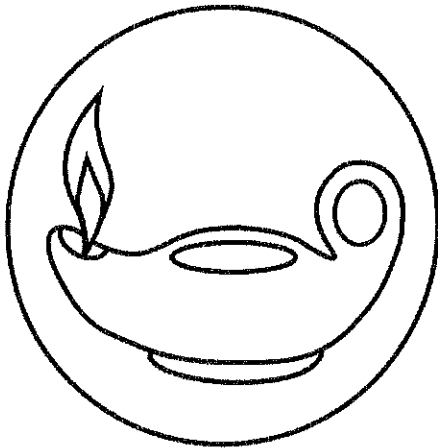


December 11: Samuel the Prophet



"Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." Samuel became a great prophet who helped keep Israel's religious heritage of the alive.



"The Infant Samuel"
Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1700s



1 Samuel 1:11, 20.

¹¹She vowed a vow, and said, "Yahweh of Armies, if you will indeed look at the affliction of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a boy, then I will give him to Yahweh all the days of his life, and no razor shall come on his head."...

²⁰When the time had come, Hannah conceived, and bore a son; and she named him Samuel, saying, "Because I have asked him of Yahweh."

There was a woman named Hannah who was very sad that she didn't have any children. She prayed for a child and promised that she would dedicate the child to God. Later she had a son named Samuel, which means "God has heard" or "asked of God." Samuel went to live with the priest Eli at an early age. One night Samuel lay down in the temple. It was getting dark but God's lamp had not gone out. Samuel heard a voice calling his name. He thought it was Eli, but Eli told him to go back to sleep. After this happened three times, Eli realized that the voice was the Lord calling Samuel so Eli instructed Samuel to answer,

1 Samuel 3:1-20. ¹The child Samuel ministered to Yahweh before Eli. Yahweh's word was rare in those days. There were not many visions, then. ²At that time, when Eli was laid down in his place (now his eyes had begun to grow dim, so that he could not see), ³and God's lamp hadn't yet gone out, and Samuel had laid down in Yahweh's temple, where God's ark was; ⁴Yahweh called Samuel; and he said, "Here I am."

⁵He ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am; for you called me." He said, "I didn't call. Lie down again." He went and lay down. ⁶Yahweh called yet again, "Samuel!" Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am; for you called me." He answered, "I didn't call, my son. Lie down again." ⁷Now Samuel didn't yet know Yahweh, neither was Yahweh's word yet revealed to him.

⁸Yahweh called Samuel again the third time. He arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am; for you called me." Eli perceived that Yahweh had called the child. ⁹Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down. It shall be, if he calls you, that you shall say, 'Speak, Yahweh; for your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. ¹⁰Yahweh came, and stood, and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak; for your servant hears."

¹¹Yahweh said to Samuel, "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. ¹²In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from the beginning even to the end. ¹³For I have told him that I will judge his house forever, for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves, and he didn't restrain them. ¹⁴Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be removed with sacrifice or offering forever."

¹⁵Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of Yahweh's house. Samuel feared to show Eli the vision. ¹⁶Then Eli called Samuel, and said, "Samuel, my son!" He said, "Here I am." ¹⁷He said, "What is the thing that he has spoken to you? Please don't hide it from me. God do so to you, and more also, if you hide anything from me of all the things that he spoke to you."

¹⁸Samuel told him every bit, and hid nothing from him. He said, "It is Yahweh. Let him do what seems good to him."

¹⁹Samuel grew, and Yahweh was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰All Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of Yahweh.