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THE NINETH MONTH
Ginbot 11
(May 19)

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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 Theocleia, the wife of Saint Justus, became a martyr. After the governor of the city of Alexandria had caused them to be separated from each other, even as it is written in the section for the tenth day of Yakatit, he took Saint Theocleia to the city of Dha. And when the governor of the city of Alexandria had read the letter before the governor of her city, he marveled and said, "Why have they left their kingdom and chosen death rather than their kingdom?" And the governor urged her with many words of persuasion, and promised her great things, but she answered and said unto him, "I have left my kingdom and I will not return unto it, I am well pleased at my separation from the husband of my youth, and I am comforted for my children by the love of my Lord Jesus Christ, and what couldst thou give me [in place thereof]?" And the governor commanded his soldiers to beat her, and they beat her until the skin was stripped off her body, and after this they cast her into the prison house; and the angel of the Lord appeared unto her and healed her wounds. And when the prisoners and the other people saw her, many of them marveled, and believed on our Lord Jesus Christ, and became martyrs. And when the time of the death of Saint Theocleia drew nigh, the angel of the Lord appeared unto her, and comforted her and promised her many things. Then the governor commanded the soldiers to cut off her head with the sword, and they cut off her head with the sword and she received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. And certain believing men came and gave silver to the soldiers, and they took her holy body, and swathed it for burial in costly cloths and laid it in a coffin until the end of the days of the persecution. Salutation to Theocleia.

And on this day also is the commemoration of Saint Pafnotyos (Paphnutius), the bishop. This father became a monk in his youth, in the desert of Scete, in the monastery of Abba Macarius, and he fought a great fight and performed many works of ascetic virtue. He fasted very often, and never ate food cooked by fire, and ate only dried herbs. And he learned in the desert the knowledge of the Canon, [and] the Scriptures, and the Law of the Church, and he was appointed priest. He lived in the desert for five and thirty years, and the report of him and his righteousness was noised abroad. And Abba Philotheus, Archbishop of the city of Alexandria, sent and had him brought to him, and made him a bishop. When he was appointed bishop he never changed his apparel, except when he wished to officiate at the Offering, and then he wore the vestments of a priest; and when he had finished the office of the Offering he put on his sackcloth again. And his spiritual fighting and asceticism were so intense, now he followed the canon of the ascetic life all day long, that his body languished, and he prayed to God, saying, "O my Lord Jesus Christ, unto Whom praise belongeth, wilt Thou withhold Thy grace from me because of my office of bishop?" And the angel of the Lord came and said unto him, "Know thou that when thou wast in the desert thou hadst none near thee to visit thee in the time of thy sickness, and there was none to minister unto thee, and thou wast not able to find relief from thy sickness, and it was God Who removed sickness and toil from thy body. And behold, thou art now here in the world, and thou hast near thee those who can minister unto thee and visit thee; and thou canst obtain relief from thy sickness, and canst attend to thyself as thou wishest." And this father sat in his office of bishop for two and thirty years, and when the time of his death drew nigh he summoned the priest, and the chief Jews and the deacons, and he handed over to them the sacred property of the churches, and all their possessions, and he said unto them, "Behold, know ye that I am departing to God, and ye know that I have walked in your midst in a manner which was befitting. And our Lord Jesus Christ, before Whom I am about to stand, will be witness for me, that I have not taken for myself one silver drachma of all the money which came to me to the bishop's office." And they embraced him and wept and asked him to bless them, and not to forget to help them; and he blessed them, and said unto them, "God bless you and make you

strong in the True Faith until ye draw your last breath"; and thus saying he fell asleep and died in peace. Salutation to Pafnotyos (Paphnutius), the bishop.

And on this day also became a martyr Abba Asher, the teacher of Bali, as he was going down to Jerusalem in the time of Wanag Sagad (died A.D. 1540) the king. He worshipped before they cut off his head with the sword, and afterwards they burnt him in the fire, at the gates of Jerusalem, at the place where the foot of our Lord stood.

And on this day also died Yared, the poet and hymn writer, who was like unto the Seraphim. This man was a kinsman of Abba Gideon a priest of 'Aksum, which city held the first church that was built in the country of Ethiopia, and in [this church] was first preached the Faith of our Lord Christ, and it was consecrated (i.e. dedicated) in the name of our holy Lady, the Virgin Mary, the God-bearer. When this Abba Gideon began to teach the blessed Yared the Psalms of David, he was unable to keep him with him for many days at a time, and then when he beat him, and made him to suffer pain, he fled into the desert and took up his abode under a tree. And he saw a worm (caterpillar ?) which was climbing up the tree, and when it had climbed up half way it fell down upon the ground; and this it did many times, because of the difficulty of climbing the tree. And when Saint Yared saw the perseverance (?) of the worm, he repented in his soul and returned to his teacher and said unto him, "Forgive me, O father, and dispose of me as thou wishest." And his teacher, a spiritual man, received him, and having asked God with tears He opened the thoughts of Yared's understanding, and he learned in one day the Books of the Old and the New Testaments; and then he was made a deacon. Now in those days there was no singing of hymns and spiritual songs in a loud voice to well-defined tunes, but men murmured them in a low voice. And God, wishing to raise up to Himself a memorial, sent unto him three birds from the Garden of 'Edom, and they held converse with Yard in the speech of man, and they caught him up, and took him to the heavenly Jerusalem, and there he learned the songs of the Four and Twenty Priests of heaven. And when he returned to himself, he went into the First Church in 'Aksum, at the third hour of the day, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Hallelujah to the Father, Hallelujah to the Son, Hallelujah to the Holy Spirit." The first Hallelujah he made the foundation, and called it "Zion." In the second Hallelujah he showed forth how Moses carried out the work of the Tabernacle, and this he called a "Song of the heights." And when they heard the sound of his voice, the king, and the queen, and the bishop, and the priests, and the king's nobles, ran to the church, and they spent the day in listening to him. And he arranged hymns for each season of the year, for summer and winter, and spring and autumn, and for festivals and Sabbaths, and for the days of the Angels, the Prophets, the Martyrs and the Righteous, in three modes, that is to say, the first mode to be used on ordinary days, the second mode to be used on fast days and days of mourning, and the third mode to be used on the great festivals. And there were not lacking (?) in these three modes any of the sounds that are made by men, and birds, and beasts. One day whilst Saint Yared was singing by the footstool of King Gebre Meskel, the king (died A.D. 1344) was so deeply absorbed [in listening to] his voice, that he drove his spear into the flat part of Yared's foot with such force that much blood spurted out; but Saint Yared did not know of it until he had finished his song. And when the king saw this he was dismayed, and he drew his spear out of his foot, and said unto him, "Ask me what ever reward thou wishest for in return for this thy blood which hath been shed"; and Saint Yared said unto him, "Swear to me that thou wilt not refuse me." And when the king had sworn Saint Yared said unto him, "Send me away that I may become a monk." When the king heard this he was exceedingly sad, and his nobles likewise, but he was afraid to prevent him because of his oath. And when Saint Yared had gone into the church, he stood before the Tabernacle of Zion, and when he had said the prayer from the beginning, "Holy, and honorable, and glorious, and blessed, and praised, and exalted" to the end thereof, he was raised above the ground the space of a cubit. Then he departed to the desert of the south, and he lived there in fasting and prayer; and he mortified his flesh exceedingly, and finished his strife there. And God gave him the promise concerning the man who should invoke his name or celebrate his commemoration; and he died in peace and the place of his grave in the south is not known to this day. Salutation to Yared.

And on this day also died the blessed woman Arsema. This holy woman became a nun in a house of virgins, and pretended to be mad, and during the night she afflicted herself, and tortured her flesh with fasting and prayer. And when anyone looked at her, she pretended to be asleep; and the widows hated her and reviled her. And God revealed her spiritual fight to Abba Daniel, and when he arrived in the mountain of the widows he told the abbess all her virtues, and she told the widows, one by one, and from that day they treated her with honor. And, hating vain praise, she fled and went into the desert secretly, leaving behind her with one of them a writing wherein she praised them for having treated her with contumely, and there she died.

And on this day also Saint Euphemia became a martyr in the reign of Diocletian. The name of her mother was Theodoriasiana, and she was a God-fearing woman and a believer on our Lord Jesus Christ. And Satan urged Antiopatus to compel all the Christians to worship idols, and he had her, and many other Christians with her, brought to him, and he said unto her, "Sacrifice to the gods." And Saint Euphemia said unto him, "I will worship my Lord Jesus Christ only, and I am strong of heart in the Holy Spirit that I may find the hope of my Father." Then was Antiopatus wroth, and he commanded his soldiers to cast her under the wheels of a wagon (?), so that it might break her body and each of her members; and the angel of the Lord came from heaven and delivered her. And then he commanded them to light a fire [and to feed it] until its flames rose up to a height of five and forty cubits, and to throw her into it. And she stood up in the midst of the fire and prayed, and as she prayed she went forth from the fire uninjured; and then they cast her into the prison house until the morning. And on the following day they brought her before the Council, and the governor said unto her, "Sacrifice to the gods." And the saint laughed and said unto him, "I will not sacrifice to these dumb stones." When Antiopatus heard her, he commanded the soldiers to bring four stones wherein were set instruments for flaying the saint. And then he commanded them to cast her into a tank of water wherein were savage creatures (crocodiles ?), and these creatures carried her and lifted her above the water, and set her outside the tank. And then he ordered them to place under the dust of the ground sharp stones and swords, and to make her to run backwards and forwards over them, so that she might fall down and die, but when she had run over them she remained uninjured. And then he commanded them to beat her, and to cast her into a cauldron to boil her, but she suffered no injury whatsoever. And then they gathered together wild beasts and bears, and set them at her, but the lions kissed her feet, though one savage beast in evil nature bit her foot. And a voice came from heaven, saying, "Ascend, O Euphemia, and come into the holy place," and thus she finished her martyrdom. And her father Philophilus and her mother came, and swathed her body for burial and buried her in a new tomb. Salutation to Euphemia who finished her course through a bite of a wild beast. Salutation to the companions of Euphemia, Sosthenes, and Yeketras.

And on this day also became martyrs Saint Sophia, the mother of Saint Isidore, and his sister Euphemia.

And on this day also are commemorated Abba Bakimos, and Abladen (Ablanius), and Julius.

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