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THE SEVENTH MONTH
MEGABIT 23
(April 01)

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**IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT,
ONE GOD. AMEN.**

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On this day died the prophet Daniel. This righteous man was the son of the daughter of Yonakir. When Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem in the seventeenth year of his reign he took Yonakir the son of Jehoiakim, and his three sons, and Daniel, his daughter's son, and he carried off into captivity, with them, many men of the children of Israel. And he took all the goods which were in the king's house, and all that were in the house of God, even as Isaiah the prophet had prophesied to Hezekiah the king. And this Daniel was a very young man, and he contended in the ascetic life strenuously and thoroughly, and the Spirit of God descended upon him; and he prophesied in the city of Babylon. And in the fourth year after he had been made captive, Nebuchadnezzar saw a vision, the appearance and interpretation of which were terrifying, and he was exceedingly troubled. When he awoke from his sleep he forgot that vision. And he gathered together all the wise men of Babylon, and demanded of them that they should tell him what that vision had been, and the interpretation thereof; and they knew neither what the vision had been nor the interpretation thereof. And he commanded his soldiers to kill all the wise men of Babylon, because [they could not tell him] the dream which he had seen. When Daniel heard that the king had commanded them to kill all the wise men of Babylon, [fearing] that he would also kill him and his companions, the Three Children, he sought out the chief steward, who said unto him concerning the dream which the king had seen, "All the wise men of Babylon and Egypt are unable to describe it, or to interpret it." And Daniel said unto the chief steward, "Speak unto the king on my behalf, and tell him that I can interpret the dream which he hath seen." Then Daniel and his companions, the Three Children who were with him, prayed to God and entreated Him to reveal to him the king's vision, and the interpretation thereof. And God revealed unto Daniel the king's vision, and even the interpretation thereof; and Daniel went in to the king's presence and told him the dream and the interpretation thereof. And he showed him that it concerned the kings who were to reign after him, and what would happen unto each one of them. And the words of Daniel pleased Nebuchadnezzar, and he bowed down before him, and he embraced him with embraces, and he bestowed very great favors upon him, and he appointed him chief of all the wise men of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar saw another dream, and Daniel interpreted it also to him, and he made him know the meaning thereof, saying, "Because of thine arrogance, God will make thee to go forth from among the race of men, and He will make thee to dwell with the beasts in the desert for seven years, and thou shalt eat grass like the beasts. After this He will restore thee to thy kingdom"; and all his prophecy was fulfilled even as he spoke. And after Nebuchadnezzar died, Daniel interpreted to Belshazzar, his son, that which the angel wrote for him on the wall, when he was drinking out of the holy vessels of the house of God. And he made known unto him that his number was written, and that he was measured, and weighed, and that the interpretation thereof was, "God hath prepared thy throne and thy kingdom for another, for He hath weighed thee in a balance, and found thee wanting, and He hath made thy kingdom to pass to the kingdom of Mani, and to the kingdom of Persia"; and his prophecy was fulfilled. And God showed him in visions all the kings who were to reign after him until the end of the world, and the appearance of the False Christ; and he also saw the glory (or, praise) of God, and His greatness, and he saw the glory of our Lord Christ, and His Godhead. And he prophesied concerning His coming, and he assigned to it a known period of years. When these years were ended, our Lord Christ came, even as Daniel had prophesied, and he said, "Our Lord Christ shall come, and they will kill Him. And after Him there shall never be another savior of Jerusalem, for Jerusalem, and the sanctuary, after the Crucifixion of our Lord Christ, shall be laid waste, and the offerings and the altars shall be abolished"; and all these things were fulfilled even as he prophesied. And there was in the city of Babylon a certain idol the name of which was Bel, and they used to give him each day twelve measures of the finest wheaten flour, and forty rams, and seven skins of wine.

And Koros (Cyrus), the King of Persia, used to worship him every day, and he thought that that idol ate and drank that which they used to give him from the king's house. And Daniel rebuked the king because of this, and he said unto him. "This idol neither eateth nor drinketh"; and the king was wroth, and he asked the priests of the idol about the idol Bel. And he said unto them, "Is it true the Bel neither eateth nor drinketh?" And the priests said unto him, "Verily Bel the Idol eateth and drinketh what is given unto him every day." Then they laid before the idol all the food and drink, and the king was to watch for the meal-time [of the idol]; and the priests went out. After they had gone out Daniel commanded [the servants] to bring some ashes, and they brought them to him, and he scattered them about the house of the idol whilst the king was looking on with his eyes; then the king and Daniel sealed the temple with the king's seal, and they departed to their abodes. Now the priests of the idol had a passage into the temple under the earth, and they came into the temple thereby, and took the food and the drink which were before the idols, and departed. And on the following day the king opened the house of idols, and did not find the meat and drink where the priests had laid them, and the king cried out, saying, "Great art thou, O Bel, who hast put Daniel to shame." And Daniel laughed at him, and he showed the king the marks of the feet of men in the ashes. Now before this the king said unto Daniel, "Why dost thou not worship Bel, my god?" And Daniel said unto him, "As for me, I do not worship idols, but I worship the Living God Who created the heavens and the earth." It was because of this Daniel revealed unto the king that the idol Bel neither ate nor drank. And he showed the king the marks of the feet of the priests in the ashes, and Daniel said unto the king, "See, O king, on the ground the [marks of] the feet of men, and woman, and children." And straightway the king was wroth, and he slew the priests of the gods, and their women and their children; and he gave the idol Bel to Daniel, and Daniel broke him in pieces and destroyed the temple. And there was also a great serpent which the men of Babylon used to worship. And the king said unto Daniel, "Now, thou canst not say that this serpent is not a god; do thou then worship him, for he is the Living God." And Daniel said unto the king, "I worship only the Living God, but give me authority to slay this serpent without sword or staff"; and the king said unto him, "I have given him to thee." And Daniel took bitumen, and hair, and fat, and boiled them together, and he made [the mixture] into small cakes, like bread, and he cast these into the mouth of the serpent, and it swallowed them and died. And Daniel said unto the people, "Behold the gods of the men of Babylon!" When they heard this they gathered together to the king, and they cried out, saying, "Hath the Jew Daniel become king? Behold he hath broken Bel in pieces, and hath slain the priests and the serpent." And they said unto the king, "If thou dost not give unto us this Daniel that we may kill him, we will kill thee and the men of thy house"; and the king was exceedingly sorry for Daniel. And the people seized Daniel and cast him into a den of lions, that the lions might rend him in pieces. Now there were seven lions in the den, and they used to give them each day the bodies of two men and two goats; but in these days they gave them nothing to eat, so that they might become famished and devour Daniel. And God sent an angel and he carried Habakkuk from Jerusalem, as he was carrying food for the reapers, and he laid it down in the den, in Babylon, before Daniel; and Daniel ate and was comforted by the words of Habakkuk. And at that moment the angel of God took Habakkuk back to Jerusalem. And on the seventh day the king came to the den to weep over Daniel--now he thought that Daniel was dead--and to look into the den. And the king saw Daniel sitting down, and the lions were licking his feet like cats. And the king cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Great is the God of Daniel, Who hath made the lions to be submissive to him, and so like unto cats that they lick his feet." And straightway the king commanded his servants to take Daniel up out of the den, and to seize his enemies, who had made accusations against him, and cast them into the den. And at that moment the lions devoured them before the king and before Daniel. And Daniel dwelt in the city of Babylon until the children of Israel returned to Jerusalem, that is to say, seventy years, and he died in peace. Salutation to Daniel.

And on this day also the Council of the Jews assembled in the house of Caiaphas, that they might take counsel together against our Lord.

Glory be to God Who is glorified in His Saints. Amen.

