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THE TENTH MONTH

Senne 05

(June 12)

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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 holy father Abba Jacob, from the East. This holy confessor became an ascetic, and fought the fight of God in one of the monasteries of the East, in the days of Constantine, the son of Constantine the Great, and in the days of Julian the infidel, and in the days of Walentos, the believer. When Walentos was killed, Wales (Valens), his brother, reigned in his stead; now he was an Arian, and he commanded, and also closed the churches of the True Faith, and at length the men of the True Faith entered the evil Faith. Now this Edict came into all the country of his dominions. And by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the heart of this holy man waxed hot, and he rose up and went to the city of Constantinople, and he found the emperor ready to set out on an expedition to fight his enemies who had risen up against him in the region of the West. And this saint stood up before him, and said unto him, "I ask thee to open the churches to the believers, that they may pray for thee, and then God shall help thee against thine enemies; but if thou wilt not do this behold God shall cast thee away, and thou shalt flee before thine enemies." And the emperor was wroth, and commanded the soldiers to beat him and to bind him in prison. And the saint said unto him, "Know that thou shalt flee before thine enemies, and thou shalt die in a blazing fire." And the emperor delivered him over to one who was to keep him under guard until he should return in safety, as he expected. And Saint Jacob said unto him, "If thou returnest in safety, then hath not God spoken by my mouth"; when the holy man said this they took him, and beat him, and bound him in prison, and the emperor departed to fight against his enemies. And as he stood up with his soldiers facing his enemies, the Son of God the Creator, Who is equal with God His Father, Whom he had denied, and he had also helped the followers of Arius in their prayers, cast him away, and he fled from before his enemies. And they pursued him until he came to a certain village, which they set on fire, and his men fled, and he was left behind, and he and all those who believed the evil Faith were burned in the fire. And all those of his soldiers who were left turned and fled to the city of Constantinople; and they told the believers this good news, and thus the prophecy of the holy man was fulfilled. And the believers assembled, and brought this saint out of prison with great honor, and both the believers and the unbelievers knew that the divine grace and the spirit of prophecy dwelt on this saint. And many of the Arians turned to the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they bowed down at the feet of the saint, and they confessed that the Son of God is equal with the Father in His Godhead. And after this the holy father lived as he had done before in devotion to the ascetic life, and in fighting the spiritual fight; and he died in peace and received the crown of everlasting life. Salutation to Jacob from the East.

And on this day Abba 'Ebsoy, the fighter, became a martyr. This chosen man and fighter had Christian parents, and they served our Lord Christ, and kept His commandments; the name of his father, who was from Antioch, and was governor of Kaw in Upper Egypt, was "Tagestas," and the name of his mother was "Karisa." They lived for sixteen years, having no son, and they were very sad because of this. One night a shining man appeared unto Tagestas, and said unto him, "Peace be unto thee, O lover of God, behold thy prayer hath been heard by God. And behold thy wife shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name 'Ebsoy.' And he shall be a chosen vessel of God, and shall be a witness (i.e. martyr) of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he shall be a great martyr, and shall suffer much torture, and shall receive the crown of life"; and Tagestas told his wife what he had seen. And after a few days, she conceived, and bore a son on the fourth day of the month of Miyazy, and she brought him up in the knowledge, and wisdom, and the fear of God. When he was six years old his parents sent him away to the country of 'Akmim and they gave him to a certain teacher, an elder, whose name was Joseph; and he dwelt there and, with his brother Peter, devoted himself to fasting and prayer, and he performed signs and wonders. When he was sixteen years old, the governor of Upper Egypt came to the city of

Kaw, and he persecuted and killed many believers. Then certain evil men came and informed against these saints Abba ‘Ebsoy, and Abba Peter, saying to the governor, “They are deacons who do not submit to thy words, and they refuse to worship the gods.” And straightway the governor commanded his soldiers to bring them and set them [before him], and he questioned them about all their affairs; and having heard their words he commanded them to shut them up in prison. After three months, the angel of God appeared unto them and said, “I am Gabriel, the announcer of glad tidings. God hath sent me to you to tell you that your memorial shall endure forever. As for thee, my beloved ‘Ebsoy, a great conflict awaiteth thee. They shall take thee to the city of Alexandria, and thence to Antioch, and there thou shalt finish thy testimony.” After this the governor brought him out of prison, and urged him to worship idols, and when the saint refused to do so, he ordered the soldiers to put him upon the henbaz, and they crushed him severely; and then the Archangel Gabriel descended and smashed the henbaz, and touched his flesh and healed him. Then the emperor cast him into prison, where he healed many. Then the governor commanded them to bring him out of prison and to fetter him in the hold of the ship, and they tied iron chains about his neck, and put irons on his hands and feet, and they gave him no bread; in this state he remained for ten days. On the following day they brought him out, and set him before the governor, who said unto him, “Worship the gods,” and when he refused to do so the governor ordered them to torture him. And they mounted Abba ‘Ebsoy upon the henbaz, and they crushed him until his blood flowed like water; and then they shut him up in prison. Whilst he was there the Archangel Gabriel again appeared unto him and said, “Be strong, ‘Ebsoy, O chosen one of God, and fear not, for I will be with thee until thou finishest thy contest.” After this they brought him to the city of Alexandria, to Diocletian, the governor, and he also questioned him about his case; and he commanded the soldiers to beat him until his members fell upon the ground. And after this they boiled pitch over the fire, and poured it into his ears and mouth, and throat (?), and the governor commanded them also to light torches and to burn his sides therewith. And he also commanded them to bring red-hot borers and to thrust them into his eyes, and also to pluck out the nails of his hands and feet, and to tear out his bowels; and they did even so. And straightway the Archangel Gabriel came and touched his limbs, and healed him. Then they brought him before Diocletian, and he also tortured him with fire, and [boiling] pitch, and sulfur, and vine-wood; and then the Archangel Gabriel delivered him. And the governor also commanded them to cast him into the sea, with a large stone fastened to his neck with an iron chain. And they rolled the stone down into the sea, and the stone, which was tied to his neck, dragged down one-half of his body, and the half of his body, which was not submerged, they tied to the top of a high pillar which they set up on the sea-shore; and they left him there to suffer this torture until the sixth hour of the day. And after this the angel of God came down and made his sides whole as before. When the emperor saw this he marveled, and he said unto the headsman, “Make haste and cut off his head”; and straightway he cut off his head, which he made to fall on the seashore. And he took his body, and his head, and threw them into a skin, and his head joined to his body, and it became as if it had never been cut off; and the skin set off by itself, no man carrying it, and after ten days it arrived at the city of Alexandria. And when the men of the city of Boha heard of this, they came and brought him to his house in the city of Boha, and they buried him with Peter his brother. Salutation to Abba ‘Ebsoy of the city of Boha.

And on this day also Saint Bifamon became a martyr. This holy man was the son of the brother of the father of John of Harakli, and he helped him and ministered unto him whilst he was in prison. When John finished his martyrdom, he prepared him for burial, and he wept over his dead body, saying, “Why hath he left me alone, a stranger to the grace of God?” And a voice went forth from the body of John, saying, “O my beloved Bifamon, if thou wishest to depart with me, go quickly to the governor, and confess Christ, and tomorrow morning thou wilt come to me.” And Bifamon ran and reviled Arianus, and cursed his gods, and after the governor had tortured him severely, he cut off his head with the sword, and Bifamon received the crown of martyrdom.

And on this day also Saint Mercurius, and Feg (Aflagius), and Eblag (‘Ablawig), and Isaac, and Ablarius, became martyrs. And on this day also Saint Mark became a martyr

for Christ's Name, by drowning.

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