



**The Holy Prophet Samuel
Whom the Holy Church Celebrates on August 20.**

Icon courtesy OCA

This most holy man, a Prophet of God from childhood, was the last Judge of the Israelite people, and anointed the first two Kings of Israel. He was born in the twelfth century before Christ, in the city of Armathaim Sipa, from the tribe of Levi, the son of Elkanah and Hannah (Anna). He was the fruit of prayer, for his mother, being barren, conceived him only after she had supplicated the Lord with many tears; wherefore she called him *Samuel*, that is “heard by God.” As soon as Hannah had weaned him, she brought him to the city of Silom (Shiloh), where the Ark was kept, and she consecrated him, though as yet a babe, to the service of God, giving thanks to Him with the hymn found in the Third Ode of the Psalter: “My heart hath been established in the Lord...” Samuel remained in Silom under the protection of Eli the priest. He served in the tabernacle of God, and through his most venerable way of life became well-pleasing to God and man (I Kings 2:26). While yet a child, sleeping in the tabernacle near the Ark of

God, he heard the voice of God calling his name, and foretelling the downfall of Eli, for although Eli's two sons, Ophni and Phineas, were most lawless, and despisers of God, Eli did not correct them. Even after Samuel had told Eli of the divine warning, Eli did not properly chastise his sons, and afterwards, through various misfortunes, his whole house was blotted out in one day.

After these things had come to pass, Samuel was chosen to be the protector of the people, and he judged them with holiness and righteousness. He became for them an example of all goodness, and their compassionate intercessor before God: "Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; yea, I will serve the Lord, and show you the good and right way" (*ibid.* 12:23). When he asked them—having God as witness—if he ever wronged anyone, or took anyone's possessions, or any gift, even so much as a sandal, they answered with one voice, "Thou hast not defrauded us, nor afflicted us, neither hast thou taken anything from anyone's hand" (*ibid.* 12:4). When Samuel was old, the people asked him for a king, but he was displeased with this, knowing that God Himself was their King. But when they persisted, the Lord commanded him to anoint them a king, saying, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me from reigning over them" (*ibid.* 8:7); so Samuel anointed Saul. But Saul transgressed the command of God repeatedly, so Samuel anointed David. Yet, since Samuel was a man of God, full of tender mercy, when the Lord told him that He had rejected Saul, Samuel wept for him the whole night long (*ibid.* 15:11); and later, since he continued to grieve, the Lord said to him, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul?" (*ibid.* 16:11). Having lived blamelessly some ninety-eight years, and become an example to all of a God-pleasing life, he reposed in the eleventh century before Christ. Many ascribe to him the authorship of the Books of Judges, and of Ruth, and of the first twenty-four chapters of the First Book of Kings (I Samuel).

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Dismissal Hymn of the Prophet. Second Tone

AS we celebrate the memory of Thy Prophet Samuel, O Lord, through him we beseech Thee to save our souls.

*Kontakion of the Prophet. Plagal of Fourth Tone
To thee, the Champion Leader*

THY hallowed mother dedicated thee unto the Lord * even before she had conceived thee; and when thou wast born, * thou didst serve Him from thine infancy like an Angel. And, O Prophet of the Most High, for thy fervent faith, * thou wast granted to foretell things that should come to pass. * Hence, we cry to thee: * Rejoice, O ven'erable Samuel.



**PROPHETESS HANNAH,
MOTHER OF PROPHET SAMUEL
WHOM THE HOLY CHURCH COMMEMORATES
DECEMBER 9.**

I Kings LXX
An Excerpt

1: 9 And Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Selom, and stood before the Lord: and Heli the priest was on a seat by the threshold of the temple of the Lord. And she was very much grieved in spirit, and prayed to the Lord and wept abundantly. And she vowed a vow to the Lord saying, O Lord God of Sabaoth, if Thou wilt indeed look upon the humiliation of thine handmaid, and remember me, and give to Thine handmaid a man-child, then I will indeed dedicate him to Thee till the day of his death; and he shall drink no wine or strong drink, and no razor shall come upon his head. And it came to pass, while she was long praying before the Lord, that Heli the priest marked her mouth. And she was speaking in her heart, and her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: and Heli accounted

her a drunken woman. And the servant of Heli said to her, How long wilt thou be drunken? take away the wine from thee, and go out from the presence of the Lord. And Hannah answered and said, Nay, my lord. I live in a hard day, and I have not drunk wine or strong drink, and I pour out my soul before the Lord. Count not thy handmaid a pestilent woman, for by reason of the abundance of my importunity I have continued my prayer until now. And Heli answered and said to her, Go in peace: the God of Israel give thee all thy petition, which thou hast asked of Him. And she said Thine handmaid has found favour in thine eyes: and the woman went her way, and entered into her lodging, and ate and drank with her husband, and her countenance was no more sad.

And they rise early in the morning, and worship the Lord and go their way: and Helkana went into his house at Armathaim, and knew his wife Hannah: and the Lord remembered her, and she conceived. And in the season of days when the time was come, she brought forth a son, and called his name Samuel, and said, Because I asked him of the Lord God of Sabaoth (I Kings 9-20 LXX).



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