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THE SIXTH MONTH
YEKATIT 08
(February 15)

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

On this day took place the coming of our Lord Christ into the sanctuary (i.e. temple). Forty days after His glorious birth Joseph, the just man, who was the messenger of this mystery, and Saint Mary, His mother, brought Him, that they might fulfill the Law with which He, to Whom be glory! had commanded the people of Israel, and to offer up offerings as the Law ordered. And this Simeon, the priest, was a righteous man, and he carried Him upon his shoulders and held Him up in his hands. And when King Ptolemy, who was called the “Conqueror,” was reigning in the five thousand nine hundred and fourth year (?) of our father Adam, and the Jewish people were under his dominion, by the Will of God he sent to the city of Jerusalem, and brought [to Alexandria] seventy-[two] learned Jewish Rabbis, and he commanded them to translate the Books of the Law from the Hebrew tongue into the Greek tongue. And this look place by the Will of God so that the Law might depart from the Jews, and come to the Christian people who were to appear after many years. And then the king commanded his officers to separate them into pairs and to put each pair in a separate place; now they were seventy-two [in number], and he lodged them in thirty-six tents. And he set men over them to watch them, and to see that they did not met each other, or make an agreement about what they were going to write, or change one word of the Law, for it is very well known that the Jews are wicked men. And when this Simeon, the just man, had translated all the Books of the Law, he came to the Book of Isaiah the prophet, who saith, “Behold a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel” (Isaiah vii, 14). And he was afraid to write “a virgin shall conceive,” and said, “The king will laugh at him (i.e. the prophet), and will not accept his word.” And he determined to change the word of the Law as it was written, and instead of writing the word “virgin” he wrote “young girl.” And then he had doubts within himself, and he said, “This is impossible--for a virgin to conceive and to bring forth a son”; and whilst he was thinking upon the matter slumber overcame him and he fell asleep. And the angel of God appeared unto him, and said unto him, “O thou who doubttest this thing, thou shalt not taste death until thou hast seen the Christ, Who shall be born of a virgin, and hast carried Him into the sanctuary, as it might be this day. And the eyes of Simeon were blind, and when he received our Lord Christ into his hands, his eyes were opened, and he saw straightway. And the Holy Spirit spoke unto him, saying, “This is He for Whom thou wast waiting.” And Simeon blessed God, and said, “O Lord dismiss Thy servant in peace, for I have remained bound in the life of this fleeting world for Thy sake. Behold, I have come and have seen Thee; dismiss me that I may depart into everlasting life. Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before all Thy people. Thou hast revealed the light to the Gentiles, and glory to Thy people Israel” (Luke ii, 29). And then he said unto His mother Mary, “This thy Son is set for the falling and the rising of many of the children of Israel,” that is to say, “For the falling of those who do not believe in Him, and for the rising of those who do believe in Him.” And then he made known unto her that suffering and separation would enter her heart at the time of His Passion, and he said, “The spear of separation which shall be in thy heart shall pass through it.” And when he had finished what the Law had commanded him, he died in peace. And Hannah the prophetess, the daughter of Penuel, whom the Holy Gospel mentioneth, also prophesied concerning Him, and she praised God, and told the orthodox among the children of Israel that He was the Savior Who should deliver them from the works of Satan, and from the fetters of Sheol. Salutation to Thy coming to Jerusalem and Thy reception by Simeon, and to Hannah. Salutation to Simeon who embraced our Lord and kissed His hand.

And on this day also died Hannah the prophetess, the daughter of Penuel. This woman was of the tribe of Asher, and her days [for bearing] were passed, and she had lived with her husband for seven years, and had been a virgin for four and eighty winters; and she never left the temple, and she fasted and prayed all day and all night. And when they brought the Lord Jesus into the sanctuary forty days after He was born, she stood up before Him, and gave thanks to God, and she spoke about Him to all those who waited for the salvation of Jerusalem; and then she died at a good old age. Salutation to Hannah.

And on this day also died the lady ‘Ammata Krestos, and her two handmaidens. This holy woman was of the people of the city of Constantinople, and she had a husband, who was in the Imperial Government, and he died in the days of his early manhood, and left her a widow, when her days were twelve years. And after a few days a certain man, who was one of the emperor’s nobles, wanted to take her by force, and she made an excuse to him, saying, “I am sick with a severe sickness, wait for me until I recover.” And then she distributed all her money among the poor and needy, and set free her slaves, and taking two of her handmaidens with her, she went forth by night, without knowing [whither to go]. And she went into a rock, which was under a high hill, and dwelt there for twelve years, and each day the birds brought regularly to her various kinds of fruits. And in the days of the Emperor Constantine one of the historians saith, “I went towards the East in order that I might bring a certain piece of work to an end, and I arrived at a monastery, and the abbot and the monks received me, and I saluted them, and we sat down. And there were there all kinds of trees full of fruit, and I saw birds carrying off branches with their fruit on them, and they flew away with them quickly, and did not eat thereof; and having seen this I marveled, and I said unto the monks, ‘What is this thing?’ And they said unto me, ‘They have been doing this for eleven years, and we know not what becometh [of the fruit].’ And I said unto them, ‘It seemeth to me that the birds carry this fruit to the monks who are in the mountains.’” And as I was saying this a raven came, and taking a branch covered with fruit flew away. And I followed it, together with the abbot and the monks, so that we might know what the raven did with the fruit, and when the bird alighted in a ravine it dropped the branch and returned. And when we came to this place we threw a stone, and we heard a voice, saying, ‘If ye be Christians do not kill us.’ And we said unto them, ‘Who are ye?’ And they said unto us, ‘If ye wish to see our faces throw us down three garments, for we are naked.’ And we threw down garments to them, and we went down to them by means of a very narrow mountain path, and when we came there three women received us, and they bowed to us, and we bowed to them. And one of them sat down, and the other stood up before her. And the abbot said unto her, ‘Whence art thou, O my mother, my lady, and how dost thou come to be here?’ And she told him all her story, from the beginning even unto the end thereof. And the abbot said unto her, ‘If thou wishest we will fetch food from the monastery, and we will partake of it with thee.’ And she said unto him, ‘O my father, command [thy servants] to bring hither a priest with the Offering, so that we may partake of the Holy Mysteries of Christ the Vivifier; but since thou wilt have gone forth thou wilt not partake of the Offering with us.’ And the abbot commanded his servants to bring a priest with the Offering, and she and her handmaidens partook of the Holy Mysteries. And on the following day she prayed and delivered up her soul into the hand of God, and her handmaidens died with her, one after the other. And the monks wrapped them in cloths and buried them with psalms and hymns.” Salutation to the three women who bore the hardships of the desert naked.

And on this day also died Abba Elias of the desert of Scete, the great elder whose works were most excellent. When the righteous Emperor Theodosius sent to the desert of Scete a letter asking the monks to send to him an elder monk of excellent works so that he might comfort him with his words, they sent this holy man, and they wrote a letter by the hand of another monk, saying, “Behold we have sent unto thee a holy man who is called ‘Elias,’ the counterpart of Elias, the prophet,” And when Elias arrived, the Emperor Theodosius said unto the elder, “The monks have sent to me a letter saying that thy spiritual strife resembleth that of Elias the prophet.” And the elder said unto him with humility and meekness, “O righteous Emperor, forgive me. Every man is known by his ability (or, natural disposition). And as for the strife of Elias, because of his righteousness a raven used to bring him his food, whereas so far as I am concerned, I have all the food which I

require. If I laid my bread out in the sun, a raven would come and carry it off.” When the emperor heard this he marveled at the savor of his words, and he said unto him, “Tell me, O my father, why God did not give unto thee a son?” And the elder said, “Because the days will come when there shall arise on the earth division in respect of the Faith. For this reason, God hath not given unto me a son, so that he might never mingle with those who doubt (or the ‘dividers’).” And the emperor wished to give him money, but he would not take it, and he turned back to his abode, and it is said of him, that he did not eat food until he returned to his cell; and he died in peace. Salutation to Elias [of Scete].

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