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THE THIRD MONTH
HEDAR 13
(November 22)

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

The doctors of the Law command us on this day to make a feast in honor of the thousands of thousands of spirit beings who have no bodies, and who make intercessions for all the world, and of whom Enoch speaks, saying, “I was in the waters, and the winds and the clouds carried me up and brought me into a house which was built with a tongue of fire, and I saw there thousands of thousands.” And he also says, “I saw the children of the angels standing upon flames of fire and their apparel was as white as snow.” And Jacob says, “I saw in the mount of Bethel a ladder on the earth which reached even to the heavens, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.” And Jacob also says, when he returned from Syria, “I saw hosts of angels.” And Moses says, “Arrange the people each [tribe] on its own border, and the number of each was as the angels of God.” And Moses also says, “God came from Sinai, He appeared unto me in Seir, and with Him were His angels.” And David says, “Who makes His angels spirits, and those who minister unto Him a flame of fire.” And he also says, “The chariots of God are thousands, and the tens of thousands who rejoice.” Elijah also saw the chariots of fire and the horses of fire surrounding him like a wall. And Daniel says, “And the Ancient of Days sat, and His apparel was as white as snow, and the hair of His head was as wool. His throne was a blazing fire, and the wheels thereof were red-hot coals, and a river of fire flowed out there from. Thousands of thousands ministered unto Him, and tens of thousands stood before Him.” And Luke says, “Suddenly there came with that angel multitudes of the hosts of heaven, and they praised God, saying, Glory [be] to God in the heavens, and peace upon earth, [and] His goodwill to the children of men. Then the angels passed from them, and went up into the heavens.” And Matthew says, “And behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.” And he also says, “Then shall the Son of man come in His glory, and all His angels with Him.” And John says in the words of Jesus Christ, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye would see the heavens opening, and the angels of God ascending and descending to the Son of man.” And Judah says, “Behold, God shall come with His thousands of saints.” And the heads of the Church have enumerated the various kinds of angels thus: Angels, Archangels, Lords (Virtues), Dominions, Powers, Thrones and Principalities. Salutation to the tens of thousands of tens of thousands of angels and to the Cherubim and to the Seraphim.

And on this day also died Saint ‘Askanafer, the chief of the thirteen thieves who became Christians of His Faith. This ‘Askanafer was one of the nobles of Rome, and he gave alms to the poor and needy. Now, in those days there was a gang of thirteen robbers who destroyed the travelers whom they found on the road. When they heard the story of ‘Askanafer, and that he succored the monks, they went to him to kill him by an ambush, and to take his money. Then they dressed themselves in the garb of monks, and stood by the gate of his courtyard, and when ‘Askanafer saw them he thought that they were the Twelve Apostles, and that one of them was Christ. And he bowed low before them, and took them into his house, and he brought a table of food to them, and then he washed their feet, and he sprinkled the water on his son who was paralyzed, and had been ill for five and thirty years, and he was healed immediately. When the thieves saw this they were greatly frightened. And ‘Askanafer said unto them, “Tell me, O my fathers, which of you is Christ? Show Him to me that I may worship Him.” And when the men of the city heard that the son of the nobleman was healed, they came to him, and they bowed low before [the thieves], and they said unto them, “O saints of God, bless us and heal our sick folk.” Then the thieves took out their daggers and gave them to the nobleman, [and their chief] said unto him, “Take these knives so that thou mayest kill us even as we wished to kill thee.” And ‘Askanafer said unto them, “Ye say this that ye may abase

yourselves." And they said unto him, "God would have trodden us in the dust if we could not have boasted ourselves of thy prayer"; and after they had spoken thus they embraced him. And each of them took a few lentils in a bag, and they departed [on a journey] of twenty-five days, and they sowed the lentils in the sand, and at the time of sunset they ate three (sic) lentils. And they lived thus for thirty years, and then the Arami (i.e., desert robbers) came and killed them. Salutations to 'Askanafer who raised a paralytic from his couch and healed him. Salutation also to the thieves who fought a fight for thirty years as the result of seeing this miracle.

And on this day also died the holy father Abba Timothy, Bishop of the city of Ensenia. This holy man was righteous and chaste from his youth, and he fought a great fight in working righteousness. And the governor of the city seized him because of his faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and because he taught His own True Faith to men, and he tortured him with severe tortures for many days, and he shut him up in the prison house, and he tortured him continually during a period of three years. And there were with him in the prison house many saints who were bound in fetters for the Faith. And that infidel governor had them brought out of the prison house, and he tortured them, and he poured out their holy blood until at length only a very few prisoners remained in the prison house, and among these was this holy man Timothy. At that time God blotted out the Emperor Diocletian, the infidel, and the God-loving Emperor Constantine reigned. And an Edict came from him into every country ordering that those who were believers on Christ should be brought out of the prisons, and they brought out from the prison house this holy man among those who were released. And this holy man departed to his house, and he gathered together the monks and the priests who were in his diocese, and he made a long prayer [which lasted] from evening to daybreak wherein he entreated God for the salvation of the soul of that governor who had tortured him, and he prayed thus: "O Lord, have mercy upon that governor, for it is he who hath brought me great good, and who hath been the means of bringing me nigh unto Thee, O my Lord. In the same manner, O Lord, do Thou work upon him so that he may believe in Thee, and may come to Thee," And the people marveled at the simplicity (or innocence) of heart of this father, and they told the governor, saying, "Abba Timothy is praying to God for thee that He may have mercy upon thee, and may deliver thy soul." When the governor heard this thing he marveled exceedingly, and he said, "I should have thought that he would curse me rather because of the punishments which I have inflicted upon him, and he obtained from him knowledge of the Law of the Christians, and this father revealed to him the causes of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and how the prophets spoke concerning Him in the beginning, many years ago, and how their prophecies were fulfilled, and how the matter concerning Him is written in the Holy Gospel. And the governor believed on our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ through this holy man, and he baptized him with holy Christian Baptism. And the governor forsook his office, and became a monk, and was numbered among the folk of this father. And during the remainder of his days this father continued to teach his flock at all times, and to confirm them in the Orthodox Faith, and he died in the peace of God. Salutation to Timothy.

And on this day died the holy father Zachariah, the sixty-fourth Archbishop of the city of Alexandria. He was a native of the city of Alexandria, and was a priest therein, and he was steward of all the property of the Church. And he was chaste in his striving, and a virgin in body, and gentle in disposition, and an old man in his days. When Archbishop Philotheus died, the bishops assembled in order to elect with the counsel of God the man who was fit for this office. And as they were all gathered together in the church of Saint Mark, the evangelist and apostle, and discussing together who was the most suitable man for this office, behold, they heard that a certain man had obtained from the emperor a letter by bribery, and that he had with him slaves and soldiers from the emperor who were going to appoint him archbishop against the wishes of the bishops. And the bishops were sorry that an archbishop should be appointed by bribery, and by the transgression of the Canon and commandment of the Apostles, and they prayed continually and entreated God, the Glorious and Most High, to appoint him whom they had chosen. And as they were praying to God behold this father came down

the stairs of the roof of the church, and he had in his hand a vessel of acid (vinegar ?), and as he was coming down his foot slipped, and he fell from the top of the roof-stairs to the bottom. And he lifted himself up still holding in his hand the vessel, which was unbroken, and the acid was unspilled. When the bishops and the priests saw this they marveled exceedingly. And the people of the city of Alexandria enquired concerning this holy man Abba Zachariah, and they talked about his virtues and his righteousness, and all the men of the city of Alexandria agreed with the bishops about the appointment of this holy man as archbishop, and they enthroned him. And during the days of his rule great tribulation came upon him, and he sorrowed greatly through the King of Egypt, Hakam, that is to say the governor. In those days there came unto him a certain monk from the monastery of Abba Macarius, and he said unto him, "Make me a bishop." And Abba Zachariah said unto him, "Have patience, O my son, and do not transgress the command of the Canon of the Apostles, but return to thy monastery, and fight for the salvation of thy soul, and God's Will shall be done." When the monk heard these words he became full of rage, and Satan entered into his heart, and he went to the King of Egypt, that is to say the governor, and made to him false accusations against Saint Abba Zachariah. And the king seized the holy man and shut him up in prison, and then he cast him to the lions so that they might rend him, but the lions would not go near him at all. And the king was wroth with the keeper of the lions, and he thought that he had taken a bribe from the archbishop. Then the king starved the lions, and took some of the blood of an ox and smeared the archbishop therewith, and threw him to the lions to eat; but they would not go near him at all; and the king marveled at this thing, and he took the archbishop from among the lions. Then he shut him up in prison for three months, and he was always saying unto him, "If thou dost not forsake the Christian Faith, and if thou dost not enter my own faith, I will punish thee, and will kill thee with the sword, and will cast thee again to the lions, and if I do not that I will cast thee into the fire." But Saint Abba Zachariah was strong in the True Faith, and he was not in any way afraid of him. Then the king made him many promises, and said unto him, "If thou wilt hearken unto my command, and wilt enter my faith, I will give thee much money, and I will appoint thee judge over every judge." But he did not listen to him in the least degree, and he did not turn aside from the least of the good works, which he was wont to do, and he answered and said unto him, "If thou wert to give me all the kingdom of this world, I would not forsake the True Faith." After this the king shut him up in prison for a few days, and then he released him from the prison house. And when Saint Zachariah came forth from the prison house he departed to the desert of Scete, and very many bishops went with him through fear of the governor. And in those days the king commanded [his people] to destroy all the churches in the countries under his dominion. And he made very many Christians to forsake their Faith after he had tortured them with very severe tortures; and the Christian peoples lived in this state of tribulation of nine years, and during this period of nine years [the Muslims] destroyed the churches. At the end of nine years Christ had compassion on his people, and He turned away his wrath from them, and He removed from them all this tribulation. And the king, that is to say, governor, commanded [the Christians] to build churches everywhere in the countries under his dominion, and he gave back to them all the goods and money which he had taken from them, and the lands which were endowments of the Church; and all the churches were built, or rebuilt and restored with more than their former splendor. And this father Abba Zachariah built many churches, and the king, that is to say, governor, commanded the Christians to blow a trumpet in the churches, and to rejoice at their times of prayer and when they celebrated the Holy Eucharist. And the Christians lived in great happiness under the right observance of the Law of the Church and of believers, and this father continued to build and to endow churches for twelve years. One day a bishop whose name was Mercurius came to him, and his body was leprous. And Abba Zachariah said unto him gently and with kindness of heart, "O my brother, Abba Mercurius, I will help thee because of this disease which hath come upon thee. And thou knowest that God said unto Moses, 'Thou shalt accept the person of no man in respect of right judgment.' The priesthood is not fitting for thee whilst this disease is upon thee, unless God shall remove this disease from thee, for the Book calls it unclean." And Mercurius the bishop wept and said unto him, "O my father, help me by

thy prayer"; and he went away from him, and departed and went into the church of our Lady, the holy Virgin Mary, which was in his diocese, and he stood up before the picture of our Lady Mary, and he wept, and prayed and entreated and made supplication to her to cleanse him from this disease. And he did this from the morning of the Second Day until the ninth hour of the Fourth Day of the week; he invoked [the Virgin] and he prayed by day and by night. And at the ninth hour, being weary, he rested his head against the wall whereon was the image of our Lady Mary, and he saw the hand of the image rubbing his body. And he awoke straightway, and he found that his body was cleansed of the leprosy, and he rejoiced with a great joy; and he praised our Lord Jesus Christ, and gave thanks to our Lady, the holy Virgin Mary. And straightway his disciple came to him, and he said unto him, "Come, O my son, and look at my body, for behold our Lady Mary hath healed me of my disease by her prayers, and it befits me to stay in this place for three days in order to thank my Lord Christ for the gracious gift which He hath bestowed upon me." Then he ate a little bread, and drank a little water, and he remained in that church until the beginning of the Sabbath. Then he rose up and went to the Archbishop Abba Zachariah when he was in the church on the First Day of the week and informed him of what had happened to him, and he said unto him, "It hath all happened through thy prayer." And Saint Abba Zachariah answered and said unto him, "God hath looked upon thy pure heart and thy humility, and hath cleansed thee from thy disease, and hath received thy prayer, and thy tears. And now it is meet for thee to consecrate the Holy Mysteries, and to administer them to us so that we may be blessed by the grace which thou hast received." And when the Holy Eucharist had been administered, all those who were in the church were blessed thereby, and they marveled exceedingly at this miracle, and they glorified God the Worker of wonders. On another occasion a certain deacon came to Saint Abba Zachariah the archbishop, and he bowed down before him weeping abundantly, and he kissed his feet and said unto him, "Have compassion upon me, O my lord, for I have gone astray and have fallen into sin, and straightway all my body hath become leprous." And Abba Zachariah said unto him, "O my son, art thou able to persevere in fasting before our Lord Jesus Christ?" And the deacon said unto him, "Yea, O my father, command me to do whatsoever thou wishes, and I will do (it)." And straightway the archbishop brought him into a dark chamber, by him, and he stood there and turned his face to the east, and he said unto the deacon, "O my son, pray to God, and entreat Him with tears by day and by night without ceasing, and repent, and return not to [thy] sins." And after three days and three nights Abba Zachariah gave him a little bread by measure and a little water, and Abba Zachariah ate and drank in the same manner. And after fifteen days Abba Zachariah visited him and said unto him, "Be not afraid." And after one month was ended Abba Zachariah visited him, and uncovered his body, and he saw that the leprosy was diminishing on his body; and he said unto him, "Be not afraid." And after four days he visited him again, and he found that his body was free from leprosy, and he washed him with water and anointed him with oil. And he prayed over him and said unto him, "O my son, know thyself. Behold, thou art healed of thy disease; commit sin no more." And the archbishop sent him away to his house rejoicing and praising God. And God wrought very many signs and wonders by the hand of this Saint, Archbishop Abba Zachariah. Now he [lived] in the sixth hundred and ninety-first year of the Holy Martyrs (i.e. A.D. 975). He sat as archbishop eight and twenty years; of that period he passed seven years in rest and peace, nine years in tribulation, and twelve years in joy and in building churches. And he departed to God and died in peace, and entered into the kingdom of heaven. Salutation to Abba Zachariah who succeeded Philotheus, and whom the lions refused to eat.

And on this day also are commemorated Lestelia, and Mekrona, and Mariana, and Philopator, and 'Abrani, and the Emperor Honorius.

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