

February 3

Z. ✙ *Holy and Righteous Simeon the God-receiver and Anna the Prophetess.*



St. Simeon was a “righteous and god-fearing” man. The Spirit of God promised him, that he would not die until he saw the Christ of the Lord 1). Amidst his troubled times that included a general decline of faith and morality, the Holy Elder lived in the expectation of the coming of the Savior, and with the eyes of faith he saw this coming bringing nearer the salvation of his people. When the Divine Infant was brought into the temple for the fulfillment of His duty before the Law, Simeon received a revelation from the Holy Spirit that his hope will be fulfilled, that his eyes will see the Savior in the Child, Who was now in the temple. Entering the temple, St. Simeon really was worthy not only to behold the Savior with his senile eyes, but also to take Him into the cradle of his arms. Burdened with many years and whitened with gray hair, the Holy Elder was in any case a representative of the Old Testament and at the same time, as the Holy Church sings, "a secret preacher of the new grace". The Gospel does not tell us what rank the righteous Simeon held, but in chants of the Holy Church he is referred to as "priest", "hierarch", "performer of divine service", "offerer of the lawful sacrifice" and "purifier by blood sacrifices of the people of Israel". In all probability, he was among the priests of the Jerusalem temple, and such an assumption agrees with his action (see Luke 2:23, 37) at the meeting of the Lord.

Worthy to meet the Lord together with Simeon was the 84-year old widow St. Anna who was descended from the tribe of Asher and was the daughter of Phanuel. Having lost her husband after seven years of marriage, she did not depart from the temple and led a strict restrained life: her preoccupation was fasting and praying day and night (Luke 2:37), and for this she received the gift of prophecy from the Lord. In her is the best example of true widowhood, a servant of God, worthy of all respect, on the commandment of the Apostle (1 Tim. 5:3,5). Having lived to a very old age, she, like Simeon, awaited the “consolation of Israel”, and therefore, being attentive to the manifestation of the spiritual world, she also united her elderly vote to the doxology of Simeon at the meeting of the Infant God in the temple. Imbued with joyful delight, she announced the good news not only within the walls of the temple, but also declared it outside of the walls of the temple in

Jerusalem, but, moreover, being wizened by her experience of the god-fearing life, she spoke about Christ "to all who hoped for the deliverance of Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38), i. e. only to those god-fearing people, who expected the speedy advent of the Savior and who were because of their godliness worthy of this annunciation. In church hymns the righteous Anna is praised, as an "all praised widow", "a chaste, venerable old woman", "inspired by God", and a "pure and glorious prophetess".

Kontakion, (Ven. Simeon), tone 4

Today the Elder is removed

From the bonds of his prayerful way of life in the flesh

Taking in his hands Christ, the Creator and Lord.

Epistle: Heb. 9:11-14; sel. 321. **Gospel:** Luke 2:25-28; sel. 8.

Notes:

1) According to tradition, the word of the Holy Spirit announced to Simeon the time of his death, it being said that he was 270 years old. The Righteous Simeon, according to this tradition was one of the 70 translators of the Septuagint, who, at the request of the Egyptian King Ptolemy II Philadelphus (who gathered in his library the sacred books of all peoples and who wished to have even the Hebrew sacred books in the Greek language), were sent by the Judaic High Priest Eleazar to Egypt and there to translate the Hebrew Sacred Books into Greek. Simeon, while translating the prophecy of Isaiah about the birth of Emmanuel from a Virgin (Is 7:14), doubted the words of the prophecy and even wanted to correct it, but he received notice from the Spirit of God, that he would not die until he sees the fulfillment of this prophesy. The Holy Elder, according to this same tradition, while waiting for the coming of the Savior lived for 360 years.

The Holy Prophet Azariah

He lived and prophesied in tenth century B.C., during the reign of Asa, King of Judea. He predicted the help of God to this king for his piety and troubles, which must overtake the Judeans because of their sins. (2 Chronicles 15).

Martyrs Adrian and Eubulus

Born in Magnesia they suffered for Christ in Caesarea, Palestine, about 308-309. Coming there to visit other confessors, they were taken at the city gate and were placed before the city mayor. After various tortures St. Adrian was thrown into the midst of lions and, when the beasts did not touch him, he was beheaded by the sword. St. Eubulus was torn apart by the beasts.

Martyrs Papias, Diodorus, and Claudian

They preached the Christian faith in Perga, Pamphylia during the reign of the Emperor Decian, for which they were arrested and, after various tortures, were beheaded in 250. There is witness that all these martyrs were natural brothers.

Martyr Blaise, Bucolus (i.e. the Shepherd)

A wealthy shepherd in Caesarea, Cappadocia, who lived in the third century, distributing his wealth to the needy, he bravely confessed Christ before the pagans and for it was subjected to cruel torture. By miracles and courage in suffering he brought many to Christ.

Repose of St. Simeon, First Bishop of Tver

At first, St. Simeon was bishop of Polotsk, but after the Polotsk rebellion (1263) he withdrew from that political upheaval to Tver. Prince Iaroslav Iaroslavich accepted the hierarch with sincere love and respect and gave the Tver hierarchical cathedral rich estates and property. According to the testimony of the Chronicles, St. Simeon was “learned and very familiar with books; not fearing unpleasant troubles, he argued with princes and aristocrats, and he ministered to the needy and orphans”. Condescending and good to the defenseless, he terribly accused those perpetuating untruths. During his episcopate in Tver a large fire twice destroyed the city. The busy hierarch used much labor for the reconstruction of the temples of God and did not spare any effort or means for this effort. St. Simeon died in peace in 1289.

Repose of the Right Believing Prince Roman of Uglich

St. Roman lived during the time of the Tatar invasion and yoke. He was 23 years old when Batu attacked Russia with his hordes. Having learned about Batu’s approach to Uglich, St. Roman, his father Vladimir, Prince of Uglich, and his older brother Andrew departed for Novgorod. After three years when the Tatars left Russia, he returned to Uglich and after the death of his father and brother he assumed the management of the principedom. He was trustee for his father’s subjects: he constructed charitable and hospitable houses, using up the greater part of his means. He built up to fifteen temples in various parts of his principedom. Every day St. Roman attended services to God, frequently conversed with pious monks and loved to read salutary books. After the death of his wife he entirely devoted himself to asceticism of fasting, prayer, charity and piety. He died on February 3, 1285 and was buried in the Church of the Transfiguration in Uglich. About 1485 the relics of St. Roman were found incorrupt and were transferred to the new Cathedral Church of the Transfiguration. In 1605 the relics of St. Roman began to work wonders and local veneration of him was established. In 1609 the Poles burned the relics of St.

Roman together with the temple in which they reposed; but the ashes of the relics were preserved until now and repose in a hidden place in the Cathedral Temple of the Transfiguration, in the chapel named for the Holy Prince.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 64-66
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