothing obviously special about this little family, but as I was watching them and asking God to show me what he wanted me to pray for them, to my surprise I heard him say, "This is how you will see the Messiah when he comes."

Anna: As a baby?

Simeon: Yes, and since that day I have had this burden on my heart to keep praying for the Messiah to come. I cannot get through a day without bringing this prayer before God. But sometimes I wonder if I will recognise him when I see him. People are presenting babies to God every day.

Anna: When the time comes, God will open your eyes so you can see.

Simeon: Yes, that is my hope.