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## THE TWELVETH MONTH

Nehasse 03

(August 09)

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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 glorious holy father, the ascetic and fighter, Abba Simon of the Pillar. This saint came from the island of Sorya. When his days were three years, his father set him to tend his sheep. And he used to go to church frequently and hear the Holy Scriptures, and the grace of God moved him, and he went to a certain monastery and became a monk, and devoted himself to the ascetic life and fought the spiritual fight for many years. And he used to carry loads of dust and ashes upon his head, and he afflicted his soul with fasting and much prayer, and with prolonged periods of thirst. And then he tied a cord so tightly about his waist that is sank into his body, and very stinking worms used to issue from the wound. And his brother monks were distressed at his filthy smell, and at his dirtiness, and they all gathered together and came to the abbot, and said unto him, "If thou dost not expel this monk Simon from among us, we shall all forsake thee and depart." And the abbot said unto them, "What hath he done?" And they said unto him, "Call him, and see what he hath done"; and the abbot called Saint Abba Simon. And when Simon stood before him the abbot saw blood, mixed with pus, flowing down upon his feet, and it was an exceedingly hard matter for the abbot. And he opened Simon's apparel and saw the rope, which had cut, into his flesh, and the abbot was wroth with him, and said unto him, "Why hast thou dared to do this thing, which thou wishest to do with such toil?" And the abbot had the rope taken off the saint's body. And they continued to treat him in this saving manner for a space of fifty days, until his wound was healed. And the abbot said unto him, "O my son Simon, depart whithersoever thou wishest." And he went forth from them, and departed, and came unto a dry pit, and he dwelt therein with serpents and scorpions. And the abbot saw a vision by night wherein it seemed that one said unto him, "Why dost thou send away My servant Simon? Seek him, and bring him back, for it shall be better for him than for thee in the Day of Judgment"; and the voice rebuked him very severely because of the going forth of Abba Simon from the monastery. And when the morning had come, the abbot told all the brethren what he had seen, and how the voice had rebuked him because of Saint Simon; and the brethren were frightened, and were exceedingly sorry. And the abbot said unto them, "Depart ye and search for him in every place, and come not back to me until ye have found him." And they departed and searched for him in many places, but they found him not. And after this they went to that pit, and they lighted a lamp, and they saw him seated with the serpents and scorpions, without food and without drink; and they let down a rope to him, and they drew him up out of the pit, and they bowed low before him and said unto him, "Forgive us our sin." And Saint Abba Simon said unto them, "Forgive ye me for having caused you all sorrow, for I have transgressed the command of my teacher the abbot." And from the time when he took up his abode in the pit until they took him out he had neither eaten bread nor drunken water; and they took him to the monastery, and he lived there a life of stern self-denial, and he fought many spiritual fights. And when they had set him in the monastery, he craved not for the glory of this fleeting world, and he left the brethren and fled from them, and departed secretly, and came to a certain rock, and stood up before it for sixty days without sleeping. And after this the angel of the Lord came unto him, and comforted him, and made him to know that Gad had called him for the salvation of many souls. And then he stood for fifteen years upon a pillar, the height whereof was thirty cubits, and he performed signs and many wonders, and great healings; and he used to teach all those who came unto him. And his father sought him but found him not, and he died before he could see him. And after many years his mother heard the report of him, and she came to him whilst he was standing on the pillar, and she wept greatly; and then she used to sleep under the pillar of the saint. And the saint asked God to deal graciously with her, and she died whilst she was sleeping, and they buried her under the pillar of the saint. And Satan became envious of the saint; and smote him a severe blow in one foot, and it became diseased, but he stood upon the other foot for many years, until the diseased foot rotted,

and worms dropped on the ground from it. And the captain of a gang of thieves came to him and repented under his direction, and he lived a few days [there] and died. And the saint asked our Lord Jesus Christ, and a spring of water sprang up at the foot of the pillar, for the use of those people who used to come to him to drink water for their troubles. And after this he departed to another high pillar and he stood upon it for thirty years. And when he had completed eight and forty years, during which time he lived the ascetic life and fought the spiritual fight, he departed to the God Whom he loved, having converted many infidels and pagans, and brought them into the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. And he taught many men, and arrayed them in the garb of the monastic life, and they became like angels of God; and he died in peace and inherited the kingdom of heaven. And when the Archbishop of Antioch heard that Saint Abba Simon was dead, he came, bringing with him priests, and deacons, and officers, and they took away the body of Saint Simon with great honor, and brought it to the city of Alexandria, with spiritual songs and psalms. And they laid it in a church there, and many signs, and wonders, and great healings took place through it. Salutation to Simon of the Pillar.

And on this day also died Saint Sophia. This saint was a kinswoman of a race of kings, and she had riches and possessions, and she crossed the Sea of Rome with her three daughters to receive the seal of Christ. And the Emperor Andrianus, knowing that she was a Christian, had her and her daughters brought before him, and questioned her about her country and her name; and she said unto him, "The name which comes first with me is that of 'Christian'; as for what my kinsfolk call me, it is 'Sophia,' and I am of a noble family of Italy. And the Lord Jesus Christ hath in His mercy brought me into thy city, that I may offer myself and my daughters as an offering." And she encouraged her daughters, and bade them not to fear the tortures. And after this her three daughters finished their testimony, and she wrapped them in shrouds and buried them outside the city. And she went out to celebrate the commemoration of her three daughters with many other women of the city, and when she arrived at their graves, she bowed down and prayed, saying, "O my perfect daughters who are crowned with crowns incorruptible, may I too receive a crown with you!" And having said these words she died in peace, and was buried with her daughters. Salutation to Sophia.

Salutation to the translation of the body of Mercurius, the fighter, which was taken to a new grave on the backs of three oxen.

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