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**THE FOURTH MONTH
TAHISAS 14
(December 23)**

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

On this day Saint Simon, who was from the city of Upper Manuf, in the north of Egypt, became a martyr in the days of the Muslims. This holy man used to dispute with a certain Muslim Shekh, and he overcame him in argument. And that Shekh went and laid information against him before the Chief Shekh, and he said unto him, "This man hath cursed the Muslim Faith." And the Muslims seized Simon and tortured him severely, and then they cut off his head with the sword and he received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. Salutation to Simon.

And on this day also Saint Abba Behur and Abba Minas, the elder, became martyrs.

And on this day also Saint Marhamnam, and his sister Sara, and his twelve slaves became martyrs. The father of this saint was the King of Athor (Assyria), and he worshipped graven images, the names of which were Bel and Babel (sic); and his mother was a Christian. And this Saint Marhamnam asked his father for permission to go out into the desert and hunt wild beasts, and his father having given him permission he [made ready to] set out with his forty slaves, and mounted on horses, and he came to his mother [before he departed] and said unto her, "I am going to hunt wild beasts"; and his mother said, "May the Lord God of heaven and earth bless thee." And as he journeyed along he came to Mount Maklub, and he sojourned there. And during the night the angel of the Lord called to him and said unto him, "Marhamnam, Marhamnam, rise up and ascend this mountain, and thou shalt see a man whose name is Matthew, and he shall speak unto thee the word of life." And on the following day, when he had gone up into the mountain, he found Abba Matthew who was dressed in a hairy skin like a sheep; and when Marhamnam saw him he was afraid. And Saint Matthew said unto him, "Draw nigh unto me, O my son, for I am a man like thyself and the property of God." And Marhamnam said unto him, "My father, is there any other god besides the gods?" And Abba Matthew taught him the whole of the Faith of God, down to the Birth of Christ, and His Death, and His Resurrection, and the reward of the righteous and recompense of sinners. And Marhamnam said unto him, "O my father, my sister is a leper from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot, and if thou canst heal her in the Name of thy God I will believe in Him." And Abba Matthew said unto him, "Come, get thee down and I will heal her." And Saint Marhamnam in going down from the mountain left Abba Matthew on the road, and when he came to his mother he told her everything; then he took his sister and carried her to Abba Matthew. And when the saint saw them [coming] he made a long prayer to God, and smote the earth and made a mark in the form of the Cross-upon it whereupon a spring of water bubbled up, abundant as a river. And he made the brother and sister to go down into the water, and he laid his hand on their heads, and baptized them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and their forty men who were with him; and he administered to them the Holy Mysteries, and straightway his sister was healed of her leprosy. And he admonished them and strengthened them in the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and showed them how that He had accepted for their sakes all the pain and the buffeting which should have come to them, and found them, and dismissed them in peace. And when Saint Marhamnam arrived home he went to his mother, but he neither went to his father, nor to the house of the gods. When the king heard this he was wroth, and he commanded [his soldiers] to beat him, and Saint Marhamnam departed with his sister, and his soldiers, and went up into the mountain, the name of which is "Kasr" and sat down there. When his father heard this he sent his chamberlain to them with glorious apparel, and the royal crowns, and [commanded them] to say unto his son, "Take my kingdom." When Saint Marhamnam saw them he was furious with them, and he said unto

them, "I am seeking the kingdom of my Lord Jesus Christ which neither grows old nor perishes." When his father heard this he was very wroth, and he commanded his soldiers to slay his son's slaves first of all so that he might frighten his son, and make him come back to him; and if he was not afraid, and did not come back, they were to kill him and his sister. When Saint Marhamnam heard this he prayed and entreated God to give him all his desire; and a voice came, saying, "I have heard thy prayer and I have given thee thy heart's desire." And straightway the officer cut off the heads of the saints with the sword, and cast them into a pit. And they brought much wood so that they might burn the bodies of the saints with fire, but they could not find them because God had hidden them. And when the soldiers saw that the sun became dark, and the earth quaked, they were afraid and fled. And Satan entered into the heart of Sanakrem, the King of Athor (Assyria), and he cried out like the swine. When the mother of Saint Marhamnam heard that her husband was mad, she sent for Abba Matthew, and made him come, and she told him about the king. And when Abba Matthew had prayed over some oil and anointed him therewith, Satan went out of him in the form of a pig. And the king believed in the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Abba Matthew baptized him, and his wife, and all the men of his royal city. And he commanded his people to build a church in the name of our holy Lady, the Virgin Maryam, the God-bearer, and to distribute money in alms among the poor and needy, and they did as he commanded. Then the mother of Saint Marhamnam made forty coffins of costly stone, and she collected the bones of those forty soldier-martyrs, and put each [group of bones to its coffin]. And she also made two coffins of crystal for her children, and she put [their bodies] in them, and laid the coffins in the church, which she had built. And through their bodies innumerable signs and miracles took place. Salutation to Marhamnam who traversed the desert in search of the Faith of Christ. Salutation to the Forty Soldiers who suffered with Marhamnam, and to Sara his sister. Salutation to the Seventeen Thousand men of Marhamnam who fought the fight.

And on this day also are commemorated the one hundred and ninety thousand martyrs who were soldiers of the King of Athor (Assyria), the father of Saint Marhamnam. And after Senakrem, the King of Athor (Assyria), whom Abba Matthew baptized, there reigned another king who knew not God. And whilst he was in the country of the Chaldeans he heard that the King of Athor (Assyria) was dead, and that his son reigned in his stead, and that his son was not able to rule the kingdom, and that he had stewards (or administrators), who had lived in his father's days, and that they ruled his kingdom, and that his mother ruled instead of him, and that the stewards held her in subjection. Therefore he gathered together his soldiers and departed to rule over the country of Athor (Assyria). And when the men of the kingdom [of Athor (Assyria)] heard that there had come to reign over them a king who worshipped idols, they gathered together their soldiers and went out to fight [them]. And the servants of the house of Senakrem, and the servants of Marhamnam who guarded his grave, went out by themselves to fight, and when they fought the King of the Chaldeans conquered them and they fled before him. And the Chaldeans captured the city, and seized the young king and killed him, and his mother also. Than all the men of the kingdom submitted to him, and he reigned over them. And after a few days he gathered together all the men of the country of Athor (Assyria), and he questioned them concerning their Faith, and they said unto him, "We are Christians." And he commanded them to worship idols, and all the people abandoned their Faith and worshipped idols. And the servants of Saint Marhamnam and the servants of his father came, and they said boldly, "We are Christians, and the servants of Christians, and guardians of the tomb of Saint Marhamnam, a work which hath been committed to us, and we will not deny the Faith which our Lord taught us." And the king was wroth, and he commanded his soldiers to slay them all with the sword, and they slew them, and they were in number one hundred and seventy thousand, and were called the "Companions of Marhamnam".

And on this day also died Abba Gabra Krestos, the sixty-sixth Archbishop of Alexandria. In his days very many signs and wonders [took place]. And behold, he heard concerning a certain church which was built in the name of our holy Lady the Virgin Maryam, in the country of 'Andal, and that there was a withered olive tree beyond the doors thereof. And it was said that on the day of the festival of our holy Lady the Virgin Maryam, this tree

used to put forth leaves, and bear fruit, and that when the festival was ended the tree returned to its former withered state. And because of this Abba Gabra Krestos the archbishop lifted up his eyes to God, and prayed to Him to explain this miracle to him. And that night the angel of the Lord caught him up and brought him to that church, and he saw that withered tree, and after it had put forth leaves and borne fruit it returned to its former state forthwith; and he told the people what had taken place and they doubted it. And after a few days came the governor of Andalusia, a man whose name was John, and the holy father, the archbishop Abba Krestos, asked him before all the priest and people, saying, "Is it true according to what I have heard, that there is a withered olive tree by the doors of the church of our holy Lady, the Virgin Maryam, this tree puts forth leaves and bears fruit?" And the governor listened and said unto him, "It is true, my father, for I have been there on the day of the festival of our holy Lady the Virgin Maryam, and I have seen its withered state with mine own eyes. And as soon as the sun rose on the day of the festival of our Lady Mary that tree burst into leaf, and blossomed, and bore fruit, and the olives which it produced up to midday were so many that they could not be counted. And straightway the steward of the church went out and took of the fruit, and made olive oil there from, and filled the lamps of the church therewith. And the people prayed and finished the office of the Eucharist, and partook of the Holy Mysteries and departed to their districts. And after this the steward of the church and the priests went out and gathered all the fruit on the tree, and afterwards the people took some of the fruit as a 'blessing'. And the steward and the priests made the olives into oil, and there was sufficient to supply the lamps of the church and for their own consumption until the end of the year. And that same day the tree withered and its leaves dropped off." And when the people heard this they marveled at the miracle exceedingly, and they glorified God and gave thanks to our holy Lady the Virgin Maryam. And in the days of this father a certain man whose name was Cyril went to the country of Ethiopia, and made pretence to be a bishop. And he sent much money to the King of Egypt, saying, "Command thou the Archbishop, Abba Gabra Krestos, to send a messenger to appoint me bishop whilst I am in my country Ethiopia, and each year I will send thee much gold as a present." And the King of Egypt summoned Abba Gabra Krestos to him, and he said unto him, "Send a man on thy behalf to the country of Ethiopia to appoint Cyril bishop." And the archbishop answered and said unto him, "This is undesirable, unless he cometh here." And the king said unto him, "Do as I have commanded thee," and the archbishop said unto him, "Thy will shall be done." And the archbishop went forth from the king sorrowfully, and he grieved exceedingly about the matter, and he gathered together all the bishops and told them what the king had said unto him; and when they heard it they were exceedingly sorry. And the archbishop prayed and entreated God to deliver him from brotherhood with Cyril, the Liar. And Cyril took much money and fled from the country of Ethiopia and came to the country of Dahluka, and the King of Dahluka seized him and took away all [his money], and bound him in fetters and sent him to King of Egypt, who shut him up in prison for seven months and after this period cut off his head with the sword. Thus Cyril died an evil death, and God accepted the prayer of this father. And Abba Gabra Krestos sat upon the throne of Mark the Evangelist thirty years, and he pleased God and died in peace. Salutation to Gabra Krestos.

And on this day also Abba Ammonius, the Glorious, Bishop of the city of 'Asna ('Esna), became a martyr. And when Arianus [the governor] came to the city of 'Asna ('Esna) he found all the men of the city gathered together to Abba Ammonius and learning the word of the Faith; and straightway he killed them all. And he seized Abba Ammonius, and bound him, and took him to the city of 'Asna ('Esna), and he pressed him strongly to offer incense of the gods, and to worship them. And Ammonius said unto him, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. I take no pleasure in your vain and silly fables, and I will not hearken to your words, and I will not look upon your unclean gods, and I will not walk in your ruined temple, and I will neither touch your stinking incense nor your foul offerings." And when Arianus the governor saw that the mind of the saint would neither abandon [his belief] nor change, he commanded his soldiers to burn him alive. And Abba Ammonius asked the soldiers to wait a little whilst he prayed. And he stood up with his hands and feet bound, and he prayed the prayer of

the Gospel, and he blessed his city and the men thereof, and all the people who believed on Christ. And he prayed for Arianus the governor, and prophesied that he would become a martyr, and he prayed also for the release of his soul; and when he had finished his prayer they threw him into the mouth of the fire, and he finished his good contest. When the fire was extinguished they found his pure body untouched, and they swathed it for burial in costly cloths, and they buried him on the west side of the city of 'Ensna, in the fortress which Queen 'Akalu-ubaters (Cleopatra), the daughter of Ptolemy, had built, and mighty deeds and miracles innumerable were wrought through him there. Salutation to Ammonius.

And on this day also died the daughter of the Emperor of Rome, whose name was Nasahit, according to what James, Bishop of Wasim, saith concerning her: "And it came to pass one day whilst I was sitting in the church of our holy Lady, the Virgin Maryam, the God-bearer, that I heard a monk knocking at the door of the monastery, and I rose up to see who he was. And I saw that he had on an old cloak, and that his body was dried up; and his face was muffled up and covered over. And I said unto him, 'Whence comest thou, and whither goest thou?' And he said unto me, 'I have come from the monastery of Abba Macarius and I wish to pass this night in this monastery, so that I may receive the Offering'; now it was one day from the Sabbath. And I said unto him, 'I cannot open the doors to thee unless thou wilt show me thy face.' And he said unto me, 'Seek not the sight of my face, for my face is detestable like my sins, and whosoever sees my face shall see at the same time all my evil works'; and because I refused to [admit] him he wanted to go back into the desert. And then I thought within myself that he might be hungry, or thirsty, and for this reason I opened the doors to him, and I brought him into my abode; and I brought him food, but he refused it, and he said unto me, 'I will not eat before to-morrow, after the Offering.' Then he went into the church, and he stood up in a dark place, and I heard a sound, as it were the sound of angels, repeating the Psalms; and the brethren who were there marveled. And in the morning the monk sat down on his feet, and did not want to say anything. And we drew nigh unto him that we might ask him to pray for us, and he said unto us, 'How can I possibly pray for you seeing that I am blackened of face and [am laden] with many transgressions?' And when we offered up the Offering he stood up upon his feet, and began to recite the Gospel of John, and he drew back his cowl from his face, and it was impossible to look upon him by reason of the great light, which was upon it. And after we had received the Offering, he received, [and we thought that he must be one of] the children of the emperor. And we brought him food, but he would not take it, and he exhorted us to turn away from the lust for women whereby Satan leads monks astray. And there was there a certain good elder monk who was a Roman by birth, and he said unto me, 'O my father James, this is a woman, and a daughter of emperors, and therefore she hides her face so that we may not recognize her.' Then I went to her to adjure her in the Name of Christ not to hide her history from us, and straightway I lost her and could not find her. Five months later there arrived many men, who had been sent by the emperor to search for her, and they told us her history, and how she had escaped by night from Rome, and how they had been searching for her for twelve years and had not found her. And then by the Will of God certain pilgrims told us that she had died on this day [of the month Takhshash]." Salutation to princess Nasahit. Salutation to the light, which illumined the darkness. Salutation to the Light, which was before the world.

Salutation to Arianus the priest, and to 'Arkisos, his God-fearing brother, the sons of Gregory. [This salutation is wanting in the Bodleian MS.]

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