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THE ELEVENTH MONTH

Hamle 20

(July 27)

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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 the holy and honorable Theodore the Great, the General, became a martyr. The name of the father of this saint was “John” and he was a man from the city of Sebt in Upper Egypt, and the governor took the father of this saint with his regiment and carried him to the city of Antioch. And John dwelt there, and married a certain noble lady of that city who was a worshipper of idols, (now she did not know whom her husband John worshipped) and he begot by her this Saint Theodore. And when his mother wanted to present him in the house of idols, and to teach him their worship, his father would not let her do so; and because of this she was angry with him, and drove him away from her, and the child Theodore was left with his mother. And his father John prayed, and entreated God to guide his son Theodore into the path of righteousness. And Saint Theodore grew up, and studied philosophy, and [other] learning, and Christ illumined the eyes of his heart; and he went to a righteous bishop, whose name was ‘Alakes, who baptized him with Christian baptism. And when his mother heard of this she sorrowed with a great sorrow. And after this he made enquiries concerning his father, as to whether he was alive or dead, and one of his servants told him the matter concerning his father privily, and how his mother had driven away his father, because he was a Christian. And Saint Theodore grew up, and was exceedingly strong in battle, and the king made him a general. And when the king went forth to fight against the men of Persia, this saint did valiantly, and he captured the son of the King of Persia, who was on his horse, and all his company with him. And after a few days the Barbarians rose up against the country of Rome, and destroyed many cities. And when the Emperor Diocletian heard of this he was exceedingly afraid, and he summoned Theodore and said unto him, “What shall we do? Take with thee all thy soldiers, and all thy weapons of war, and set out for the war.” And Saint Theodore answered and said unto him, “Take thy weapons of war and give them to thy slaves, for I have no need of weapons of war, because my trust is in the help of my Lord Jesus Christ. This spear, which is in my hand, and the horse, which I ride, are profitable to me through the might of my Lord Jesus Christ. I will set out alone for the war, and will not take a soldier with me, for my God will go forth with me to the war, and He, the Creator of the universe, will help me.” And the emperor said unto him, “Do what thou pleasest, but behold, our enemies have drawn nigh.” And on the following day the saint went forth to war, and the emperor said unto him, “What strength hast thou to fight against the Barbarians, who are a people many in number?” And the saint answered and said unto him, “Stand here with thy army, and I will go out against them alone, and thou shalt see what shall come upon them, and I believe, by God, that not one of them shall ever return to his house”; and the emperor and all those who were with him marveled. And then Saint Theodore went to the war by himself, and he left the emperor and went a long way off from him, namely a distance of three stadia. And when Saint Theodore arrived at the city (camp?) of the Barbarians, he said unto them, “Will ye fight, or will ye depart in peace?” And they said unto him, “Who are we to fight? We do not see any men to fight except thyself.” And Theodore said unto them, “I want no one, for I by myself in the might of my God will destroy you all.” And the Barbarians said unto him, “Peradventure thou hast come out to fight a dog? If thou wilt select the least among us, he shall come to thee, and fight thee.” And straightway Saint Theodore came down from his horse, and turned his face towards the East, and he prayed, saying, “O my Lord and God, Who didst strengthen Daniel the prophet, and enable him to destroy the idols, and to kill the serpent in the city of Babylon, do Thou be with me in the same manner this day, and strengthen me by Thy help so that I may praise Thy Name for ever and ever, Amen.” And when he had finished his prayer he took his spear in his hand, and made over it the sign of the Cross, and he leaped upon his horse, and cried out to the Barbarians, saying, “Come to me so that we may fight with you; I am the servant of my Lord Jesus Christ.” And straightway he charged in among them with his spear in his hand, and he destroyed all the Barbarians and not one of

them escaped, either on his horse, or by running away on foot. And Saint Theodore cut off the heads of their officers and brought them to the emperor with him, and the emperor and all his army welcomed him; and all the men of the city of Antioch bowed down before him. And they laid waste all the country of the Barbarians. And there was in the city of ‘Eukitos a great serpent which the people used to worship, and they gave it each day two men to devour. And there was in that city a certain woman, who was a widow and a Christian, and she had two sons, and the people took them and set them before the serpent for it to devour them. And at that time Saint Theodore came to the city of ‘Eukitos, and the widow stood up before him weeping, and she told him all that had befallen her, and how they had taken her sons for the serpent. And when he learned that the woman was a Christian he said within himself, “They have wronged this woman, but God shall avenge her.” And he came down from his horse, and turned his face towards the East and prayed, and after he had finished his prayer he drew nigh the serpent; and all the people were watching him from the tops of the walls of the city. Now the length of the serpent was fourteen cubits, but God gave him power over it, and he speared it with his spear and killed it, and delivered the sons of the widow. After this he departed into Upper Egypt to search for his father, and he asked about him, and they brought his father to him, and he knew by a certain mark that Theodore was his son. And he lived with his father until he died, and then he returned to the city of Antioch. And he found that the Emperor Diocletian was denying Christ, and worshipping idols, and was bringing tribulation upon the Christian folk, who believed on the Name of Christ; and he stood up before him and confessed our Lord Christ. Now the priests of the idols of the men of the city of ‘Eukitos had already laid information against him before the emperor, saying, “The man who killed the serpent worships [Christ].” And on the morrow the emperor sent, and had Theodore brought before him, and he said unto him, “Who dost thou do this evil thing?” And Saint Theodore answered and said unto him, “Every evil work is from thee, O son of sin, who hast forsaken the God of heaven, and dost worship unclean idols; God shall destroy thy kingdom quickly.” And straightway the emperor was wroth, and he commanded a hundred soldiers and they threw Theodore upon the ground, and beat him with rods in relays. And they beat him and then rested, and at length his flesh was cut into strips and his blood flowed on the ground like water. And whilst he was under this torture Michael, and angel of God, came down and stood before him, and said unto him, “Be strong, O Theodore, behold the time of the hours of thy fight hath drawn nigh, and many signs and wonders shall appear in the place where thy body is laid. And behold, our Lord Jesus Christ promiseth thee a righteous promise, and saith unto thee. ‘All those who shall celebrate thy commemoration, or fill the hungry with good, or give alms on the day of thy commemoration, or give drink to the thirsty, or shall give an offering or incense, or a book to the church in thy name, I will erase their sins from the roll, and they shall never see punishment. Whosoever shall write a book of thy fight, or cause it to be read, or shall listen to it, or shall acquire it, I will write their names in the Book of Life.’” And when the angel had said this he went up to heaven in great glory. And straightway all the soldiers of the emperor and all the people gathered together, and they cried out and said unto him, “God shall destroy thee, O infidel, by the spirit of His mouth, and He shall do it in wrath because thou dost torture Saint Theodore, the mighty and strong man, who hath delivered us out of the hand of our enemies.” And they believed on our Lord Jesus Christ, and on that day many of the people and of the soldiers of the emperor became martyrs. And after this Diocletian, the infidel, commanded the soldiers and they brought an iron bed and laid the saint upon it, and lighted a fire beneath it, and the flames of the fire soared upwards. And Saint Theodore said, “O my Lord, deliver Thou me as Thou didst deliver the Three Children from the fiery furnace”; and straightway the fire was extinguished, and it became cold as dew at the time of dawn. And there came a voice from heaven, saying, “O thou to whom power hath been given by our Lord Christ, be strong!” And straightway the saint stood up before the emperor and said unto him, “O infidel, be ashamed, for our Lord Jesus Christ hath delivered me from all torture.” And when the general of the emperor saw this he believed in our Lord Christ, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying, “There is no god but the God of Saint Theodore”; and he became a martyr. And when the emperor was tired of torturing him, he commanded the soldiers to cut off his head with the sword, and to burn his body in the fire, and by the Will of God they carried him to the door of his

mother's house, and there they cut off his head, and blood and milk flowed out. And they lighted a large fire, and cast his body into it, but the fire neither touched it nor burnt a hair of his head. And his mother gave much money to the soldiers, and took his body and wrapped it up in rich cloths, and hid it in her house until the end of the days of persecution. And they built for him a church and many monasteries, and they laid his body in the monastery of his father's city Sebt in Upper Egypt, and many signs and wonders and great healings took place through it. The end of his martyrdom took place on the twentieth day of the month of Hamle, and he received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. Salutation to Theodore.

Salutation to the purification of Hanna, the mother of Mary.

And on this day also are commemorated Saint Theocytus, and Saint Timothy, Archbishop of Alexandria, and Moses, and Julitta, and the four hundred and forty martyrs who were with Cyriacus.

Salutation to Gabra Iyasus and to Thekla.

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