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THE TENTH MONTH

Senne 19

(June 26)

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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 became a martyr the new Saint George, that is to say, Mazakham, which is, being interpreted, “Compeller,” in the days of the Muslims. This saint had a father who was a Muslim [and was called] “Balaw,” and he married a woman who was a Christian from the city of Demera, in the north of Egypt, and he begat her three sons, of whom this saint was one, and he called his name “Zakhan.” And he used to go with his mother to church, and he wished to become a Christian, and he begged his mother to be allowed to receive the Holy Mysteries. And she said unto him, “It is impossible for anyone to receive the Holy Mysteries unless he hath been baptized with Christian baptism, and is pure.” Then she gave him a portion of the blessed Eulogia bread, and having swallowed it, the taste thereof became in his mouth like that of honey. And he meditated in his heart, and said, “If the taste of this portion of the bread of the Christians is like honey in my mouth, what will be the taste of the Offering?” And he wished to become a Christian, and he made it known that he intended to be a Christian, and intended to be baptized with Christian baptism, and changed his name to George. And the Muslims oppressed him, and seized him, and tortured him very severely. Then he escaped and fled to the city of Saft Abu-trab, and dwelt therein for three years. When his history became known he departed to the city of Ketur, and ministered in the church of Saint George, the martyr, and then he returned to the city of Demera. And the Muslims of the city of Demera heard his history, and they seized him and delivered him to the governor. Now the wife of the governor was a Christian, and she said unto the governor, “Do not torture this holy man.” and he shut him up in prison. And the Muslims assembled and smashed the door of the prison house, and they beat the saint very severely, and they split open his head, and they left him well nigh dead, that is to say, between life and death. When the Christians came in the morning to bury him, for they thought that he was dead, they found him alive. After this the Muslims gathered together and formed a company, and they said unto the saint, “If thou dost not turn away from this counsel of thine we will torture thee very severely, and kill thee.” And Saint George Mazakham said unto them, “Do what ye will. I will not deny my Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, the Creator of the heavens and of the earth.” And they were wroth with him, and they hung him up on the mast of a ship, and tortured him very severely; and after this the governor commanded the soldiers to take him down and shut him up in prison, and they did as he commanded. And his wife made him to bear patiently, and she strengthened him, and taught him that he must not think in his heart that the punishment which had come [upon him] was because of his sins; that Satan should not lead him astray, or destroy his toil; and that he must encourage himself in his heart with the thought that he was a counterpart of the martyrs. And then the angel of God appeared unto him, one night, and comforted him, and strengthened him, and promised him that he should be numbered with the martyrs; and he informed him that on the following day they would cut off his head. When the morning came the Muslims gathered together about the governor, and demanded from him [permission] to cut off his head; and the governor commanded them to take him, and to do what they wished with him. And they took him out of prison, and cut off his head with the sword, near the church of the glorious angel Michael in the city of Demera, and he received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. Then they lighted a fire on his body, and that fire burned all that day and all that night, but it neither consumed him nor touched him at all. After this the Muslims took him and laid him in a basket, and cast him into the river, and by the Will of God he came to the quay on the shore of an island, and his mother, who was waiting for him, took him and made him ready for burial, and laid him in her house for a few days. After this they built a church for him and laid him therein, and countless signs and wonders took place there through him. Salutation to George, and salutation to the woman his friend.

And on this day also became a martyr Saint Besoy-nob, whose name meaneth “fine gold.” This saint came from a city the name of which is Banos, in the district of Damietta, and he was the son of noble and wealthy parents in that city. He was one of the soldiers of Cyprianus, the governor of Athribis, and he believed on the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. [And the governor of Athribis commanded his soldiers to bring him] into the city of Athribis, and they took him to the city of Antinoe; and he stood before Arianus, governor of the city of Antinoe, who was angry with him, and said unto him, “Cast incense to the gods.” And he would not obey him, and was not afraid of him, and Arianus tortured him severely. Then he commanded them to cut off his head with the sword, and they took him outside the city, and a crowd of men from the city followed him. And in it was the keeper of the lions of Arianus, the governor, and he had with him two lions bound with an iron chain; and one of them rushed forward and broke the chain [and attacked the saint]. And the angel of God came to the saint and raised him up above the lions, and he flew away with him until he brought him to the Fountain of the Sun, and the saint, who had his eyes closed, did not know where he was going. And then they cut off his head with the sword, and he received the crown of martyrdom in the kingdom of the heavens. Salutation O Nub-Besoy, which is being interpreted, “fine gold.”

And on this day also became martyrs the five soldiers ‘Arsonophis, Peter, ‘Ascarion, ‘Arengis, and Belfeyos, who lived in the Palace of Diospolis. When the governor urged them to sacrifice to the gods, the saints said unto him, “We will fulfill the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to Him only will we sacrifice.” When the governor heard this he was wroth, and he commanded the soldiers to put them into a house, and not to give them bread or water for two days. Then he ordered them to bring them to him, and when they stood before him he said unto them, “Sacrifice ye to the gods.” And the saints said unto him with one voice, “We are Christians, and we will not sacrifice to unclean devils.” And the governor commanded the soldiers to chain them by their necks, and to take them to another governor. And ‘Arengis said unto his brethren, “I tell you truth. I heard the angel of God pronounce the names of the five of us.” And when the soldiers had brought them to Deses, the governor, he took the first of them ‘Arsonophis, and said unto him, “Sacrifice to the gods”; and when he refused to do so the governor commanded them to fetter him, and to tie him to the tail of a horse, and drag him through the city. When they had brought him into the city, he commanded them to cast him into the furnace of the public baths. And they also tied him to a chariot to torture him, and hung him up head downwards; and he kept his Faith and delivered up his soul. Next they brought Saint Peter, and Deses said unto him, “Sacrifice.” And when he refused to do so the governor commanded them to take him and fetter him, and to set up a post, and to hang him upon it, head downwards, and to tie him to it in this position. And they also dug a hole in the ground, and covered him up in it with earth, and made a mule to tread it down, but the saint bore this, God helping him. When they brought him out his body was crushed (?) by the excessive torture, and he was unable to speak; and then they tied him up in the hide of an animal [and left him] without bread and water. And they brought ‘Arengis before the governor, who said unto him, “Sacrifice,” and when he refused to do so, Deses commanded them to bind him with fetters, and to scraped him, and to hang him up head downwards. And having endured them, they tied him up in the hide of an animal [and left him] without food and drink. Then they brought ‘Ascarion to the governor, who said unto him, “Sacrifice, and have pity on thyself.” And when the saint refused to do so, Deses commanded them to take him, and bind him in fetters, and scrape him, [and they did so,] and they delivered him over to the keepers of the instruments of torture to torture him severely. And they set up a tree, and hung him upon it head downwards. And when he vanquished them by his endurance, they told the governor, and he commanded them to tie him up in the hide of an animal, and to shut him up in a chamber to die of hunger and thirst. And they brought to Deses Belfeyos, and the governor said unto him, “Sacrifice, so that thou mayest not die.” When he refused to do so Deses commanded them to take him, and bind him in fetters, and scrape him, and to drag him round the city. And they set up a tree and hung him upon it, head downwards, and they tied a stone to his neck. And when he wavered not in his Faith, they tied him up in the hide of an animal to die of hunger and thirst; and they walled up the door of the house. And [the soul of] the blessed ‘Arengis

was nigh to go forth from his body. And ‘Arengis departed on the fifth day of the month of Pohin, and when they had brought him out they built up the door against the two that were left. And then the blessed ‘Ascarion died, holding the Faith, on the eighteenth day of the month of Pohin; and when they had taken him out they built up the door against Belfeyos. When the brethren visited the blessed man Belfeyos, he said unto them, “My brethren, wait for me this night; I am going forth,” and then he delivered up his soul on the nineteenth day of the month of Pohin. Salutation to ‘Arsonophis, and Peter, and ‘Ascarion, and ‘Arengis, and Belfeyos.

And on this day also is celebrated the commemoration of the holy fathers of Debre Kua’at.

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