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THE SEVENTH MONTH
MEGABIT 19
(March 28)

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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 Saint Aristobulus, the preacher and apostle and disciple of Saint Paul the Apostle. This holy man was one of the two and seventy disciples whom our Lord chose before His Passion, and sent forth to preach the Gospel, and on whom the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, descended; and grace and power were with the Apostles on the festival of Pentecost. And he went with the Apostles, and ministered unto them, and he preached with them the Holy and Life-giving Gospel, and he turned many into the path of salvation, and brought them into the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; and he baptized them with Christian baptism, and saved their souls by giving unto them the divine commandments. And the Apostles made this holy man Bishop of the city of ‘Abratabias, and he went and preached therein, and he converted many of the men thereof to the knowledge of God; and he brought them into the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he performed many miracles before them. And tribulation arose through the Jews and the Greeks, and they drove him away for a very long time, and they stoned him with stones. And having finished his course nobly and faithfully he died in peace; and behold Paul, the Apostle, mentioneth him in his Epistle to the Romans (chapter xvi, verse 10).

And on this day also are commemorated the following martyrs: Alexander the Egyptian, and Alexander and Agabius from the city of Gaza, and ‘Amilas from the city of Bunitos, and Dionysius from the city of Tripolis, and Ramelos and Thalasius from the vineyards of Egypt. These seven men made a pact together in Messianic love, and they came to the governor of the country of Caesarea of the Philistines, and they confessed our Lord Jesus Christ before him, in the days of the infidel Diocletian, and he tortured them with severe tortures, and they received crowns of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens.

And on this day also died Saint ‘Askenafer, and his wife Martha, and his sons Arcadius and John. This ‘Askenafer had many possessions, and much riches, and he was a keeper of the Law of God, and he brought up his sons with spiritual admonitions. When they were grown up he sent them to the city, which is called Tayrut in order to learn wisdom and discipline. When they had finished their education he sent a message ordering them to be brought to him, so that he might rejoice in their progress. And as they were sailing on the river, their ship was wrecked, and God having saved them from drowning, a wave cast up John at a certain spot, and Arcadius at another. Having lost all hope, John went to a monastery, and became a monk, and he wasted his body by fasting and prayer for the sake of his brother Arcadius, whom he believed to be dead; and Arcadius also wept because he thought that his brother John was dead. And John appeared unto him in a dream, and told him that he was alive. And Arcadius went to the holy places, and he journeyed to the desert where John was, and became a monk under a holy elder, and he remained striving in the ascetic life for three years. When “Askenafer heard of the death of his sons, he and his wife put on sackcloth, and strewed ashes over themselves. One night ‘Askenafer had a vision in which he saw John, and he had a crown of jewels on his head, and a cross in his hand; and he saw Arcadius also who had upon his head a crown in the form of a star. And having risen up, he told the visions to his wife, and he said unto her, “Come, let us go into the sanctuary, so that we may enquire for news of our sons”; and when they had gone into the sanctuary they prayed. And they went to the Jordan, in the monastery of John the Baptist, and they found the elder who had received Arcadius their son as a monk, and they fell down at his feet and told him their trouble. And he said unto them, “Sorrow not, O ye beloved of our Lord Christ, when ye return to the sanctuary ye will find your sons”; and they turned away rejoicing. And John came to worship at the feast of the Cross, and the elder called John, and made him to meet Arcadius his brother; and then they embraced each other and wept. And again the elder called ‘Askenafer, and made him to meet his sons, and ‘Askenafer and his wife wept over Arcadius and John, and kissed them. And

‘Askenafer assumed the monastic garb with that elder, and he made his wife to enter a house of women, and he set free his slaves, and distributed his possessions among the poor. Then he put on sackcloth made of hair, and he went out into the desert and [lived there] in fasting and prayer. And he, and his blessed sons, and his wife Martha died in peace.

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