History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria (part 1 of 2)

Severus of al-Ashmunein (10th century)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

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Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — Introduction

HISTORY OF THE PATRIARCHS OF THE COPTIC CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA — I — S. MARK TO THEONAS (300)
ARABIC TEXT EDITED, TRANSLATED, AND ANNOTATED BY B. EVETTS PREFACES

PART 1 — FIRST PREFACE
In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the One God. This is the book of the Lives of the Fathers and Patriarchs. May God grant us the blessing of their prayers! These patriarchs were the successors of the father and missionary, Saint Mark the evangelist, who preached the holy gospel and the good news of the Lord Christ in the great city of Alexandria, and in the region of Egypt, and in the regions of Ethiopia and Nubia, and in Pentapolis in the West, which is also called Africa, and in the neighbouring territories; for all these countries fell by lot to his preaching, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And after he had preached and proclaimed the good tidings, and written the gospel in Greek, and finished his course, he became a martyr in the Caesarium, a quarter of Alexandria, which is called in the Hebrew language the |106 city of Ammon . His biography, which records that which was done to him, and how he preached, and what befell him, is set forth in the first of the histories contained in this book.

And after him our orthodox fathers, the patriarchs, were the heirs of his doctrines which save souls from hell; and they remained true to that which he delivered to them, in the guardianship of the orthodox faith and in attachment to it, and in patience under persecution for its sake, at all times, to their last breath, that is to say till death. They sat upon his episcopal throne, one after another, each of them succeeding his predecessor; and thus all were his representatives, and the shepherds of his flock, and his imitators in his faith in Christ. These histories here given were collected from various places by the care of the celebrated father, Abba

Severus, son of Al-Mukaffa, bishop of the city of Al-Ushmunain, who relates that he gathered them together from the monastery of Saint Macarius and the monastery of Nahya and other monasteries, and from scattered fragments which he found in the hands of the Christians. And when these documents were put together by your |107

poor brother into this single volume, after research and trouble on his part, God gave him a long life, until a day came when he wrote out this history and set it in order; but it was not completed till the end of his eightieth year. And now I implore God’s help that we may understand what we read therein, and may obey these holy patriarchs, and carry out their precepts, and follow in their footsteps, and remain attached to their faith; for he is the God who hears and answers our prayers. Thanks be to him for ever and ever. Amen.

SECOND PREFACE

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the One God. Praise be to God, the origin and source of learning, the maker and creator of all things, who forms and brings into being all that exists : who guides and elects those whom he pleases, and raises those whom he desires among his servants to be his chosen ones and his holy people, whom he picks out and in whom he takes pleasure; who lifts up the poor from the ground, and the needy from the dunghill, that he may make him ruler over his people, and a prince to govern his servants and his land; and gives him as his inheritance the throne of power, that he may rule over the earth with justice, and among men with truth; that he may deliver the weak from the mighty, |108 and save the oppressed from the oppressor. This is the judgment and wisdom of God which none of his creatures can comprehend, for his mysteries are hidden from the wise and learned; and he raises up at all times those who shall gently guide his people.

The merciful, the compassionate one, the Lord Christ, who gave himself by the mystery of his Incarnation to save his creatures, and vanquished the mighty by humility and weakness; who speaks through the mouth of his prophets by the Holy Ghost; when it pleased him to manifest himself on earth and become incarnate, that he might save his creatures whom he had created after the likeness of the image of his majesty, appeared among them in a human body, born of the Virgin Mary, most excellent of women in creation. For he had elected her from among the offspring of Adam, the sinner and rebel against his Lord, who obeyed his enemy and broke the commandment of his Creator, so that it was necessary that he should die, as God had said to him when he warned him not to disobey; but Adam would not listen, desiring to be a god and similar to his Creator, and so was caught in the net of stumbling. Yet even then God the Word had mercy upon him in pity for him, and became incarnate, ----He, the uncreated in respect of his Godhead, the Man in respect of his Humanity, the pure from all sin. And the Virgin Mary bore him in her

womb and brought him forth, by a mystery to which the intelligence of creatures cannot attain, and by which he exalted her above above all other created beings in heaven or on earth; above the Angels, the |109 Powers, the Principalities, the Cherubim and the Seraphim, and all whom God has made in heaven or on earth. For she became the throne of him who is Lord of the first and the last, without division or change, ---- of him whom no space can enclose, and no time contain.

And when, in his unattainable wisdom, he established his dispensation, and the Union of his Humanity with his Divinity, the mystery of which is hidden from all in heaven or on earth, he chose his disciples, the apostles, and gave them the great commission, authorising them to bind and to loose. And so likewise their successors after them inherit this gift in all regions of the world, each one following his predecessor. Thus the inheritance of this power, which Christ gave to the great father and evangelist, Mark, the apostle, is carried on to his successor, the patriarch who sits upon his episcopal throne in the great city of Alexandria, in the midst of the regions where he preached.

Saint Mark, then, was the first patriarch who fed the flock of Christ; and in after times he was followed by the inspired fathers and patriarchs, generation after generation. This see of his is independent, and separate from all other sees. And no patriarch is promoted to it, nor does any obtain from God this glorious station and this high and sublime degree, save one whom he has proved and tried, and who has experienced such trouble and adversity and resistance of enemies and attacks of heretics that by these things he resembles Christ’s disciples and apostles, who were assisted by his Holy Spirit, ----those pure ones, those preachers of good tidings, who |110 suffered contempt and blows and scourging and stoning and crucifixion and shipwreck, and burning by fire, and wounds, and casting down from high places to the ground, and death by the sword, and all kinds of torment, which if we were to relate in detail, our narrative would be too long and the description of it would be too copious, and listeners would tremble at the hearing of it, and books and volumes would not contain even a small part of the history. Yet they lived in patience, enduring all these sufferings, and imitating their Lord, their Master and their Christ, who sent them to baptize all men and all nations, and draw them to faith in him.

They taught men that by which they might profit through all ages and generations and times to the end of the world, namely the means of saving their souls in this world and the next; and they bequeathed their doctrines to their successors, the fathers and patriarchs, in every region to which their preaching was extended; for the patriarchs are indeed their successors and their followers. So they laid down their lives to preserve their trusted ones among the baptized, the faithful and orthodox. As the great apostle and excellent teacher Paul, the elect one and lamp of the Church of God, says , «Rather we glory in the tribulation that we suffer; for

we know that tribulation perfects patience in us, and patience trial and probation, and hardships call forth hope, and hope disappoints not, because it pours into our hearts the love of God by the Holy Ghost». As he says in another place , «Verily if ye be allowed to wander free, and be left |111 without chastisement, and be not branded as the elect friends of God were branded before you, then are ye become strangers to God and are not near to him». And there are many similar testimonies in the books of the Church, from Paul and from others of the inspired apostles and fathers and teachers, since th evenerated prophets.

The patriarchs did not cease to repel the doctrines of the heretics, striving to refute them, resisting them, overthrowing their false tenets, revealing to men their misbelief and the corruption of their creeds. And they composed a homily on every text, until they filled the Church of God with their homilies and sermons and spiritual learning. They never abandoned the study of the scriptures and writings and commandments of God, reading all the ecclesiastical books and other works which they needed for the composition of their homilies, and searching out every jewel of the Divine Word and of other literature. So at last they attained their desire, and obeyed the summons of their Creator who called them, saying, each one of them, «Here am I with the sons whom thou gavest me, for not one of them has perished!» Thus they obtained their high degrees, and the mansions, brilliant with happiness and light, the blessings of which are eternal and imperishable.

They did not in the time of their pastorate fear haughty princes. Their hearts and purposes never faltered in the love of God, nor in teaching men, both secretly and openly, the means of saving their souls. And while they governed the Church, they were never careless nor frivolous, |112 nor did they acquire aught belonging to this transitory world; but they were obedient to their Lord’s commands, and applied themselves to their duties of instruction and imparting discipline, and observed the canons and precepts of God. So in the eyes of their flock they were great and learned; and when one of their disciples, or one of those who resisted them and their doctrine, beheld them and their deeds, he glorified God for their works, because the words of the Gospel which Christ uttered were now fulfilled : «You are the light of the world. A city, when it is placed upon a hill, cannot be hidden, and a lamp, when it is lighted, is not set under a bushel, but on a candlestick, to enlighten all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven .»

As one of the wise men says : «He who mounts the steps of learning and public affairs becomes great in the eyes of the multitudes, and he whose nature is noble has his rights acknowledged; to him who despises money men’s hopes are directed; he who is reasonable ceases to be unjust; the just man’s judgments are carried out; the leader is he who defends his faith with his possessions, and does not defend his possessions by means of his faith». But the best is what is said in one of the jewels

of literature as follows : «The good shepherd does good to his flock and with justice rules creation. He who is just in his government is independent of his assistants. He who excels among men by his rank of governor and his superiority as ruler is bound to |113 guard his rank by his good administration, so that his prosperity may continue and that he may be fortunate both in spiritual and temporal matters. He whom God has put into possession of his land and territory, and entrusted with his people and servants, and whose place and rank he has exalted, ought to give thanks to God in faith, and to preserve his religion, and embellish his life, and purify his thoughts, and make virtue his constant habit, and salvation his aim and object. But injustice slips on its feet, and draws down vengeance, and destroys happiness and makes the nations perish. The hasty man fails even when he gains;

but the deliberate man succeeds even when he loses. He who relies on his own opinion falls into the net of his enemies. He who rides on haste comes to a fall. He who does what he pleases gets what is evil. The fall of dynasties is caused by the employment of the lowest of the people. He who asks help of the wise gains what he hopes for. He who asks the advice of the prudent walks in the right path. Good government is the light of sovereignty, but evil administration is the source of destruction. To favour the fool is the worst of baseness, but to employ the wise is the best of merits; for the employment of the wise leads to the establishment of wisdom, but the employment of the fool to the maintenance of folly. Every man inclines to his like, and every bird roosts with its fellow. Learn that the cause of the ruin of princes is to be found in the rejection of the virtuous and the employment of the base, and in making light of the counsellor’s advice, and in the deception that arises from placing trust in the flatterer. But God assists the right by his bounty and glory |114 and power and majesty. Verily, he can bring to pass all that he pleases. To him be glory for ever!»

THIRD PREFACE

BY SEVERUS, BISHOP OF AL-USHMUNAIN The author of this history, Severus, son of Al-Mukaffa, the compiler, says thus :

When I, ---- the wretched and sinful one, drowning in the seas of my transgressions, I, the penitent, who waste my days in sin, and grieve over my negligence and the loss of the months and years of my life in hopes and procrastinations, ruinous to my faith and my condition, ---- learnt and ascertained the graces which the Lord Christ, the Saviour, has granted, to whose name worship is due, to all the baptized whom he bought with his precious blood;

and how he gave his authority, and bestowed the Holy Ghost upon his disciples and followers, the chosen Twelve and Seventy, and upon those that came after them, such as Paul, the teacher of the Church, whom God specially called because he knew the strength of his faith and his zeal, and such as those whom he elected to the episcopal throne of his martyr and disciple and evangelist, whom he sent as

apostle to his people, and as the first of the patriarchs of Egypt, and of Pentapolis, which is Barca and |115 Fezzan and Al-Kairuwan and Tripoli of the West and Africa, and of Ethiopia and Nubia, ---- all of which countries fell under his preaching by the command of the Holy Ghost, ---- whose martyrdom took place in the city of Alexandria, after he had preached the name of the Lord Christ, according to the evidence of his biography, of whose doctrines which save souls from hell our fathers, the patriarchs, became heirs, sitting upon his episcopal throne one after another, each one in succession to his predecessor, all being the successors of Saint Mark, handing down his authority one to another, and the shepherds of his flock, and imitators of his faith in Christ, ---- of Saint Mark, the pure evangelist who saw Christ's face, ---- from whose successors, the patriarchs who came after him, descends to us the knowledge of their history and their names and the changing fortunes of each of them in his time and age, and the troubles and sorrows and struggles which fell to the lot of each of them for the name of his Lord and his Christ, and the preservation of his flock year after year and age after age, ----then, since I am one of those who are not fit to write down with their wretched, perishing hands any of the histories of these patriarchs, I requested the help of those Christian brethren with whose fitness I was acquainted, and begged them to assist me in translating the histories that we found written in the Coptic and Greek languages into the Arabic tongue, current among the people of the present day in the region of Egypt, most of whom are ignorant of the Coptic and the Greek, so that they might be satisfied with such translations when they read them. |116

And I implored him who gives speech to the stammerer, and opens the mouths of the dull, and calls those weighed down by burdens, as I am, in accordance with the words of the gospel, spoken by his own holy mouth, which say : «Come to me, ye that are weary and carry burdens, that I may give you rest; and learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart, that ye may receive rest for your souls; and bear my yoke upon you, for my yoke is light and my burden is good. » ---- 1 implored him to pardon my slips, and to forgive the progress which I make in indulgence towards my blameworthy deeds and faults and frequent sins. And I copied that which I knew not from the men of old, in agreement with the canons of the Church, according to that which is now about to be related, besides what tradition and history teach. And I added to the rest what I knew of the histories of the fathers and patriarchs whom I had myself beheld. And I asked God ---- whose power is glorious ---- to pardon me the superfluous eloquence and beautified language that the histories contain, and all that I can claim as the work of my sinful self in relating the accounts of those whose meanest disciple I am unworthy to be, and my description of the virtues of holy monks inspired by the grace of the Holy Ghost, partly from what I have myself beheld and partly from translations of histories.

Now I will make frequent prostrations on behalf of those who shall read what I have written, that they may pray for pardon for me for that which I have attempted and

undertaken, and may beg for forgiveness and indulgence and absolution for me, through the intercession of the elect Lady of the first |117 and the last, the Throne of the Lord of the worlds; and through the intercession of the angels who stand beside him, and of the spiritual orders, and of the truth-announcing and inspired prophets, and of the pure and elect apostles, and of the militant martyrs, and of the holy and righteous fathers, and of the virtuous elders, and of all among the posterity of Adam with whose works God is well pleased. Amen. O God, I pray thee to open the eyes of my heart and my sight, that I may understand thy words, and ray hearing, that I may hear and do that which is right. In thy mercy be not angry with me for that which I have written, but pardon and forgive the faults therein caused by my negligence. And shew thy favour to him who here speaks, relying upon God's pardon.

FOURTH PREFACE

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the One God.

Great is the Lord and exceedingly to be praised, and great are his works, and inscrutable are his mysteries and his wisdom; nor can any man comprehend any of God's dealings, which are too high for the understanding of those that understand, or of the learned in the law. For these when they are questioned, humble themselves and say : O God, who hast created us and |118 favoured us, and given us commands and prohibitions, and by punishments made us fear to do what thou hast forbidden, and hast guided us towards the salvation of our souls and the good way; we have slipped in our thoughts, and have rebelled in our free-will. Therefore we implore thee, O long-suffering and beneficent and mighty and gracious One, who pardonest all that come to thee with honest purpose, to be gracious to us, and to be our starting-point and our assistance and our final perfection in the road by which we advance to thee; and to open the darkened eyes of our hearts and our clouded thoughts, so that we may observe and do what we read in thy holy books, and in the histories of those whom thou didst love, and didst choose from among thy followers, and didst elect, namely those militant ones, who overcame their desires, who abandoned the world on account of their love for thee, and their obedience to thy commandments and precepts;

and to grant us a good end, so that our departure from this world may be the departure of thy chosen ones, who are saved from sins and iniquities, from which no man is free, and that we may be delivered from the terrible and dreaded place, if thou wilt have mercy upon us, and wilt liberate us from the power of the Devil, and from the service of sin; and to grant to us spiritual wisdom, with which we may trample down worldly desires by striving to keep thy commandments; and to let us go forth from this perishing world with provisions for the eternal life; and to give us words of welcome before thy dreaded and terrible tribunal. And among thy benefits to us, guide the course of our life in this world, that it may be passed in

doing |119 what pleases thee and in obeying thee, and following thy guiding and life-giving Law; and lead us to thy directing Life, that our minds may be directed to thy kingdom, and that our actions may be ruled by the doctrines of thy holy gospel. Thou sayest, O Lord : «Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you ». So I ask of thee, confiding in thy words, without an action that I have done that can please thee, and having no good deeds which I have offered to thee;

but for the sake of thy name by which we are called, as the blessed David says in a Psalm : «Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to thy name give the glory because of thy mercy and thy truth, that the gentiles may not say : Where is their God ? And our God is in heaven and on earth; all that pleases him he has done». O God deliver us and save us, and be to us in this world of ours a Protector and Saviour in all our affairs, whether small or great, whether glorious or mean. And be merciful, O compassionate one, and vouchsafe, O merciful one, to lead us to that which pleases thee, and remove us far from what offends thee. For thou sayest, O Lord : «Return to me, and I will forgive you, even if your sins are as numerous as the sands of the sea, and the stars of heaven». Therefore fulfil thy promise to us sinners, and do not ask of us repentance or works, but by thy mercy and pity and goodness, grant help to the prayer of thy sinful servant, although he neglects thy commandments, namely to him who writes these glorious histories, and hereby begins by saying : |120

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the One God. Let us begin, with the help of God and with his blessed assistance, to write the histories of the holy Church. The author says : That which I, the sinner, have written, I collected from the monastery of Saint Macarius, and the monasteries of Upper Egypt; and the religious deacon, Michael, son of Apater, was commissioned to make translations of some of the documents from the Coptic language into Arabic, as will be mentioned in its place. This was in addition to that which was found in the great city, and the abridgments of certain histories which were found, the first of them relating to Christ, my Help and my Hope and my Defender and my Salvation. For the first of these documents is that which was translated in the monastery of our Lady at Nahya, concerning the matter of the priesthood of Christ the Lord, whose name is glorious, and of his entrance into the temple. In the peace of God. Amen. Amen. Amen.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

In the time of Julian , the unbelieving Prince, there was a man who was a Jew, and a priest of the Jews, and his name was Theodosius, and he was high in rank. There was also a Christian, a silversmith , who knew him; and there was a strong affection between the two; and the name of the Christian was Philip. And on a certain day Philip went to one of the cities of Syria |121 and moored his ship in the harbour,

that he might sell certain goods which he had brought. There Philip met his friend, the Jewish priest Theodosius, and, entering into affectionate conversation with him, said to him : «O my brother, I would that thou wouldst become a Christian, so that our friendship might be a genuine one, and that thou mightest make profit out of this world and the next also». Then Theodosius answered, saying to him with great affection : or I have taken care for my salvation; and I have thought of something that I wish to reveal to thee; for I will not leave thee without the knowledge of the most high God, who bears witness to that which I tell thee. Therefore do not doubt it, for I tell it thee because thou hast shown me thy love for me. But I prefer that thou shouldst keep what I say in thy heart and not repeat it to anyone, and it is this :

That he who was announced by the Holy Ghost and the Prophets is the Messiah whom you Christians worship, confessing that he indeed has come; and this I believe with an honest and pure heart, without any doubt at all. For thou art a brother and a friend, and therefore 1 disclose this secret to thee and certify it in thy presence, because thy love and desire of happiness and good things for me are so evident to me. Therefore believe me now, my brother. But my carnal thoughts hinder me from being baptized; for I am not humble, nor am I fit, for I am weak; and I am a priest to this people, and have acquired great renown and honour and high rank, and have gained by them treasure and wealth, and if I left them, I should lose all that. And not only my own people would abandon me, but the Christians also, according to what I have witnessed with regard to the Jews when they are baptized, as to the position that they hold; and I have heard also that you say : «When a Jew is baptized, it is as if one baptized an |122 ass». So how can I now be baptized? Moreover I see Christians sinning and angering God and neglecting the law, instead of walking in the straight path of discipline and in the truth which has come to them.

And I have witnessed others who have seen them living thus, and whose hearts and faith have grown weak, so that they have imitated those careless Christians. When we enquire into the salvation which came to you from us, we recognise the Messiah indeed; and the apostles, who became your teachers, are also of our race; but you neglect the good tidings that they brought to you, and the doctrine that they taught you. And as the other nations have not been baptized and have not believed to this day, so also I have not been baptized, because of the glory of the world and the honours which 1 receive from my people, and because I see you neglecting the commands and admonitions which Christ gave you, and the exhortations of his disciples to you. Thus I refused to lose my glory and honour, and to become neglectful like you of that which has been given to you; and this is what hinders me from baptism. For the greater part of our Jewish community believe in the truth of the Messiah and in his miracles more firmly than you do; yet are they far from the salvation which came to you. And now I congratulate thee on the glorious mysteries

which we have possessed from the beginning. And I declare this to thee, that we know and believe in Christ's miracles and works more firmly than you Christians do, and we know truly that he is the Messiah who is come. |123

Hear then from me this mystery which took place in ancient times, and while the temple was still standing at Jerusalem. The Jews had a custom of establishing twenty-two priests in the temple by an obligatory law; and there was in the temple a book in which was written the genealogy of every man who became a priest, and the names of his father and mother, that it might be known that he followed the command of the most high God. And the Jews retained this custom.

Now at that time, when Jesus Christ was in Judaea, this book having existed before his appearance, one of the twenty-two priests died, and the rest assembled by themselves to choose whom they should promote instead of him. But their opinions did not agree as to whom they should appoint, and they persisted in opposing one another; and as often as a man was named he was rejected. Then they cast lots with a view of electing him upon whom their lot should fall, and, after electing him, to appoint him to the office, if there were no fault or infirmity in him, and no defect in his family, or other cause; for if they found one who had the correct genealogy but was not learned, they rejected him and would not promote him; and this was a dispensation from the most' high God, because of their strife, so that none might be promoted except the Lord of the priesthood, who was worthy of this place, namely, Jesus Christ. And behold, after this, the Holy Ghost moved in one of the priests, and he became zealous for God and stood up in the midst of them, and said : «We have to day been assembled for ten days, and yet we cannot appoint any one. And I know certainly that our discussion is thus |124 prolonged because of him whom the most high God will appoint, and this is the reason of the disputing among us and the overthrow of our intentions.

And this will be made manifest by the will of the most high God». Then they said to him : «If thou knowest anyone, mention him to us openly, and we will acknowledge it as a great favour on thy part». So he said to them : «Not till you make an agreement with me that you will not reject what I say to you, but will accept it from me; and then I will tell you who is fit for the place; but I know that you cannot reject him». So when all the priests heard this, they swore an oath by Truth and Sincerity that, if one who was worthy was shown to them, they would accept and appoint him. When he was assured of them, he said to them : «O my brethren, the most high God has put it into my mind that he who is worthy of this place is Jesus, who is called the son of Joseph; for he is a man perfect in his pedigree and in his person and in his conduct, and is capable of speaking and acting before God and men. And know that you will find none like him among this people who has no deceit nor physical defect». So when the priests heard his words, and understood his discourse, they were confounded and perplexed because of the oath; and therefore they said to

him with guile, thinking they could reject his proposal : «He whom thou namest is worthy, for we are seeking a good man;

but he is not of the lineage of the priests, and the people speak calumniously of his birth, |125 because of the infants whom Herod slew with the sword on his account». Then he answered and said to them without anger : «Cleave fast to the truth; for indeed I will guide you to the right course with regard to him, so that you may not turn away from the most high God; for then we should go far from the truth, and should believe lies, since I know that if we enquire into the truth God will reveal it to us». Then they said : «Satisfy our minds, as thou knowest how, with regard to his birth and family, and we will consent to what thou sayest to us». So he said to them: «Enquire and you will learn that in the days of Aaron the priest there was an alliance by marriage between Aaron and the tribe of Juda, to which the prophet David bore witness. Now I have enquired much about Jesus, his tribe and genealogy, and 1 find that his mother Mary is connected with both tribes. And, she is also innocent of sin, through another great mystery. For this reason I desire that you make enquiries, that you may know with certainty that what I say is true, and may recognize that I speak honestly to you». But the priests thought that by this notion of theirs they would bring his counsel to nought.

And they began to enquire about the family of Jesus, and found that Mary united the two tribes, and therefore they could not evade this point on account of the oath. So they began to dispute about the pedigree of Jesus. For they said : «There is a different opinion on this point. We wish to know how his birth was not adulterous, since they accused his mother Mary, when she was given to Joseph». And they all agreed on this subject. And they sent for his mother Mary to the Temple, and exhorted her gently to declare to them the matter of her conception of |126 Jesus, and whence he was. And the Law was in their hands, bearing witness against them with her, that they should not think evil of her if she spoke the truth; and they swore to her accordingly. And they said to her : «O woman, behold, thou seest us all assembled for good, not for evil, but for the business of God most high which we are settling. For we have come to one conclusion with regard to thy son, whom we find to be acceptable to God and men. And he is wonderful among men, and they all glorify God most high on account of him, for he at this time is among them like Solomon son of David, who was given to him by the wife of Uriah the Hittite; and therefore we have chosen him and selected him by lot, to establish him as priest on account of his virtues.

But with regard to one report we are still in doubt; for we wish to know from thee whence he is, and by whom thou didst conceive and bring him forth; in order that the truth may be known from thee, so that no evil word be spoken of thee nor of the priesthood. For this reason we sent for thee, that we may know the truth, and may not remain in doubt; then thou wilt put an end to the dispute about the

matter before us. And here is the Law before us, and we declare before God most high, the Invisible One, that no harm nor blame shall come to thee from us; but we shall thank thee greatly because thou hast not hidden the truth from us». But Mary thought that if she revealed to them the hidden mystery of her miraculous maternity they would not believe it on account of the difficulty which the matter would present to them; and that their minds would not admit the idea that a virgin could become a mother, and that there could be a son |127 without a father. So she said to them : «If I told you what I know, would you accept it? Nay if I revealed to you the mystery concerning my conception and wonderful maternity, you would not believe my words. Therefore the best thing for me is to be silent».

But the priests, moved by their evil thoughts, said to her : «O Mary, in truth we desire to hear from thee whose son Jesus is. For his father Joseph is dead, and our hearts doubt with regard to him whether he was his father; and therefore we ask of thee the true account of the matter, for by giving it thou wilt stop the whole dispute about thy maternity. We beg thee to reveal to us this mystery truthfully and clearly; and do not fear anyone, for the right course is not concealed from us; but if thou hidest the matter, the Law decrees against thee a curse for ever». This they said to her, and the like. So Mary was troubled, saying : «I am perplexed in every way on account of the incomprehensible One, whom I bore; and behold the day is come for me to declare him. And I understand now the secret of my maternity, which you urge me to reveal. But when you hear it, you will not believe it, and you will not accept what I shall tell you. Even Joseph who, as you say, is dead, doubted of my conception, as you do, and asked me, saying : «Who has been with you?» So I swore that no man had ever touched me; yet he did not believe me until the angel of God appeared to him and satisfied his mind. But he is not living to bear witness for me before you to the truth of what I say.

For the Law accepts the evidence of two witnesses more readily than the evidence of one. But I affirm before God and this Law that 1 brought forth my son Jesus, although I am a virgin; and I will relate to you how I |128 conceived him». Then they said to her : «Verily the thing is manifest; and we acknowledge before God and his holy Law that thou didst in truth bring forth this son; and this is a thing not to be concealed, for a woman who conceives and suffers the pangs of childbirth is she that rejoices more than others when she brings forth. Now thou hast confessed truthfully that thou didst bring him forth; and thus we, who for a long time have conversed with no one, are now sitting conversing with a woman. But we told thee that we would not reprimand thee, if thou wouldst tell us what it is lawful for us to hear and accept from thee». Then Mary began to think in perplexity and fear, bending her face towards the ground and weeping. At last she said : «Now I know that I brought forth Jesus as you say, and this I confess. But as for your suggestion that a man ravished me, indeed the seal of my virginity bears witness to me that I

tell you the truth». When they heard this, they were troubled and said : «This is a statement that we will not accept, for it is a tale of wonder.

How can we write the name of thy son in the genealogy, without the name of his father and of the tribe to which he belongs, as the current custom is?» When Mary heard the priests say this, she said to them : «I told you from the beginning that I know nothing of what you have said; therefore do what you wish, for I will not tell you what has not happened to me». So when she said this, not one of them |129 contradicted her; but they were moved by divine providence, and sent and summoned trustworthy women from among their midwives, and begged them strenuously and eagerly to clear up the matter with regard to her, whether she was a virgin, as she said, before God and the Law. So the midwives examined her, and said to the priests : «She speaks the truth; she is a virgin inviolate, as she said; and her virginity was not lost when she brought forth Jesus, for as you all know, he was born of her.» Then they inquired among her neighbours and acquaintances, to see whether they might find someone to deny the birth. But they found no one, for everyone confirmed the fact of her bringing forth a son, and the time at which she so wonderfully became a mother, by a mystery which was understood by none. Thus the priests found nothing which they could allege against her, or by which they could prove her false, but only the manifest truth.

Then after that they sent for her, moved by necessity, in fear, and said to her : «We have inquired, and have found nothing contrary to thy words, nor to what thou didst relate to us. But it is not right that we should write down what thou sayest. Now therefore we adjure thee by God Almighty to make known to us who is the father of Jesus, by whom thou didst bring him forth, that we may write his name in the register and in the genealogy». And Mary was filled with the Holy Ghost, and said : «I will say nothing with guile or falsehood, and God, by whose name you have adjured me, is my witness». And she began to tell them thus : «The Angel Gabriel came to me, and |130 announced the good tidings to me». So she explained to them all that had happened to her. Then they were confounded and marvelled greatly, and prayed God to forgive them the unjust words which they had used against her. And one of them said : «Indeed this is the Messiah, of whom the Prophets prophesied that he would come of the house of David, and from Bethlehem of the tribe of Juda.» Then they called Jesus, and tendered the oath to him as priest, and wrote his name in the genealogy, with the day and the month and the year, describing him as «Jesus, the son of God, and the son of Mary the virgin, whom she bore while still a virgin.

He is indeed a priest, and is worthy of the office». And this was a providential dispensation, as Luke the Evangelist, who is said to have been a physician, says in a passage of his Gospel , namely, that «When Jesus returned through Galilee in the power of the Spirit, his fame went forth through all the country, and he used to

teach in their synagogues, and all glorified him; and he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up, and entered according to his custom into their synagogue on the Sabbath day. And the attendant gave him the book containing the prophecy of Isaias, in which it is written : The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and therefore he has anointed me and sent me to preach good tidings to the poor, and to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those that are bound, and to announce the acceptable year of the Lord. Then he rolled up the book and gave it to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of those present were fastened upon him. And he began to say to them : To-day has this prophecy been fulfilled in your |131 ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth».

When Philip the Christian heard these words from Theodosius the Jew, he rejoiced greatly. Then the latter said to him : «I know these things and have spoken of them only because I am one of the teachers and readers of the Law; and it is the Law that has confirmed in my heart the belief that he whom Mary brought forth is the Messiah, and that in him and no other is fulfilled the prophecy of Jacob to Juda, his son, and that no other Messiah shall come after him. For it is assured to us that he it is whom the nations were expecting, and he it is that was to come into the world and to deliver those that believe in him. And there shall not be after him any chief or leader or priest in Israel, according to the words of the Prophet David concerning him in the 109th Psalm : «The Lord sware and repents not, Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech». But who among the posterity of Adam is a priest who shall live for ever? For David also says in the 88th Psalm : «Who is the man that shall live and shall not see death?» Therefore it is the Messiah of whom David said that he is the living and eternal priest.»

Then Philip answered and said to him : «It is right that thou shouldst know that thy concealment of this matter makes thee liable to judgment on the Great Day; and I should prefer to reveal what I have heard from thee to our religious prince, that he may send and bring to light the genealogy |132 written in the register, and the Jews' want of faith, so that they may be openly condemned». But the Jew answered and said to the Christian : «Thou knowest that thou wilt bring a judgment upon thyself for breaking the promise which stands between us. Moreover the thing which thou thinkest that thou wilt succeed in doing, thou wilt not be able to do, but wilt be powerless therein; for when the Jews hear of it, they will stir up a great war, and events will take place by which many men will lose their lives. And if they are urged to show the genealogy, and that which is written therein, they will prefer to burn it in the fire, or all of them will be slain with the sword; but they will not show it. Then thou wilt be to blame, and the genealogy will be lost after all. And the Christians do not need it, because it is the register of the Jewish priests; but you believe in Jesus and know him through the words of the prophets and apostles, and have already assured yourselves of the facts of your religion.

But this register will condemn the Jews for ever, so long as it remains with them. Why then dost thou desire to take it away from among them? Believe me, my friend, that every book which I have read of the Law and of the Prophecies of the Prophets with regard to the Messiah is literally in agreement with the genealogy in my eyes, and by it I confirm my faith in the Messiah whom you worship; and this is manifest to all the doctors of the Law. And I know that if thou shouldst mention it, thou wouldst cause its destruction».

Then I, Philip, in spite of many entreaties, at last yielded to his injunctions not to reveal this matter to the prince; for he made me afraid, and so I |133 restrained myself. For he assured me in the name of God, that this evidence proves that Jesus is the Messiah sufficiently to condemn the Jews, and to confirm us and our faith. I, Philip, wrote this report, and laid it before the assembly of the church, and before certain holy bishops and chosen monks. And when they learnt these things they were astonished at them„ and were assured of the truth of the Jew’s words and the testimony of his people to the Lord Christ in the matter of the priesthood, as it was written in the register. Then the bishops and the monks wrote treatises about the priesthood of Christ; for they found that Eusebius Pamphili mentions this matter in several passages in the histories of the Church . For Josephus brings the subject to light in the books of the Captivity . And this Josephus says that Jesus was seen to enter the temple with the priests at the time of the sanctification. Then is mentioned also the testimony of Luke the evangelist concerning the incident that we have already quoted, and concerning the fact that the Lord Christ also made a scourge of cords, and drove the traffickers out of the temple.

This fact and all these testimonies prove that the Jew’s words are true, and that on account of his sincere friendship with Philip he reveal ed this secret matter to him, and bore witness of it to him. And when the Jew Theodosius had finished this true discourse to his friend Philip, he was baptized and became a Christian, and was sealed with the seal of baptism, and received the Holy Mysteries. And everyone was astonished |134 at the soundness of his faith in the Lord Christ, whose power is glorious. And I, Philip, had great joy with Theodosius the neophyte. And when many of the Jews saw this, knowing that he was one of the teachers of the Law among them, and that he was a ruler over them, and had acquired great honours among them, and had then abandoned all that, and become a Christian, many of them believed and were baptized. Therefore I, Philip, glorified God most high, because I had gained the soul of my friend, who was a Jew, but is now a Christian. And glory be to the Lord Jesus Christ with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and at all times and for ever and ever. Amen. Amen. Amen. |135

PART I — CHAPTER I. ---- SAINT MARK.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the One God. The first biography of the history of the holy Church. The history of Saint Mark, the

Disciple and Evangelist, Archbishop of the great city of Alexandria, and first of its Bishops .

In the time of the dispensation of the merciful Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when he appointed for himself disciples to follow him, there were two brothers living in a city of Pentapolis in the West, called Cyrene. The name of the elder of them was Aristobulus, and the name of the other was Barnabas; and they were cultivators of the soil, and sowed and reaped; for they had great possessions. And they understood the Law of Moses excellently well, and knew by heart many of the books of the Old Testament. But great troubles came upon them from the two tribes of the Berbers and |136 Ethiopians, when they were robbed of all their wealth, in the time of Augustus Caesar, prince of the Romans. So on account of the loss of their property, and the trials which had befallen them, they fled from that province, in their anxiety to save their lives, and travelled to the land of the Jews. Now Aristobulus had a son named John. And after they had taken up their abode in the province of Palestine, near the city of Jerusalem, the child John grew and increased in stature by the grace of the Holy Ghost. And these two brothers had a cousin, the wife of Simon Peter, who became the chief of the disciples of the Lord Christ; and the said John whom they had surnamed Mark, used to visit Peter, and learn the Christian doctrines from him out of the holy Scriptures.

And on a certain day, Aristobulus took his son Mark to the Jordan, and while they were walking there a lion and a lioness met them. And when Aristobulus saw them approaching him, and perceived the violence of their rage, he said to his son Mark : «My son, seest thou the fury of this lion which is coming to destroy us? Escape now, and save thyself, my son, and leave them to devour me, according to the will of God Almighty.» But the disciple of Christ, the holy Mark, answered and said to his father : «Fear not, my father, Christ in whom I believe will deliver us from all danger». And when the lions approached them, Mark, the disciple of the Lord Christ, shouted against them with a loud voice, and said : «The Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Living God, commands that you be rent asunder, and that your kind be cut off from these mountains, and that |137 there be no more offspring to you here for ever». Then the lion and the lioness burst asunder in the midst at that moment, and perished straightway; and their young were destroyed. And when Aristobulus, the father of Mark, saw this great miracle which was manifested by his son, through the power of the invincible Lord Jesus Christ, he said to his son : «I am thy father who begat thee, Mark, my son; but to day thou art my father, and my saviour and deliverer.

And now, my dear son, I and my brother pray thee to make us servants of the Lord Jesus Christ whom thou preachest». Then the father of holy Mark and his uncle began to learn the doctrines of Christ from that day. And Mary, the mother of Mark, was the sister of Barnabas, the disciple of the apostles.

After this, the following event took place. There was in those regions, in a town called Azotus, a very large olive-tree, the size of which was greatly admired. And the people of that city were worshippers of the moon, and prayed to that olive-tree. So when the holy Mark saw them pray, he said to them : «As for this olive-tree, which you worship as God, after eating its fruit and burning its branches for fuel, what can it do? Behold, by the word of God whom I worship, I will command this tree to fall to the ground, without being touched by any tool». Then they said to him : «We know that thou workest the magic of the Galilean thy master, and whatever thou wilt thou doest. But we will call upon our god the moon, who raised up for |138 us this olive tree that we might pray to it». The holy Mark answered and said to them : «I will cast it down to the ground; and if your god shall raise it up, then I will serve him together with you». And they were satisfied with these words. And they removed all men from the tree, saying : «See that there be no man concealed in it».

Then the holy Mark raised his face to heaven, and turned himself towards the East, and opened his mouth and prayed, saying : «O my Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Living God, hear thy servant, and command the moon, which is a second attendant on this world, and gives light by night, to let its voice be heard by thy decree and by thy authority, before these men who have no God, and to make known to them who created it, and who created all creation, and who is God, that they may serve him; although I know, O my Lord and God, that it has no voice nor power of speech, and that it is not customary for it to speak to anyone; so that its words may be heard at this hour through thy irresistible power, that these men who have no God may know that the moon is not a god, but a servant under thy authority, and that thou art its God. And command this tree, to which they pray, to fall to the ground, so that all may recognise thy dominion, and that there is no God but thou, with the good Father and the Holy Ghost, the giver of eternal life. Amen». And at that hour, as soon as he had finished his prayer, a great darkness occurred, at midday, and the moon appeared to them shining in the sky.

And they heard a voice |139 from the moon, saying : «O men of little faith, I am not God, that you should worship me, but I am the servant of God and one of his creatures, and I am the minister of Christ my Lord, whom this Mark, his disciple, preaches; and it is he alone that we serve and to whom we minister». At the same moment the olive-tree fell. And great fear came upon all who witnessed this miracle. But as for the people who served and worshipped the tree, they were angry, and rent their garments, and seized the holy Mark and beat him, and gave him up to the unbelieving Jews, who cast him into prison. That night the holy Mark saw in his sleep the Lord Christ, saying to Peter : «I will bring forth all those that are in prison». So when he awoke from his sleep, he saw the doors of his prison open; and he and all those with him in the prison went forth; for the gaolers of the prison were asleep like dead men. But the multitudes who witnessed what took palace

said : «There is no end to our work with these Galileans, for they do these deeds by Beelzebub, the chief of the devils».

And Mark was one of the Seventy Disciples. And he was among the servants who poured out the water which our Lord turned into wine, at the marriage of Cana in Galilee. And it was he who carried the jar of water into the house of Simon the Cyrenian, at the time of the sacramental Supper. And he also it was who entertained the disciples in his house, at the time of the Passion of the Lord Christ, and after his Resurrection from the |140 dead, where he entered to them while the doors were shut. And after his Ascension into heaven, Mark went with Peter to Jerusalem, and they preached the word of God to the multitudes. And the Holy Ghost appeared to Peter, and commanded him to go to the cities and villages which were in that country. So Peter, and Mark with him, went to the district of Bethany, and preached the word of God; and Peter remained there some days. And he saw in a dream the angel of God, who said to him : «In two places there is a great dearth». So Peter said to the angel : «Which places meanest thou?» He said to him : «The city of Alexandria with the land of Egypt, and the land of Rome. It is not a dearth of bread and water, but a dearth arising from ignorance of the word of God, which thou preachest». So when Peter awoke from his sleep, he told Mark what he had witnessed in his dream. And after that Peter and Mark went to the region of Rome, and preached there the word of God.

And in the fifteenth year after the Ascension of Christ, the holy Peter sent Saint Mark, the father and evangelist, to the city of Alexandria , to announce the good tidings there, and to preach the word of God and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom is due glory and honour and worship, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the one God for ever. Amen. |141

CHAPTER II. ---- SAINT MARK.

Martyrdom of the holy Mark, and his preaching in the city of Alexandria .

In the time of the dispensation of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, after his Ascension into heaven, all the countries were allotted among the apostles, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that they might preach in them the words of the good tidings of the Lord Jesus Christ. And after a time it fell to the lot of Mark the evangelist to go to the province of Egypt, and the great city of Alexandria, by the command of the Holy Ghost, that he might cause the people to hear the words of the gospel of the Lord Christ, and confirm them therein; for they were in error, and sunk in the service of idols, and in the worship of the creature instead of the Creator. And they had many temples to their contemptible gods, whom they ministered to in every place, and served with every iniquity and magical art, and to whom they offered sacrifices among themselves. For he was the first who preached in the province of Egypt, and Africa, and Pentapolis, and all those regions. So when the holy Mark returned from Rome, he betook himself first to Pentapolis and preached in all its

districts the word of God, and shewed many miracles; for he healed the sick, and cleansed the lepers, and cast out devils by the grace of God which descended upon him.

And many believed |142 in the Lord Christ through him, and broke their Idols which they used to worship, and all the trees which the devils used to haunt, and from which they addressed the people. And he baptized them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, the One God. And so the Holy Ghost appeared to him, and said to him : «Rise and go to the city of Alexandria, to sow there the good seed which is the word of God». So the disciple of Christ arose and set out, being strengthened by the Holy Ghost, like a combatant in war; and he saluted the brethren, and took leave of them, and said to them : «The Lord Jesus Christ will make my road easy, that I may go to Alexandria and preach his holy gospel there». Then he prayed and said : «O Lord strengthen the brethren who have known thy holy name that I may return to them rejoicing in them». Then the brethren bade him farewell.

So Mark journeyed to the city of Alexandria; and when he entered in at the gate, the strap of his shoe broke. And when he saw this, he thought: «Now I know that the Lord has made my way easy». Then he turned, and saw a cobbler there, and went to him and gave him the shoe that he might mend it. And when the cobbler received it, and took the awl to work upon it, the awl pierced his hand. So he said : «Heis ho Theos»; the interpretation of which is, «God is One». And. when the holy Mark heard him mention the name of God, he rejoiced greatly, and turned his face to the East and |143 said : «O my Lord Jesus, it is thou that makest my road easy in every place». Then he spat on the ground and took from it clay, and put it on the place where the awl had pierced the cobbler’s hand, saying : «In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, the One living and eternal God, may the hand of this man be healed at this moment, that thy holy name may be glorified». Then his hand at once became whole. The holy Mark said to him : «If thou knowest that God is one, why dost thou serve these many gods?» The cobbler answered him : «We mention God with our mouths, but that is all; for we know not who he is».

And the cobbler remained astonished at the power of God which descended upon the holy Mark, and said to him : «I pray thee, O man of God, to come to the dwelling of thy servant, to rest and eat bread, for I find that to-day thou hast conferred a benefit upon me». Then the holy Mark replied with joy : «May the Lord give thee the bread of life in heaven!» And he went with him to his house. And when he entered his dwelling, he said : «May the blessing of God be in this house!» and he uttered a prayer. After they had eaten, the cobbler said to him : «O my father, I beg thee to make known to me who thou art that hast worked this great miracle». Then the saint answered him : «I serve Jesus Christ, the Son of the ever living God». The cobbler exclaimed : «I would that I could see him». The holy Mark said

to him : «I will cause thee to behold him». Then he began to teach him the gospel |144 of good tidings, and the doctrine of the glory and power and dominion which belong to God from the beginning, and exhorted him with many exhortations and instructions, of which his history bears witness, and ended by saying to him : «The Lord Christ in the last times became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and came into the world, and saved us from our sins».

And he explained to him what the prophets prophesied of him, passage by passage. Then the cobbler said to him : «I have never heard at all of these books which thou speakest of; but the books of the Greek philosophers are what men teach their children here, and so do the Egyptians». So the holy Mark said to him : «The wisdom of the philosophers of this world is vanity before God». Then when the cobbler had heard wisdom and the words of the Scriptures from the holy Mark, together with the great miracle which he had seen him work upon his hand, his heart inclined towards him, and he believed in the Lord, and was baptized, he and all the people of his house, and all his neighbours. And his name was Annianus.

And when those that believed in the Lord were multiplied, and the people of the city heard that a man who was a Jew and a Galilean had entered the city, wishing to overthrow the worship of the idols, their gods, and had persuaded many to abstain from serving them, they sought him everywhere; and they appointed men to watch for him. So when the holy Mark knew that they were conspiring together, he ordained Annianus bishop of Alexandria, and also ordained three priests and seven deacons, |145 and appointed these eleven to serve and to comfort the faithful brethren. But he himself departed from among them, and went to Pentapolis, and remained there two years, preaching and appointing bishops and priests and deacons in all their districts. Then he returned to Alexandria, and found that the brethren had been strengthened in the faith, and had multiplied by the grace of God, and had found means to build a church in a place called the Cattle-pasture , near the sea, beside a rock from which stone is hewn. So the holy Mark greatly rejoiced at this; and he fell upon his knees, and blessed God for confirming the servants of the faith, whom he had himself instructed in the doctrines of the Lord Christ, and because they had turned away from the service of idols.

But when those unbelievers learnt that the holy Mark had returned to Alexandria, they were filled with fury on account of the works which the believers in Christ wrought, such as healing the sick, and driving out devils, and loosing the tongues of the dumb, and opening the ears of the deaf, and cleansing the lepers; and they sought for the holy Mark with great fury, but found him not; and they gnashed against him with their teeth in their temples and places of their idols, in wrath, saying : «Do you not see the wickedness of this sorcerer?»

And on the first day of the week, the day of the Easter festival of the Lord Christ, which fell that year on the 29th of Barmudah, when the |146 festival of the idola-

trous unbelievers also took place, they sought him with zeal, and found him in the sanctuary. So they rushed forward and seized him, and fastened a rope round his throat, and dragged him along the ground, saying : «Drag the serpent through the cattle-yard!» But the saint, while they dragged him, kept praising God and saying : «Thanks be to thee, O Lord, because thou hast made me worthy to suffer for thy holy name». And his flesh was lacerated, and clove to the stones of the streets; and his blood ran over the ground. So when evening came, they took him to the prison, that they might take counsel how they should put him to death. And at midnight, the doors of the prison being shut, and the gaolers asleep at the doors, behold there was a great earthquake and a mighty tumult. And the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and entered to the saint, and said to him : «O Mark, servant of God, behold thy name is written in the book of life; and thou art numbered among the assembly of the saints, and thy soul shall sing praises with the angels in the heavens; and thy body shall not perish nor cease to exist upon earth».

And when he awoke from his sleep, he raised his eyes to heaven, and said : «I thank thee, O my Lord Jesus Christ, and pray thee to receive me to thyself, that I may be happy in thygoodness». And when he had finished these words, he slept again; and the Lord Christ appeared to him in the form in which the disciples knew him, |147 and said to him : «Hail Mark, the evangelist and chosen one!» So the saint said to him : «I thank thee, O my Saviour Jesus Christ, because thou hast made me worthy to suffer for thy holy name». And the Lord and Saviour gave him his salutation, and disappeared from him.

And when he awoke, and morning had come, the multitude assembled, and brought the saint out of the prison, and put a rope again round his neck, and said : «Drag the serpent through the cattle-shed!» And they drew the saint along the ground, while he gave thanks to the Lord Christ, and glorified him, saying : «I render my spirit into thy hands, O my God !» After saying these words, the saint gave up the ghost. Then the ministers of the unclean idols collected much wood in a place called Angelion , that they might burn the body of the saint there. But by the command of God there was a thick mist and a strong wind., so that the earth trembled; and much rain fell, and many of the people died of fear and terror; and they said : «Verily, Serapis, the idol, has come to seek the man who has been killed this day».

Then the faithful brethren assembled, and took the body of the holy Saint Mark from the ashes; and nothing in it had been changed. And they carried it to the church in which they used to celebrate the Liturgy; and they enshrouded it, and prayed over it according to the established rites. And they dug a place for him, and buried his body there; that they might preserve |148 his memory at all times with joy and supplication, and benediction, on account of the grace which the Lord Christ gave them by his means in the city of Alexandria. And they placed him in the

eastern part of the church, on the day on which his martyrdom was accomplished (he being the first of the Galileans to be martyred for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in Alexandria), namely the last day of Barmudah according to the reckoning of the Egyptians, which is equivalent to the 8th day before the kalends of May among the months of the Romans, and the 24th of Nisan among the months of the Hebrews.

And we also, the sons of the orthodox, offer glory and sanctification and praise to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom is due laud and honour and worship, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the Giver of Life and Consubstantial one, now and for ever. |149

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — ANNIANUS, THE SECOND PATRIARCH . A. D. 62-85

When the evangelist Mark, the apostle of the Lord Christ, died, Annianus was enthroned as patriarch after him. In his time the brethren and believers in Christ increased in numbers, and he ordained some of them priests and deacons. He continued twenty-two years, and went to his rest on the 20th. of Hatur, in the second year of the reign of Domitian, prince of Rome.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — AVILIUS, THE THIRD PATRIARCH . A. D. 85-98

Then the orthodox people assembled and consulted together and took a man named Avilius, and elected him patriarch on the episcopal throne of Mark the evangelist, in the room of Annianus. This Avilius was a man of chaste life; and he confirmed the people in the knowledge of Christ. In |150 his time the orthodox people increased in numbers, in Egypt and Pentapolis and the province of Africa. He remained twelve years in the see; and the Church was in peace in his days. He went to his rest on the 1st. of Tut, in the 15th year of the reign of the above-named prince. When the priests, and the bishops, his suffragans in the land, heard that the patriarch was dead, they mourned for him. Then they assembled at Alexandria, and took counsel together with the orthodox laity of that city, and cast lots, that they might know who was worthy to sit upon the throne of Saint Mark, the evangelist and disciple of the Lord Christ, in succession to the Father Avilius; and their choice fell with one consent, by the inspiration of the Lord Christ, our Master, upon an elect man, who feared God, and whose name was Cerdo.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — CERDO , THE FOURTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 98-109

So they took Cerdo, and appointed him to the see of Alexandria. He was chaste, humble and innocent throughout his life. He held his office for eleven years, and went to his rest on the 21st. day of Baunah, in the ninth year of the reign of Trajan the prince. |151

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — PRIMUS , THE FIFTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 109-122

After this there was among the orthodox people of Christ a man named Primus, who was chaste as the angels, and piously performed many good works. So they took counsel with regard to this man, and chose him, and appointed him to the evangelical see, as patriarch. He remained in possession of it twelve years, and there was peace in the Church in his days. He went to his rest on the 3rd. of Misri, in the fifth year of the reign of Hadrian the prince.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — JUSTUS , THE SIXTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 122-130

After this the people assembled, and their choice fell upon an excellent and wise man among them, whose name was Justus, and they appointed him patriarch. He continued for eleven years, and went to his rest on the 12th. of Baunah, in the sixteenth year of the reign of Hadrian, and was buried with his fathers. |152

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — EUMENES , THE SEVENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 130-142

And after that they appointed Eumenes patriarch in the see of Alexandria; and he remained for thirteen years, and was acceptable to God and to the Church. He went to his rest on the 10th. of Babah, in the sixth year of Antoninus, the prince.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — MARK II, THE EIGHTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 143-154

So when the aforesaid patriarch departed, the people assembled and took a man who loved God, and whose name was Mark, and appointed him patriarch, and set him upon the throne of the evangelist Saint Mark. He occupied it for nine years and some months, living an admirable life, and went to his rest on the 6th of Tubah, in the fifteenth year of Antoninus, the prince.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — CELADION, THE NINTH PATRIARCH. A.D. 157-167

There was in those days among the people a man who loved God, and whose name was Celadion. So the orthodox laity assembled, together |153 with the bishops who were at Alexandria in those days, and took Celadion, and appointed him patriarch, and placed him upon the evangelical throne. He was beloved by all the people. He remained fourteen years, and died in the reign of Aurelius and Verus, the two sons of the princes, on the 9th. of Abib. He was enshrouded, and buried with his fathers, the patriarchs, whose names have been mentioned above.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — AGRIPP1NUS , THE TENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 167-180

Then the people assembled again with one consent, and laid their hands upon a man of the congregation who feared God, and whose name was Agrippinus; and they appointed him patriarch, and set him upon the evangelical throne. He sat for twelve years, and died on the 5th of Amshir, in the nineteenth year of the reign of the princes already named.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — JULIAN , THE ELEVENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 180-189

There was a man who was a wise priest, and had studied the books of God, and his name was Julian; and he walked in the path of chastity and religion and tranquillity. So a body of bishops of the synod assembled, together with the orthodox laity, in the city of Alexandria, and searched |154 among the whole people, but could find none like this priest. So they laid their hands upon him, and appointed him patriarch. He composed homilies and sermons on the saints; and he continued in the see ten years. After this patriarch, the bishop of Alexandria did not remain always in that city, but issued thence secretly, and ordained priests in every place, as Saint Mark, the evangelist, had done. Julian went to his rest on the 8th. of Barmahat, or on the 12th. of Babah, as some say, in the fifth year of the reign of Severus the prince.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — DEMETRIUS , THE TWELFTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 189-231

When the patriarch Julian was dying, an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream, on the night before his death, and said to him : «The man who shall visit thee to-morrow with a bunch of grapes shall be patriarch after thee.» Accordingly, when it was morning, a peasant came to him, who was married, and could neither read nor write; and his name was Demetrius. This man had gone out to prune his vineyard, and found |155 there a bunch of grapes, although it was not the season of grapes; so he brought it to the patriarch. And the patriarch Julian said to the bystanders : « This man shall be your patriarch: for so the angel of the Lord last night declared to me.» So they took him by force, and bound him with iron fetters. And Julian died on that very day; and Demetrius was consecrated patriarch.

And the grace of God descended upon this man, and he was like Joseph, the son of Jacob; yea, and more excellent than Joseph, for though Demetrius was married, he knew not his wife. And if any should say : «How is it lawful that a patriarch should be married?» we reply that the apostles declare, in their canons, that if a bishop be wedded to one wife, that shall not be forbidden him; for the believing wife is pure, and her bed undefiled, and no sin can be laid to his charge on that account. And the patriarch is but bishop of Alexandria, with a right of primacy over the bishops of the different provinces subject to that city; for he is the successor of Saint Mark, the apostle and evangelist, who had jurisdiction over all Egypt and Pentapolis and Ethiopia and Nubia, through his preaching the gospel in those parts; and therefore the bishop of Alexandria also of necessity has jurisdiction over those countries. But the people were unjust towards this patriarch, Demetrius, saying that he was the twelfth of the patriarchs, counting from Mark, the evangelist, and that all of them were unmarried except Demetrius; and |156 they bewailed his fall.

He had a gift from God, which was that when he had finished the liturgy, before he communicated any one of the people, he beheld the Lord Christ, giving the Eucharist by his hand;

and when a person came up who was unworthy to receive the Mysteries, the Lord Christ revealed to him that man's sin, so that he would not communicate him. Then he told that man the reason, so that he confessed his offence. And Demetrius reproved him, and said : «Turn away from thy sin which thou dost commit, and then come again to receive the Holy Mysteries.» When this practice had continued a long time, the faithful of Alexandria left off sinning for fear of the patriarch, lest he should put them to open shame; and each one said to his friend or his kinsman : «Beware lest thou sin, lest the patriarch denounce thee in the presence of the congregation.» But some of the people said : «This is a married man. How then can he reprove us, seeing that he has dishonoured this see? For none has sat therein to this day who was not unwedded.» Again others said : «His marriage does not lessen his merits, for marriage is pure and undefiled before God.» But it was God's will to make his virtues manifest, that he might be glorified, and might not leave this great secret unknown. As he said in his holy gospel, by his pure mouth : «A city when it is set on a hill cannot be hidden,» so God made the merits of this patriarch manifest, that his people might increase in virtue thereby.

Accordingly, on a certain night, an angel of the Lord came to Demetrius, and said to him : «Demetrius, seek not thine own |157 salvation by neglecting thy neighbour; but remember what the gospel says, that the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep». Then Demetrius said to the angel : «O my Lord, teach me what thou commandest me to do. If thou wilt send me to martyrdom, I am ready to let my blood be shed for the name of Christ.» Then the angel said to him : «Listen to me, Demetrius, and I will tell thee. The Lord Christ was incarnate only to save his people; and it is not right that thou shouldst now save thine own soul, and allow this people to be filled with scruples on account of thee.» So Demetrius answered : «What is my sin against the people? Teach me, my Lord, that I may repent of it.» Then the angel said : «This secret which is between thee and thy wife; namely, that thou hast never approached her. Now therefore make this known to the people.» But Demetrius said : «I pray thee that I may die before thee rather than that thou shouldst reveal this secret to any man!» Then the angel answered : «Know that the scripture says : He that is disobedient shall perish. Tomorrow, therefore, after the end.

of the liturgy, assemble the priests and the people, and make known to them this secret which is between thee and thy wife.» When the patriarch heard this, he marvelled, and said : «Blessed is the Lord, who does not abandon those that trust in him.» Then the angel departed from him.

So on the morrow, which was the feast of Pentecost, the patriarch celebrated the liturgy, and bade the archdeacon give directions to the clergy and the people that not one of them should leave the church, but that they should |158 gather together round the patriarchal throne. The archdeacon, therefore, proclaimed to the congregation : «The patriarch's wish is to speak to you all. Let none of you, therefore, depart without hearing what he shall say.» When they had sat down, the patriarch bid the brethren collect much fuel; and they did so, marvelling thereat and saying : «What is this that the patriarch will do ?» Then he said to them : «Rise and let us pray!» So they prayed, and afterwards sat down. And he said to them : «I beg you out of your love for me, to allow my wife to be present before you, that she may receive of your blessing.» Then they marvelled, and thought in their hearts : «What is this that he does?» And they all said : «Whatever thou biddest us do shall be done.» Then the patriarch commanded one of his servants, saying : «Call my wife, the handmaid of the saints, that she may receive their blessing.» So the holy woman entered, and stood in the midst of the congregation.

And her husband, the patriarch, arose, where they could all behold him, and stood by the blazing logs, which had already been lighted, and spread out his cloak, and took burning embers from the fire with his hand and put them in his cloak; and all the spectators were astonished at the quantity of burning fuel in his garment, and yet it was not burned. Then he said to his wife : «Spread out thy woollen pallium which thou hast upon thee.» So she spread it out; and the patriarch transferred the embers to it while she stood there; and he put incense on the fire, and commanded her to incense all the congregation; and she did so, and yet her pallium was not burned. Then the patriarch said again : «Let us pray»; while the embers were blazing in his wife's pallium, which yet was not burned. |159

You have now heard, my friends, this great wonder. This man had made himself an eunuch of his own free will, so that he was more glorious than those that are born eunuchs; and therefore the fire had no effect upon this saint, nor upon his garments, nor upon those of his wife, because he had extinguished the flames of lust. But now let us abridge our discourse upon this subject, and return to the history, glorifying God for ever and ever. So when the clergy had prayed, they said to the patriarch : «We beg of thy Holiness to explain to us this wonderful mystery.» And he replied : «Attend, all of you, to what I say. Know that I have not done this seeking glory from men. My age is now sixty-three years. My wife who stands before you is my cousin. Her parents died and left her when she was a child. My father brought her to me, for he had no other child than me, and she was the only child of my uncle. So I grew up with her in my father's house, and we dwelt together. When she was fifteen, my parents resolved to many me to her, in order that their possessions might not pass to a stranger, but that we might inherit them. So the wedding was performed, as men do such things for their children; and I went in to her.

And when they had left us alone, she said to me : «How could they give me to thee, seeing that I am thy sister?» So I said to her : «Listen to what I say. We must of necessity remain together in this chamber without being separated all our lives, but there must be no further connexion between us, until death shall part us; and, if we remain thus in purity, we shall meet in the heavenly Jerusalem, and enjoy one |160 another's company in eternal bliss.» And when she heard this, she accepted my proposal; and her body remained inviolate. But my parents knew nothing of our compact. Then the wedding-guests demanded the customary proof of the consummation of the marriage, as you know is done by foolish men; but my mother said to them : «These two are young, and the days before them are many.» Thus we kept our purity; and when my parents as well as her parents were dead, we remained orphans together. It is now forty-eight years since I married my wife, and we sleep on one bed and one mattress and beneath one coverlet; and the Lord, who knows and judges the living and the dead, and understands the secrets of all hearts, knows that I have never learnt that she is a woman, nor has she learnt that I am a man; but we see one another's face and no more. We sleep together, but the embraces of this world are unknown to us.

And when we fall asleep, we see a form with eagle's wings, which comes flying and alights upon our bed between her and me, and stretches its right wing over me, and its left wing over her, until the morning, when it departs; and we behold it until it goes. Do not think, my brethren and ye people who love God, that I have disclosed this secret to you to gain the glory of this world which passes away, nor that I have told you this of my own will; but it is the command of the Lord, who bade me do it, for he desires the good of all men, and he is Christ our Saviour.» |161

When Demetrius had finished this discourse, the people all fell upon their faces on the earth, saying : «Verily, our father, thou art more excellent than many of the saints; and God has shewn his mercy towards us in making thee head over us.» And they gave thanks to him, and besought him to forgive their evil thoughts of him. Then he gave them his blessing, and prayed for them; and they dispersed to their own homes, praising God. And after this, Demetrius bade his wife depart to her house.

Have you ever heard, you that listen to me, of such wonders? This holy, father dwelt so long with his lovely and virtuous wife, and yet endured the trial. Where now are the men who are married, and yet commit adultery also, while professing to be Christians? Let them come and listen to the Father Demetrius, the patriarch, saying : «I have known the face of my wife and no more», that they may be ashamed and confounded! O that valiant saint, fighting against his bodily desires! O that miracle! How could his heart remain unmoved when he beheld his wife's beauty, and how could his senses remain unexcited before her loveliness! How wonderful

was thy discourse, O thou saint, in thy bridal chamber! The archer whose arrows strike all men, namely Satan, was unable to strike thee. Demetrius said : «I am a man and have a body like all other men, but I will teach you how to answer the suggestions of the Devil. When my heart was troubled by evil thoughts, I remembered the |162 compact I had made with Christ; and if I broke it, I feared that he would reject me in the kingdom of Heaven, before the Father and his holy angels.

Moreover, when I saw the beauty and grace of her form, I thought of the corpses lying in their tombs and the foulness of their odour, so to keep myself from strange words, through fear of the fire that is not quenched, and the worm that sleepeth not, in the other world, where none can open his mouth». O my friends, this Father was chosen by God, and in his courage and valour was braver than those that slay lions; as one of the doctors says : «The brave man is not he that kills wild beasts, but he that dies pure from the embraces and snares of women». Blessed is this saint, for his degree is exalted! Like Joseph in the house of the Egyptian woman, when she solicited him on every occasion that she could, so Demetrius fought against his desires every day and night until his battle was finished, and preserved his chastity and his right faith throughout his life.

Demetrius remained patriarch forty-three years. In his time there was a disturbance at Alexandria, and the emperor Severus banished him to a place called the quarter of the Museum; and there he died on the 12th. day of Barmahat, which, I believe, was the day of the manifestation of his virginity. Now in the reign of the emperor Severus many became martyrs for the love of God. Among them was the father of a man named Origen , who |163 learned the sciences of the heathen, and abandoned the books of God, and began to speak blasphemously of them. So when the Father Demetrius heard of this man, and saw that some of the people had gone astray after his lies, he removed him from the church. In these days also the martyrs Plutarch and Serenus were burnt alive, and Heraclides and Heron were beheaded. Likewise another Serenus, and the woman Heraïs, and Basilides; and Potamiaena, with her mother Marcella, who suffered many torments and severe agonies; also Anatolius, who was the father of the princes, and Eusebius, and Macarius, uncle of Claudius, and Justus, and Theodore the Eastern; all these martyrs were kinsmen. There was also another virgin named Thecla. Now Basilides was a soldier, and he came forward of his own free will; and when they questioned him, he replied : «I am a Christian because I saw three days ago in a dream a woman who appeared to me, and placed upon my head a crown from Jesus Christ». Thus Basilides obtained the crown of martyrdom; and so likewise a great number were martyred; for Potamiaena was seen by them in dreams, and encouraged them to have faith in the Lord Christ, so that they receved the crown of martyrdom.

Now there had come to Alexandria, in the room of Pantaenus, a new governor , whose name was Clement; and he remained governor until those |164 days. And

this Clement composed out of his own head books, in which he overthrew the received chronology. Then a Jewish scribe, named Judas , who had read in the book of the Visions of Daniel, in the tenth year of the reign of Severus, explained the years and dates mystically up to the epoch of Antichrist, on a system of his own, and declared that the time was at hand, on account of the deeds of Severus, the hostile prince.

And when Origen, whom Demetrius had cut off on account of his composing unlawful books of magic, and leaving the books of the holy writers, saw this, he wrote many treatises containing many blasphemies. Among these was his doctrine that the Father created the Son, and the Son created the Holy Ghost; for he denied that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one God, and that the Persons of the Trinity are inferior one to another in nothing, but have the same power and the same might. So, on account of his wicked creed, the Church abandoned him, because he was strange to her, and was not one of her children, for he taught corrupt doctrines. And when he left the Church and was deposed from his office, he departed from Alexandria, and travelled to Palestine, and there intrigued until he obtained priestly rank, and was ordained priest by the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine . Then Origen returned to Alexandria, believing that he would there be recognized as a priest, and would do just as he desired; but the holy Father Demetrius would not receive him, saying to him : «According to the |165 apostolic canon, a priest must not be removed from the altar to which he has been ordained. Return, therefore, to the place to which thou hast been ordained priest, and serve there in all humility according to the canon; for I will not break the canons of the Church to gain the approval of men». So Origen remained rejected. This was before the patriarch knew of Origen’s blasphemies and misbelief; and the thing became a scandal to all men, because he had made himself a teacher, although he was unworthy to be even a disciple.

Now Severus, the prince, reigned eighteen years, and then died. And Antoninus, his son, reigned after him. After this time lived many who were strong by the help of Christ, through the dispensation of God. One of these was Alexander, the confessor, and bishop of Jerusalem, who succeeded Narcissus . This Narcissus performed many miracles in his life time. For, when the church was in need of oil, Narcissus even bade them fill the lamps with water , during the vigil-service of Easter, and prayed; and the water was turned into oil, and the lamps were kindled. Such wonders he did many times, through his faith in the oneness of Christ; and all men bore witness to these miracles; and we have learnt his history from persons worthy of credit. But some men hated him in their, wickedness, and wished to kill him, and invented lies concerning him, swearing that he did evil. And one of |166 these wicked men began to kindle a fire, and was burnt thereby; and another’s bowels gushed out, so that he died; and another fell sick, and his body was consumed; and another became blind; so that men understood that their words against Narcissus

were lies, through the proofs that were given of his holiness. Then Narcissus was made bishop; and no evil befell him because he was pious and wise, and confessed the Lord Christ.

It came to pass that he fled from the church, and retired into the wilderness, because the people were in disorder, and some of them accused him of intrigue. But the all-seeing eye would not endure this; for God punished those that held an evil and heretical creed and a false faith concerning him; and the first of these men died, with all his household, in a fire from a spark which fell upon them; and another was afflicted with pains from his head to his feet, with a violent fever; and a third tried to flee because of his evil conscience, but God overtook him, and he was struck with sudden blindness, and acknowledged his wicked conduct towards the holy bishop, before all, and was devoured by remorse, and repented, and wept over the loss of his sight. And as for Narcissus, the bishop, he lay hid in the desert, and none knew where he was for many days. But, because the churches over which he was bishop were left without any to govern them, circumstances made it necessary that they should appoint in his stead a man named Dius , who, however, occupied the see for a short time only, and then died. So they ordained in his place another, named Germanion . |167 After that, the glorious Father Narcissus was found, like one risen from the dead; and they begged him to return to his see; and the people were greatly rejoiced over him.

But he had devoted himself to philosophy, and to the cultivation of the graces which God had granted to him; and therefore he would not return to serve his diocese. Now as for Alexander, who has been mentioned above, he was in possession of another see; but he saw in a dream the angel of God, who bade him go to help Narcissus, and serve God , for he had already been consecrated bishop in Cappadocia. So he went to Jerusalem at that time to pray, and saw the holy churches which he had desired to behold, and visited all the holy places. Then he was about to return to Cappadocia his native country; but the brethren prevented him; and he was warned in a dream. For they all heard a voice in the church, saying : «Go forth to the gate, and the first man whom you shall meet entering through it make your bishop.» This they did, and there they found Alexander; and they clung to him. But he refused to be their bishop, saying : «I will not consent.» So they appointed him by force, in the presence of an assembly of the bishops, in the city of Jerusalem, and by their command, with one purpose and one consent. And in the letters which Alexander wrote and sent to Antinoe, he spoke of Narcissus, and said that they had one faith in common, and were in agreement in all things in the church of Jerusalem.

And in all Alexander’s letters, he said : «Narcissus, who |168 preceded me in this bishopric, salutes you. He is now with me and he encourages me, and fortifies me

by his prayers, that I may be strong in this ministry. He has continued to serve God thus for one hundred and sixteen years . I pray you to be of one heart and mind.»

Among the holy men of this time was Serapion also, who was patriarch of Antioch; and when he died Asclepiades, the confessor, was appointed, and his degree was exalted. And Alexander wrote to the people of Antioch with regard to Asclepiades, saying thus : «Alexander, the servant of God, and believer in Jesus Christ, addresses the holy church in Antioch, in the Lord, with joy, by the hand of the chaste priest Clement. My brethren, I desire that you promote Asclepiades, who is worthy of that post.» So he was ordained to the see. Serapion also wrote to the people of Antioch a letter , in which he said that a Jew, named Marcian, had written books, which he attributed to Peter, the chief of the apostles, and in which the writer spoke lies, «Beware, therefore,» continued Serapion, «of these writings. We receive Peter and the rest of the disciples, as we receive the commands of Christ, because they saw him and heard his words. But these lying books we do not accept, but reject them, because they contain nothing of the doctrine of our fathers.» Now when the priest arrived at Antioch with the letters, he said to them : «Be confirmed in the true faith, and do not turn aside to the spurious writings attributed to Peter, for they are false and delusive, |169 and in them is the beginning of heresy; and for this reason I am come to you in haste, for we have learnt that this Marcian, the Jew, has led multitudes astray by his books, so that they have become heretics.» For this heretic wrote many books, and the history from which we are quoting contains an account of some of them. But because it would make our narrative too long, I think it needless to write down their names.

Now Demetrius, the holy patriarch of Alexandria, displayed much learning and wisdom, although he had formerly been ignorant and unable to read or write; and all his spiritual children were continually admonished by him. But when he found that he was growing old in his researches into the divine doctrines and scriptures, so that he was carried into the church in a litter, although he did not cease from giving instruction from morning to night, while the brethren went and came that they might profit by his teaching, then he named Heraclas as his deputy and successor. Now Heraclas was an elect man, learned in the scriptures of God , teaching the doctrines of the Church and the science of the word of God; and he knew the canons of the Church by heart.

So when Origen, whom Demetrius had excommunicated, saw that the Church had rejected him, he went to the Jews, and expounded for them part of the Hebrew books, in a new fashion; and he concealed the prophecies which they contain of the Lord Christ, so that when he came to the mention of the thicket in which the ram of Abraham, the Friend of God, was caught |170 by its horns, which the Fathers interpret as a type of the wood of the Cross, Origen even concealed and abandoned this interpretation. He wrote books full of lies and containing no truth. And there

was with Origen another heretic named Symmachus, who was the cause of much dissension. He said that Christ was born of Mary by Joseph , and rejected the miracle of the wondrous birth; denying also that Christ, who was born without labour (for so he was born of the Virgin), is very God and Man, and One of Two; thus contradicting the true Gospel according to Matthew, and what he says concerning the Nativity. But the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. This heretic pretended that he was a Christian; and in one place he says that he was a philosopher, and had read the books of the Sabaeans and of the schismatics. Subsequently he contracted a friendship with Origen, and led astray many simple women. At this time there was a holy and excellent man, who possessed divine wisdom, named Ammonius;

and he refuted them both, and exposed their false and unrighteous explanations of the Scriptures, and their lies. After this, Origen went to Caesarea in Palestine, where he had been made priest, and brought books back to Alexandria, in great abundance. But the Father Demetrius would not receive him, and banished him, because he knew what his conduct was. So Origen departed and went to a place called Thmuis in Augustamnica, and invented a plausible story for the bishop, whose name was Ammonius; so he placed Origen in one of |171 the churches. But when Demetrius heard of this, he went himself straightway to Thmuis, and banished Origen, and removed the bishop Ammonius who had received him, and in his indignation appointed another bishop in his stead; for having convinced himself that the bishop had received that heretic, although he knew his history and his false doctrine, he appointed in his place a bishop named Phileas, a man who feared God, and was full of faith. But Phileas said : «I will not sit upon the episcopal throne while Ammonius is alive.» So when Ammonius died, the aforesaid bishop, Phileas, sat after him; and he was martyred a long time afterwards , and departed to the Lord in peace. And Origen, the excommunicate, went to Caesarea in Palestine, ,and began to perform his priestly duties as if he were bishop there.

So the Father Demetrius wrote to Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, saying : «We have never heard of a prodigal and heretic teaching in a place in which there were bishops duly established .» And he proceeds to blame the bishop of Caesarea, whose name was Theoctistus, and reprehends Origen who was living in his diocese, and condemns his conduct in this matter, saying : «I never thought that such a thing would be done at Caesarea, with this bishop.» For we have found this Origen saying in certain books that the Son and the Holy Ghost are created. So the bishop of Caesarea read the letter of the Father Demetrius in the church, for the hishop of Jerusalem sent it to him; and also he suspended Origen, and drove |172 him away from the diocese of Caesarea. Then Origen shamelessly returned to Alexandria.

On account of the many changes among the princes and patriarchs of Rome and Antioch; we have thought it unnecessary to give an account of them, with a view to brevity and to the avoidance of prolixity. Philetus became patriarch of Antioch,

and in his days a heretic appeared, who wrote strange books. Then Philetus died, and Zebinus was appointed patriarch of Antioch instead of him. And Zebinus commanded that neither the works of that heretic nor those of Origen, who had been banished from Alexandria, should be read; for the writings of the latter had become celebrated .

Now these are the words of Origen : «Let him who wishes to read the Scriptures read the books named below. The books of the Old Testament are as follows : The five books of the Law; the book of Josue the son of Nun; the book of the Judges; the book of Ruth the Moabitess; the books of Kings, the Paralipomena, the book of Esdras, the Psalms of the prophet David, the Wisdom of Solomon, the book of Isaias, the book of Jeremias, the book of Ezechiel, the book of Daniel, the book of Job, the book of Esther, the book of Samuel, the book of Machabees , the book of the Twelve Minor Prophets. The books of the New Testament are these : the Gospel of Matthew, which he wrote in |173 Hebrew on a roll, when he was at Caesarea, at the house of a man whose descendants preserve it from generation to generation; and it was translated into Greek, and rendered into all languages by the power of the Lord Christ. Then the Gospel of Mark, which he wrote in Greek, while Peter, chief of the apostles, was with him, and which was read in the assembly of the princes. Then the Gospel of Luke, the disciple of Paul, which he wrote in Greek at Antioch. The Gospel of John, the son of Zebedee, whom his disciples, after he had grown old, frequently solicited until he wrote it in Greek at Ephesus. The book of the Acts of the Apostles and Disciples, called Praxeis.

The book of the Epistles of Paul the Elect, which contains fourteen epistles. The book of the Revelation of John the Evangelist, or the Apocalypse». There is also the book of the Didascalia, or Teaching of the Apostles, and Canons of the Church, written by the apostles before they dispersed to preach the gospel. These are the books delivered to the Catholic and Apostolic Church. After them come the books of the Fathers and Doctors, which they composed through the instruction of the Holy Ghost, such as the homilies and other writings; for they added nothing to the Scriptures, and took nothing from them. But the books of the heretic Origen are contemned by God, and there is nothing in them written with the Holy Ghost. As he said by Paul the apostle : or We receive no spirit of this world, but the spirit that God has given to us.»

Now the glorious father, Demetrius, remained patriarch forty-three years, and went to his rest, as we have related. |174

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — HERACLAS , THE THIRTEENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 231-247

This father had been, in the time of the patriarch Demetrius, a teacher in the Church, and gained distinction in the divine sciences . At this time Firmilian , who was bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, discovered that Origen had associated himself with the Jews at that place, and had lived amongst them for a time. When Alexander had ruled in Rome for thirteen years, Maximinus Caesar reigned after him. And this prince set up a great persecution against the rulers of the Church only, because they were the teachers of those that were baptized; and many died in his days. And when Maximin died, Gordian reigned in Rome. And the patriarch of that city was Pontianus, who sat for six years ; and when he died, Anteros became patriarch after him, and occupied the see for one month. And they enquired of him whom they should appoint in his stead.

And they found a man in the fields upon whom a wonder had been manifested; for the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove. So they took him, and made him patriarch of Rome. And Zebinus died at Antioch, and Babylas was appointed after him. |175

So Heraclas was made patriarch of Alexandria after Demetrius, and was counted worthy to serve in the sanctuary. And Heraclas gave the direction of the studies at Alexandria to Dionysius, and entrusted to him all the affairs of the patriarchate. This man was of a noble family, and was a distinguished teacher; and he grew up in Alexandria. The cause of his being called, and entering into the orthodox faith was as follows. This Dionysius had formerly been a worshipper of idols, according to the religion of the Sabaeans, among whom he was a leader, and a philosopher. While he was sitting one day, behold there passed an aged widow, holding in her hand a book containing some of the epistles of saint Paul, the apostle; and she

said to him : «Wilt thou buy this from me?» So he took the book, and studied it; and it filled him with admiration, and pleased him greatly, and took possession of his heart. And when he understood the book, he marvelled greatly thereat, and rejoiced over it exceedingly. So he said to the old woman : «What price dost thou ask for the book?» And she answered : «One carat of gold». So he gave her three carats, and said to her : «Go and search the place in which thou didst find this book, and whatever thou shalt discover bring to me, and I will give thee more than its full price». Then the old woman went away, and brought him three books;

and he took them from her, and gave her nine carats. But when he had read the books, he became aware that a part of the contents was still wanting. So he said to the old woman : «If thou wilt find the rest of this book, |176 I will give thee six denarii». Then the old woman, when she saw his faith and courage, and knew that he had received the grace of the Holy Ghost while he was reading the books, replied : «Trouble not thyself. Go to a church, and beg for the book in its entirety from the clergy, and they will give it to thee, that thou mayest read it. I only found these manuscripts among the books of my fathers, who were readers and singers in the church». So Dionysius said : «But will the people of the church entrust this book to me?» And the old woman answered : «Yes. They will hinder no-one from knowledge, if he asks for it. They will give to all who seek, without demanding payment».

Then Dionysius went to Augustine, one of the deacons of the Church, who gave him the complete epistles of Paul. And Dionysius read them, and learnt them by heart through the power of his lively intelligence. Then he went to Demetrius, of whose death we have spoken above, and begged of him the second Birth; and Demetrius received Dionysius, and baptized him, and gave him the grace which he solicited; and Dionysius was attached to the patriarch’s person, and lived in the church. Thus after being a teacher among the idolatrous Sabaeans, he became a teacher in the Church , and many disciples came to him; and instead of teaching his former errors and receiving a transitory payment, he was afterwards removed by the Lord into the great see, in reward for his labours; and his house was made into a |177 church which exists to this day, and is named after him. The names of his disciples were Theodore and Gregory and Athenodorus . To these he had imparted in former days his strange philosophy; but, when he was baptized and advanced to the priesthood, he converted them to the wisdom of the Church, so that they were filled with the grace of the Holy Ghost. They lived with him for five years, after his ordination; and they also attained to priestly rank. Dionysius had also another disciple, named Africanus , who wrote five books with much labour; and when he heard of the wisdom of the patriarch Heraclas, he went to Alexandria to learn of him.

And Dionysius used to say to him : «Know that no beast that eats bryony is profited or stimulated by it; and so every man that does not eat spiritual food is perishing. Formerly I was occupied with food that passes away and comes to an end, and neglected the bread of eternal life, until the Lord led me». And he attracted his disciple by these words to the heavenly doctrines, until through his talents he learnt the true harmony of the genealogies in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and found no discrepancies whatever in them.

Now Heraclas occupied the see for thirteen years, and went to his rest on the 8th. of Rihak, and was gathered to his fathers. |178

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — DIONYSIUS THE WISE, THE FOURTEENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 247-264

Of Dionysius, who was appointed patriarch after Heraclas, somewhat has already been recorded. Churches grew more numerous, and the faithful were multiplied in his days. And the churches were filled with the divine doctrines; and all was done openly, and in public. At this time certain men in Arabia taught a heresy, according to which the soul dies with the body, and shall rise again with it on the Day of Resurrection. But the holy Church rejected this heresy, after the assembling of a council to examine into it. Another heresy also arose, which taught corrupt doctrines; but it was extinguished and brought to nought by God's help in the reign of Philip , who ruled the empire during seven years.

After Philip reigned Decius; and there had been between Philip and Decius a great enmity; and therefore the latter inflicted a great persecution upon the Church. The patriarch Fabian was martyred, and Cornelius became patriarch after him. Likewise Alexander, the patriarch of Jerusalem, twice confessed Christ, and showed forth his faith before the misbelievers, |179 and was thrown into prison, and there went to his rest after much suffering. Alexander was endowed by God with a great gift of holiness, patience and courage; and men heard him in the dungeon confessing and glorifying God until he died. After him, a patriarch named Mazabanes sat upon the episcopal throne. The patriarch of Antioch, also, Babylas, confessed Christ, and was imprisoned, and died in the dungeon; and Fabius sat after him. As for the patriarch Dionysius , he says : «I will record what I endured, and call God to be my witness. Decius, the prince of Rome, sought diligently for me, but God concealed me from him, and he could not discover my hiding-place. After four days, God bid me remove from that place ; therefore I fled with my disciples and a band of the brethren, and we wandered far. After four days, when the light had waned,

and we were approaching Taposiris, the soldiers took us; and this was after four days of concealment. But Timothy, one of my disciples, escaped from our captors; and he returned to the house where we were, after meeting a countryman, who enquired of him what news he had to give him; so he told him what had befallen the patriarch.» And that rustic assembled his companions; and when they had rescued the patriarch Dionysius from the soldiers, they made him ride upon a bare-backed ass, as he relates of himself; but his disciples walked on foot. |180

Dionysius also sent a letter to Fabius , patriarch of Antioch, and narrated to him the history of the martyrs, who suffered under Decius at Alexandria. He related that an old man named Metras was seized; and his captors said to him : «Wilt thou worship the idols?» But he refused; and so they inflicted upon him a painful beating, and wounded his face with styli . Then they led him out of the city, and stoned him until he died. Likewise a certain believing woman was led in to offer worship to the idols; but she refused; and they beat her, and stripped her, and bound her feet together and dragged her over the stones so that her flesh was mangled, and her blood ran over the ground in the streets, while she was scourged all the time, until they had drawn her out of the city; and they killed her, and threw her body aside there. Then they returned to the houses of the faithful, and plundered them and wrecked them, and carried off all the gold and silver and furniture that they found in them. At this time Paul of Alexandria was martyred, and received his crown with joy. And none could openly profess the knowledge of God. In those days also a faithful virgin, named Apollonia, received the crown of martyrdom. All her limbs were broken, and she was burnt in the fire while still alive, outside the city, because she would not |181 obey them by giving up her faith, and would not deny the Lord Christ. And she looked at the flame of the fire while they burnt her; and it did not terrify her, but she endured it patiently, and gave up her spirit.

And another man was taken, named Serapion, and was severely tortured, and thrown from the third story, so that his bones were broken; thus ho suffered martyrdom. And the faithful had neither a place of refuge nor a place of rest to go to, neither by day nor by night; and in this condition they remained for a long time; and this was the work of Decius the prince. And many were martyred whose names were not recorded. And the blessed Julian also was taken; and he was corpulent and stout in body, and was unable to walk, and therefore he had two men with him; so they led them all to the palace; and one of the two men apostatized, but the other confessed the faith together with the aged Julian; so they dragged those two through the city, and burnt them in the fire. And there were many troops prepared for the punishment of the Christians; and they seized another man , who cried aloud, saying : «O Lord take me quickly to thyself!» Then his head was cut off, and he was burnt in the fire. And two others also were martyred with him; besides another man named Alexander, and a number with him, whom they drove to the prison, and afterwards brought forth thence; and they were put to death. And

there was a woman who left her children, and was slain. And another believing woman , in the greatness of her zeal for |182 the faith, defied the governor, who therefore put her to death. And a great multitude without number came forward to suffer martyrdom for the name of the Lord Christ with great joy, as a man hastens to his wedding; andlikewise many of the inhabitants of the towns and villages.

And a great multitude without number wandered among the mountains, having fled from the unbelievers; and many of them died of hunger and thirst, and from the heat. And an old man, a bishop , from the city called Malîj, of the province of Egypt, fled, in company with a woman, who followed him; and these two could not be found, nor were any tidings of them known. And many were captured by the soldiers, who afterwards took a bribe from them, and released them. But many wandered forth at random, and never returned. «I, Dionysius, the patriarch, have not said all this to no purpose; but I have made known to thy Paternity, my brother Fabius, all the trials which have surrounded us, and what we have endured and encountered. And all those persons that I have mentioned to thee, my brother, merited the kingdom by their sufferings and combatings for the name of the Lord Christ. And many of those who apostatized in the persecution have returned to us, and we received them gladly, because we knew the joy of him who desires the repentance of the sinner, and not his death, so that he may be converted and live. |183

And because I am assured of thy fellowship with me, dear brother, I have expounded to thee what befell us; for we are of one spirit and one faith. And to you also, my brethren and my sons, I wish to relate this, for the sake of" my blessed children and their patience; that you may know of the struggles of your faithful brethren for the orthodox faith, and of the happiness to which they have gone, through their endurance for the sake of him who suffered for us and for them, and redeemed us all by his blood. For they were patient for his sake, and would not deny him in the assembly of the unbelievers; and, in their love for him, neither the edge of the sword, nor the plunder of their goods, nor burning in the fire could terrify them. For God showed forth their virtues in this world; and in the next they have a great reward, and a glorious return to him.»

Now there was a certain priest a native of Rome, who said in his pride : «It is not lawful that we should receive any one of those who denied Christ in the time of trouble and persecution, even if he now returns to the Lord; for he fell and did not endure, but was made one of the misbelievers.» And this priest used to call those that had been constant, «the Pure »; and he was the head over their community. So a council assembled at Rome, consisting of sixty bishops besides priests and deacons, to try the case of this man and his followers; and they wrote to every place an account of what took place. And there was a man called Novatus, who assisted this |184 priest, out of hatred for the penitents, and helped him to repel

from the Church all those that wished to return to her. Accordingly he began to forbid his followers to administer to the people the divine medicine, which consists in repentance and penitence and fasting and watching and weeping and humbly imploring God's forgiveness. So the clergy of Rome wrote to the clergy of Antioch an account of what had passed; and the latter returned an answer to them; and they all agreed that they should receive those that relumed to the Church, and absolve them, and help them to repentance, because God himself receives them. Then they excommunicated the proud priest, who despised those penitent apostates;

and they sent for the letters of Novatus concerning the conciliation of such men, and learnt what he wrote about them. After that, Novatus , unworthy as he was, usurped the title of bishop and remained in that office for three years, ordaining as priests ignorant men who knew nothing; and he made his followers believe that he was the chief of the bishops, and they honoured him accordingly; until the report of his deeds reached Rome, and there was trouble between the two parties in the Church and a great schism.

After that, a synod of bishops assembled, and cancelled all that Novatus had done by his lies, and proved to all those that had accepted him that they were simple men without knowledge, and that all his ordinations and other acts were invalid. Then one of those whom Novatus had ordained came forward and confessed his sin, and wept; and so the bishops received and pardoned him. And they wrote about Novatus to the various sees, |185 and warned the Christians not to receive any of his doctrines. And the number of those who published his teaching, and whom he ordained, was as follows : forty-seven priests, and seven deacons, and seven subdeacons, and seven readers and doorkeepers . And he had done many things that were invalid, but which it is unnecessary to relate. Then the patriarch Dionysius wrote letters to all places, enjoining that those who returned from their apostasy should be received; and he made this a permanent canon for those who should repent of their error. He also wrote a separate letter to Conon, bishop of Al-Ushmunain , containing similar matter, besides those sent to the rest of the bishops.

And Dionysius warned the people who dwelt with him in Alexandria, telling them of all that Origen had done in all the churches, and putting them on their guard against him. Then he wrote canons, which he made perpetual in the Church, and which contained an exposition of doctrines and rules of legal discipline. Then Dionysius, the great patriarch of the great city of Alexandria, wrote down what had happened to him, and what had befallen him during the period of his primacy; and we have learnt these things from his epistles and his instructions, which we have seen in all the churches, in every place. And altogether Decius did not reign two years; and on account of his |186 persecution of the children of the Church, and his putting them to death, he was slain with his sons, and his princely power was

taken away from him. And after him Gallus was enthroned as prince. And Dionysius wrote a letter to him. Gallus the prince had known all that Decius had done, for he had left behind him an idol of stone which he used to worship, saying that this idol had given him the empire; and he slew the priests who used to pray to God for his salvation and the confirmation of his power.

Then Dionysius also wrote a letter to the patriarch of Rome , requesting of him the establishment of correspondence between them both, and the reception of those who had apostatized during the persecution of Decius, but had returned; informing him also of the entire cessation of the persecution which had been in his diocese of Alexandria, and of the coming of peace to the Church; and of the removal of the schism of Novatus, so that there did not remain an adversary to the Church, for he had only seized the pontificate for himself, and had never become an unbeliever. For Dionysius had examined the followers of Novatus on the unity of doctrine. At that time «Demetrianus was bishop in the city of Antioch, and Theoctistus at Caesarea, and Mazabanes at Jerusalem, that is Aelia, and Marinus at Tyre. And Alexander had gone to his rest at Laodicea. And |187 all the churches were in harmony in the orthodox faith and unity of Christ in every place and every region, rejoicing and magnifying God and at one in the true doctrines; with glory to God, the God of heaven, and our Lord Jesus Christ the Word, and the Holy Ghost, One God, wherever there is agreement in one creed, and love of the brethren.» These are the words of Dionysius.

Then he wrote also to Stephen concerning the baptism of those who had returned from their denial of Christ during the persecution, saying that they should settle this matter, because it was very important; and that the council of bishops who met together had spoken of this question, as we have heard; and that those who accepted instruction and abandoned schism and heresy must be washed, that they might become new by immersion, so that they might be purified from their commingling with the filthy. Dionysius also speaks in his letter of the schism and heresy of Sabellius, because he was the cause of the mischief which led to blasphemy against God Almighty. And Dionysius says in his letter : «He sent word to me of those that desire to rebaptize all the heretics; and they are Helenus and Firmilian and many with them .»

And the Church remained in tranquillity for a short time, until the prince died, and there reigned after him an unbelieving prince named Valerian. |188 And by his command his deputies seized Dionysius, and imprisoned him. And they killed an innumerable number of martyrs; even ripping open the bodies of infants, and taking their intestines, and twisting them round musical instruments made of reeds which they sounded in honour of the devils . Then they tortured Dionysius the patriarch, and demanded that he should worship their idols. So he said to them : «We worship God most high; but you worship what you love. Our worship is offered

to the Lord Christ, Creator of heaven and earth, whom we love.» Then the governor said to him : «Thou knowest not the measure of the patience of the princes towards thee. For if thou wilt worship our gods, we will honour and promote thee. But if thou wilt not do so, and disobeyest the command, and wilt not worship the gods, then thou shalt see what will happen to thee.» And the governor took many of the patriarch's companions, and killed them, after exhorting him at length; and then drove him out, and banished him to a place, called the district of Coluthion, the interpretation of which is Chamberlain . But the inhabitants of that place treated Dionysius and all his companions, who would not worship the idols, hospitably. And after this they brought him back to condemn him to death;

and they led him before the governor, who said to him : «We have heard that thou goest to a place apart, and performest the liturgy with |189 thy companions.» Dionysius answered : «We never cease to pray, night or day.» So the governor exhorted him at length, and then left him; and the patriarch returned to his companions and said to them : «Go to every place, and pray and celebrate the liturgy; and if I am absent from you in the body, yet I am with you in the spirit.» Then the patriarch was sent back to the place in which he had been in banishment, and his companions were sad because he was parted from them; but they said : «We know that the Lord Christ is with him in all his ways.»

Then an innumerable multitude of the brethren were martyred in those days for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, because they refused to worship the idols. And Valerian, the prince, made martyrs of many people in every region and every place. Afterwards a multitude of the Barbarians attacked him, and brought great trouble upon him. But he had a son who was very wise, and who remained in possession of the government; and he had been brought up in the days of persecution. And he gave to Dionysius and his companions a letter of release, and commanded that these words should be written in it : «Publius Caesar, the reigning prince, who loves God, writes to Dionysius the patriarch, and Demetrius and the rest of the bishops, and commands that they be kindly treated. Let those that hate them depart from them, and let their churches be opened to them. Let them take courage from our letter; and let no chastisement touch them after this day, nor sadness |190 nor sorrow after this time; so that they may perform their service and their prayers to God; for we have set them free. And I have appointed Aurelius Cyrenius, and commanded him to guard the bishops safely, and treat them kindly. And let them say their prayers and celebrate their liturgies.»

This letter was written in Greek. And the prince wrote another letter to the bishops, bidding them resume possession of all their monasteries and dwelling-places. At this time Xystus was bishop of Rome , and Demetrianus bishop of Antioch, and Firmilian bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and Gregory bishop of Pontus, and his brother Athenodorus bishop of Caesarea in Palestine; and Hymenaeus was bishop

of Jerusalem; and he it is whose head they took off because he confessed Christ. So when Dionysius advanced in age, his body grew weak from the great hardships that he had endured; but nevertheless he did not cease for one night to read the holy scriptures. For since God most high knew his love for the holy scriptures, he granted him the faculty of sight, so that he could see as well as he used to in the days of his youth. And since he could not go to the council which assembled to settle matters concerning Paul of Samosata, he sent his envoys with a letter full of |191 wisdom and instruction to the bishops assembled on his account; for Paul was like the wolf that howls at the sheep. So the bishops of the council went in haste to Antioch for the glory of the Lord Christ. And among those present in the council were Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and Gregory who has already been named, and his brother Athenodorus, and Helenus, bishop of Tarsus, and Nicomas, bishop of Iconium, and Hymenaeus, bishop of Jerusalem, and Maximus, bishop of Bostra; and with them a multitude of bishops and priests and deacons. Then they sent for Paul, and asked him concerning what he had said, and admonished him because he had blasphemed the Lord Christ; and when he would not retract his opinions, they excommunicated him and banished him.

At this time Dionysius, patriarch of Alexandria, went to his rest, after remaining in the see for seventeen years; and he died on the 13th. day of Barmahat. But in a copy in the Monastery of Father Macarius it is said that he continued upon the episcopal throne seven years. Said, son of Batrik, however, bears witness in the book of the annals that the period was seventeen years; and this agrees with the biography from which the present copy was translated. |192

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — MAXIMUS THE FIFTEENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 264-282

After Dionysius, Maximus was placed upon the throne of Saint Mark in the great city of Alexandria, in the seventeenth year of the reign of Gallienus and Valerian, and he helped the brethren in the affairs of the Church in every place. And he drove out Paul the Samosatene from the Church, when he learnt that he was a heretic, because an account of all that happened in the council of Antioch with regard to Paul was written and sent to Dionysius, patriarch of Rome, and to Maximus, patriarch of Alexandria, when he took his seat after Dionysius. For the whole council subscribed with spiritual consent to the excommunication of Paul, and said that it was not fit that he should be named with the name of Paul the apostle. And they wrote to Dionysius, patriarch of Rome, and Maximus, patriarch of Alexandria , and to all the bishops of the inhabited world, and to the priests and deacons and all the baptized, and to the whole orthodox Church under heaven, naming the bishops, and saying in their letter : «Helenus and Hymenaeus |193 and Theophilus and Theotecnus and Maximus and Proclus and Nikomas and Aelianus and Paul and Protogenes and Bolanus and Hierax and Eutychius and Theodore and Malchion and Lucius, and the rest, who dwell in the cities near to us.

We have written to you, our brethren, the holy bishops, and the laity who love the Lord Christ, the Son of God, calling upon you to pray to the Lord that he may cause to cease from among you the opinions of Paul the Samosatene, who teaches doctrines which beget death for him more than any other; that thus you may be of one mind with us, like Dionysius, patriarch of Alexandria, and Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, who wrote to us at Antioch, so that we overthrew the leader of the error, of whose evil teachings they knew nothing, because it was we who read in the council his writings, containing his corrupt faith; and we and those

with us bore witness of this. And after that he promised us to repent; but that was mockery and treachery on his part; for his heart was hard, and he would not repent, but remained in his error, imagining vain things about the Lord in his discourses. So he apostatized and denied the Lord in his creed.

Now the condition of this Paul was of such a nature that he went over from faith to misbelief and error and perdition. And he was notoriously poor by birth, because he inherited nothing from his ancestors, and earned nothing by the work of his hands; but he became rich by the wealth of the church, and |194 used to rob the sanctuaries by the Law, and take bribes from the brethren when judging them; and if their adversaries offered him larger bribes, he turned round and took their side against the others. Thus he gained for himself vain riches by every kind of injustice. Yet in spite of that, he professed that he served God. And he used to walk with an escort, and to tyrannize over the poor, and to make a parade through the chief streets; and he loved to be called bishop, and troubled men by the multitude of his attendants. And he had letters with him, which he read while he walked, as if he was collecting taxes; and he made the people feel that he was a ruler; and he was accompanied by armed men before and behind him. And he hated spiritual teaching, and loved strange doctrines. And he neglected strangers, when he entered the church. And he sought glory from the rulers, and made plans for vain pomp of every kind, so that he even placed for himself a throne with a high platform; pretending to be a disciple of Christ, while in reality he was a stranger to the Church.

And he made the women chant songs on the nights of the festivals and at the Easter assembly instead of the Psalms and hymns; but the faithful brethren stopped their ears when they heard them chant. And he would not accept any of the scriptures, nor confess that Christ was the Son of God, nor that he came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Virgin Mary; but he uttered many blasphemies, and |195 declared that Christ was one of us. In consequence of these things it was necessary that we should assemble in council and cut him off. And we have appointed instead of him a man who fears God, named Domnus, son of the blessed Demetrianus, who is now in the Church, and deserves her praise. Thus we have written these things to you in order that you may write to this new bishop, and may receive his letters in peace according to the custom of the Church. Paul the Samosatene then has fallen away from the Faith, and Domnus has received his bishopric in our presence at Antioch.» And the prince Aurelian began to raise a persecution against the Church , but the help of the Lord was not with him in what he intended to do; and alter six years he died. And after him was Probus the prince. In his time a wicked man named Manes appeared, and showed forth evil deeds, and blasphemed the Father Almighty, and the only-begotten Son, and the Holy Ghost who proceeds from the Father.

And he dared to say that he himself was the Paraclete.

This man had been slave to a widow woman, who had much wealth. |196 For there had formerly lived with her a great magician, a native of Palestine, who fell from the house-top and died. After that, the woman bought that wicked slave, and had him taught in the writing-school; and when he grew up, she gave him the books of that magician. And when he had read them, and learnt magic from them, he went to Persia, and visited the place where the magicians and diviners and astrologers dwelt. And when he was strong in the doctrines of sin, Satan appeared to him, and strengthened him, and encouraged in him the hatred of the Church. So he led astray many people by his magic; and money was brought to him; and he had youths and girls, who ministered to his evil desires, and whom he enslaved by his magic. And he led astray a multitude of people, saying to them that he was the Paraclete, whom the Lord Christ promised to send in the Gospel of John.

And there was a rich Christian man, named Marcellus, chief of a city in the province of Syria, where there was a bishop named Archelaus. And upon this chief was the spirit and blessing of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and he was a disciple of the church, and constant in his visits there, morning and |197 evening, like a poor man who possesses nothing. And he used to listen to the sermons of the bishop, as it was his duty to do, and to perform good works with his money among the people of this city. And his door was open to everyone who came to him, whether they were the poor or those oppressed by the taxes, or others; so that he was like the holy Job.

And at that time the Persians took captive the people of a village near the house of Marcellus, and laid waste the village, and killed many people. Then the prisoners sent to him, and asked him to perform an act of mercy towards them. Accordingly he consented to their request in charity, and interceded with the leader of the Persians, and received from him many of those that had been taken. And Marcellus, when he came before the Persian chief, offered money to him and to many who were with him, saying to them : «Take what you please in payment for these captives.» But when the Persians saw his good deed, they refused to do as he proposed, and said to him : «We will not do this, but give us what thou wilt as a ransom for the men who are with us.» So the affair was settled between the parties at three denarii for every person. Thus Marcellus delivered all that were in the hands of the Persians, and paid them the money, and presented to them as a gratuity something beyond the price agreed upon; and he received the captives from them, and remained with them seven days. And he tended the sick among those prisoners as if they were his own children; and he sent to their town, and buried those whom the Persians had slain of them. Then he rebuilt the houses of the living whom he had redeemed; and the hearts |198 of those who remained in the town were set at ease; and he rebuilt for them all the churches, and made them live in their town. And when the Persians went away from his country to their own land, they related all that he had

done, and the greatness of his wealth, and the love of the people of his town for him.

Now when Manichaeus, the evil one, heard what this man, Marcellus, had done, he thought over it, and said to himself : «If I could gain this man over, and receive him into my sect, then the whole of Syria would be under my influence.» So he wrote him a letter, in which he said : «The Paraclete, Manes, writes thus to Marcellus. Verily I have heard of the excellence of thy deeds, and therefore I know that thou wilt be a chosen disciple of mine, that I may make known to thee the straight way, which Christ has sent me to teach to men. But now your teachers have led you astray, since they say that God, whose Name is glorious, entered the womb of a woman. And the prophets said untrue words of Christ; for the God of the Old Testament is evil, and wills not that anything should be obtained from him. But as for the God of the New Testament, he is good, and when they take aught from him he does not refuse.» And he said of Christ many words blasphemously, which it is not lawful to repeat; nor has Satan himself ever said the like!

And Manes gave the letter to one like himself, and sent him to Marcellus. But when the messenger came to Syria, none of the people received him on the way, to entertain him at his house; and he suffered greatly from hunger, |199 feeding only upon herbs, until he came to the house of Marcellus. So when Marcellus had received the letter and read it, he sent it to the bishop Archelaus; and having provided the messenger with a lodging, he waited. Then, when the bishop had read the letter, he tore the hair of his head, saying : «Would that I had died before reading this blasphemous letter!» And he sent to Marcellus, who brought the messenger to him; and the bishop asked him concerning the history of this Manes, and in what circumstances he was living. So the man informed Archelaus of those matters. And that messenger desired to remain with these two, when he heard their words, and saw their virtues and their excellence. Then Marcellus requested him to return to Manes with an answer to the letter, and gave him three denarii. But he said : «Pardon me, my lord, but I will not return to him.» Thereupon they rejoiced at the salvation of his soul from the snares of death. And Marcellus wrote to Manes an answer to his letter, and sent it to him bv one of his slaves.

And the Father Archelaus said to that slave : «Take nothing from him, and neither eat nor drink with him.» Then he sent him on his journey. And after seven clays, Manes came to Marcellus, dressed in a habit of fine linen, with a striped tunic of fine material beneath it; and he was wrapped in a cloak descending over his feet, adorned with figures in front and behind; and with him were thirty-two youths and girls walking behind him.. So when he entered the house of Marcellus, he |200 went straight to a chair, and sat upon it in the midst of the house; and he thought that they would request him that they might receive instruction from him. So Marcellus sent to the bishop Archelaus, and when he saw Manes sitting on the

chair, he was astonished at his want of shame. Then the bishop questioned him, and said to him : «What is thy name?» Manes replied : a My name is Paraclete.» Archelaus said to him : «Art thou the Paraclete of whom the Lord Christ said that he Avould send him to us ?» He said : «Yes; I am he.» The bishop asked him : «How many are the years of thy life?» He answered : «Five and thirty years.» Archelaus, the bishop, said to him : «The Saviour Christ said to his disciples : «Remain in Jerusalem, and do not depart, nor preach the gospel, until you are clothed with the power from on high, which is the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost.

And after ten days from his Ascension into Heaven, as he said, the Paraclete descended, on the day of Pentecost, which was the completion of fifty days after the Pasch. But according to thy words, the disciples are still awaiting thee at Jerusalem; and yet by Christ's command it is about three hundred years since they began to preach, and their voice went forth into all lands, and their words reached the ends of the world. If the event had been as thou sayest, they would not have preached, but would have remained alive |201 till now. And where didst thou see the Lord Christ, thine age being thirty-five years ? And he bade thee not to sit in the chief places at assemblies; yet, behold, thou hast taken the highest seat in the house.»

Then Manes enquired : «Does not the gospel say, I will send you the Paraclete?» Archelaus answered : «If thou believest in the gospel, he said to our Lady Mary, the Virgin : The Holy Ghost shall descend upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; and he whom thou shalt, bring forth is Holy, and shall be called the Son of God.» Then the bishop brought forth the letter of Manes, which he had sent to Marcellus, in which he denied the birth of Christ from a woman, and declared his disbelief in Christ's death and resurrection from the dead. Thereupon Manes began to speak of his false doctrines, saying that there were two gods, one of them Light, and the other Darkness, and uttering similar infidelities. So the bishop Archelaus said to him : «If I refute thee according to thy lies, thou wilt still insist on thy doctrines before me. But behold, I will send and bring into thy presence people who do not know God, the God of Heaven, that they may put thee to shame in thy words.» Accordingly he sent and brought before him two men, one of them a philosopher and physician, and the other a scribe, and said to them : «Hear what this man says. Are there in your books some words which you accept, and other words which you reject?» They answered : «No; but we accept everything in our books, and we reject nothing in them. For if we separated part of our books from the rest, we should neither know how to read them nor how to accept them.» |202

Then the bishop answered and said to them : «This man preaches and says that he is the Paraclete whom Christ sent, and yet he neglects the commands of Christ.» Then they said to him : «We do not accept Christ nor do we touch anything of his.» And when Manes spoke, and the assembly heard his words full of blasphemy, they rushed upon him to kill him; but the bishop forbad them to do that, and said to

them : «He will be slain by the hand of another than us.» Then he banished Manes from the city, saying to him : «Take heed that thou be not found in our province, lest thou die!» When Manes went forth, he betook himself to a village where there was a hospitable priest, with whom he dwelt. And Manes remained for a month in the house of this priest, who did not, however, know who he was. At last he spoke to the priest of his wicked doctrines. So the priest said : «I have never heard of these words before; but I will send to the bishop Archelaus, that he may come and hear from thee what thou sayest, and then if it is good, we will accept it.» But when Manes heard the name of Archelaus, he was troubled thereat, because he knew his valour and the wisdom of God which was in him. Therefore he returned without delay to the land of the Persians, where he continued, as his custom was, to utter blasphemy. But the true Paraclete condemned him in his wisdom; for he delivered him into the power of the king of the Persians, who flayed off his skin, and cast him to the wild beasts, which devoured him. |203

At that time died Felix , patriarch of Rome; and Eutychianus was enthroned after him. And the length of time that Felix remained in the patriarchate was five years. And Eutychianus remained ten months, and then went to his rest. And after him sat Marcellinus. And at that time Timaeus received the patriarchate of Antioch after Domnus. When Auxelian, the prince, died, Probus received the empire after him, and remained six years and died. Then, after him, reigned Cams and Carinus and Numerian; and they continued three years and then died. And after them reigned Diocletian, through whom a great persecution descended upon the Church, greater than those of his predecessors; for he destroyed the churches, and burnt the books, and slew the bishops and priests and many of the faithful.

And Socrates died at Laodicea, and Eusebius was appointed bishop of that city instead of him. This man had come from Alexandria on account of the council which had assembled at Antioch concerning Paul the Samosatene. His successor was Anatolius, who also had arrived in Syria from Alexandria, whither he had migrated, and where he had taken up his abode in order that he might teach the young people there. For he was skilled in learning, so that his fame reached as far as Rome. And when |204 an army marched from Rome to the city of Alexandria, and besieged it, Anatolius the teacher did not cease negotiating between the two parties, with all fairness until he improved the state of affairs, and established peace, and the war ceased. And the great men of the city were incensed against him, because he urged them to do what they did not wish. So he said to them : «Let the old men and old women and young children leave the city, for they are not required here; but do you do what you will with your city, for so you will retain the provisions which are in your hands, stored up among you.» Thus their hearts were appeased by this advice; and the next day the soldiers and the captains of the city assembled, and took counsel about this matter, and decided that it was right so to act. So they sent

out the old men and old women and children; and many others escaped through the gates by night.

After that, the emperor Claudius commanded to slay the troops of the city, because they had helped the people to depart from it; and the city was laid waste. And Eusebius also acted between the two parties as a physician or father who heals both sides alike. And this man was bishop of Laodicea, and he came to his see with the other bishop from Alexandria in excellent agreement. And after the fighting which took place at Alexandria, Anatolius wrote many instructions, and the people of the city profited by them. And he wrote for them a calculation of Easter also. |205

And on the 1st. day of the month after the council, which took place at Antioch to judge Paul the Samosatene, Theotecnus was established as bishop on the episcopal throne of Caesarea in Palestine, and the above-mentioned Eusebius over Laodicea. And Eusebius was a man powerful with the Lord, as also was Anatolius; for they were both inspired by the Holy Ghost to impart spiritual doctrine. Then they went to their rest, one after the other; and Stephen became bishop over Laodicea. He was a man full of wisdom, and everyone was astonished at him; and it was not merely wisdom of words, but the true orthodox faith; and he rebuilt the churches which had been destroyed in his city, and renewed them with the help of God given to him. And his successor, the bishop Theodotus, lived in the time of persecution, and was worthy of the two names by which he was called; for the interpretation of his own name is Gift of God, besides the name of bishop. And he was a lover of the people, and their shepherd and physician, skilful in doing good to their souls, so that it was said that there had been none equal to him in his charity. And Agapius, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, was like him also, and had laboured among his people in great charity; for he loved the poor, and controlled his people like a faithful servant of God; and after this he merited the crown of martyrdom, with many of the priests of Alexandria.

And there were martyred also with them Pierius; and Meletius, who had become bishop of Pontus, and was called Honey, on account |206 of the sweetness of his tongue, which was full of the doctrine and grace of God. Meletius loved to give alms to the poor, and grudged nothing; and all his teaching was from the gospel; and he lived in the time when men were scattered and persecuted, and yet was constant in doctrine.

When Hymenaeus, bishop of Jerusalem, went to his rest, Zambdas was appointed instead of him; and when Zambdas died, there came after him Hermon, who suffered hardships in the time of persecution. And Maximus, patriarch of Alexandria, went to his rest on the 14th. of Barmudah, after he had remained eighteen years in the see.

Vol. 1, Part 1 -- St. Mark to Theonas (300 AD) — THEONAS THE SIXTEENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 282-300

When Maximus went to his rest, Theonas took his seat after him upon the episcopal throne of Alexandria, after the people had assembled, and had come to an agreement upon his fitness for the office. So they promoted him in the first year of the reign of Numerian, Carus and Carinus, the princes. And he built a handsome church in the name of our Lady Mary, which was called the Church of the Mother of God . For up to this time the people had celebrated the liturgy in caves and underground places and secret |207 resorts. And from saint Mark the evangelist to the third year of the patriarchate of Theonas were two hundred and nineteen years. And he went to his rest on the 2nd. of Tubah, after remaining nineteen years in the see. There was in the days of this Father, the patriarch Theonas, a holy priest, who had a pure wife; and these two walked together in the way of the Lord, keeping his commandments, and acting according to his precepts, cleaving to the canons of their religion, firm in the faith. But they had no child, and were sad at heart for this reason. And they multiplied fasts and prayers and alms, that the Lord might be gracious to them and grant them a child, by the sight of whom their eyes might be refreshed.

When the least of the two glorious disciples, Peter and Paul, came round, on the fifth day of Abib, and all the faithful were present in the church, to keep their least, the wife of this priest, being present near the place where the picture of those two saints was, saw the faithful bringing their children forward, and anointing them with the oil of the lamp which was lighted before the two pictures. So she sighed, with a wounded heart, and prayed those two saints to intercede with the Lord for her. And she partook of the Holy Mysteries, and received the peace of God, and departed to her home, thanking the Lord of glory. And that night she saw in her

sleep two persons in the dress of the patriarchs, who said to her : «Be not sad, for the Lord has heard thy petition, and has given thee a child with whom he will refresh |208 thine eyes. And he shall be a father to many people; and his name and his holiness shall appear like those of Samuel the prophet, for he is the son of a promise. Therefore when the morning comes, go early to the Father Theonas, the patriarch, and make this known to him, that he may bless thec;

for God in his mercy will give thee a child who shall be blessed.» Accordingly, when it was morning, she told her husband the priest, and he said to her : «Go and make this known to Theonas the patriarch, as thou wert bidden.» So she went to him, and made the dream known to him; and he blessed her, and said to her : «The Lord will perform thy request, and answer thy prayer; for the Lord is true to his word, and his works are wonderful among his saints.» And she departed to her home. And a short time after that, she conceived; and she guarded herself in all purity, and in continual fasts and prayers night and day, until the day of the feast of Peter and Paul, on the fifth of Abib, when she brought forth a son. And the messenger of good tidings went to Abba Theonas, the patriarch, and informed him that she had become the mother of a son; and he rejoiced greatly thereat. And her husband, the archpriest, also rejoiced. And Abba Theonas, the patriarch, said to them : «Name him Peter.» And it was done so. And the child grew and waxed and increased, like John the Baptist, until he reached the age of three years. Then his parents carried him to the patriarch, and said to him : «This is the son of thy prayers.» So Theonas blessed them and the child, and baptized him.

And when the child was five years |209 old, his parents gave him to be instructed. And he learnt wisdom in a very short time, and came to have a better memory than the rest of his comrades who were in the Church. And in his seventh year the patriarch made him reader; and he was filled with spiritual grace. And when he was twelve years old, he made him fully deacon; and he surpassed the other deacons in knowledge and piety, and in the spiritual and heavenly grace which God gave him. When he was fully sixteen years old, he was promoted to be priest, on account of the chastity and modesty and knowledge and piety, and true faith, and soundness of learning, and assiduous service of the churches, night and day, which the patriarch saw in him.

And in those days there had appeared a blaspheming man, named Sabellius, who preached a doctrine divergent from the faith; and this was that he believed that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the holy Trinity, were one Person, and not three Persons, but merely three names. Sabellius disbelieved in the gospel, and would not listen to that which is written therein, that our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was baptized by John, saw the Holy Ghost descending upon him like a dove, and heard the voice of the Father from heaven, saying : «This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.» So many, who heard the teaching of Sabellius, followed him, and

he led them astray by his impiety. Then he assembled the members of his sect, and came to the church, when the father and patriarch, Abba Theonas, was present, on the day of a great feast; and he |210 stood at the door, and sent to the patriarch a messenger, who said to him : «Come out and discuss matters with me this day; and if thou art in the right I will follow thee, but if not I will make known to the people that thou art in error.» Then the father and patriarch said to Peter, the priest : «Go out to this misbeliever, and silence him, that he trouble us not.» So Peter went out; but when Sabellius saw him he said : «See the haughtiness and pride of Theonas;

he has only sent out to me the least of the youths who attend him.» But Peter said to him : «Though I be young with thee, with my Father Theonas I am old. And the Lord will show thy misbelief hereby this day, for he will give me the victory over thee, as he made David victorious over Goliath the giant. For the Lord will bring his fate upon thee, and will punish thee, and destroy thee with thy companions, and bring thy doctrine to naught, and overthrow thy opinion, so that no word or syllable of thine shall remain.» And he had not finished his words before the face of Sabellius was convulsed, and his neck bent backwards, and he fell on the ground dead. And his followers fled in haste, and all those that were with him. So he perished, and his memory was lost, and his teaching was cut off, and no remembrance of him remained. This is the end of what happened to Sabellius.

And the Lord showed forth another sign by the hand of the holy Peter, which was as follows. There was a great feast in the city of Alexandria, at which the Father Theonas and all the clergy and people were present, glorifying God and keeping festival. And a man among them, in whom was |211 a rebellious devil, stood by the door, and began to throw stones at the faithful, and to foam at the mouth, and growl like a camel. So the people fled from him into the interior of the church, and made known to the patriarch the state of that madman. Theonas, therefore, said to the holy Peter : «Go out to him, and drive this devil out of him.» So Peter took a basin, and poured water into it, and presented it to the patriarch, begging him to make the sign of the cross over it; and he did so. And Peter went out, taking the vessel of water, to the place where the madman was. Then he said : «In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, who cast out the Legion of devils, and healed men of all diseases and sicknesses, go forth from him, Satan, by the prayers of my father Theonas, the patriarch, and return no more to him!» Then immediately the devil went out of him, and the man was healed, and became whole, and reasonable, and calm.

But if we were to describe the wonders which were manifested by this holy man, Peter, the exposition of them would be too long, and books would be too small to contain them. And when Theonas came to die, so that he was to be gathered to his fathers, all the clergy and people were present with him, weeping and saying : «Alas our Father, thou leavest us like orphans.» Then he said to them : «You are not

orphans, but this Peter is your father, and he shall be patriarch after me.» Thus Abba Theonas before his death appointed him to that office. [Footnotes renumbered and moved to the end] 1. 1. Jer. xlvi, 25; Nahum iii, 8; cf. Ez. xxx, 14,15,16, Vulg. 2. 1. Preface II is wanting in CD and E. 3. 1. Rom. v, 3, 4. 4. 2. Hebr. xii, 8. 5. 1. S. John xvii, 12; xviii. 9.

6. 1. S. Matth. v, 14-16. 7. 1. S. Matth. xi. 28. 8. 1. S. Matth. vii, 7; S. Luke xi. 9. 9. 2. Ps. cxv, 1-3 (Sept. cxiii, 9-11). 10. 1. This chapter is wanting in CDE. Cf. Suidas in v. Ἰησοῦς; Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina, ed. A. Vassilief, 1893, p. 60. 11. 2. The Greek versions have : τοῦ ἐν εὐσεβεῖ τῇ μνήμῃ γενομένου Ἰουστινιανοῦ. 12. 3. ἀργυροπράτης 13. 1. Urim and Thummim, Δήλωσος καὶ Ἀλήθεια, Doctrina et Veritas. 14. 1. κώδιξ. 15. 1. S. Luke iv. 14-22. 16. 1. Ps. cx, 4 (Sept. cix). 17. 2. Ps. lxxxix. 48 (Sept. lxxxviii). 18. 1. Cf. Eus., H. E., I. 3. 19. 2. Ἐν τοῖς τῆς αἰχμαλωσίας αὐτοῦ ὑπομνήμασιν. 20. 1. Cf. Bargès, Homélie sur saint Marc, Paris. 1877, p. 73-80 (premier appendice). 21. 1. Eus., H. E., II, 16. 22. 1. Cf. Bargès, loc. cit., p. 81-90 (second appendice); Acta SS., Apr, 25.

23. 1. Τὰ Βουκόλου, Bucolia. 24. 1. Σύρωμεν τὸν βούβαλον ἐν τοῖς Βουκόλου. 25. 1. Τὸ Ἀγγέλιον. 26. 1. Eus.; H. E., II, 24. 27. 2. Ibid., III, 14. 21. 28. 1. Eus., H. E., III,21. 29. 1. Eus., H. E., IV, 1, 4. 30. 2. Ibid., IV, 4, 5. 31. 1. Eus., H. E., IV, 5, 11. 32. 2. Ibid., IV, 11. 33. 3. Ibid., IV, 11. 19. 34. 1. Eus., H. E., IV, 19; v. 9. 35. 2. Ibid., V, 9, 22. 36. 1. Eus., H. E., V, 22; VI, 2, 3, 8, 19, 26. Cf. Acta SS. Oct. 9. 37. 1.Eus., H. E., VI, 1. 38. 1. Eus., H. E., VI. 4, 5. Aquila ([Arabic]) was the prefect of Egypt who carried on the Persecution. 39. 2. τῆς κατ' Ἀλεξάνδρειαν κατηχήσεως καθηγεῖτο. Ib., VI. 6. 40. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 7. 41. 2. Ib., VI, 8.

42. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 8. 43. 2. Ib., VI, 9. 44. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 9. 45. 2. Ib., VI. 10. 46. 3. Ib. 47. 1. Eus., H.E., VI, 11. 48. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 11. 49. 2. Ib., VI, 12. 50. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 15. 51. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 17. 52. 1. Eus., H.E.. VIII, 9, 10. 53. 2. Cf. Eus., Ib., VI, 19. 54. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 23, 24, 25, 32, 36. 55. 2. Ib., VI, 25. 56. 3. Σαρδὴθ Σαρδανὲ Ἔλ. 57. 1. I Cor., ii, 12. 58. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 26, 35. 59. 2. Ib.., VI, 15. 60. 3. Ib., VI. 26. 61. 4. Ib„ VI, 28. 62. 5. Ib., VI, 29. 63. 6. Ib. 64. 7. I. e. Fabian. Ib. 65. 1. Eus., H. E., VI, 29. 66. 1. According to Eus., H. E., VI, 30, Theodore, or Gregory, and Athenodorus were two pupils of Origen.

67. 2. Eus., ib., VI, 31. 68. 1. Eus., H.E., III, 28; VI. 29,35, 40-42, 44-46; VII, 1.2,4-11,20-28. 69. 2. Ib., VI. 37. 70. 3. I. e. that of the Helcesaïtes, ib., VI. 38. 71. 4. Ib., VI. 39. 72. 1. Eus., H. E., VI,40. 73. 1. Eus., VI, 41. 74. 2. The Arabic and some MSS of Eusebius have here «Fabian». 75. 3. καλάμοις ὀξέσι, ib. 76. 4. Quinta, ib. 77. 5. A misunderstanding of the passage : [Greek omitted from online version] ib. 78. 1. Eus. καλήλοις ἐποχούμενοι, perhaps misread καμίλοις. 79. 2. Besas. ib. 80. 3. Dionysia, ib 81. 4. Ammonarion, ib. 82. 1. Chaeremon, bishop of Nilus, Eus., H. E., VI. 42. 83. 1. Novatian. 84. 2. Eus., H,E., VI, 43. 85. 3. Καθαροί. 86. 1. The name here should be Novatian, but Eusebius also has

Νοουάτος. 87. 1. These are the numbers of the Catholic clergy in Rome. Eus. has 42 acolytes. 52 exorcists, readers and doorkeepers, ib.

88. 2. τῆς Ἑρμουπολιτῶν παροικίας ἐπίσκοπος, ib., VI, 46, 89. 1. This passage is a mistranslation of Eus., VIII, 1. 90. 2. Stephen, ib., VII, 2-5. 91. 3. Ib., VII, 5. 92. 1. He is here writing to Xystus and speaking of Stephen, ib. 93. 1. A misinterpretation of the words : [Greek omitted from online edition] ib., VII, 10. 94. 2. Severus perhaps derives this name from ἀκόλουθος. 95. 1. Eus., H. E., VII, 13. 96. 1. Eus., H. E., VII, 14. 97. 2. ib., VII, 27. 98. 1. Eus., H. E., VII, 11, 28, 32. 99. 2. Ib., VII, 30. 100. 1. Eus., H.E., VII, 30, 31. 101. 2. The following account of Manes, Marcellus and Archelaus is taken from the Acts of the Dispute of Archelaus, now only existing in a Latin version, first published, according to the imperfect MS. from Bobbio, by H. de Valois, at the end of his edition of Socrates and Sozomen, Paris, 1668, and from the complete copy at Monte Cassino,by L. Zaccagni in Collectanea Monumentorum Veterum, Rome, 1698. There are, however, some variations in the Arabic summary here given. Fragments of a Coptic version of these Acts, and also of Eusebius (VII, 30, 32), coming from the White Monastery in Upper Egypt, and written in the tenth century, from which the Arabic version seems to have been translated, exist in the National Library in Paris (MS. copte 129). See Crum, Eusebius and Coptic Church Histories in Trans. of Soc. of Bib. Arch. Feb. 12. 1902.

102. 1. The rest of this life is from Eus.; H. E., VII, 32. 103. 1. Eus., H. E., VII, 32. 104. 2. Θεομήτωρ.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — Introduction

HISTORY OF THE PATRIARCHS OF THE COPTIC CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA — II — PETER I TO BENJAMIN I (661)

ARABIC TEXT EDITED, TRANSLATED, AND ANNOTATED BY B. EVETTS

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — PETER I , THE MARTYR, THE SEVENTEENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 300-311

When Abba Theonas, the patriarch, went to his rest, the clergy of Alexandria assembled with the people and laid their hands upon Peter the priest, his son and disciple, and seated him upon the episcopal throne of Alexandria, as Theonas, the holy father, bade them; and that was in the sixteenth year of Diocletian the prince. And when Peter saw that the wicked Arians had filled the whole country with confusion through his unbelief, he cut him off and banished him from the Church.

And in the nineteenth year of the reign of Diocletian, his letters came to Alexandria and Egypt; and he brought trials upon the Christians, and destroyed the churches of God, and killed many persons with the sword; and those that believed in Christ fled into the wilderness, and into dens and caves. Then Diocletian established guards and watchmen in every place of the |384 province of Egypt and the Thebaid as far as Antinoe, and commanded them to kill all the Christians that they found. Afterwards those guards seized the blessed Peter , patriarch of Alexandria, and threw him into prison, and made known to the prince that they had seized him and bound him; and so the unbelieving prince commanded that they should take off his head. When the letter came to them with this order, they hastened to perform the prince’s bidding. But when they wished to bring Peter out from the prison that they might take him and kill him, the people assembled at the door of the prison, and sat by it, to watch over their shepherd, saying :«When we are all put to death, then his head shall be taken.» So those soldiers began to consider how they should bring him forth, so that a great multitude might not die on account of him; for all the people had assembled for his sake, the old and the young, and the monks and

the women and the virgins, and were weeping abundant tears. And the soldiers agreed together that they should enter and bring him forth, and slay any of the people who opposed them, as the prince's letter directed.

Now the reason of the prince's command to seek and put to death this |385 father and patriarch was as follows. There was at Antioch a man named Socrates, who was one of the commanders of the troops which served at the palace, and was a comrade of Apater, who was martyred with his sister Irene. This Socrates was by birth a Christian, and was baptized; but he denied his religion, and came to hate the Christians. And he had a wife who was good and charitable and a Christian, by whom God granted him two children. So when they grew and were fit for baptism, the wife said to her husband : «I pray thee, my brother, to travel with me to Alexandria, that we may baptize our children, so that they may not die without baptism, lest the Lord Christ be angry with us for our neglect of them». Then the unbeliever replied : «Be silent; for thou knowest not the troubles which have come upon us in these days; lest the king should hear and be exceeding wroth with us.» Now his intention was to frighten her by this; so that she might leave her children without baptism. But when she perceived that he would not consent, nor travel with her, she took her two children and two trustworthy menservants whom she had;

and she went out to the sea-shore, and prayed, saying : «O Lord Almighty, Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, if thou wilt make my journey easy, prepare for me a ship in which I may depart.» Then while she was praying, she saw a ship about |386 to set sail. So she called one of the sailors, and said to him : «Whither are you voyaging?» He answered : «To Alexandria». She said to him : «Carry me with you, and I will pay you a high fare». So he consented to that. And she embarked on that ship, taking her two children, and her two men-servants. And after two days a high wind rose against them, so that everyone in the ship was troubled. Then that believing woman thought : «Verily God will not hear a sinner like me; but that which has come into my mind I will do». Then she arose and spread out her hands, and turned her face to the East, and prayed, saying : «O God, who knowest everything before if takes place, thou knowest what is in my heart, and that I love thee more than life or wealth, more even than my children and my own soul. Behold, we die in the midst of the waves for thy holy name's sake.

O Saviour, O Lord, O my God and Saviour of my soul and my body, have a care for my children who are become orphans on account of thy holy name, and let them not die without baptism.» And when she had finished those words, she took a knife and said : «O Lord Almighty, thou knowest my heart». And she cut her right breast with the knife, and took from it three drops of blood, with which she made the sign of the cross on the foreheads of her two children, and over their hearts, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and she dipped them in the sea, saying

: «I baptize you, my |387 children, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost». Then she embraced them, saying : «If death is to come to us, then let me die now, me and my two children.» So when the Lord saw her faith thus firm, he quelled that tempestuous wind; and there was a great calm. And they arrived after three days at the city of Alexandria.

So when they entered the city by the help of the merciful God, since that day was in the week of Baptism, which is the sixth week of the Fast, when infants are baptized, that woman went straightway to one of the deacons, and said to him : «My Father, I wish to have an interview with the patriarch». So he said to her : «What is thy business with the patriarch?» She answered : «My Father, I am a stranger, and I wish to baptize these two children of mine». The deacon asked her : «Hast thou no other business than this?» She replied : «No». He said to her : «Take thy seat in the church; behold the patriarch will come and baptize the infants, and will baptize thy children with them». So she did as he bade her; and when the time came, and the father and patriarch had finished the liturgy, they presented to him for baptism the infants who were to be baptized; and so he baptized them. Then they brought to him the two children of the woman of Antioch; but when the patriarch took the two infants to baptize them, the water was congealed, and became like stone. When Peter, the holy patriarch, saw this, he was astonished; and he commanded to set those two aside; but he told no one of the congealing of the water.

Then he bade that |388 the other children should be presented to him, and when the other infants were brought the water was liquefied, and became as it was at first; and he baptized those that were presented to him. Then he gave orders that the two children of the woman should be presented a second time; but when they were brought to him, the water was congealed again, and became like stone. So he sent them back, and the infants of the city were offered to him again; and the water was unbound, and he baptized them. After that, he asked for the two children of the woman a third time; and the water was congealed again, and became like stone. Thereupon the patriarch bade the archdeacon of the church fetch their mother; and so he brought her before him; and he said to her : «Make known to me, woman, thy circumstances, and tell me what thy religion is». She replied : «I am of Antioch, and my family are Christians». The patriarch said to her : «Then what hast thou done? For behold, the Lord will not accept thy children for baptism». She replied : «Hear me, my Lord and Father, and be patient with me. For indeed thy Paternity knows how Christians are persecuted throughout the world in these days, and the worst of the trouble is at Antioch.

And when these two children of mine grew up, and I found no way of baptizing them there, I asked their father to journey with me to this city, in order to baptize them here, but he would not. So I took these two children of mine, and went out with them to the sea-shore, and there we embarked in a ship; but afterwards |389

when we were in the midst of the waves, a tempest arose against us, so that the ship was near sinking. Therefore I took a knife, and wounded my right breast, and took from it three drops of blood, and made the sign of the cross upon the faces and hearts of my little ones, and dipped them in the sea, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three times. For this reason the Lord withholds them from baptism. And this, by the truth of thy holy Paternity, is what I did». So the patriarch said to her : «Let thy heart be comforted, my daughter; fear not, for the Lord is with thee. When thou didst wound thy breast, and take from it the blood, and make the sign of the cross upon the faces of thy two children, in the faith of God the Incarnate Word, whose side was pierced on the cross with the spear, when the water and the blood came forth from it, he it was who made the cross over thy two children with his divine hand».

Then the patriarch blessed those two among the baptized, but did no more to them; for he could not baptize them a second time, because the Lord had accepted them on the sea. For the patriarch said: «None can be baptized twice, for there is one baptism only; and these two have already been baptized once by the intention and faith of their mother, and by what she did».

Then the patriarch composed on this subject a homily, beginning thus : «The mercy of God which descends upon men». And he gave to the two children of the holy Mysteries. And he took them and their mother into his |390 house until they had kept the Feast of the Holy Easter. Then they returned to their own city in peace. But when her husband learnt what she had done, he went to Diocletian, the unbelieving prince, and said to him : «Know, my lord the prince, that my wife committed adultery in this city; and when I hindered her, she went away to Alexandria, and committed adultery with the Christians during many days; and she took my children, and performed upon them a rite called baptism. And behold, she has returned hither. What thinkest thou that I should do with her?» Then Diocletian commanded Socrates her husband to bring her and her two children before him; and he. did so. And when she stood before him, he said to her : «O woman deserving of death, why didst thou leave thy husband, and go away to Alexandria, and commit adultery there with the Christians?» Then that holy woman answered him : «The Christians do not commit adultery nor worship idols; but do whatsoever thou wilt; for thou wilt not hear another word from me». The prince said to her : «Make known to me what happened to thee at Alexandria.» But she would not answer him. Therefore the prince commanded that her hands should be fastened behind her, and that her two children should be placed on her lap, and that all three should be burnt in the fire. So the holy woman turned her face to the East, and her children with her; and thus they gave up their souls, and received the crown of martyrdom. |391

Then the prince asked her husband Socrates : «Who is it that does these things at Alexandria?» He replied: «It is Peter, the patriarch of the Christians». So when he

heard this, he was filled with anger and wrath, because he was full of indignation against the holy Peter, the patriarch, on account of the writings which he had composed in refutation of the worship of idols. Accordingly he wrote to his deputies at Alexandria, commanding that they should take his head. And while the soldiers were zealously obeying the commands of the prince, and Peter was in prison, as we have said above, Arius, the unbeliever, learnt that they wished to kill the patriarch. Then Arius feared that Peter would go to his rest, while he would remain bound by his sentence of excommunication. So he went to certain priests and deacons and many of the laity, and begged them to visit the prison, that they might throw themselves at the feet of the patriarch, and pray him to set Arius loose from his bonds of excommunication. Now they thought that Arius made this request out of piety, and therefore they consented to his petition. So they entered into the prison, and cast themselves down before Peter, and prayed: Then they made prostrations to him, and besought him to loose Arius from his bonds.

But the patriarch cried out with a loud voice : «Do you intercede with me for Arius?» Then he raised his hands and said : «Arius shall be at this time, and in the time to come, excluded from the glory of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ». When he had said this, a great fear came upon them, and not one of them dared to answer |392 a word. But when he saw that they were afraid of him, he comforted their souls. Then he rose up from the midst of them, and took with him the two old men, Achillas and Alexander, his two disciples, and went apart with them, and said to them : «God, the God of heaven, will help me to accomplish my martyrdom. Then thou, Achillas, the priest, shalt sit on this throne after me; and thy brother Alexander after thee. Say not that there is no mercy in me, for I am a sinful man; but Arius is full of hidden guile; and it is not I that have excommunicated him, but Christ. I tell you that this night, when I had finished my prayers and fallen asleep, I saw a youth coming in to me, with his face shining like the light of the sun, wearing a garment which clothed him down to his feet, but it was torn; and he took up the part where it was rent in his hands, and covered with it his breast and his nakedness.

So when I saw him, I rose hastily, and cried with a loud voice, and said : O my Lord, who is it that has torn thy garment? He answered : Arius has rent it. Therefore receive him not, and have no fellowship with him. To-day there will come to thee some who will intercede with thee for him; but let not thy heart accept him, for I have forbidden thee to do so. Likewise charge thy disciples, Achillas and Alexander, who will sit after thee on the episcopal throne, that they receive him not. There my speech with him ended. And now I shall accomplish my martyrdom, having charged you as he commanded me. You, |393 my brethren, know how I have been all my time with you, and what trials I have encountered, and the conspiracies of the unbelievers and idol-worshippers; and how I was continually fleeing from place to place, from Mesopotamia to Syria, and to Palestine and Ramleh and the

islands. Yet I did not cease to write to you two, secretly and openly, nor to comfort the people through the power of the Lord Christ, clay and night; and I neglected not the flock with which I was entrusted. And my heart was greatly grieved; but in spite of all this I did not neglect the care of Phileas and Hesychius and Pachomius and Theodore, who were imprisoned for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and merited grace from God;

for I used to write to them, and to speak of them in my epistles from Mesopotamia. And I suffered great trouble and torment for their sakes, lest anything should happen to them together with the priests who were in prison; for more than six hundred and sixty souls became martyrs. Now, as you know, I have the care of you all; therefore, when I heard that they had been martyred, I worshipped and thanked him who strengthened them, Jesus Christ, who also counted them among his martyrs. So likewise I pray him to number me among them. Moreover you two know the evils which have befallen me from Meletius of Asyut, who divided the Church of God, which the Lord Christ, the Word of God, redeemed with his holy blood, when he laid down his life for it».

Then the father and patriarch, Abba Peter, began to teach those two, |394 and charge them to beware of the guile of the aforesaid Meletius, that they should not associate with him. And he said to them : «Behold, you two see me bound for the love of God, while I am awaiting his will; for the officers of Diocletian daily deliberate how to kill some of us, as you know, and they assiduously carry out what they are commanded to do. But I do not fear for myself, and only desire to finish the course which God has appointed for me, and my ministry, which I accepted from the Lord Jesus Christ, my God; and he will help me to complete it; henceforth, therefore, you two will not see my face in the body after this day. I testify to you that I have declared everything to you; and I am pure and free from sin. Therefore keep the flock which the Holy Ghost has entrusted to you, and guard the Church of God which he bought with his blood; for I know that, after I am separated from you, some of the people will arise and speak words of blasphemy, with the intention of dividing the Church, as Meletius has done, whom many of the people have followed; but I beseech you to be vigilant, for you will encounter trouble.

For you know what befell the Father Theonas, who brought me up, and upon whose episcopal throne I sat after him, and the evil which he suffered from the worshippers of idols. And I hope that a grace like his will come to me, similar also to the grace given to the Father Dionysius, who hid himself in various places on account of the heretic Sabellius. What shall I say also concerning |395 Heraclas and Demetrius, the two blessed ones, and the disorders that they encountered, and the hostility which they endured from Origen, the madman, and all that took place through him; and concerning all our fathers, who were before us, and what they

bore for the Church of God? But the grace of God, which was with them, was that which overshadowed them and protected them.

And now I commit you to God by the word of grace, which has the power to preserve you, and to preserve his flock». And when the Father Peter had said this, he fell upon his knees and prayed and worshipped with those two, and gave thanks, and clasped them to himself, embracing them, and kissed them. And Achillas and Alexander kissed his hands and bade him farewell weeping, because of his saying to them that they would not see him after that day in the body. Then he returned to the assembly near which he was standing, and remained among them and exhorted them, and comforted them, and prayed for them, and blessed them, and consoled them, and dismissed them in peace. And when they went away from him, they informed the people of what he had said, and of what he had done in the prison with regard to Arms. And when the people heard this, they marvelled, for they knew that God was with him, and had separated Arius from them. But when Arius learnt this thing, he kept silence and concealed himself and his opinions and his guile, because his hope in the patriarch Peter was cut off. |396

So when the Father Peter heard of the strife on his account between the troops and the people of the city, who prevented the soldiers from approaching the prison in which he was, he feared that some would be slain for his sake, and resolved to preserve his faithful people, and to redeem them with his own life. Therefore he sent word to the soldiers secretly, saying to them : «Come this night to the wall of the prison at the place where I will knock for you from within; and make a hole through it, and do what the prince has commanded you to do». And when they heard this, they accepted his words. Accordingly they went that night secretly to the place of which he told them, which was a cell where he was separate from the other prisoners, of which none of the people knew; and then he knocked at the wall from within, and when they heard him, they broke open the place where he knocked, and made an opening there. So he made the sign of the cross on his face, and put his head out to them, through the hole which they had opened, saying : «It is better that I should give up my life than that the people should perish for my sake». Thereupon the soldiers cut off his head, and went away. Behold then this most admirable deed!

Now there arose at that hour a violent wind, so that none of the people who were guarding the door of the prison heard the sound of those that pierced the wall; nor did any of the prisoners hear it. Thus this blessed father accomplished the words of the holy Gospel, and the words of the Jews which it reports on the day of the blessed crucifixion, namely, that |397 it is better that one should die for the people than that the whole people should perish; and he was like his Lord, the Good Shepherd, who gave his life for his sheep. But the people meanwhile were sitting by the door of the prison, and knew not what had happened to him.

In another copy, however, it is said that he came out through the hole in the wall, and the soldiers took him and led him away to a place called Boucolia, the interpretation of which is Cattle-yard; and this is the place where was accomplished the martyrdom of the glorious father, Saint Mark the evangelist. But when the soldiers saw the holy Peter thus giving himself up to death, they were filled with awe, and dread fell upon them. So he asked them, and said to them : «I pray you that I may go and receive a blessing from the body of the father, Saint Mark the evangelist». Then they consented to his request, and said with shame and downcast looks : «Whatever thou desirest, father, do quickly». So he went to the place where the body of Saint Mark, the evangelist and bringer of good tidings, lay; and he prayed and received a blessing from the relics, and knelt by them, as if he were discoursing with the saint, saying : «O my father, evangelist and messenger of the Lord Christ, the Only-Begotten Son, who dost bear witness to his passion, thou art the first martyr and the first patriarch of this see. Thou, O pure and holy one, art he whom Christ, truly the most holy, elected. Thou didst preach his name in the land of Egypt, and in this city, and in the provinces which surround it, and didst diligently exercise the ministry which was thy work; and thou didst receive the crown of martyrdom.

For |398 this reason, O father and evangelist, disciple and martyr, thou wast worthy to show forth thy faith in God, the Word and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thou didst elect the blessed Annianus because he was worthy; and after him was Avilius, and those who succeeded those two; then Demetrius and He-raclas and Dionysius and Maximus; and the blessed Theonas, my father, who brought me up until I came to the ministry of this see after him, though I am a sinner, unworthy of this honour which I received only by the greatness of his compassion. Therefore intercede for me, that I may be a martyr in truth, if indeed I be worthy to imitate Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection; and that he may fill me with the perfume of life-giving faith, so that I may be to him sweet-smelling incense, by the shedding of my blood for his holy name. For the time is come for my decease; therefore pray, O my father, for me, that I may not be divided into two hearts or purposes; and that the Lord may strengthen me, until I depart from this world. And behold, I leave to thee the flock with which thou didst entrust me, and which thou didst hand over to me, and to those who were before me also, for thou art our teacher, O our lord; therefore be with us and with our children, according to the charge which the Lord Christ gave to thee».

Then Peter rose from beside the tomb, and lifted up his hands to heaven, and said : «O Son of God, Jesus Christ, Word of the Father, I pray and beseech thee to make to cease from us this persecution which is upon thy people, and to grant that the shedding of the blood of this thy |399 servant may put an end to the oppression of thy reasonable flock». Now there was in the neighbourhood of the tomb a dwelling-place, where lived a young virgin with her aged father, and she was at that moment

standing to pray; and when her prayer was ended, she heard a voice from heaven saying : «Peter was the first of the apostles; and now Peter is the last of the martyrs». So when the holy father had finished his invocation, he kissed the apostle's tomb, and the tombs of the fathers which were there also. Then he ascended to the soldiers, who saw his face as it were the face of an angel of God, and so they were afraid of him, and did not speak to him; for God does not abandon those who trust in him. Thereupon the saint raised his hands to heaven, and thanked the Lord, and made the sign of the cross on his face, and said «Amen». And he took off his pallium, and bared his neck, which was pure before the Lord, and said to them : «Do as you have been commanded». But the soldiers feared that trouble would befall them because of him.

So they looked one at another, and not one of them dared to cut off his head, because of the dread which had fallen upon them. Then they took counsel together and said : «To him that cuts off his head each one of us will give five denarii». Now they were six persons; and one of them had some money; so he took out five and twenty denarii from among the coins and said : «He that will go up to him, and cut off his head, shall receive this money from me and from the four others». So one of the men |400 went forward, and summoned up his courage, and cut off the head of the holy martyr and patriarch Peter; that day being the 29th of Hatur. Now Peter had sat on the evangelical throne for eleven years. But as for that soldier who cast in his lot with Judas Iscariot, he took the money and fled, he and his companions, in fear of the people. And the body of the saint remained lying as it was far into the day, until the people who were sitting before the prison learnt what had taken place, and saw the hole in the wall. Then they went in haste to the place where he was, and found his body covered with his garment, and the old man and the young virgin sitting there and guarding it. So they joined the head to the body, and spread over it a linen cloth; and they collected his blood;

and they stood there weeping.

And the city was in confusion, and was greatly disturbed, when the people beheld this martyr of the Lord Christ. Then the chief men of the city came, and wrapped his body in the leathern mat on which he used to sleep; and they took him to the church, and placed him there on the synthronus, until the celebration of the liturgy. And, when the liturgy had heen performed, they buried him with the fathers. May his prayers be with us and all those that are baptized! Amen. |401

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — ACHILLAS, THE EIGHTEENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 311-312

When the Father Peter went to his rest, and the people of Alexandria were thus deprived of his presence, they sent and assembled the bishops together. And they made Achillas, the priest, patriarch instead of Peter, as he had charged them before his death. Then, when Achillas had taken his seat upon the apostolic and evangelical throne, a body of the people came to him, and prayed him to receive Arius. Accordingly he admitted their request, and made Arius deacon. But since Achillas received Arius, and thus disobeyed the command of his father Peter, he only remained in the see six months. And he went to his rest on the 19th of Baunah.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — ALEXANDER I, THE NINETEENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 312-326

When Achillas, the patriarch, went to his rest, the people assembled and laid their hands upon the Father Alexander, the priest, as the Father Peter, the last of the martyrs, had charged them; and he sat upon the |402 episcopal throne. And some of the people came to him, and prayed him to receive Arius. But when Alexander, the excellent, saw Arius, he rejected him, and would not receive him, and said to those who interceded with him for that man : «The Father Peter, while he was in prison, said to me and to my brother Achillas : The Lord Christ has anathematized Arius; therefore receive him not. And when Achillas, my brother, disobeyed the Father Peter's injunction, he only remained upon the episcopal throne six months. Therefore I will not receive Arius at all, since he is separated from us». So Arius remained in banishment under sentence of excommunication for many years. After that he went to Constantinople, and laid a complaint before Constantius, son of the blessed prince Constantine, describing how he had been treated, and declaring that he had repented and renounced his false doctrine; and he swore to this. And thus he continued to hide his guile in his heart, until God revealed to him his power over him, and his bowels gushed forth from his body, and so he perished, as it shall be related hereafter. For it was on account of Arius that the holy council at Nicaea took place, at which he was anathematized, and the orthodox faith was established, and the days of the fast and the day of the feast of Easter were fixed. And our Father, the patriarch Alexander, was president of that council. And after that, he went to his rest, holding fast to the orthodox faith. His death took place on the 22nd of Barmudah; and the period of his occupation of the see was sixteen years. |403

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — ATHANASIUS I, THE APOSTOLIC, THE TWENTIETH PATRIARCH. A. D. 326-373

So when the blessed Father Alexander went to his rest, the Church was widowed for a few days. Then the people assembled and took counsel, and appointed the Father Athanasius, and seated him on the evangelical throne. And he wrote excellent treatises and many homilies; and he was called during his patriarchate the Apostolic, on account of the nobility of his deeds, which were like those of the Apostles. In his days took place the council of Galatia at which Basil the Great, author of the Liturgy, was present, and in which they excommunicated the Arians, in the reign of Julian the misbelieving prince; and Jovian, the patrician, presided over this council; and Julian, the prince, was slain by the hand of the glorious martyr Mercurius; and after him Jovian the patrician was enthroned as prince, and gave rest to the Church during his reign. And Athanasius, the patriarch, endured many trials, and was sent into exile; for evil snares were laid for him, so that he was forced to leave his see by the frequent persecutions that he underwent: and he fled to Upper Egypt, and remained there for many years, and feigned himself a |404 workman, and disguised himself as a hired labourer, and did not disclose that he was patriarch. And the misbelieving princes, Valens and Valentinian, reigned eleven years. So when it was the Lord’s will to restore Athanasius to his see again, through this patriarch’s holy and accepted prayers, he destroyed those princes by an evil death, on account of what they had done against orthodoxy. And the Lord set up a believing prince, named Theodosius; and the Church rejoiced in his days, and there was tranquillity and security and peace.

When Athanasius returned to his see there was joy and gladness in the land of Egypt at his reappearance, because the Lord had counted the people worthy of the return of their shepherd to them. And this good spiritual shepherd remained on the throne of Saint Mark the evangelist forty-seven years, until he went to his rest on the 8th of Bashans, governing the Church, and subduing those who rebelled against the truth, and resisted the orthodox religion, and wearing as a garment the honour of the Lord Christ. So the people mourned for this apostolic shepherd of whom they were deprived.

And as for his history, he quitted his diocese three times, on account of the persecutions which overtook him, when the heretics took possession of his see; and his absence the third time lasted eleven years. And he wrote |405 from his exile to certain virgins in the city of Alexandria, saying to them : «Verily your bridegroom is Christ, the invisible and immortal one, so that, as long as you remain obedient to his love, you will not be widows. Know that I used to act as scribe for my father Alexander; and he never read the gospel in his cell or elsewhere seated, but always standing, with the light in front of him; for God most high had made him love to read the scriptures. So while he was one night standing and praying and reading in the gospel, behold, some nuns came, and asked leave to see him. Then they came up to him, and prostrated themselves before him, and said to him : There are in our convent certain virgins who fast during six days of the week continuously; but they do no work with their hands, by which something might be earned to feed the poor. Now we desire of thee, our father, that thou shouldst bid them work, and direct that their fast be kept in moderation. So he said to them : Believe me my sisters, I have never fasted for two whole days together, without breaking my fast during the day;

but I only ate in moderation, and neither wearied my soul nor punished my body. For it is good that fasting should be in moderation, and drinking in moderation, and sleep in moderation. For if a man eats as he ought, he is strong for prayer; and so likewise if he sleeps in moderation; but to food there should be a limit, and to drink a limit, and to sleep a limit. So tell them to break their fast in moderation, and to work, for everything is good in moderation, that words may not be multiplied, and the beginning of them may not be forgotten». |406

This is what Athanasius the Apostolic wrote and reported of his holy father, Alexander. He declared also that his words were like honey to those that heard them, for he was full of the grace of the Lord Christ; and that it was reported that Arius had come to this Father Alexander, and prayed that he might enter to him. But Alexander said : «Tell him thus : My father charged me that I should not receive thee, and that thou shouldst not enter to me, and that I should not associate with thee. For my father bore witness that the Lord Christ showed him in a dream his garment rent by thee, and commanded him not to receive thee. Or knowest thou

not that it is thy tongue that has separated thee from him by what thou hast said concerning him ? Therefore pray to the Lord Christ, the Saviour, and confess thy sin to him; and if he receive thee, then he will command me to receive thee, as he commanded Peter, my father, not to receive thee. For Christ has commanded that we should forbid none of those that believe in him to enter the church. But if a man has committed an offence, and has sinned, then we forbid him, until he repents and is converted; and then if Christ receives him we receive him».

So when Arius heard this he was angry, and went away, and collected to himself a great body of followers, and composed blasphemous treatises, and denied his faith with his tongue that deserved to be cut out, saying that the Son of God was created. And the council at Nicaea was held on account of him; and there the heads of the four sees were assembled to judge him, |407 namely the patriarchs of Rome and Alexandria and Ephesus and Antioch; and Constantine, the believing prince, sat with them. And they finally settled the orthodox faith, and the time of the Fast and of Easter. And the prince said to the bishops in council : «I pray you to make the city of Constantinople a patriarchal see, because it is the city of the prince, and likewise Jerusalem because it is the city of the true, heavenly prince.» So when they saw his humility, they did this as he prayed them. And they cut off Arius the unbeliever; and Constantine, the believing prince, wrote the excommunication of Arius the unbeliever in his own handwriting, saying therein that he had caused those to perish whom Christ bought with his holy blood. Then Arius fled to Africa, and found no rest in the days of Constantine, the prince, and in the days of Alexander the patriarch.

Now Alexander had brought up Athanasius excellently well. For he was the son of a principal woman, a worshipper of idols, who was very rich; and he was an orphan on the father’s side. So when he grew up she wished to marry him to a wife, but he did not desire that. Then she intrigued against him, that he might fall with a woman who was a sinner, that she might involve him in the mire of matrimony; but he would not do it, for the Lord was keeping him for great things. And she used to take beautiful girls, and adorn them and perfume them, and make them enter to him into his chamber, and sleep near him and solicit him; but when he awoke he beat them, and drove them away. For her constant desire was to marry him and to establish him in his father’s possessions |408 and wealth, but he would never consent. And she sent for a man who was a magician of Alexandria, a wise man among the Sabaeans, and informed him of her circumstances with regard to her son; so he said to her : «Let me eat bread with him to-day.» Thereupon she rejoiced, and prepared a great feast. And the philosopher accompanied her son, and they ate and drank; but when the morning came, he went to her, and said to her : «Trouble not thyself, for thou canst have no power over thy son, for he has become a Galilaean according to the doctrines of the Galilaeans;

and he will be a great man.» She said : «Who are the Galilaeans?» He answered :. «The people of the Church, who have ruined the temples and destroyed the images.» Therefore when she heard this, she said within herself : «If I neglect him, he will go away from me, and I shall be left alone.» So straightway she arose, and took him with her, and went with him to Alexander, and related to him the circumstances of Athanasius her son, and all his history. Then she was baptized, and her son also.

And after a time she died, and Athanasius remained like a son with the Father Alexander, who educated him quietly in every branch of learning. And Athanasius learnt the gospels by heart, and read the divine scriptures; and when he was fully grown, Alexander ordained him deacon, and made him his scribe, and he became as though he were the interpreter of the aforesaid father, and a minister of the word which, he wished to utter. |409

So when Constantine, the believing prince, died in a good old age, Constantius his son was enthroned after him, but did not remain firm in the orthodox faith, only fearing and respecting the people. Then Arms found his opportunity, and aimed at taking hold of the prince, and drew him to his own mind, and corrupted his heart, and induced him to incline the empire to his doctrine, and led him astray, till he sent and summoned Alexander from Alexandria to Constantinople. For the prince did not know the power of Alexander, nor the cause for which he had anathematized Arius and removed him from the Church. Now Alexander had grown old and advanced in years, although he was strong in sense and sound in faculties; and Athanasius was his interpreter and scribe and mouthpiece, through the power of the Holy Ghost, on account of his knowledge of the orthodox faith. So the Father Alexander took his seat in the presence of the prince, who then summoned Arius; and Arius uttered his impure discourse, and multiplied his vile phrases. But Athanasius confuted him by the arguments which he delivered, and brought his discourse to naught. Thereupon Arius was troubled, and broke up the assembly, saying : «We will have another sitting.» And since Arius knew that he had no power against Athanasius, he gave money to the attendants at the royal doors, and settled with them that they should prevent Athanasius from entering with the others into the next assembly.

So when the morrow came the prince commanded to bring them in; but when Alexander entered, the doorkeepers prevented Athanasius |410 the Apostolic from entering. When the prince had taken his seat, the patriarch being present also, Arius spoke and delivered a long discourse. So the Father Alexander turned to the right and left, but could not see Athanasius, his scribe; and therefore he was silent. Then the prince said to him : «Why dost thou not speak?» Alexander replied : «How shall I speak without a tongue?» So the prince knew that he meant Athanasius, and commanded to bring him in. But when Arius saw that Athanasius had entered, he

went out hastily, and would not remain. Then Alexander said to the prince : «Know, O prince, that the cutting off of this Arius took place at the council; and it was not I alone that cut him off, but thy blessed father, the prince, and all the members of the council cut him off, and the prince wrote his anathema in his own handwriting. Therefore if thou wilt look at the letter of thy father, thou wilt find that it is in his handwriting. Shall I then say of him that was excommunicated by the prince Constantme and the members of the council that I will absolve him? Nay, that would be an act of heresy on my part.

For thy father in truth wrote his anathema and his excommunication in his own handwriting, at the council which took place at Nicaea.» So when the prince heard this speech, he was afraid of his brother, that if he should break the command of his father, his brother would find in that a pretext for plotting against him; and therefore he dismissed the Father Alexander, and restored him to his see. Thus Arius justly remained anathematized, and bound by the censures of the |411 Church, for he had supposed that he would succeed in obtaining his desires by his power over the prince, and by giving money to the attendants.

And the Father Alexander went to his rest with his fathers, after he had charged the priests and the people, at the time of his death, that they should seat Athanasius after him upon the throne. So they rejoiced at that, on account of their love for Athanasius. When he sat upon the apostolic throne, he drove the sect of Arius out of the Church, and brought forth the letter of excommunication which was in the handwriting of Constantine, the prince, and the members of the holy council, and read it in the church before the congregation. But when Arius heard of this, he was exceedingly angry, and his pride blazed up like fire, and he went to the prince, and said to him : «If Alexander, patriarch of Constantinople, will receive me by thy command, I shall attain my object.» So the prince summoned the patriarchy and said to him : «Behold, the patriarch of Alexandria has refused to receive Arius, and has disobeyed our command. But thou knowest that we have raised thee, and seated thee as patriarch upon the throne of Constantinople; and therefore it behoves thee not to resist us, as others do., since thou art good, but to take Arius to thyself, and receive him.» The patriarch answered : «Nay, the Church will not receive him, and it is not right that we should receive any except those who agree with her faith.

For this man has declared that one of the Trinity is a creature, and has been rightly removed from the Church.» The prince rejoined : «That he does not do, |412 but on the contrary he acknowledges the Trinity.» The patriarch said to him : «Then let him write for me a confession of his faith in his own handwriting, so that I may know what he believes.» So the prince sent for Arius; for this was a thing from God most high; and he wrote a confession of the faith in his own hand, concealing his heresy in his own soul. Then the patriarch asked him to swear that no doubt of the

truth remained in his heart; and so he swore to him. Then the prince said to the patriarch : «What remaining objection hast thou against Arius after that?» So the Father Alexander, patriarch of Constantinople, said to the king : «Verily the Father Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, has read afresh at Alexandria the anathema pronounced against Arius, written in the handwriting of the prince Constantine, thy blessed father, and in the handwriting of the fathers of the council of Nicaea, and has banished his sect from his church. But if no misfortune happen to this Arius from to-day till Sunday, then I will receive him, and will invite him to association with the priests. »

Then Arius went away, and waited for Sunday. So when Sunday came he entered the church, having put on splendid garments, and perfumed and scented himself, and sat by the door of the sanctuary, among the ranks of the priests. But the patriarch and his friends had remained all through the week fasting, and standing before the Lord Jesus, and beseeching him not to reckon to them the sin of Arius; for the prince had sworn to Alexander, saying : «If thou wilt not receive Arius on Sunday after his oath, I will exact from the church a large sum of money». So when the clergy and the |413 people were assembled on that day in the church, while Arius was present, the father and patriarch performed the liturgy, though he was sad. But when the reader read, the bowels of Arius were moved; and he went out to a corner at a distance, that he might relieve himself, and all his bowels gushed out from his body. And as he remained absent from the congregation, they asked after him, but could not find him. So they searched for him, and discovered him sitting rigid, empty, and shrivelled, with all his internal organs lying before him. Then they brought word of this to the father and patriarch, and he marvelled thereat, and was silent, and thanked the Lord Jesus Christ, and glorified him who had passed judgment upon Arius, and destroyed him swiftly, on account of his false oath and his corrupt faith. Then he showed to the prince and the congregation all the truth of what the Father Peter, the martyr, patriarch of Alexandria had said.

So Alexander, patriarch of Constantinople, finished the liturgy on that day with joy and glory and praise, and sent to Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, saying : «We glorify God and make known to thee, brother, that Arius has died a wonderful death, and his doctrine has been cut off, and his sect scattered.» But the prince was not satisfied with that, on account of the friends of Arius, namely Syrianus and George and their followers. These are they who made the assault upon the church of Alexandria. |414 For the prince gave to George five hundred horsemen of his army, and sent them with him, that they might make him patriarch of Alexandria. And he wrote to every city letters, in which he repeated the doctrine of Arius, that the Son of God was created; but not one in the land of Egypt would accept it, and the people continued to receive the communion from priests whom Athanasius had ordained. So this George entered into the church of Alexandria by guile; and many of the Christian people who followed the doctrine of Athanasius were killed by the

soldiers who came with George, until the blood in the church rose up to their knees; and they plundered the vessels of the church, and violated the virgins who were in it.

Meanwhile Athanasius lay hid; and the people continued for a long time to communicate in caves and deserts and in the fields in all the provinces of Egypt as far as the Thebaid; for the Arians, who were friends of the prince, were spread over every place. And Serapion, bishop of Thmuis, wrote to the patriarch Athanasius and all the people, that they should keep themselves from the Arians. And after six years Athanasius showed himself, and went to the prince, thinking that he would kill him, and that he would receive the crown of martyrdom. So the prince commanded that he should be placed in a small boat, and that neither bread nor water should be given him, and that there should be no sailor with him nor anyone to guide the vessel, but that he should embark in it alone, and be sent out to sea; so |415 this was done to him. And the waves carried him, while God guarded and guided him, until he arrived at Alexandria unexpectedly on the third day. Thereupon the priests and people went out to him, and met him with joy and chanting, and so accompanied him until he entered the church, and expelled from it George, and those who believed in his corrupt faith. And Athanasius kept on that day a festival to the Lord; and the people rejoiced in all the provinces of Egypt.

And after seven years a man came whose name was Gregory, with whom were two thousand men who were soldiers ; and he pillaged the church, and remained in possession of the see four years. And Athanasius was arrested; and the prince delivered him to a man named Philagrius, an unbeliever and idolater, for he wished to kill him, and to kill Liberius, patriarch of Rome, and Dionysius, patriarch of Antioch, because those three were the fathers of the orthodox faith; but the Lord rescued them from his hand, and saved them. So Athanasius went away with Liberius to Rome, and did not cease to remain with him until Constantius died, and his son Constans reigned after him; and he was orthodox. And as soon as Gonstans took his seat upon the throne he commanded to restore Athanasius to his see. At that time Cyril was patriarch of Jerusalem; and a great miracle was manifested by his hand, for a pillar of light appeared by the tomb of the Lord Christ our Saviour; and a multitude of the Romans witnessed it, for all |416 those that were in the city and its neighbourhood came and beheld it. And it remained from the third hour to the ninth; and the people hastened to see it from every place. And Cyril wrote to Constantius the prince, and informed him of this wonder. Now Constans the prince loved Athanasius; and when he returned to his see, he remained twenty-five years in tranquillity and peace, although before that time he had passed twenty-two years in the see, in exile and conflict and persecution.

And Constans died, and Julian, the misbelieving gentile and idolater, reigned after him, being the son of the sister of Constantine, the great prince, and began

immediately to open the heathen temples. Julian lived at Antioch, because he was unworthy to dwell in the residence of the great Constantine; and when he went to the place of the idols, he took a hawk, which he gave to the priest of the idols, who offered it to Satan, and Julian took its heart and ate it. And he had a sister's son named also Julian, an unbeliever like his uncle, who took the faithful priest Theodoret, and killed him, and then came to his uncle and informed him that he had put him to death. But Julian was angry with him, and said to him : «I did not desire that thou shouldst kill him; for the Christians take a pride in being slain, and say that they have become martyrs; but I am determined, if I return from fighting the Persians, that from everyone of the Christians shall be taken three ounces as a tax» ; meaning thereby that he would oppress the Christians, |417 so that they might worship his idols, because they would not be able to pay the tax. Now the Church was in those days rich, and had four pillars to sustain her, namely Athanasius the patriarch, and Anthony and Pachomius, the two monks, in Egypt, and Basil, the bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia; and Liberius was patriarch of Rome.

And the aforesaid Basil was a friend of Julian, the prince, and was brought up together with him in the school; so when he heard his evil doctrine, he took with him two bishops, and went to visit him. So Julian looked at their garments and their beards, and then said to them : «What do you seek?» They replied : «We seek a good ruler to rule over us.» Julian said to Basil : «Where didst thou leave the son of the carpenter when thou earnest hither?» Basil answered : «I left him making thy coffin to put thee in.» The prince said to him : «If thou wert not my friend, and if I had not an affection for thee, I would cut off thy head forthwith.» Basil said to him : «Didst thou not love knowledge, and long after it? How then hast thou abandoned philosophy?» The prince replied : «I have studied it and learnt it by heart, and I have found it vile.» Basil said to him : «Thou hast not studied it well, nor learnt it by heart; for if thou hadst understood it, thou wouldst not have thought it base.» The prince answered : «I must imprison you until I return from fighting the |418 Persians, so that you may see what will happen.» Basil rejoined : «If thou go and return, God has not spoken in me.» Julian, the prince, said : «What have I to do with that lying Galilaean, who said, I will destroy the temple which the Jews built?

For I will rebuild it as kings build; and it shall be evident to all men that his words, It shall not be built, are false.» Then he cast Basil and the two who were with him into prison.

So Julian marched into the land of the Persians; and when he passed by Jerusalem, he saw the temple in ruins, without a wall standing, for Vespasian, the prince, had demolished it when he destroyed the Jews, and took them captive. But Julian commanded that the ground should be cleared, and the temple constructed anew, and proceeded on his march after leaving behind him one to superintend the building. Then he who directed the work of rebuilding the place began by pulling down the

remains of the temple, so that there was not left therein one stone upon another, as the holy Gospel says; and afterwards he began to reconstruct it as a heathen temple. And the builders used to work during the whole day until night-fall, and then they departed to their homes; but when they came on the morrow, they used to find all that they had built destroyed, though not by human hands; nay, they even found the walls torn up from their foundations, and cast down on the ground. So they went on for two months, without being able to rebuild anything. Then the Jews said to them : «Burn down these tombs, in which the Christians lie, and then the building which you erect will be strong.» This advice they followed, and set fire to the tombs, beginning with two |419 tombs, in which were the body of Eliseus, the prophet, and the body of John the Baptist; but the fire had no power over them at all, therefore they wondered greatly.

And although the fire continued to be lighted for many days, yet it would not touch them. Then some of the faithful went to the governor, and offered him money, if he would empower them to take away the two bodies which were in the two tombs; and he accepted the money and gave them permission to do so. Then they carried away the two holy bodies, and sent them to the Father Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria; and when they were brought to him, he rejoiced over them, as if he saw them alive before him; and he took them, and concealed them in a certain place, until he should find means of building a church over them.

And while Athanasius was sitting one day, and many of the faithful were with him to hear his discourses which gave life to their souls, behold, he raised his eyes and observed certain mounds opposite to the place in which he was. So he said : «If I find an opportunity, I shall build upon these mounds a church to John the Baptist and Eliseus the prophet.» And Theophilus, the scribe of Athanasius, was sitting with him at the table, with others of the faithful, and heard him say these words, which therefore remained in his memory.

But as for Julian, the unbelieving prince, he marched on into Persia; and God delivered him into the hand of his enemies, on account of the saints |420 whom he had imprisoned and threatened before his march. His death was thus. He saw in the night an army which came down upon him from the air, and one of the soldiers struck him with a lance on the head so that it pierced him through the body. Then, knowing that it was one of the martyrs, he filled his hand with his blood, and threw it upwards, saying : «Take that, Jesus, for thou hast conquered the whole world.» And after blaspheming thus, he fell dead. Thus God delivered his people; and the Romans returned to their own country. And Basil, the holy man, three days before the death of Julian, being in prison, had awaked from his sleep, and said to the two who were with him : «I have seen to-night the martyr, Saint Mercurius, entering into his church, and taking his lance, saying : In truth, I will not suffer this unbeliever to blaspheme my God. And when he had said this, he disappeared from me,

and I did not see him again.» Then both his companions said to him : «Verily I also saw the same thing.» So they said one to another : «We believe this firmly, that it is so.» And they sent to the church of the martyr, Saint Mercurius, that they might look for his lance which was kept there, to see whether it was still there or not; and as they could not find the lance, they were assured of the truth of the dream. And after three days the letters with the news of Julian's death arrived at Antioch.

Then the chiefs of the empire assembled, and seated on the throne of the empire a man named Jovian, who was a believer and a holy man, fearing God from his youth. Accordingly at the moment of his election he released |421 the fathers from prison; and thus the saying of that pillar of the truth, Basil, to Julian, the unbeliever, was fulfilled, when he foretold that he would not return; as the prophet Michaeas predicted to Achab, the unbelieving king of the children of Israel; for God, the worker of miracles, was the God of both those men, namely of that prophet and of this holy father, and he accepted their words. And Jovian, the prince, brought out the three fathers, and honoured them, and gave them many gifts, and sent them to their sees. And he used assiduously to attend the prayers in the churches. And he wrote to Athanasius, patriarch of Alexandria, a letter, in which he said : «O true father and trusty shepherd, Athanasius, martyr of Christ who is God, my empire hopes much of you; therefore be of good courage, and take the priestly staff and drive out with it the ravening wolves from among the reasonable flock, namely those whose mouths are full of cursing and the bitterness of the poison of asps, for they are the slayers of souls.» This letter was read in the church at Alexandria, and Athanasius the patriarch sent it to the provinces of Egypt, where it was read in their churches, to comfort and strengthen the faithful. So the followers of Arius were driven away because they were hated; and they were filled with sadness; and after this some of them went to Jovian, the prince, and appealed against the Father Athanasius, but he would not attend to them because he knew their wickedness.

Then Athanasius grew old and advanced in age, after he had written |422 many homilies and treatises; and he wrote concerning Melchisedech, and concerning the Father Anthony, whose biography he related; and he wrote forty-seven Festal Epistles. He wrote also concerning the holy cross, how the Lord Christ was unknown to the devil thereby, so that he believed that he was a mere man; and when he came to him, the Lord pierced his nostrils with his finger, which is next to the little finger, and his thumb, putting them behind him : which means that he rent, shattered, and destroyed Satan's power; showing us that he had overcome the devil's strength by weakness, for the finger which is next to the little finger is one that a man never uses, and is the weakest of the fingers; for he did not kill him speedily, but weakened his power, as the Scripture says, in the 67th Psalm : «Let God arise, and let his enemies be destroyed.» Athanasius also wrote many works on doctrine, and things that cannot be numbered. And he used to write to Basil; and Basil used to answer his letters, and used to address him as My Father. And he

wrote also an epistle to Arsenius, to console him for Theodore his brother, when he went to his rest; and he said in it : «Would that all of us had obtained the place of Theodore thy brother, and would that our ship had anchored in his harbour!» And he wrote a treatise in which he proves that evil comes from the devil, (may God shame him!) and that there is no evil at all with God.

It is said that this Father Athanasius, the patriarch, was borne by an angel of the Lord on one of his journeys, when he was fleeing from the unbelieving princes, until he brought him to the place to which he desired to go, |423 as the angel carried Habacuc the prophet from Jerusalem to Babylon, and as Ezechiel the prophet was carried from Babylon to Jerusalem; for that is not difficult for God most high to do. And there was in Alexandria an idol named Serapis; and when Athanasius was consumed by fever, and his death drew near, he said : «If I find mercy with my Lord Christ, I will prostrate myself before him, and will not raise my face until the gate of this idol be shut.» Accordingly the priests of Alexandria bore witness that after seven days from the day of his death, the prince sent and blocked up the door of the temple in which the idol was.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — PETER II, THE TWENTY-FIRST PATRIARCH. A. D. 373-380

When the patriarch Athanasius, the Apostolic, went to his rest, the bishops and clergy with the orthodox people assembled, and laid their hands upon a priest, named Peter, and appointed him patriarch. And many troubles |424 befell him through a misbelieving man named Lucius, the deaf-eared liar, who was appointed by the scribe Palladius, without authority from the prince. But after some time the matter reached the ears of the prince, and he despatched an officer who seized Lucius the unbeliever and Palladius the scribe, and sent them both into banishment; and they remained in exile until they died. And the Father Peter remained patriarch for eight years, and went to his rest on the 20th of Amshir.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — TIMOTHY I, THE TWENTY-SECOND PATRIARCH. A. D. 380-385

And the people assembled, with the bishops, after the death of the Father Peter, and laid their hands upon a priest named Timothy, and made him patriarch. In his days took place the council of Constantinople, at which the number of the bishops who took part in it was one hundred and fifty; and they excommunicated Macedonius, the misbeliever, patriarch of Constantinople, where the council was held, and another, Eunomius, because those two had blasphemed against the Holy Ghost, and said, in their misbelief, |425 that he was created. This was in the time of Theodosius, the faithful prince. And Timothy remained all his days in tranquillity and peace. The period of his occupation of the throne of Alexandria was nine years and a half; and he died on the 7th of Abib, maintaining the orthodox faith.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — THEOPHILUS, THE TWENTY-THIRD PATRIARCH. A. D. 385-412

When the Father Timothy died, the bishops and people assembled, and appointed Theophilus patriarch. He had been secretary to the patriarch Athanasius, and was righteous in his conduct before God and men. When he took his seat upon the patriarchal throne, news was brought to him that the idolaters had gone to Jerusalem, to open the house of their idols. So he sent some monks thither to drive them away; but the monks were unable to overcome the idolaters. Then Theophilus sent to the monastery of Pachomius in Upper Egypt, and fetched the religious thence, and despatched them to Jerusalem. And when they reached that city, they offered up prayers, |426 and the devils fled from the heathen temple; and that temple was made a habitation for the monks of Jerusalem. When the monks of Upper Egypt returned homewards, the patriarch Theophilus forced them to remain and eat with him by themselves, and entertained them from Sunday to the following Sunday; and he gave them a garden which had belonged to the patriarch Athanasius.

Then the Father Theophilus, the patriarch, remembered the words of Athanasius, which he uttered when he was eating with Theophilus, while he was his scribe. Athanasius said that it was his desire to clear away the mounds of rubbish which he saw, and to build on their site a church to the names of the Baptist and the prophet Eliseus. And at that time, a woman, who had two sons, cleared away the mounds, as his letter testifies, and a stone slab was discovered, upon which three thetas were inscribed; and her history is related in that letter, besides a story of Theophilus and the Angel Raphael, which is not written in this biography. And when Theophilus removed the slab, he found beneath it the money which he required;

so he built the churches with it. He built in a certain spot beside the garden a church to which he translated the body of Saint John the Baptist, and the body of the prophet Eliseus; and many miracles were performed by them both on that day, and a number of people who had been sick were healed.

Theophilus wrote, in the course of his life, many homilies and treatises. |427 Now the emperor Valentinian had died after reigning twelve years; and Valentinian and Gratian, his two sons, reigned after him; and they were believers, and loved God, whose name is glorious. When Theophilus administered the sacrament of baptism, he used to behold a beam of light in the form of a cross over the font before him. But in a certain year, when he stood and blessed the font, during the week of baptism, the cross of light did not appear to him; and he was sad. And it was revealed to him that the reason was that he had not sent for the deacon Arsenius to pray with him, and that if he did not do so the light would not appear to him. So Theophilus dismissed the congregation that day, and sent to seek Arsenius, and found him in the neighbourhood of Ushmûn, and brought him to the church in haste. And the patriarch rejoiced greatly over the arrival of Arsenius, and was consoled; and the cross appeared once more over the font. Theophilus, when he saw the humility of this deacon, and his virtue, desired to ordain him priest; but Arsenius would not consent, and begged the patriarch to spare him that promotion, and to bless him, and let him return to his native country. So the patriarch granted the request of Arsenius.

Now Theophilus had a nephew, his sister's son, named Cyril, whom he had instructed and brought up to the best of his power. And after some time the patriarch sent him to the Mount of Nitria, to the desert of Saint Macarius. And Cyril dwelt there five years in the monasteries, reading the books of the Old and New Testaments; for Theophilus urged him to apply himself assiduously to his studies, saying to him : «By these studies thou |428 wilt some day arrive in Jerusalem on high, which is the dwelling-place of the saints». For Cyril was the attendant of Theophilus in the patriarchal cell, and was ordained reader. The patriarch, when he sent Cyril to the desert, entrusted him to Serapion the Wise, and charged him to teach Cyril the doctrines of the Church, which are the true doctrines of God; so Cyril learnt all the Scriptures by heart. He used to stand before his teacher studying, with a sword of iron in his hand; and if he felt an inclination to sleep, he pricked him with the sword, and so he woke up again; and during most of his nights he would read through in a single night the Four Gospels, and the Catholic Epistles, and the Acts, and the first Epistle of the Blessed Paul, namely, that addressed to the Romans; and on the morrow after this, Cyril's teacher would know, by looking at his face, that he had studied all night.

And the grace of God was with Cyril, so that when he had read a book once, he knew it by heart; and in these years in the desert he learnt by heart all the canoni-

cal books. After this, the patriarch Theophilus sent to him and brought him back to Alexandria, and there Cyril dwelt with the patriarch in his cell, and read aloud in his presence; and the priests and learned men and philosophers were astonished at him, and rejoiced over him on account of the beauty of his form, and the sweetness of his voice which never changed, as it is written : «I opened my mouth and drew in my breath». And all the people, when they heard him read, desired that he might never cease |429 reading, because he read so sweetly, and was so beautiful in countenance. And his uncle Theophilus loved him greatly, and thanked God that he had granted him a spiritual son who had grown in grace and wisdom. Cyril's conduct was excellent, and his humility great; and he never ceased to study theology, nor to meditate upon the words of the doctors of the orthodox Church, Athanasius and Dionysius and Clement, patriarch of Rome, and Eusebius, and Basil, bishop of Armenia, and Basil, bishop of Cappadocia. These are the orthodox fathers whose works he studied. And he would not follow the doctrine of Origen, nor even take his books into his hand for a single day;

but when he heard that one of the faithful had read Origen, he condemned and excommunicated him who had so read. When Cyril read in the Gospel the words : «Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find», he understood these words, and prayed to God for knowledge, and God gave it him. For he was like the bee, which goes forth to feed upon every plant and tree, and collects what is profitable for itself, until it has filled its bag with pure untainted honey.

Now the history of the Father Theophilus is very copious; for it contains the account of his dealings at Alexandria with Theodosius, the great prince; and the miracles which the Angel Raphael performed for him; and the affair of the widow and her two sons, whom he made bishops; and the three thetas |430 which were found written on the slab of stone which concealed the treasures that were discovered at Alexandria; and the wonders manifested by the Angel Raphael in the church which Theophilus built upon the island; and then the authority given to him by the prince over the property of the heathen temples, from Aswan to the confines of Syria, and in the provinces that lie between them.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — CYRIL I, THE TWENTY-FOURTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 412-444

When the patriarch Theophilus died, the Father Cyril took his seat upon the apostolic throne; and the bishops raised the Four Gospels over his head, and prayed over him, saying : «O God, strengthen this man whom thou hast chosen for us.» The first thing that Cyril did was to appoint priests to take charge of the churches throughout his diocese, so that they might not be drawn away from the spiritual food by which they were able to do that which pleases God; and he began his patriarchate full of the wisdom which gives life. And the prince, Theodosius the Younger, who loved God, followed the injunctions |431 of his fathers, and assembled the monks around him, and performed his devotions in their company; but he had no son, and his sister administered the empire. Now the patriarch Cyril never wearied of composing discourses and homilies by the power of the Holy Ghost, who spoke through him; so that most of the principal inhabitants of Alexandria appointed copyists to transcribe for them what the father composed. Then certain philosophers said to him : «Behold, here are discourses written by the prince Julian, in which he casts contempt upon Moses and all the prophets, and alleges that Christ was a mere man; and we used to read his books because it was the prince who wrote them. Julian says : The words of the Galilean will I make lies; for Christ said :

There shall not remain one stone upon another in the temple of Jerusalem that shall not be thrown down. But I will rebuild the temple, and falsify his words. Accordingly Julian destroyed what remained of the temple, that he might rebuild it; but after all he died without restoring any part of it. Thus the words of the Saviour were proved to be true, and we have learnt how great is his power and majesty because none of his words have been falsified.» Now when Cyril heard these things, he was much troubled, until he had found a copy of Julian’s works,

and had read them; and he found them worse even than the works of Origen and Porphyry. |432 So when Cyril found that he was unable to collect all the copies of Julian's works which were scattered here and there in the possession of different persons, he wrote to the prince Theodosius to inform him of this matter, saying : «If it is thy pleasure that Julian's works be destroyed and his misbelief rooted out, order these books which he composed, and by means of which he led men astray, to be collected, and cause them to be burnt.» And the prince approved of Cyril's letter, and glorified God, and acted in accordance with Cyril's suggestions, and wrote a reply, in which he requested him to bless his empire.

So the Father Cyril rejoiced, and composed homilies and discourses, in which he refuted the writings of the prince Julian, and condemned his actions, pointing out how the angel destroyed him in war like Saul; and much besides.

After this the news concerning Nestorius reached the ears of Cyril, and he was informed of the corrupt doctrine of that heretic. And Cyril was sad when he heard this, and said : «No sooner has the misbelief of Julian passed away, than the blasphemies of Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, have appeared.» So Cyril, when he had ascertained how false the opinions of Nestorius were, wrote to him as follows : «Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, addresses Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, with the salutation of the brethren in the true God, who has given us the grace which is one, setting all the world in agreement and |433 in one belief, by the shedding of his blood, which grace is the faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ». The rest of the epistle is well known, and therefore has not been transcribed in this history. And Nestorius returned an answer which was full of blasphemies. So Abba Cyril wrote to the bishops, to inform them of the case of Nestorius; and they met the patriarch in synod, and said to him : «We have heard the reports concerning Nestorius, and there is a special difficulty in regard to his circumstances. For Arius and his followers, and Paul and Manes and the rest of the heretics were not patriarchs, and yet they led a multitude of men astray. How then can this man remain patriarch of Constantinople?»

Then the Father Cyril wrote to Nestorius a second letter in which he said many things, including the following words : «Verily I do not fully believe what is told me of thee». And he added exhortations and warnings, and taught Nestorius what is the right faith, and begged him to return from his heretical doctrine, and told him that he was not strong enough to oppose God who mounted the Cross for our sakes. The following is a transcription of Cyril's letter:

«To my brother and fellow-minister. I did not believe at first what was reported of thee, nor that the contents of the letters, which came to me, and which were said to be written by thee, in reality proceeded from thee. For the lying doctrines which they contained were attributed to the saints; for they were letters full of blasphemy. And now I charge thee to cast away this blasphemy and these disputes; for thou

hast no power to fight against |434 God, who was crucified for us in truth, and died in the body, although he was living in the power of his Godhead. For it is he that is sitting on the right hand of the Father, while the angels and principalities and powers worship him; and he is the eternal King, into whose hands the Father has given all things. And he is the Creator of all; so that thou hast no power to oppose him. I told thee what befell the Jews who withstood him, so that thou art not ignorant of it, and what befell the heretics, Simon Magus and the prince Julian and Arius. Behold what Job the truthful says : Look upon my wounds, and fear, and glorify God. I tell thee that the Church will not endure that thou insult her God; and she it is against whom the gates of hell shall not prevail; for thou knowest what trials she has undergone, and yet that no man has ever had power over her, because she is as a rock in her faith. Beware therefore what thou doest at this time. Farewell.»

When this second letter reached Nestorius, he wrote another answer like his first, full of blasphemies, and, when the Father Cyril received it, he again addressed an epistle to Nestorius, saying :

«If thou wert not a bishop, none would know of thee save thy neighbours and kinsmen; but since thou sittest upon the episcopal throne of the Son of God all know thee, through the fame of the Church. Thou hast attacked the Lord with words of blasphemy, which thou canst not confirm or prove. |435 For if thou searchest the Old Testament, thou canst not find therein that Christ is called a mere man, as thou pretendest; and in saying thus thou showest only that thou dost resist God thy Creator, who bought thee with his blood, namely God the Son, Son of God the Father. So he is called both in the Old and New Testaments. So he is called in the Gospel of John, which speaks of him as the Only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of his Father . Matthew the evangelist also says that Christ is Emmanuel, the interpretation of which is God with us, as Isaias says in his prophecy. Mark testifies in his Gospel that when the high priest asked of Jesus : Art thou the Son of God? he answered : Yea, I am he; and hereafter you shall see the Son of God sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds to judge the living and the dead. Is not this testimony that of which Paul says that it was the good confession which Jesus made before Pontius Pilate?

This is the confession in which the Church perseveres, and for it myriads of martyrs have died, whose numbers cannot be counted. Hast thou not heard Gabriel saying to our Lady Mary that he whom she should bear was of the Holy Ghost, and should be called the Son of God, who is over all, and glorified for ever and ever? Who is it that bears the sins of the world? Is it not Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, whom she bore for us, God the Word incarnate? If thou believest that he was a prophet like |436 Moses, yet neither Moses nor any of the prophets was able to bear the sins of the world; but it is the Prince of goodness, even Christ, who bears the sins of the

world by his being raised upon the cross for our sakes. Hast thou not heard Paul, the apostle, saying : He is not man, but he is God who became man? Again Paul says that it was no angel or intercessor that saved us, but Jesus Christ; and God the Father raised him from the dead. Seest thou now how he confesses that he is God, and how he acknowledges the sufferings that he endured in his holy body?

For if he be not God, how could Paul acknowledge that our salvation came not by a man nor from a man, nor by an angel or intercessor, but by God, even Jesus Christ, whose death he also acknowledges, when he says that the Father raised him from the dead? Thou seest now this wisdom, full of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I have sent thee these letters, my brother, that thou mayest preserve them in the church. Thou art not without knowledge, so read the scriptures and learn from them these things and more besides. I have sent the brethren to thee, and have asked them to remain with thee, that thou mayest enquire diligently during a month, and search through the scriptures, and write to us of what befalls thee. Farewell.»

When Nestorius had perused this epistle, he would not receive the brethren who had brought it to him, nor would he accept the advice contained |437 in the letter or write an answer to it. So the messengers remained a whole month at Constantinople, as Abba Cyril, the patriarch, commanded them, and paid frequent visits to Nestorius; but he would not allow them to enter, and hardened his heart, as Pharao did.

Now Nestorius had been a friend of the prince Theodosius since the time when they were together in the school; and the prince used to say to Nestorius : «I have never heard any of the doctors of the Church teach according to thy doctrine.» But Nestorius would not listen to him. ---- So the messengers sent to Nestorius by Cyril returned to him, and told him what had happened. Then Cyril availed himself of the weapons of his fathers, Alexander and Athanasius, and put on the breastplate of faith which his predecessors had handed down in the Church of Saint Mark the Evangelist; and he went out to war, as David did, with his heart strong in Christ who is God. And he wrote to the other bishops, and they sent a letter to the prince, begging him to allow them to hold a council to enquire into the teaching of Nestorius, and reminding him that his fathers, who had reigned before him, had at all times been supporters of the Church. «They constantly assisted the bishops to confirm the orthodox faith, that they might bless their empire. But now this Nestorius has divided the Church, and is not far from the error of idolatry, since he blasphemously teaches that Christ is a mere man, and no more than a prophet. Many prophets have come into the world, but none of them has ever been worshipped; so that if Nestorius |438 worships a man, he is become an idolater. When Peter said to our Lord Christ :

Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias, he said it because Christ was the Creator of

those two and their God, and had manifested his glory to his disciples by bringing those two, the one from heaven and the other from the earth. Therefore we beg of thy imperial power that we may hold a council to enquire into this man's doctrines. And we will pray for thee and for thy empire that thou mayest obtain salvation, O thou that lovest God!» When the prince had read this letter, he was moved by the power of the Lord, and, acting together with the patriarch, he summoned a council of the bishops to meet in the city of Ephesus. Accordingly, two hundred bishops assembled there from all the cities, each bishop taking with him two priests and a deacon from his diocese. They sent to Nestorius, demanding his presence; and they waited for him many days, but he did not appear; so they wrote to the emperor, informing him that Nestorius had not appeared but that they were waiting for him. And Nestorius requested the prince to send an official with him to protect him, saying : «The bishops are many, and I fear that they will kill me.» So the prince sent with Nestorius a patrician named Candidian, whose opinions agreed with those of Nestorius.

When Candidian came to the council, he seized Cyril by night and imprisoned him in a place in which wheat was kept, together with his friends. And Cyril said to his friends : «What is this beneath |439 our feet?» They answered : «It is wheat.» «And he said : «Thanks be to God who has given us the victory; for they have put us into the house of life.»

Now Candidian had done this in order to support Nestorius, and to intimidate Cyril and the bishops with him, who had come together on account of him, that they might be scattered. But Candidian's object was not attained, for the bishops had not met together without having devoted themselves to death, if it should be necessary, for the faith. So when Candidian was convinced of this, he released Cyril and his friends ; and as he was afraid lest the affair should reach the ears of the prince, who would cause him to be executed on account of it, he began to guard the roads, and prevented the reporters of news from writing to the prince any account of what had passed. Then the fathers continued for some time, in company with the bishop of Ephesus, assembling together and praying, while Nestorius remained separated from them, and would not join them. So they sent to him three bishops, requesting him to be present with them for prayer; but the soldiers under the orders of Candidian. would not allow these bishops to enter the house where Nestorius was. And as he thus held aloof from them, and the transactions lasted so long that the bishops were troubled at being so far from their dioceses, they were forced to expel that enemy of God from God's Church. Accordingly they brought the four gospels, and also brought the blasphemous writings of Nestorius;

and a learned deacon, namely Peter, who was the scribe of Cyril, and knew the blasphemous passages in the compositions of Nestorius, read them out briefly before the holy council; and when they heard them, his misbelief was proved |440 to

them. So the bishops anathematized Nestorius and excommunicated him, and subscribed their signatures to the letter of excommunication, which was sent to him; yet he would not receive it, nor give up his misbelief. Then the bishops desired to send a copy of their letter to the prince, but were not able to do so because of those whom Candidian, the patrician, had set to guard the road. So they consulted together; and at last one of them took the letter, and put it inside a stout cane, and disguised himself, and started off and travelled to Constantinople. There he gave the letter to Dalmatius and Eutyches, the two monks. And they presented it to the prince; and the prince handed it to an eunuch, who received it from him, and gave it to the scribe that he might read it before the prince. And when he read it, the contents proved to be as follows :

«The Council assembled at Ephesus declares thus. We believe that Emmanuel is God Incarnate. But it is said that Nestorius does not share with us in this faith. Therefore he is a stranger to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, and a stranger to the tradition of the Apostles, and a stranger to the one Holy Church. Everyone who denies that Jesus is Emmanuel, that is to say, God Incarnate, is anathema. And everyone who denies that the Virgin Mary is the Mother of God the Word, truly Incarnate, is anathema. Jesus is the Creator, Jesus is the Conqueror, Jesus is the Saviour of all. To him belongs glory for ever. Amen.» |441

And when this confession of faith was read to the prince, he and all that were in his palace cried out, saying : «Jesus is Emmanuel, God Incarnate.» Then Eutyches, the monk, said to the prince : «Let thy majesty subscribe to his excommunication, and write to the bishops, commanding them to appear before thee, to salute thee and bless thy empire.» And the prince did so. Therefore the assembly of bishops journeyed to Alexandria, and thence to Contantinople. And the prince received them graciously, and sat in a lower seat than they, and prostrated himself before them, and received their blessing. But he commanded that Nestorius should be sent into banishment. So Nestorius was exiled in company with a chamberlain who conducted him to Egypt. And the bishops sent a letter to him before he started, in which they said : «Confess that the Crucified is God Incarnate, and we will receive thee again and obtain the repeal of thy sentence of banishment.» But Nestorius hardened his heart like Pharao, and returned no answer to them. And when he said to the chamberlain : «Let us rest here, for I am tired,» the chamberlain replied : «Thy Lord also was weary when he walked until the sixth hour, and he is God. What sayest thou?» And Nestorius answered : «Two hundred bishops assembled to make me confess that Jesus is God Incarnate, but I would not do so. Shall I then say to thee that God suffered fatigue?» And the chamberlain conducted Nestorius on his journey until he brought him to Ikhmîm in Upper Egypt; and there he remained in banishment, anathematized and excommunicated, until he died. |442

Now the holy Father Cyril wrote many epistles, among which was an epistle to Abba John, patriarch of Antioch, beginning thus : «Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth exult.» Cyril also wrote an epistle to Acacius, bishop of Malatia, beginning : «How sweet is an assembly of perfect brethren, who remind one another of spiritual doctrines.» And he addressed a letter to Valerian, bishop of Iconium, beginning : «The beloved brother and fellow-minister.» And he sent an epistle to the priests and deacons and monks and ascetes who remained firm in the orthodox faith after the excommunication and banishment of Nestorius; and an epistle to Eulogius, the Alexandrian priest who dwelt at Constantinople, beginning : «Men are wroth with us on account of the faith proclaimed by the bishops of the East.» And he wrote an epistle to Anastasius and Alexander and Martinian and John, and Paregorius, the priest, and Maximus, the deacon, beginning : «I greatly praise your love for learning.» And in every epistle Cyril makes mention of the orthodox faith, and exposes the errors of Nestorius and the corruption of his doctrine, pointing out that it is opposed to the faith of the holy fathers, and to that which is contained in the divine scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and he proves this by genuine testimonies from the holy writings, in which the Holy Ghost speaks by the |443 tongues of the veracious prophets, the elect apostles, and the holy fathers and doctors of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. Cyril also wrote letters to Nestorius, before his banishment, which are conceived in a spirit of benevolence, and in which Cyril exhorts Nestorius, and aims at conciliating and guiding him. Yet Nestorius would not listen to Cyril, nor return from his misbelief and hardness of heart and corrupt creed.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — DIOSCORUS I, THE TWENTY-FIFTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 444-458

After the holy patriarch Cyril had departed to his rest, Dioscorus was made patriarch in the see of the city of Alexandria. He endured severe persecution for the orthodox faith at the hands of the prince Marcian and his wife; and they banished him from his see, through the partial action of the council of Chalcedon, and their subserviency to the will of the prince and his wife. It is for this reason that the members of that council and all the followers of their corrupt creed are called Melkites, because they follow |444 the opinion of the prince and his wife, in proclaiming and renewing the doctrine of Nestorius.

It was a custom of the ancients to write histories of their predecessors in every generation. In the time of the Israelites, Philo, the Pharian, and Justus and Josephus and Hegesippus wrote part of the life of Jesus Christ, and an account of the ruin of Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus his son, and of what took place after them. And after that, Africanus and Eusebius wrote, and Mennas wrote of the trials and persecution endured by the pastors and their flocks in the days of the patriarch Abba Cyril the Wise, and what passed between him and Nestorius; also of what the Father Dioscorus after him suffered in the council of Chalcedon. But at that time the creeds were separated, and the sees were torn asunder, so that none was left to write histories of the patriarchs, and the practice of composing them was interrupted. But the Lord remains for ever. In this way no biography of the holy patriarch Dioscorus after his banishment has been found. He preserved the orthodox faith, which persists in the see of the evangelist Saint Mark to this day and

for ever, until he received the crown of martyrdom in the island of Gangra, by the command of the prince Marcian; for it was in that island that Dioscorus died. |445

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — TIMOTHY II, THE TWENTY-SIXTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 458-480

And after the militant Father Dioscorus, the patriarch, went to his rest, the Lord Christ raised up a patriarch, named Timothy, upon the episcopal throne of the city of Alexandria; and he suffered from hardships, and from warfare with the dissidents. He and his brother Anatolius were banished to the island of Gangra, like Dioscorus, for seven full years, but he returned by the grace of God, at the command of the prince, to Alexandria. His ordination took place in the days of Leo, the prince. He remained patriarch twenty-two years, and went to his rest on the seventh day of Misri.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — PETER III, THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 480-488

So when Timothy went to the Lord, Peter the priest was ordained by command of God in the church of Alexandria, and was made patriarch. But the empire of the Romans remained established upon the ever-renewed memory of the impure council of Chalcedon; for it was not built upon the |446 foundation of the firm Rock, which belongs to God the Word who is Jesus Christ. And, after the consecration of Peter, patriarch of Alexandria, Acacius, patriarch of Constantinople, wrote to him many epistles which he sent to him, and letters to ask him to receive him to himself; for he rejected the council of Chalcedon, the members of which he called heretics, and the blasphemous Tome of Leo; and he likewise rejected the doctrine of Nestorius. Therefore Peter wrote letters to Acacius in order that he might be assured that his doctrine was sound to the core. And when they came to him he accepted them with joy and gladness, and showed them to those that wished among the believers in the orthodox faith; and then he wrote a synodical epistle and sent it to the blessed Peter. But there were certain bishops who were not present at the time when the letters were written by the two patriarchs, Peter and Acacius; and Satan (may God confound him! stirred up trouble in the hearts of those bishops; and James, bishop of Sâ, became their chief, with Mennas, bishop of Munyat Tâmah.

And they went to the city of Alexandria, and said to the patriarch : «How couldst thou receive Acacius, when he is one of those who were present at the Chalcedonian council?» So he answered them quietly and calmly : «I received him only because he abandoned that doctrine.» And he informed them of the epistles of Acacius which had come to him, which bore witness of his return to the truth, and of his confession of the orthodox faith; and he reminded them that he had sent the

bishops to Acacius, that they might hear his expressions, according to the canon of |447 the Church. But they would not accept his words because pride was established in their hearts; and they separated themselves from the throne of the evangelist, Saint Mark, the apostle, saying in their ignorance, as the children of Israel said, that they had no portion with David, nor inheritance with the son of Isai . And since they were divided from the holy patriarch Peter, and would not enter under his obedience, the orthodox called them Those that had no head . Now the epistles written between the two patriarchs aforesaid formed fifteen books.

This Peter, when he became patriarch over Alexandria, met with trouble from the heretics. For they banished him, and delivered up his see to a man called Timothy, who is also named Anthony or Theognostus, and belonged to Canopus. Then followed John the Tabennisiote, whom they appointed after the death of Anthony. Subsequently, the patriarch Peter returned to his see with great glory; and the period of time during which he sat upon the patriarchal throne was eight years; and he died, in peace and great honour, on the 2nd of Hatûr. All his epistles are preserved in the Monastery of Father Macarius; and among them is an epistle of Zeno, the blessed prince, with the answer to it, in which are jewels of language, and words of holiness, and the confession of the orthodox faith. |448

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — ATHANASIUS II, THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 488-494

When the holy Father Peter went to his rest, Athanasius was appointed. He had been priest in charge of the church of Alexandria; and now he was made patriarch over it. He was a good man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost; and he accomplished that with which he was entrusted; and in his days there was no disorder or persecution in the holy Church. He remained seven years, and went to his rest on the twentieth of Tût.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — JOHN I, THE MONK, THE TWENTY-NINTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 494-503

When Athanasius the Younger went to his rest, John the Monk was appointed, and made patriarch upon the evangelical throne; and he walked according to the lives of the excellent fathers who preceded him. The Church and the people and the inhabitants of the country-districts were in his days in security and peace through the grace of the Lord Christ. And he lived in the time of the holy Zeno, the blessed prince; and on |449 account of his faith and goodness the prince commanded in his clays that there should be carried to the monastery of Saint Macarius, in the Wadi Habib, all that the monks needed of wheat and wine and oil, and whatever they required for the furnishing of their cells. So Abba John, the patriarch, accomplished his ministry in security and tranquillity in the days of Zeno, the blessed and faithful prince, and went to his rest on the 4th of Bashans, after remaining eight years as patriarch, and was gathered to his fathers.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — JOHN II, FORMERLY THE HERMIT, THE THIRTIETH PATRIARCH. A. D. 503-515

So when Abba John, the patriarch, went to his rest, there was appointed instead of him a man who was a hermit, called John; and this was by the command of God. This John was a kinsman of the departed patriarch. And he wrote in his days many books and homilies. And God shewed forth in his days a wonderful thing, and raised up royalty and priesthood together for the Church, in the persons of the prince Anastasius, the pious believer, and the patriarch Severus, the excellent, clothed with light, occupant of the see of Antioch, who became a horn of salvation to the orthodox Church, and who sat upon the throne of the great Ignatius. |450 And Severus wrote a synodical letter to the Father John, the patriarch, concerning the unity of the fnith, wherein he announced the agreement between them in the one orthodox creed of the holy fathers. So John, the patriarch, and his bishops accepted this letter, and read it in their churches throughout the land of Egypt; and they offered prayers and thanked the Lord Christ, who had restored the divided members to their places. And with great joy and spiritual exultation did John, the holy patriarch, write to the great Severus an answer to his letter in canonical language, full of the orthodox faith, which is that of the doctors of the Church, as the blessed Severus had written to him. And when the envoys of Severus returned to him with this gift, which was a fitting reward for his friendship, he rejoiced and was glad exceedingly. John remained patriarch eleven years, and went to his rest on the twenty-seventh of Bashans.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — DIOSCORUS II, THE THIRTY-FIRST PATRIARCH. A. D. 515-517

And when the Father John, the patriarch, went to his rest, he had a scribe whose name was Dioscorus, and who was a man perfect in all his |451 relations, humble and good; and there was none like him in his time. So they ordained him patriarch upon the evangelical throne. Then he wrote a synodical letter to the Father Severus, in which he informed him of the death of the blessed Father John, and announced that he had taken his seat after him upon the apostolic throne. So Severus wrote an answer to him, to console him, and to confirm him in the orthodox faith, and to charge him to teach the people, and not to cease teaching, and to encourage him in this work. And Dioscorus remained patriarch three years; though in another history it is related that he continued one year and a half; and he went to his rest on the twenty-seventh of Babah, and was gathered to his fathers.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — TIMOTHY III, THE THIRTY-SECOND PATRIARCH. A. D. 517-535

Then Timothy took his seat as patriarch on the throne of Alexandria. And Anastasius the believing prince died; and they raised up after him an evil man, a heretic, whose name was Justinian, that he might govern the empire. When Justinian took his seat upon the throne, he employed all his efforts to make the orthodox believers return to the faith of the Chalcedonian council; and the first thing that he began with was that he seized the holy |452 patriarch Severus. And Justinian assembled a council in the city of Constantinople, on his own initiative, at which were present Vigilius, patriarch of Rome, and Apollinaris, whom the prince had made patriarch over Alexandria, and Eutychius, patriarch of the city of Constantinople, and the bishops who were under their jurisdiction. Moreover Justinian sent to fetch the Father Severus, the patriarch, and the bishops of the East; for he thought that he could conciliate the mind of the holy Severus, and incline him to his doctrine, so that all the bishops might obey him, because they firmly believed in Severus and in his faith, and so they might acknowledge the prince’s evil doctrine. But the great Severus paid no heed to the prince. And Severus, with his bishops, went to Constantinople that he might confirm the faith; for he thought that that unbelieving prince would be converted from his corrupt doctrine.

So when the Father Severus arrived at Constantinople, then the prince at first honoured him greatly, and exalted his rank, and spoke good words to him, seeking from him that he should make concessions to him with regard to the Tome of Leo, by adopting his faith. But Severus, God’s champion, had placed in his heart the words of Peter the Apostle to Simon the Magician : «Let thy gifts perish with thee,

for I see that thou art full of bitterness, even more than the serpent.» And Justinian the prince was like Nestorius; and one day he commanded that the bishops, falsely so called, should assemble for that council. But neither the Father Severus, the valiant one, nor any of |453 his bishops would be present with them, for he said : «If they will not first anathematize the Tome of Leo and the impure, contemptible council of Chalcedon, I will not consent with them to the doctrine of unbelief.» Then things were done by the prince which this book is too small to relate, lest the narrative should grow too long by recording them. So when the command of the prince reached Severus, and yet he did not meet the bishops in council nor go to join them, they brought trials upon him, and persecutions came upon him.

But after two years, at the request of the believing princess, Theodora, the prince left Severus alone, and gave him up to her; and so she sent him back to his see.

And in those days Timothy was at Alexandria. So when Severus, the patriarch, and his bishops, who were from the East, were driven away from Antioch, and came to Egypt, those bishops came to the city of Alexandria. And many nuns, who were virgins, were driven out of the monasteries. And the Father Severus, at the time of this trouble, was fleeing from city to city, secretly or openly, and from monastery to monastery. And he wrote to the bishops, his companions, who were at Alexandria, and consoled them, and encouraged them to have patience, and charged them to endure the persecutions with fortitude. And there was with them one who was no true bishop, whose name |454 was Julian. This man plainly showed that he was a partaker in the council of Chalcedon, because he divided the Lord Christ, who is One, into Two, arid made him into Two Natures after the Ineffable Union. And when he found an opportunity in the absence of the Father Severus, he wrote a Tomarion, with an evil purpose, addressed to certain sick and intoxicated people, in which he expresses his approval of the faith of Eutyches, the unbeliever, and Apollinaris and Manes and Eudoxius, the unbelievers; and he filled it also with the blasphemous creed of those who believe in the doctrine of the Phantasiasts, and deny the lifegiving Passion of Christ the Lord. And he sent this book ahout Egypt, and to the monks of the desert.

And they received him, and fell into the snare, except seven persons, whose hearts God enlightened, and so they would not accept it; for they heard a voice saying : «This is the impure Tomarion.» Then those who had fallen into the error of Julian rose up against them, and killed two of them. So the rest were scattered, and began to celebrate the liturgy in their cells in the Monastery of Saint Macarius and in other monasteries. And this was the cause of their separation, and of the prevalence of error in the four monasteries and in the hermitages. Then by the power and grace of the Holy Ghost, assistance came to the five monks who remained of the seven, and so they prevented the other monks from accepting the Tomarion. But the

source of this error, Julian, did not cease to send his writings into the country to lead men astray and draw them to himself. |455

So when the Father Severus learnt this, by the power of the Holy Ghost which dwelt in him, he wrote to every place, in order that a true account of the facts might be disseminated, and that Julian's true meaning might be made known. For he informed men in his letters that Julian was an evil serpent, filled with blasphemy. And Severus bestowed his care on those that were afflicted with this plague, that he might heal them, and encouraged those that did not follow the Tomarion, from which there arose trouble and antagonism. And meanwhile the Father Timothy, the blessed patriarch, went to his rest, being established in the orthodox faith. For he fought on its behalf, like the Father Severus, and refuted Julian and all his doctrine. The period during which Timothy remained patriarch on the throne of Alexandria was seventeen years; and he died on the 13th of Amshir.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — THEODOSIUS I, THE THIRTY-THIRD PATRIARCH. A. D. 535-567

By the command of God, the bishops and orthodox people assembled after the death of Timothy, and, by the dispensation of the Lord Christ, they ordained the holy Father Theodosius patriarch. He was a virgin, and a |456 master of the literary style used in ecclesiastical writings. But, after a short time, the hater of good raised up a trial for him, and stirred up trouble among evil people of the inhabitants of the city, the masters of vile arts. For there was a man who was old and advanced in age, and whose name was Gaianus; and he was archdeacon of the church of Alexandria; and he was standing, at the time of the ordination of the Father Theodosius as patriarch, among the bishops and priests and chief men of the city, until they had ordained him, and written his diploma of consecration, and promoted him to the degree of primate over the apostolic diocese, and ratified his appointment with the consent of all Christian and God-loving people. But after that, certain persons led the archdeacon astray, and changed his thoughts, in his simplicity, and gave him counsel, saying : «This degree and this promotion are thy due, and it is not lawful for anyone to be promoted before thee.» Thus they insinuated their evil suggestions into his mind little by little, until he accepted their advice. So they took him, and went with him to the house of a priest, named Theodore, who was an evil-doer and had much wealth;

and there they ordained Gaianus, the archdeacon, as patriarch. And there was with them, assisting them, Julian, the corrupt of faith, in agreement with Theodore the priest; for Theodosius the blessed, when he became patriarch, had anathematized Julian, because |457 he was the refuge of the heretics. Then Gaianus went to the

governor, and to the commander of the forces, and offered them bribes, and won their hearts by his many gifts, until they were induced to stir up great trouble against the Father Theodosius, the patriarch, and against the Church, and drove out the holy Theodosius from the see of Alexandria to Hierasycaminus, where he remained six months. And the governor hid from the prince what they had done to the patriarch, and also that they had ordained another in his place, and all that was done by Julian and Theodore and Gaianus, who joined together against him. But the wise Severus, the patriarch, used to call Theodosius brother and helper and partner in the one true evangelical work, and used to console and encourage him in his sufferings for the orthodox faith, comparing him to the great Paul the Apostle, when he was first chosen and first believed in Christ, and reminding Theodosius how Paul's family and friends rejected him, and how the believers let him down from the wall in a basket, so that he could flee from Damascus. For the Father Theodosius suffered continual trouble and persecution from the heretics. And this was in the year 242 of Diocletian.

Now Severus, the patriarch, was hiding himself from Justinian, the heretical prince, in a Christ-loving town, called Sakhâ, in Egypt, at the house of a man, named Dorotheus, who took care of the affairs of the aged monks who had rejected the error of Julian the unbeliever. And the said |458 man was allowed to visit the governor of Egypt, Aristomachus, and begged him to take pity on the aged among the monks who were in the desert, by granting them the favour of authorizing them to build churches and towers, instead of those that had been taken from them by Julian and his companions, that so he might give rest to the monks. Accordingly the governor gave orders to Dorotheus to do as he wished; and Dorotheus returned thanks to God most high.

Severus, the patriarch, had composed books in which he refuted the heresy of those that believe in the Two Natures, and brought to naught most of those that hold this view, by the glory of God, and through the instructions that he gave with his tongue, which was a spiritual sword. And he continued to teach concerning the books of divine wisdom, until he grew old, and the days of his removal from trouble to rest grew near. For he remained in the midst of struggles, and enduring persecution from the heretics for thirty years, upon the throne of Antioch, and amid opposition and distress for six years; and he did not cease from this life of fighting for the orthodox faith until death. So when he had accomplished his course, still preserving the true faith, he went to the Lord Christ whom he loved, and received the crown of victory with the holy fathers in the assembly of the heavenly virgins.

And as for the blessed Father Theodosius, he was greatly troubled by the heretic Gaianus and his followers. But John, the governor of |459 Alexandria, and others were struggling to save him from them: and so they consulted with the fathers, and took Theodosms secretly, and put him on board of a boat on the river, and conveyed

him to a town called Malij, within the province of Egypt, and there he remained two years.

And the laity of Alexandria, and the clergy and officials of the city, were troubled because their patriach was taken away from them, and said to the governor : «Why hast thou removed the good shepherd Theodosius from us?» Then the governor was afraid of them, and dreaded lest the affair should be reported to the prince; and so he sent Gaianus, the heretic, out of the city. After that, one of the officials went to carry out some business which he had with the prince, and so he made known to the faithful princess Theodora that the blessed Theodosius had been banished from the city of Alexandria, whence she herself had originally come. So she went in to the prince calmly and wisely and humbly, and informed him of all that had happened, without his sanction, to the Father Theodosius, patriarch in the city of Alexandria. Then, when the prince heard that, he rejoiced in his heart at the trouble and conflict which the orthodox had endured, because they would not consent to share the corrupt and impure faith of Chalcedon, which he held. But afterwards, wishing to please the |460 princess, and to delight her heart, he gave her power to do by his authority in this matter whatever she desired. So she sent to the city of Alexandria, to enquire into the matter, and to restore the Father Theodosius, the patriarch, to his see;

and she bade the messengers inform her how his appointment as patriarch took place at his ordination, and whether it was accomplished according to the canon of the Church. So when her messengers came to the city, according to what she commanded them to do, they enquired into what she bade them enquire into, and examined the circumstances of his ordination, and sought to discover whether it was accomplished according to the canon of the Church; and they also enquired how Gaianus, the archdeacon, had been appointed, and which of them was the first to be consecrated. Therefore the governor, and the commander of the forces, in return for the gifts and bribes which they had received, suborned certain persons who cried aloud saying : «Gaianus was the first to be ordained.» Their words, however, were not confirmed; for one hundred and twenty men, of the priests and officials of the city, subscribed their signatures to a statement that it was Theodosius who was the first to be ordained.

Then they assembled together, and the help of the Lord Christ was with them, and the officers and military chiefs of the prince, who were his envoys and trusted counsellors, were present, and all the Alexandrians were assembled with them in the holy church. And they brought the holy |461 gospels and the prince’s decree to which his seal and image were attached, and they introduced the Father Theodosius, the blessed patriarch, and the body of bishops who had been present at his consecration; and they separated them, and questioned them one by one, and wrote down what they said. And their confession proved true, in each case, for they

all stated, without hesitation or discrepancy, that it was Theodosius, the blessed, who was ordained first, with the consent of the bishops and people, according to the canon of the Church; and that two months after that they heard that Gaianus had been made patriarch. Then Gaianus came forward before the assembly, and confessed to them that the statement was true, and asked pardon for what he had done. And the assembly begged of the blessed Father Theodosius to receive Gaianus, and prayed him to accept his repentance, on condition that he would write in his own handwriting that he had done this in contradiction to the ecclesiastical canon, and that he would remain in his office of deacon, becoming archdeacon again, as he had been before, and would humble himself and submit to the Father Theodosius, and obey him till the time of his death; and Gaianus consented to do all this. And they all set their seals to this statement as being true and veracious; and the whole assembly rejoiced, and glorified God, and thanked him because their good shepherd Theodosius, the patriarch, had returned to them, and had taken his seat upon his throne, to rule the Church and the people in peace. |462

And as for Julian and Theodore and Manes and all those that dissented, and their followers, the name of heretic was established as their due, for they did not repent; but Gaianus submitted to the obedience of Theodosius, the patriarch. So when the affairs of the Church and the faithful Christian people were well established, the Father Theodosius rejoiced, and wrote letters in which he thanked the prince and princess; and these letters he sent by their messengers, namely Aristaenetus and Nicetas and Philodorus, whom he thanked for what they had done. And when the envoys arrived, and delivered the letters to the prince, and made known to him all that had happened, his thoughts were despondent and troubled. For he thought : «Behold, I have given up the throne of Alexandria to Theodosius; and yet, even if I bestowed upon him in addition all the provinces of Egypt and Africa and all other countries, he would never agree with me in the creed which I prefer, so that the whole Church might be of one faith.»

Then the prince Justinian, after that, took thought, and wrote to the governor and officials of Alexandria, and to the Father Theodosius, with the view of attracting him by the hope of reward, praying him to receive the Tome of Leo, and yield to him on that point, and promising in that case that he should have the two offices, both the civil patriarchate, and the civil governorship, and that all the bishops of Africa should be under |463 his obedience, and that he should have the command over all that territory; «but» added the prince, «if he will not obey nor consent, then let him be driven out of the Church, and depart whithersoever he will; for he that does not agree with me in my faith shall have no prelacy either over people or Church».

But when the blessed father and patriarch Theodosius, the confessor of Christ, heard the letter and proposals of the prince, he exclaimed in the presence of the

assembly, and of the governor and envoys : «The holy gospel says that the Devil took the Lord and Saviour, and led him to the summit of a high mountain, and shewed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of it, and said to him : All this is mine, and if thou wilt worship me I will give it to thee. So likewise what you promise me will be the destruction of my soul, if I do as you propose, and I shall become thereby a stranger to Christ, the true king». And he raised his hands before the envoy sent by the prince, and before the governor and that great assembly, and said : «In truth I anathematize the Tome of Leo and the council of Chalcedon; and whoever acknowledges them is anathema henceforth for ever. Amen.» Then he said to the governor and to all the prince's troop : «The prince has no power except over my body; but the Lord Jesus Christ, the true and great prince, has power over my soul and body together. And now behold the churches are before you |464 with all that they contain, therefore do whatever you wish with regard to them. But as for me, I follow my fathers who have preceded me, the doctors of the apostolic Church, Athanasius and Cyril and Dioscorus and Timothy, and those who were before them, whose deputy I am, although unworthy.» Then Theodosius arose and went out, saying : «Let those that love God follow me. For I came forth from my mother's womb naked, and I shall return to it naked. And he that loses his life at this time for the Faith, shall save it.»

So they took him to the palace, where they guarded him for a day and a night; but when the morrow came, they sent him away, as the prince had commanded in his letter, saying : «Let him go whithersoever he pleases.» Therefore he went out from the city, and the power of the Lord Christ guided him; for Aristomachus provided for his needs, and prepared for him all that he required, and carried him in a boat to Upper Egypt, where he remained teaching the people and the monks in the monasteries, and confirming them in the orthodox faith, and encouraging them to, endure the conflict until death.

And the prince's envoy returned to him, and made known to him all that had happened, and how Theodosius, the patriarch, had gone forth from the city, and would not accept any of the offers made by the prince. When the prince heard that, he and all his attendants were astonished that the patriarch had rejected that post of governor, and had disputed the royal command, and remained firm in the faith. Then Justinian |465 thought within himself and said : «If I leave him where he is, then all the people will follow his faith, and he will not allow them to accept the Tome of Leo.» So he wrote a letter full of assurances and promises to the patriarch Theodosius, declaring that no pain nor damage should come to him from him, but all good and kindness; and he sent this letter by a scribe, to whom he said : «Treat him courteously until thou bringest him to me, and say to him : The prince desires to confer with thee.» So when the blessed patriarch had perused the prince's letter, he prayed for the help of the power of the Lord Christ, and took with him of the clergy certain wise men, learned and excellent; and they embarked in a ship, and

journeyed until they arrived at Constantinople. There Theodosius entered to the prince and princess, who, when they saw his serenity and humility and excellence, received him kindly, and lodged him in chambers which they had prepared for him and his companions.

Afterwards the prince sent for him a second time, and a third time, until the sixth time, and each time he addressed him courteously, and desired of him that he should yield to him in confirming the council of Chalcedon, and gave him many marks of honour and priority and precedence. But Theodosius said : «Neither life nor death nor dearth nor nakedness nor sword will turn my heart from the faith of my fathers; nor will I abandon a jot or tittle of what my fathers, the inspired doctors, wrote before me, those shepherds of the reasonable flock of Christ, from Mark the evangelist |466 to the day on which I was made a deacon by the Father Timothy, after whom I became patriarch by the dispensation of God.»

So when the prince could not draw Theodosius to his doctrine, he left him and sent him into banishment in disgrace. But he showed favour to the clergy of Alexandria, and caused Mennas, patriarch of Constantinople, to ordain for them a man, named Paul of Tinnis, that he might be patriarch on the throne of Alexandria, and sent him, accompanied by a troop of soldiers, to the city of Alexandria. But when Paul arrived there, not one of the inhabitants would receive him; for they said : «This is the new Judas!» And he remained a year, during which none would listen to him, nor would any communicate from his hand, except the envoy who accompanied him, and the soldiers who arrived with him, and the governor and his attendants only. And the people of the city used to insult Paul, saying : «This is Judas the betrayer!» So he wrote to the prince to make known to him what had happened to him, and how they fled from him as sheep flee from a wolf; and he sent the letter by a patrician. Then the prince was enraged, and sent a letter by another patrician, in which he commanded that the doors of the churches in the city of Alexandria should be shut and sealed with his seal, and guards set before them, so that no one at all might enter.

When that sinful letter arrived in the city, there was great sadness on account of it, and anguish and unbounded sorrow that cannot |467 be described, upon the orthodox people. And they remained in this condition for a whole year, without communion, or church to pray in, or place to be baptized in. But the letters of their blessed Father Theodosius came to them from his place of exile, reminding them of the faith, and consoling them, and encouraging them to patience. So when their trouble increased, an assembly of the orthodox met together, priests and laymen, and took counsel together as to building a church in which they might take refuge, so that they might not be like the Jews. And they did what they proposed, and built a church by the power of Christ, in the western part of Alexandria, in the place called the Pillars, or the Serapeum; and this church is the Angelion, which

they built secretly at the hundred and five steps. And another congregation of the people also built another church, in the name of Cosmas and Damian, to the east of the amphitheatre, and a little to the west of the colonnade; and they finished it in the year 278 of Diocletian. When the prince learnt this, he sent and opened all the churches, and put them under the authority of the Chalcedonians.

So when the blessed Father Theodosius learnt that there remained to him no other than these two newly-built churches, the church of the Angelion, and the church of Cosmas and Damian the Martyrs, he sighed and wept, because he knew the people of Alexandria, and that they loved pomp and honour, and he feared that they would depart from the orthodox Faith, with a view to gaining honour from the prince. And he used to pray, saying : «O my Lord Jesus Christ, thou |468 didst buy this people with thy precious blood, and thou providest for them; therefore remove not thy hand from them; but thy will be done!» And Theodosius remained twenty-eight years in banishment and otherwise, and in Upper Egypt four years, preserving the orthodox faith. And he composed of homilies and doctrinal treatises during his patriarchate, which lasted for thirty-two years, too many to be counted.

Theodosius was removed, in the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ whom he loved, on the 28th day of Baunah; and he received the crown of victory with the assembly of the saints in the land of the living for ever. And let us, the believers who remain in the orthodox faith, and are counted worthy to be called Theodosians after his name, supplicate and implore God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that we may have spiritual thoughts, and encouragement, while we keep the right faith without wearying, as it was kept by this holy father and prelate, who confessed before heretics, kings and princes and authorities who lived at that evil time, and that our life before him may be without offence, and that we may not turn aside from his will, and that we may have a full share together with him in the kingdom of heaven, by the grace and mercy and compassion of our God, the Lover of Mankind, Jesus Christ our Lord and |469 Saviour, to whom is due glory with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the Giver of Life, now and always, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — PETER IV, THE THIRTY-FOURTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 567-569

When the patriarch Theodosius was banished by Justinian, the prince, there was set up instead of him, though he was still alive, Paul of Tinnis, who was appointed at Constantinople. So this custom began for the patriarchs of the Melkites, that they should be ordained at Constantinople, and then proceed to Alexandria. And after a short time the Lord destroyed Paul of Tinnis by an evil death; and they appointed in his stead Apollinaris, who also took possession of the church, by the prince's authority; and he ordered that none of the believing bishops should be seen in the city of Alexandria. At that time there was union between the Church of Antioch and the Church of Alexandria in the orthodox faith and in Christian love; for Theodosius confessed before the prince, both he and those who were with him, that he was in union with the Father Severus, patriarch of Antioch, |470 and said : «I accept all that was said by Saint John the Golden Mouth, and by the wise Cyril.»

And when Theodosius went to his rest, Apollinaris, the hypocrite, rejoiced greatly, and made a great feast for the clergy and people of the city; for he thought that they would conform to his creed, because not one of the fathers and bishops was able to show himself, neither in Alexandria nor in Antioch, on account of what the heretical prince had commanded. But, by the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, Alexandria was governed by an excellent and philanthropic man, who had thrown in his lot with the orthodox; and therefore he commanded that they should ordain a patriarch for themselves secretly, in succession to the Father Theodosius. And he said to them : «Go out to the Monastery of Az-Zajaj, as if you wished to pray there, and appoint over yourselves him, whom you shall elect, as patriarch.» So they thanked God, and glorified the Lord Christ, and sent to the northern cities of the land of Egypt, and summoned three bishops, and went out with them to the

Monastery of Az-Zajaj, where they ordained a man, who was a priest, named Peter, as patriarch. And the people received consolation through him, and their faith was strengthened; but they could not bring him into the city openly, through fear of the prince, and of Apollinaris, the patriarch of the heretics. So his residence was outside Alexandria, at a |471 distance of nine miles, at the church dedicated to the name of Joseph; and they used to carry to him all that he needed; but the prince knew nothing of him.

And after this the thing became known, that Peter had become patriarch instead of Theodosius the deceased; and when Apollinaris learnt this, he was exceedingly angry, and wrote to the prince to inform him of what had happened. But before his letter reached Justinian, the prince, at Constantinople, the Angel of the Lord smote him and he died; and his death was evil like the death of Herod. And as for Peter, he was well formed and of beautiful countenance, adorned with every noble deed, loving those in whom was the knowledge of God. For this reason he sought a man excellent and learned in the holy canons, that he might be his scribe. So they pointed out to him a monk who was a deacon, and whose name was Damian, in the Monastery of Tôn Paterôn, and this man was a skilful writer; and the Father Peter, the patriarch, went to the monastery, and talked with Damian, and asked him to help him and labour with him in the works of the Church. And the patriarch begged him and persuaded him to remain with him in the monastery as if he were a bishop, since he could not reveal that he was patriarch, and was not able to enter into the city of Alexandria openly. And the deacon and monk, |472 Damian, consented to do this, and obeyed the patriarch in what he bade him accomplish.

And there were in that place six hundred flourishing monasteries, like beehives in their populousness, all inhabited by the orthodox, who were all monks and nuns, besides thirty-two farms called Sakatinâ, where all the people held the true faith. And the father and patriarch, Peter, was the administrator of the affairs of all of them. When the orthodox people of Antioch heard of what the inhabitants of Alexandria had done, they also took a man whose name was Theophanes, and made him patriarch in succession to the blessed Father Severus, and seated him on the throne in a monastery called the Monastery of Aphtonius; because the heretics forbad the orthodox bishops to enter, any one of them, into the city of Antioch, as was done also at Alexandria. So the two patriarchs were in similar circumstances, living in two monasteries outside their respective cities. Then Peter, patriarch of the city of Alexandria, fell sick and went to his rest, after finishing his course and his ministry which was pleasing to God. The period of time during which he remained patriarch was two years; and his death took place on the 25th of Baunah. May his prayers be with us! Amen. |473

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — DAMIAN, THE THIRTY-FIFTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 569-605

When the holy Father Peter went to his rest, they enthroned in his place his scribe Damian, the deacon and monk, who was strong in deed and word and in the grace of the Lord which descended upon him. For he had been a monk from his youth in the wilderness of Wadi Habib, and was brought up by saints in the Monastery of Saint John, where he remained sixteen years, serving God according to the service of the holy ascetes, before he came to Pihenaton, to the Monastery of Tôn Paterôn, otherwise called Monastery of the Fathers. This was at the time of the rebuilding of the four monasteries in Wadi Habib, which were growing up like the plants of the field in security and guidance from God; and to their inhabitants was brought all that they needed, and they worked industriously at the building.

But there were among them the Meletians, I mean the followers of Meletius, who used to receive the Chalice many times in the night, before they came to the church. For this reason, when the Father Damian, the patriarch, was counted worthy to sit upon the evangelical throne, he wrote to the holy mountain, and commanded that the Meletians should be banished from it. And after a short time, a voice came from heaven upon that desert, saying : «Flee! Flee! » And when the inhabitants of the four |474 monasteries had left them, they were laid waste. When news of this reached the patriarch Damian, he was exceedingly sad. Now this holy father, the patriarch, was living in seclusion, in the Monastery of Tôn Paterôn, as we said at the beginning, in the condition of a suffragan bishop. And, by the wisdom of God which was given to him, he wrote the Logos, which is a discourse of wisdom. And he also wrote the Mystagogiae, besides the Festal Letters and the Catecheses. And the followers of the impure heresy came to him, and disputed about the Faith; but by the grace of the Lord which was with him he resolved their arguments,

sweeping them away like a spider ’s web; and he spoke courteously to them, and taught them to understand the mysteries of Christian doctrine, and made them like Achab before our Father Elias, the prophet.

In the eighth year of Damian’s patriarchate, a satanic thought fell into the hearts of the Acephali who were living in the east of Egypt. For there were four priests remaining over from that impure council, and they said : «What shall we do? We are perishing, and no bishop is left to us. Come therefore, let us make one of ourselves bishop, lest the remembrance of us perish from the face of the earth.» Then they chose the oldest among them, whose name was Barsanuphi, and the three priests took him and |475 made him bishop, and his heretical doctrine was named after his name. When the people of the west of Egypt heard of this, they were exceedingly angry because they had done this without consulting them; so they separated from them, and would not join them. For this reason they had none to baptize them or give them communion or pray with them. So the others ordained a bishop for them. Now the prince at that time was Maurice, who loved money exceedingly, and rejected the orthodox.

When the Father Theophanes, the patriarch, went to his rest and departed to the Lord, the people of Antioch took one of the priests of the church, whose name was Peter, and made him patriarch. And he was coarse-minded, and sinful in his thoughts, and disturbed in his intellect, and opposed to the right faith, as that wise man in the Lord, Cyril, the holy patriarch, said with regard to the followers of Anatolius : «They are dark in their thoughts».

On account of the union between the two sees, Peter wrote a synodical epistle to the Father Damian, the patriarch, according to the usual custom. So when the synodical letter came to Damian, he rejoiced at it, and assembled the bishops. But when he examined Peter’s doctrine declared in it, he found in it an error in the confession of the Holy Trinity. Therefore he sought in his wisdom and gentleness to draw the said Peter to himself by kindness, that the Church might not be divided, nor the union between the two sees be |476 broken. So he wrote to him a homily in which he reminded him of all the heretics, and of the doctrine laid down by Severus, the patriarch, with the object of making him understand the faith, in order to guide his intelligence. For Peter said in his strange philosophy : «There is no necessity to name the Trinity». Yet all the Doctors of the Church, and Cyril the Wise, and those that came after him, till the days of Damian, in their writings confess the holy Trinity, declaring that it is Three Persons and One Nature and One Godhead, creating and containing nothing created; and that it is divided in Persons, and truly united in substance and in name. They declare that God is the Creator of the two great luminaries; for the sun is made to rule the day, and the moon, as the lesser luminary, to rule the night; and that the act of creation took place before the name was given;

and that God said : «Let the waters be gathered together, and let the dry land appear» ; and God called the place of the gathering of the waters the seas, and called the dry part land; and that the act preceded the naming. «So likewise must thou understand this», adds Damian, «that the nature of the Creator is the one single nature which does all things. For who knows the thoughts of the Lord, and who can point them out; and who can give to him that he may seek from him a reward? For all things are from him. And glory be to the Holy Trinity, the consubstantial, the all-perfect, who accepts no new thing |477 and no new names at all; but his names are sure, and his deeds together with them».

This discourse the Father Damian, the patriarch, wrote to Peter, patriarch of Antioch. But Peter, patriarch of Antioch, was like the deaf asp which stops its ears and will not listen to the voice of the charmer nor to the medicine which a wise man prepares; nay he remained obstinate in his erroneous ideas, confessing and saying with his tongue which deserved to be cut out : «What is the need of naming the Trinity?» Thus he divided the Undivided Trinity. So there was a conflict between the Egyptians and the Orientals on this account; and they remained thus for twenty years disputing without coming to an agreement, until God had mercy on his people of whom he has care at all times, and broke off the life of the heretic, and removed him from the world. And Damian, the blessed patriarch, remained all his days composing letters and homilies and treatises, in which he refuted the heretics. And there were in his days certain bishops whom he admired, marvelling at their purity and excellence; and among them was John of Burlus, and John his disciple, and Constantine the bishop, and Cleistus, and many others who tended the vineyard of the Lord of Sabaoth. And the patriarch Damian did not cease to teach all the davs of his life. And through the multitude |478 of his fasts and prayers and conflicts, when his course was finished, he fell ill, and went to his rest in the peace of the Lord, after remaining patriarch thirty-six years, preserving the true faith in a good old age. And he departed to the Lord Christ whom he loved on the 28th day of Baunah.

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — ANASTASIUS, THE THIRTY-SIXTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 605-616

And the Lord Christ considered his people, for he is the chief and leader of shepherds, and raised up a wise man adorned with virtues, whose name was Anastasius, an inhabitant of Alexandria and one of the priests of the, church there, learned in the scriptures and in the doctrines of the faith. So he was placed by the ineffable decrees of God upon the apostolic throne, and began to appoint the bishops and the priests according to the canon of the Church. Anastasius was brave of heart, and went to the city at all times, and entered therein, and ordained the priests there; for, as we have mentioned above, the orthodox bishops were forbidden to enter Alexandria; and he drew many of the people to himself by his wisdom, for he was a learned man, known through his appointment to the city-council. He had been presiding priest in the two churches that we have mentioned, |479 namely the Angelion and the church of Cosmas and Damian, and over the convents of virgins, and most of the monasteries.

Then Anastasius began to build church after church. And he took the church which is on a mound of ruins, and a church named after Michael. He had great trouble from the party of Tiberius and Belisarius, upon whom the name of Gaianus had come, and from the followers of the impure Chalcedonian council, and from another man who was called Eulogius. This man was exceedingly indignant against the Father Anastasius, and desired to bring upon him all evils and torments; but God did not deliver him into his hands.

In those days there arose a man from the palace, one of the chief officers, whose name was Phocas, and killed the prince, and sat in his place, and did wicked deeds;

and he loved carnal pleasure, and corrupted all the daughters of the patricians; and he loved discord without fear. Therefore when Eulogius knew of this, and heard the report of these things, he wrote to the prince a calumnious letter, concerning the Father Anastasius, full of lies and folly. For he said that, when Anastasius preached in the church of John the Baptist, he anathematized him and the victorious princes and the Chalcedonian council, adding : «And I marvelled that the springs and |480 the waters were not dried up». This Eulogius wrote to the prince that he might stir up trials for the orthodox. So when Phocas, who had taken possession of the empire, heard this, he was troubled, and wrote to the governor in Alexandria, that he should take from the patriarch Anastasius the church of Cosmas and Damian and all its dependencies, and all that belonged to it, and give it to Eulogius, the misguided. Accordingly they seized that church; and the Father Anastasius, the blessed, was sad, and returned to the monastery with great grief and much sighing. And he desired that God might reunite the members of the Church which Satan had divided; I refer to the division of Antioch from Alexandria, the cause of which was Peter, patriarch of Antioch; and God heard his prayers; for Peter the aforesaid died, and there sat instead of him, upon the throne of Severus at Antioch, a man who was a monk and priest and scholar, named Athanasius, exceedingly wise, and pure in heart. And it was he who delivered a homily in which he spoke of the holy Severus; and everyone that read it knew that the Lord Christ was with him, and his wisdom was within him.

So when the Father Anastasius heard that Athanasius had taken his seat as patriarch upon the throne of Antioch, he hastened to write to him a synodical letter full of wisdom, in which he styled him his colleague and one who was brother and friend, and one turning his attention to the faith, and to the rectification of that which had been corrupted by Peter, the misguided one who was now dead. «For the whole of the spiritual Israel |481 is one flock», wrote Anastasius, «and thou shalt unite it, that thou mayest receive the crown of testimony and unity». Now Athanasius was good fruitful ground, and therefore he received the spiritual seed with joy, and took the synodical letter which had come to him, and assembled the bishops under his see, and said to them : «Know that the world to-day rejoices in peace and love, because the Chalcedonian darkness has passed away, and there has remained this one light-giving and fruit-bearing branch of the true vine, which is the see of Mark the evangelist, and the province of Egypt. For we have been heretics and schismatics since the patriarch Severus, who was to us a guide and a way of salvation. And you know that Peter the apostle and Mark the evangelist had one gospel which they preached; and so also Severus and Theodo-sius had one faith, and lived in unity, and endured exile and conflicts to the end».

So, when the fathers and bishops heard his discourse, they rejoiced greatly and agreed to accept the synodical letter, and declared that the two churches should be one, and that the two patriarchs should be of one spirit, and a lamp illuminating

the orthodox. So the blessed Athanasius arose, and took with him five bishops, excellent and learned, and journeyed in a ship to Alexandria. But when they arrived, they were informed that the Father Anastasius was in the monasteries; and therefore they went out to him. Then, when he heard that the patriarch of |482 Antioch had come to him, he assembled the bishops and priests and monks, and arose in great humility, and went out on foot, until he met him, with chants and hymns and joy and gladness. And they entered together into the monastery which is on the sea-shore, to the north-east of the monasteries, and there they sat in peace and joy.

And the Father Anastasius sent at once and summoned all the clergy of Alexandria, that they might be present at the meeting of the fathers, and might celebrate the liturgy with them, and communicate of the Holy Mysteries. And Athanasius pronounced at that assembly a wonderful discourse, full of wisdom, so that everyone who was present marvelled; and at the end he said : «At this hour, O my friends, we must take the harp of David, and sing with the voice of the psalm , saying : Mercy and truth have met together; Athanasius and Anastasius have kissed one another. The truth has appeared from the land of Egypt, and righteousness has arisen from the East. Egypt and Syria have become one in doctrine; Alexandria and Antioch have become one Church, one virgin-bride of one pure and chaste bridegroom, who is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son, the Word of the Father».

And the Father Athanasius remained with the Father Anastasius for one month, while they meditated together upon the holy scriptures and profitable |483 doctrines, speaking of these matters and discussing them. Then Athanasius returned to his province in peace and great honour; and from that day there has been agreement between the see of Antioch and the see of Alexandria to this day. And the Father Anastasius provided for the affairs of the Church with assiduity, and for spiritual learning, for the Lord granted him tranquillity. And from the first year that he sat upon the throne, he began from the first of the letters of the alphabet, and made each successive letter the first letter of that which he wrote every year in a book, whether mystagogia, or synodical epistle, or systatic epistle, or festal epistle, or homily. And he remained upon the throne, holding the orthodox faith, for twelve years, during which he wrote twelve books.

And during the forty days of the Fast before Christmas, the Lord Christ, who longs for those that believe in him, and who does wonders among his saints, looked upon him, and was pleased to translate him to the land of those that live for ever. So he went to his rest on the 22nd day of Kihak, in the year 330 of Diocletian, the slayer of the Righteous Martyrs. May their intercessions be with us ! Amen! |484

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — ANDRONICUS, THE THIRTY-SEVENTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 616-622

When Anastasius went to his rest, they seated upon the throne a learned man, a deacon of the church of the Angelion, a virgin and a scribe, whose name was Andronicus. He was very rich, much inclined to almsgiving, a leader of the people, loving mercy, and incessant in giving; and his family were leading people of the city, inasmuch as his cousin had been appointed head of the council of Alexandria. Therefore on account of the power of his authority and his eminence the heretics could not drive him out of Alexandria to the monasteries, as had been done before him; but he resided in his cell at the church of the Angelion, all his days. Now there had arisen in Persia a king named Chosroes, who assembled a great host, and came with mighty power against the army of the Romans, and destroyed them utterly, and annihilated them. He took possession of the land of the Romans, and the land of Syria, and took captive the land of Palestine and Idumaea, and the land of Egypt, and trod them down as the oxen tread the threshing-floor, and collected their wealth and all that they had into his treasuries. And, on account of his love of money, he would kill a man for one denarius, or for something worth three denarii; for he had many subjects, and he knew not God, but worshipped the sun. |485

So when he took Egypt, and gained power, he made it his care to conquer the great city of Alexandria. And there were at Henaton near that city six hundred flourishing monasteries, like dovecotes; and the monks were independent, and insolent without fear, through their great wealth; and they did deeds of mockery. But the army of the Persians surrounded them on the west of the monasteries, and no place of refuge remained for them; and so they were all slain with the sword,

except a few of them, who hid themselves, and so were safe. And all that was there of money and furniture was taken as plunder by the Persians; and they wrecked the monasteries, which have remained in ruins to this day.

And when the news arrived at Alexandria, the inhabitants opened the gates of the city. And the Persian governor, the leader of the war and lieutenant of king Chosroes, saw in his dream at night a personage who said to him : «I have delivered up to thee this city and its buildings and all that it contains. Therefore take heed that thou injure not the city, but let not its inhabitants be left within it; for they are hypocrites in religion». Now the Persians call their leader in their own language Salar, which means «commander» ; and it was this Salar who built at Alexandria the palace which is called Tarâwus, the interpretation of the name being «House of the Ring», and it is now named Castle of the Persians. So when he received authority over the people of Alexandria, he did in his cunning as follows. He commanded all the young men in the city, from the age of eighteen to |486 fifty, to go out and receive twenty denarii each. So all the young men of the city assembled, and their names were written down; while they thought that they would receive the gift which he had promised them. And when he knew that all of them had come out, and that not one of them was left within the city, he commanded his troops to surround them, and slay them all with the sword. And the number of those that were thus slaughtered was eighty thousand men.

And when the Salar had done this, he marched away to Upper Egypt. And there were in the city of Niciu, which is also called Ibshadi, certain persons who gave him information concerning the monks who lived on the mountains and in the caves, the number of whom was seven hundred, and told him how they were enclosed within a fortified wall, and that their deeds were reprehensible, on account of the greatness of their wealth. So when the Salar heard this report of them, he sent his troops and surrounded them. And when the sun rose, they entered and slew all of them with the sword, and not one of them remained. And this Salar was the cause of many troubles, because he knew not God. But the time is too short to recount his deeds. So when the patriarch Andronicus had accomplished six years in his patriarchal office, and had suffered from this nation of the Persians, and seen all these disasters, which he encountered and patiently endured, he went to his rest, and departed to the Lord in perfect peace, holding fast to the right faith, the faith of his fathers, on the 8th. of Tubah. |487

Vol. 1, Part 2 -- Peter I to Benjamin I (661 AD) — BENJAMIN I, THE THIRTY-EIGHTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 622-661

One year before the Father Andronicus died, there was a God-fearing and believing brother, whose name was Benjamin, in a monastery called the Monastery of Canopus, who came to it at that time and took refuge there with a holy old man whose name was Theonas. For the Persians had not destroyed this monastery among the rest that they had wrecked, because it lay to the north-east of the city, which Saitus was protecting. This brother Benjamin was a native of the province of Al-Buhairah, and came from a hamlet called Barshut. And he had longed after the monastic life and the practice of asceticism; and so he left his parents and all that they had, for they were very rich, and departed to the monastery, where the holy old man, Theonas, clothed him with the habit of the monastic life, and brought him up in the fear of God; and he grew day by day until his holiness and patience and self-restraint made great advances. And he learnt the scriptures by heart, until what happened to Paul happened likewise to him; for the great one Paul was brought up at Jerusalem with a man whose name was Gamaliel; and then his own assiduity and the grace of the Lord Christ raised him, until he became many times more capable and more excellent than his teacher. So also this Benjamin used to chastise himself |488 by ascetic practices, and took no sleep during the nights when there was an assembly in the church. And he read especially in the Gospel of the Blessed John, for he learnt it by heart.

And on a certain night he saw in his dream a man in shining raiment standing by him, who said to him : «Rejoice, O Benjamin, thou humble sheep, who art also the shepherd that shall feed the reasonable flock of the Lord Christ.» So when he

heard these words he was troubled and vexed; but afterwards he rejoiced over the grace given to him from heaven; and he rose hastily and told his Father Theonas; and the old man believed his words with regard to this vision, but said to him : «Err not, my son; for Satan desires by this to cause thee to perish through pride. Go now therefore, and watch over thyself, and fall not by vainglory. For behold, I have spent fifty years in this convent without seeing any such vision, nor has anyone ever told me that he has seen any such thing». So Benjamin was silent and accepted his teacher's words; and grace increased in him day by day, sent from the God of glory; and all his words and actions were assisted by heaven. And the old man Theonas, and all who knew Benjamin, were astonished at the grace of God which was upon him, and thought that he was beside himself, until the old man Theonas took him, and went to the Father Andronicus, the patriarch, and explained his circumstances to him. So he said : «Bring him to me that I may hear him speak». When Benjamin entered, he prostrated himself before the Father Andronicus, the patriarch, who saw the grace of Christ |489 which was upon him, and asked him quietly to make known to him what he had witnessed; and Benjamin confessed, and described the event to him; and the patriarch kept them both with him during that night.

And when morning came, Theonas asked Andronicus to allow them to depart to their monastery in peace. But the patriarch said to him : «As for thee, depart in peace; but the Brother Benjamin henceforth belongs not to thee, for the Lord has elected him to be a servant to himself». And straightway he took Benjamin, and ordained him priest. And Benjamin began to live with the patriarch, assisting him in ecclesiastical works, and in his general administration. And Andronicus rejoiced exceedingly over him, and when his death drew near, charged them that Benjamin should be patriarch after him; and so, when he went to his rest, they made the aforesaid Benjamin patriarch upon the evangelical throne. And the Persians remained rulers of Egypt and its provinces for six more years after that. Then Heraclius, who had been chief of the patricians under Phocas, the misbelieving emperor, succeeded him on the throne, and devoted himself to the task of fighting the Persians. For by the grace of Christ, he marched against them, and slew Chosroes, their misbelieving king, and ruined his city and made it a wilderness, and carried away its wealth and captives in triumph to Constantinople. And when Heraclius obtained possession of the land, he appointed governors in every place. And he sent a governor to the land of Egypt, named Cyrus, to be prefect and patriarch at the same time. |490

So when Cyrus came to Alexandria, the angel of the Lord announced his coming to the Father Benjamin, and bade him flee. For the angel said to him : «Flee thou and those that are with thee here, for great troubles will come upon you. But take comfort, for this conflict will last only ten years. And write to all the bishops who are within thy diocese, that they may hide themselves until the wrath of the Lord pass». So the Father Benjamin, the confessor, the militant by the power of our

Lord Jesus Christ, settled the affairs of the Church and put them in order, and gave injunctions to the clergy and laity, and charged them to cleave to the right faith even unto death. Then he wrote to the rest of the bishops of the province of Egypt, that they should hide themselves before the coming temptation.

And after that he went forth by the road towards Mareotis, walking on foot by night, accompanied by two of his disciples, until he came to Al-Munâ. Thence he went to Wadi Habib. And the monks there were few in number, because it was only a short time after the ruin which took place in the days of the patriarch Damian; and the Berbers did not allow them to multiply there. Then Benjamin went forth from the monasteries in Wadi Habib, and departed to Upper Egypt; and he remained hidden there in a small monastery in the wilderness until the accomplishment of the ten years, as the angel of the Lord had told him. These were the years during which |491 Heraclius and the Colchian ruled over the land of Egypt. And on account of the greatness of the trials and the straits and the affliction which the Colchian brought down upon the orthodox, in order that they might enter into the Chalcedonian faith, a countless number of them went astray, some of them through persecution, and some by bribes and honours, and some by persuasion and deceit. So that even Cyrus, bishop of Niciu, and Victor, bishop of the Faiyum, and many others denied the orthodox faith, because they had not obeyed the injunctions of the blessed Father Benjamin, and had not hidden themselves as the others did; for the Colchian caught them with the fishing-line of his error, and so they went astray after the impure Chalcedonian council.

And Heraclius seized the blessed Mennas, brother of the Father Benjamin, the patriarch, and brought great trials upon him, and caused lighted torches to be held to his sides until the fat of his body oozed forth and flowed upon the ground, and knocked out his teeth because he confessed the faith; and finally commanded that a sack should be filled with sand, and the holy Mennas placed within it, and drowned in the sea. For Heraclius the misbeliever had charged them, saying : «If any one of them says that the council of Chalcedon is true, let him go; but drown in the sea those that say it is erroneous and false.» Therefore they did as the prince bade them, and cast Mennas into the sea. For they took the sack, and conveyed him to a distance of seven bowshots from the land, and said to |492 him : «Say that the council of Chalcedon is good and not otherwise, and we will release thee.» But Mennas would not do so. And they did this with him three times; and when he refused they drowned him. Thus they were unable to vanquish this champion, Mennas, but he conquered them by his Christian patience.

Then Heraclius appointed bishops throughout the land of Egypt, as far as the city of Antinoe, and tried the inhabitants of Egypt with hard trials, and like a ravening wolf devoured the reasonable flock, and was not satiated. And this blessed people who were thus persecuted were the Theodosians. And in those days Heraclius

saw a dream in which it was said to him : «Verily there shall come against thee a circumcised nation, and they shall vanquish thee and take possession of the land». So Heraclius thought that they would be the Jews, and accordingly gave orders that all the Jews and Samaritans should be baptized in all the provinces which were under his dominion. But after a few days there appeared a man of the Arabs, from the southern districts, that is to say, from Mecca or its neighbourhood, whose name was Muhammad; and he brought back the worshippers of idols to the knowledge of the One God, and bade them declare that Muhammad was his apostle; and his nation were circumcised in the flesh, not by the law, and prayed towards the South, turning towards a place which they called the Kaabah. And he took possession of Damascus and Syria, and crossed the Jordan, and dammed it up. And the Lord abandoned the army of the Romans before him, as a punishment for their corrupt faith, and because of |493 the anathemas uttered against them, on account of the council of Chalcedon, by the ancient fathers.

When Heraclius saw this, he assembled all his troops from Egypt as far as the frontiers of Aswan. And he continued for three years to pay to the Muslims the taxes which he had demanded for the purpose of applying them to himself and all his troops; and they used to call the tax the bakt, that is to say that it was a sum levied at so much a head. And this went on until Heraclius had paid to the Muslims the greater part of his money; and many people died through the troubles which they had endured. So when ten years were over of the rule of Heraclius together with the Colchian, who sought for the patriarch Benjamin, while he was fleeing from him from place to place, hiding himself in the fortified churches, the prince of the Muslims sent an army to Egypt, under one of his trusty companions, named Amr son of Al-Asi, in the year 357 of Diocletian, the slayer of the martyrs. And this army of Islam came down into Egypt in great force, on the twelfth day of Baunah, which is the sixth of June, according to the months of the Romans.

Now the commander Amr had destroyed the fort, and burnt the boats with fire, and defeated the Romans, and taken possession of part of the country. For he had first arrived by the desert; and the horsemen took the road through the mountains, until they arrived at a fortress built of stone, between Upper Egypt and the Delta, called Babylon. So they pitched their |494 tents there, until they were prepared to fight the Romans, and make war against them; and afterwards they named that place, I mean the fortress, in their language, Bâblun Al-Fustât; and that is its name to the present day. After fighting three battles with the Romans, the Muslims conquered them. So when the chief men of the city saw these things, they went to Amr, and received a certificate of security for the city, that it might not be plundered. This kind of treaty which Muhammad, the chief of the Arabs, taught them, they called the Law; and he says with regard to it : «As for the province of Egypt and any city that agrees with its inhabitants to pay the land-tax to you, and to submit to your authority, make a treaty with them, and do them no injury. But plunder and take

as prisoners those that will not consent to this and resist you». For this reason the Muslims kept their hands off the province and its inhabitants, but destroyed the nation of the Romans, and their general who was named Marianus. And those of the Romans who escaped fled to Alexandria, and shut its gates upon the Arabs, and fortified themselves within the city.

And in the year 360 of Diocletian, in the month of December, three years after Amr had taken possession of Memphis, the Muslims captured the city of Alexandria, and destroyed its walls, and burnt many churches with fire. And they burnt the church of Saint Mark, which was built by the sea, where his body was laid; and this was the place to which the father and |495 patriarch, Peter the Martyr, went before his martyrdom, and blessed Saint Mark, and committed to him his reasonable flock, as he had received it. So they burnt this place and the monasteries around it. And at the burning of the said church a miracle took place which the Lord performed; and that was that one of the captains of the ships, namely the captain of the ship of the duke Sanutius, climbed over the wall and descended into the church, and came to the shrine, where he found that the coverings had been taken, for the plunderers thought that there was money in the chest. But when they found nothing there, they took away the covering from the body of the holy Saint Mark, but his bones were left in their place. So the captain of the ship put his hand into the shrine, and there he found the head of the holy Mark, which he took. Then he returned to his ship secretly, and told no one of it, and hid the head in the hold, among his baggage.

When Amr took full possession of the city of Alexandria, and settled its affairs, that infidel, the governor of Alexandria, feared, he being both prefect and patriarch of the city under the Romans, that Amr would kill him; therefore he sucked a poisoned signet-ring, and died on the spot. But Sanutius, the believing duke, made known to Amr the circumstances of that militant father, the patriarch Benjamin, and how he was a fugitive from the Romans, through fear of them. Then Amr, son of Al-Asi, wrote to the provinces of Egypt a letter, in which he said : «There is protection and security for the place |496 where Benjamin, the patriarch of the Coptic Christians is, and peace from God; therefore let him come forth secure and tranquil, and administer the affairs of his Church, and the government of his nation». Therefore when the holy Benjamin heard this, he returned to Alexandria with great joy, wearing the crown of patience and sore conflict which had befallen the orthodox people through their persecution by the heretics, after having been absent during thirteen years, ten of which were years of Heraclius, the misbelieving Roman, with the three years before the Muslims conquered Alexandria. When Benjamin appeared, the people and the whole city rejoiced, and made his arrival known to Sanutius, the duke who believed in Christ, who had settled with the commander Amr that the patriarch should return, and had received a safe-conduct from Amr for him.

Thereupon Sanutius went to the commander and announced that the patriarch had arrived, and Amr gave orders that Benjamin should be brought before him with honour and veneration and love. And Amr, when he saw the patriarch, received him with respect, and said to his companions and private friends : «Verily in all the lands of which we have taken possession hitherto I have never seen a man of God like this man». For the Father Benjamin was beautiful of countenance, excellent in speech, discoursing with calmness and dignity.

Then Amr turned to him, and said to him : «Resume the government of all thy churches and of thy people, and administer their affairs. And if thou wilt pray for me, that I may go to the West and to Pentapolis, and |497 take possession of them, as I have of Egypt, and return to thee in safety and speedily, I will do for thee all that thou shalt ask of me.» Then the holy Benjamin prayed for Amr, and pronounced an eloquent discourse, which made Amr and those present with him marvel, and which contained words of exhortation and much profit for those that heard him; and he revealed certain matters to Amr, and departed from his presence honoured and revered. And all that the blessed father said to the commander Amr, son of Al-Asi, he found true, and not a letter of it was unfulfilled. Thus when this spiritual father, Benjamin the patriarch, sat among his people a second time, by the grace and mercy of Christ, the whole land of Egypt rejoiced over him; and he drew to himself most of the people whom Heraclius, the heretical prince, had led astray; for he induced them to return to the right faith by his gentleness, exhorting them with courtesy and consolation. And many of those that had fled to the West and to Pentapolis, through fear of Heraclius, the heretical prince, when they heard of the reappearance of their shepherd, returned to him with joy, and obtained the confessor’s crown. So likewise the bishops, who had denied their faith, he invited to return to the orthodox creed; and some of them returned with abundant tears; but the others would not return through shame before men, that it should be known among them that they had denied the faith, and so they remained in their misbelief until they died.

And after that, Amr and his troops marched away from Alexandria, and |498 the Christ-loving duke Sanutius marched with him. And on that night the father saw in his dream a man in shining garments, clothed in the raiment of the disciples, who said to him : «O my beloved, make a place for me with thee, that I may abide therein this day, for I love thy dwelling.» Now the place, wherein the patriarch dwelt, was a pure habitation without defilement, in a monastery called the Monastery of Metras, which was the episcopal residence. For all the churches and monasteries which belonged to the virgins and monks had been defiled by Heraclius the heretic, when he forced them to accept the faith of Chalcedon, except this monastery alone; for the inmates of it were exceedingly powerful, being Egyptians by race and all of them natives, without a stranger among them; and therefore he could not incline their hearts towards him. For this reason, when the Father Benjamin returned

from Upper Egypt, he took up his residence with them, because they had kept the orthodox faith, and had never deviated from it.

And when the ships, containing the provisions and booty of the troops, and the baggage of the believing duke Sanutius and his companions, were about to set sail, his own particular ship remained motionless, and could not be got under weigh. Therefore a great crowd assembled near that ship, supposing that it had grounded, and fastened towing-ropes to it, and pulled at it with all their might; and yet it did not move at all. So they went to the duke, and made this known to him, for he was sailing with the commander. Then the duke was greatly astonished; and he anchored the ship |499 in which the commander Amr was, and returned accompanied by many people, and when he arrived at the ship, he saw by it an innumerable crowd of men who were unable to move it. So he said to them : «Turn the prow of this ship to the city.» And when they turned it round as if to enter the city, it sped towards it like an arrow. Then the duke said to them : «Draw it outwards,» So they drew it until it arrived at its former position, and then it stood still and motionless. Then they turned the ship inwards again, and it sped; and they drew it outwards again, and it stood still. This happened three times.

Then the duke said to the captain of the ship : «Bring up to me the baggage of the sailors, that I may search among it, so that I may see what it is, and discover the cause which has forced this ship to stand still alone of all these ships». Then the captain who had taken the head of the holy Mark, the evangelist, was afraid, and threw himself at the feet of the duke, and confessed to him what he had done, and that the head was hidden among his baggage. So they brought up his baggage from the hold, and found the head among it.

Then they went in haste and made known to the Father Benjamin exactly what had taken place. So he mounted his horse at once, and took with him a body of the clergy, and came to the duke, and related to him the dream which he had seen that night; and thereupon they all said : «Truly this is the head of the holy Mark the evangelist». And as soon as the patriarch |500 Benjamin came to the ship and took the pure head, and so released the ship, it got under sail at once and departed in a straight course. So he and the duke and all the people knew the truth of the story, and bore witness to this miracle, and glorified God. And the duke gave to the patriarch much money, and said to him : «Rebuild the church of the holy Mark, and pray to him for safety for us». And the Father Patriarch returned to the city, carrying the head in his bosom, and the clergy went before him, with chanting and singing, as befitted the reception of that sacred and glorious head. And he made a chest of teak wood with a padlock upon it, and placed the head therein; and he waited for a time in which he might find means to build a church.

And his care was bestowed night and clay upon the conversion of those members of the Church who had been separated from her in the days of Heraclius; and no

other business made him neglect that; for he was filled with faith and the Holy Ghost; and the grace of the Holy Ghost, which was with Athanasius the Apostolic, was with him in his words and in his deeds; and, through his agency and through his prayers, the Lord shewed mercy to his people. By his intercession began the rebuilding of the monasteries of Wadi Habib and of Al-Munâ; and the good works of the orthodox grew and increased, and the people rejoiced like young calves, when their halters are unfastened and they are set free to be nourished by their mothers' milk. When Amr returned to Egypt, he departed thence once more to the army of |501 the prince of the Muslims; and a man named Abd Allah, son of Sa'd, was sent to Egypt instead of him. This man arrived, accompanied by many people; and, as he was a lover of money, he collected wealth for himself in Egypt; and he was the first who built the Divan at Misr, and commanded that all the taxes of the country should be regulated there.

And in the days of Abd Allah, son of Sa'd, a great dearth took place, the like of which had not been seen from the time of Claudius the unbeliever up to his time. For all the inhabitants of Upper Egypt came down to the Delta, in search of provisions; and the dead were cast out into the streets and market-places, like fish which the water throws up on the land, because they found none to bury them; and some of the people devoured human flesh. And if the Lord had not been compassionate, through the multitude of his mercies and the prayers of our Father Benjamin, the holy one, and speedily put an end to that dearth, all the inhabitants in the land of Egypt would have perished; for every day there died of the people countless myriads. But the Lord accepted the prayers of the patriarch, and had mercy on his people, and satisfied them with his good things, and sought out his heritage in his beneficence, as it is written : «The eyes of all look unto thee, hoping for thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in its season; and when thou givest it them they live and are satisfied with good things.»

Now the holy Benjamin had with him a man full of grace and wisdom, meek like a dove, whose name was Agathon; and he was a priest in the |502 church, and was a native of Mareotis. And he used to disguise himself at Alexandria in the days of Heraclius in the garb of a layman, and went about at night, comforting the orthodox who were concealing themselves there, and settling their affairs, and giving them of the Holy Mysteries. And if it was in the daytime, he carried on his shoulder a basket containing carpenters' tools, and pretended to be a carpenter, that the heretics might not hinder him, and that so he might find a means of entering the houses or lodgings of the orthodox, that he might give them of the Mysteries, and encourage them to patience, and console them. And so he remained ten years until the time of the appearance of the Muslims. Then, when the blessed Benjamin returned to his see in peace, he adopted Agathon as his son in the administration of the holy Church.

Then the blessed Father Benjamin was attacked by a disease in his feet, besides the old age which had come upon him. And he remained thus sick for two years, until the saints prayed for him that God would release him from the prison of this world, so full of sadness, and would bring him to them in the place wherein is no sadness nor sorrow, but which is full of joy, in the land of the living. And God accepted their prayers, and sent to Benjamin three personages, namely Athanasius the Apostolic, and Severus and Theodosius the patriarchs, who were present at his death, and went before his holy soul, while the holy angels bore it on their pure wings, ascending with it to heaven with glory and honour, with the voices of praise and |503 glorification preceding it, until it reached the land of the saints, as the bridegroom enters his chamber, or the king his palace. So he departed to Christ his king, after finishing his conflict, and accomplishing his course, and keeping his faith, without losing one of his flock, on the 8th of Tubah, when he had been patriarch thirty-nine years, keeping the faith, wearing the crown of exile, which he received from the Lord Christ, to whom be glory with the merciful Father and the Holy Ghost, the Giver of Life. Amen. Abba Agathon says : «Those whose thoughts are in heaven are enlightened by the glory of God, who is the Father of Light;

and the spiritual love of God is in them, as it is written : Taste and see that the Lord is good. Such was the Father Benjamin, the patriarch, the teacher of the orthodox, who understood the interpretation of the scriptures, and dwelt in the desert, and grasped many mysteries; for he despised his body and cut off his desires, for the love of the Lord Christ our God who is above all. And as for me, |504 the sinner Agathon, I was the son of the Father Benjamin, and knew much of his virtues through my intimacy with him.

And he told me of the great mystery which he had seen manifestly at the consecration of the holy sanctuary of the glorious father, Saint Macarius, in Wadi Habib, and of the canons and rules which he had drawn up. And to that belongs the following account which he related to me :

When I was in my city of Alexandria, having found a time of peace and deliverance from persecution and from the warfare of the heretics, the festival of the Nativity of the Lord Christ arrived on the 28th of Kihak, and we assembled in the church of the Pure Lady Mary, the Mother of the Light, which is called the Porch of the Angels. And we offered many prayers, in the presence of the clergy, and of the chief men of the city, and of all the people old and young, to celebrate the praises of the Lady and Virgin, who brought forth God the Word, the truly Incarnate in this world, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings, to whom is due glory with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the One God; and to observe at the same time also the festival of the Lord Christ, the Only-begotten Son, who was incarnate and was made man, and was born of the Pure Virgin at Bethlehem of Juda, one undivided Christ. Then I saw certain monks of calm and dignified appearance, like angels, who had entered

into the midst of the congregation; and some of them were priests and some of them were from the desert of the holy Macarius; but they |505 could not reach me, on account of the multitude of the people. So one of the priests came towards me, and made their entrance known to me; therefore I said to him : I have seen them;

and I bade him go to them, and he invited them to come to me. When they approached me, I enquired of them the cause of their coming so far. Then they said : We are come to thee with the object of praying thy Paternity, with a prostration, for God's sake to undertake the trouble of a journey to the monastery in the Holy Mountain, Wadi Habib, the home of our father, Macarius the Great, in order to consecrate the new church which has been built to him at the foot of the rock among the cells; because many of the old and sick inhabit cells far away, which are near the water, and are wearied if they mount to the top of the rock. Be gracious then to us, O our father, and endure the fatigue, that the fathers and monks may receive thy blessing; for they all long to behold thy Holiness.

When I heard this, I said to them, in my poverty, with joy : Ah indeed may God make me worthy of that task! So they waited until we had finished the festivities of that day, and of its morrow, which is the 29th of Kihak, and of the third day of the feast. Then I said to thee, O Agathon, and to Cosmas, the scribe, thy companion : Provide for us what we need for the journey to Wadi Habib, that we may receive a blessing from the Father Macarius, and from the brethren and monks. So we undertook this task; and we began our journey on the second day of Tubah. And when we arrived at Tarûjah, the inhabitants thereof met us |506 with great joy. Then we reached the desert of Al-Munâ, which is that of Abba Isaac, near the mountain of Barnûj; and the brethren who were there rejoiced greatly over us, and we remained there two days, after which they took leave of us; but some of them accompanied us to show us the way leading to the desert and to the mountain; and they were holy and excellent men. So they brought us to the extremity of the desert of the mountain of Nitria.

Then we turned to the Monastery of Baramus, or Maximus and Domitius, where we alighted at the Church of the Holy Isidore; and we abode there one day. Then the brethren and monks who had come to visit us in the city of Alexandria departed, and made our arrival known to the monks of the Monastery of Saint Macarius, save two of their priests who remained with us, together with the brethren who had accompanied us from Al-Munâ; and therefore some of the monks came out to us. And on the 7th day of Tubah we visited the rest of the monasteries, and received blessings from them. Finally we proceeded to the Monastery of the holy Macarius. And when we drew near to it, the young monks met us with palm-branches in their hands; and after them came old men, carrying smoking censers, and a body of the clergy, chanting like angels, resembling those who came to meet the Lord Christ from Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

And they began to give to my weakness that of which I was not worthy. And there was with them the great teacher Basil, bishop of Niciu. So I glorified the Lord Christ because he had counted me worthv once more to |507 see this renowned desert, and these holy fathers and brothers, and the manifestation of the orthodox faith; and had delivered me from the persecution of the heretics, and saved my soul from the great dragon, the tyrant who drove me away on account of the right faith; and had vouchsafed to me that I should behold my children once more around me. Then all the monks, the priests and the brethren, went before me until I entered the newly built church of Christ. There I seemed to enter Paradise, the place of meeting of the angels, and the joy of the saints, and the abode of rest for the just.

When the morrow arrived, the 8th day of Tubah, I said : Bring to me the priest Agathon, who suffered with me for the faith, in the time of the troubles which came upon me, when the Colchian, that enemy of the truth, attacked my weakness. So when thou earnest to me, I said to thee : O my son, bring forth the books which are requisite for the consecration; and accordingly thou didst bring them forth for me. Then we began the prayers; and with me were Abba Basil, bishop of Niciu, and all the clergy surrounding me, and all the monks, as thou sawest. At that time, while I was thus performing the rite of consecration, behold, I saw an old man, with a great light and radiant brilliancy upon his face; and as I gazed upon him and considered him, I said within myself : This man is fit to be made a bishop, to rule over many people; and if the Lord be pleased, as soon as a see is vacant, I will set him over it; for this person is a holy |508 man, fit for that office. So, while I was thinking of this, I saw a seraph with six wings, who appeared to me, and stood beside me. And he said to me : O bishop, why art thou thinking of this old man? This is Saint Miacarius, father of the patriarchs and bishops and monks who have lived in this desert; and he has come for the consecration of this church.

Thereupon I was confounded before him, and considered him while he was standing among his sons with great joy; and the voice of that seraph resounded in my ears, and I was afraid of him. Then he said to me : If his sons walk in the straight way in which he walked, then they will enter with him into the place of the king, and rejoice with him. But he that breaks his commandments has no lot with him, but shall be driven out of the flock and shall have no inheritance with him.

Then the holy Macarius said to him : Put not thy seal, O my Lord, upon my sons with these words; for if a single grape be found in a bunch, it shall not perish, because the blessing of God is in it; and so I also trust in Christ, the Lover of my soul, that if he find among my children a single commandment kept, namely the love of one another, or if they raise their eyes to heaven to the Lord Christ even once every day, he will not forget them in his mercy, but will deliver them from the punishment of eternal hell. For the Lord, the Lover of mankind, grants repentance

to the sinner, and desires not his death, in order that he may turn and repent, that so he may receive him. |509

Thus when I heard the words of Saint Macarius to the seraph, I understood his love for his children. For the interpretation of the name of the Father Macarius is the Blessed one, honoured by God and man. He, the Father Macarius, the disciple of God the Lord, is the net which gathers together of every kind for the kingdom of heaven. Then I said, so that those that were near me might hear me : Blessed art thou, O Saint Macarius, and blessed is thy order and blessed are thy children, since they deserve that thou shouldst be a powerful intercessor for them before the judgment-seat of God our Lifegiver, when our Ring and our God, Jesus Christ, shall come at his second appearing, to reward everyone according to his works in truth. Thou, O Saint Macarius, art the great ark which carries so many souls, and brings them into the harbour of safety and salvation, and thou art the intercessor for us all. As David says in his psalm : Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of hypocrites, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful! Thou art indeed the champion and the prince! Blessed is the womb that carried thee and brought thee forth into the world! Remember me, O thou true saint of God!

Then thou, O Agathon, didst say to me, and the bishop of Niciu said to me : To whom speakest thou, O our father? So I said to you both : I am addressing Saint Macarius, the father of this mountain. For there is a time to speak and a time to be silent. |510 And I went up to the sanctuary, and said the prayer over the chrism, and took it to anoint the holy sanctuary. And I heard a voice saying : Observe, O bishop! So when I marked the sanctuary with the chrism, I saw the hand of the Lord Christ, the Saviour, upon the walls, anointing the sanctuary. Therefore great fear came upon me and trembling, such as thou sawest in me; but thou and those present did not know the cause of it, nor what I had seen and heard. Then I said, with the Father Jacob : Verily this is a dreadful place, and this is the house of God in truth, and this is the gate of heaven, and the resting-place of the most High.»

Agathon the priest says : «At that time we had looked upon him, and he was like fire, and his face shone with light; and not one of us could speak a word to him, but we were confounded at him. Then the Father Benjamin said : This is the tabernacle of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And he walked round the sanctuary three times, saying Alleluia. Then he chanted the eighty-third Psalm, saying : How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth and pineth after the dwelling-places of the Lord, thy altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God . And he finished saying the psalm to the end.

Then, when he had completed the consecration of the dome, he went out into the body of the church, to consecrate its walls and columns; and at the end he returned and sat in the dome. And he said to us : I have been carried away to-day to the

Paradise of the Lord of Sabaoth, and I have |511 heard voices that cannot be uttered nor conceived in the heart of man, as the wise apostle Paul says. Believe me, my brethren, I have seen to-day the glory of Christ filling this dome; and I beheld with my own sinful eyes the holy palm, the sublime hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour, anointing the altar-board of this holy sanctuary. I have witnessed to-day the seraphim and the angels and the archangels, and all the holy hosts of the Most High, praising the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost in this dome. And I saw the father of the patriarchs and bishops and doctors of the orthodox Church, standing among us here in the midst of the brethren, his sons, with joy, ---- I mean the Father Macarius the Great. Truly this sanctuary is beneath the throne of the Almighty. This sanctuary is that which Isaias the prophet describes, when he says : There shall be an altar to God in the land of Egypt, and a platform, and five towns that speak the language of Chanaan.

Arise now, my children, and let us finish the liturgy, and obtain the blessing of the fathers, and glorify God most High».

Agathon the priest says : «The patriarch continued his narrative as follows. When I had finished the divine service and communicated the clergy, I saw again a great grace which I must not hide from thee. For when the old men came up for communion, I saw a vapour of incense ascending like perfume from their mouths, so that I thought that each one of |512 those fathers and monks carried incense when he came up to communion. Then the roof of the church opened, and that perfume ascended from it. And I observed their mouths as they prayed when they approached the Host, and I saw the words and the incense which issued from their mouths ascending to heaven. So I was assured then that it was their petitions and their prayers, which they uttered when they received the Holy Mysteries, which are the Body and Blood of the pure Lord Jesus Christ. And I saw the angels receiving those prayers of theirs, and carrying them up before the throne of the Lord. And, on account of the power of their prayers and supplications, I thought : Verily this is the golden candlestick holding the lamp; and this is the precious jewel; and this is the morning-star which rises and shines upon the whole world. And I sang the hymn of the three young men, Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, which they recited in the furnace of burning fire : Blessed art thou O Lord, God of our fathers, and praised and glorified for ever . And blessed in truth is the Lord, the , God of these saints, by whom and by whose like he directs the world. This is the meeting-place of the angels, and the harbour of all the souls which flee to God, the Deliverer of all souls. Then I glorified and thanked the Lord Jesus Christ, who made me worthy to witness what I saw.

And when I fell asleep that night, I saw standing before me a shining |513 personage who said to me : Awake, O bishop, and arise to set in order the canons of this church and this sanctuary together; so that every one, whether priest or deacon,

may guard himself in his conduct therein in perfect patience and virtuous tranquillity, because Christ our Lord and all his angels are here; and write these canons as a memorial for this holy church for ever. For there will come a crooked generation who will love the praise of men more than the glory of God, and they will trample down this holy place shamelessly and haughtily, and will barter for gold the grace of the Holy Ghost which he gave to his people, and will break the apostolic canons. For who can desire to have an inheritance in this holy place who is without fear of the Lord and whose soul is not tried at the beginning? And the glory of this holy and renowned and venerated place shall be changed by such, who shall occupy as it were stalls for cattle at their entrance into it; for those who are of this kind have hearts like the hearts of cattle, and neither read nor understand. All of them go out of the way and become abominable; and their care is for their bellies, and their glory is in shame; and they go upon their bellies like serpents, and swell, and bite men, and are insolent, haters of their brethren, occupied with eating and drinking, as cattle which have no understanding or their like; and the Apostolic Church separates them from herself.

CANONS FOR THE MONASTERY OF SAINT MACARIUS. [1]. No priest shall ascend to this sanctuary until he has put on his pallium first, before he carries the incense into the sanctuary. |514 [II]. No priest or deacon shall communicate therein until he has vested himself in the epomis or a pallium. [III]. No priest or deacon shall speak in this holy dome any idle words, nor sit therein to read any book. And he that shall break this canon shall be anathema. [IV]. If any priest or monk shall enter into this dome, unless he be appointed for the service of this sanctuary, let him be anathema. [V]. If any of the priests belonging to this place bring a strange priest from Misr or an official into this dome and holy tabernacle, for the sake of human glory, let him be anathema. [VI]. If any man shall persist in entering into this holy dome, the Lord Jesus Christ shall cast him out.

[VII]. And if any man transgresses in order that he may have a lot in this holy place by means of money or bribe, then let him, and everyone who assists him to enter it for the sake of human glory, be degraded, especially if he be notorious for evil and pride. Know, my brethren, that not one of these shall receive the lot of Jacob; and the power which dwells in this place and in this holy sanctuaiy will not consent to any of these things. But let a monk be humble, pure, peaceable, perfect in all the approved qualities, as the Teacher Paul testified in what he |515 said about this degree; for he says what is certain in his glorious epistles. Then this shining personage, by whom I am unworthy to be addressed, said to me : Thy departure, O Benjamin, from this world, which is the separation of thy soul from thy body, will correspond to the day of the consecration of this church. And thou shalt depart to the Lord Christ whom thou lovest, that thou mayest rest in the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the predestined, together with all the elect. So I said to him : O my Lord, I trust that God may make me worthy of what thou sayest, and may receive

me, his sinful servant; and that I may go to him on the said day. And blessed be my Lord Jesus Christ, the Lover of my soul and spirit, because his mercy is abundant towards me. Thereupon the seraph disappeared from me.

And the patriarch Benjamin said to us : Think not, my brethren, that I have written these anathemas for this generation. Nay, rather I have written them because there will come another generation in the last times which will deserve what I have written, according to that which the seraph announced to me, who talked with me. Therefore it behoves every believer to beware of following the praise of men; but let him do what is fitting for the glory of God, and love him with all his heart. And do thou my son Agathon, the priest, write down for thyself the date of this consecration; and remind me of it constantly and every day, that I may remember the words of the seraph on this day, that on the same day will take place my departure from this world, it being the 8th of Tubah, on which took place the consecration of the holy church in the name of the holy Macarius, our father. |516

Now we will record another miracle which took place on the same day. There was in the city of Niciu a great and eminent official, whose custom it was to enter at all times into the holy monasteries in Wadi Habib; and accordingly he was present on the day of the consecration of the church of Saint Macarius, accompanied by a son of his who was afflicted by disease, in whom was manifested another great and conspicuous wonder, worked by the blessed Father Macarius, who is the father of the holy mountain in Wadi Habib, and the comforter of all the patriarchs and bishops and monks and teachers in the whole world; for the odour of the incense of his works, and the beauty of his deeds have filled the land, and his lamp illumines all that come to him. And it was the custom of this official to come to the monastery always at the feasts of the Nativity and of the Baptism and of Easter; and thus he was present on the day of the consecration together with his son, whom he entrusted to the charge of a holy monk, with whom was a youth who served him. When the consecration and the liturgy were finished, and the people had communicated, the son of the official was sleeping in the holy church; and at that moment he cried out in his sleep so that he frightened the people who were present with his cries. But that monk took courage, and went up to the lad, and awoke him; and when he awoke, the congregation observed him, and behold, he was healed, and seemed like a new creature on that day. So they glorified God for this great miracle which had taken place. |517

The Father Benjamin, the patriarch, said : So when I had finished the communion, I called the official, the father of the lad, and inquired of him concerning the circumstances of his son, and he informed me of his sickness and all that had happened to him. Then I called the lad and said to him : O my son, explain to me what thou sawest in thy dream, and hide nothing of it from me. So the lad said : While I was sleeping, I saw a tall old man with a light beard descending over his breast, and

he squeezed my body with his hands, so that I cried out with the pain. Then he grasped with his hand the edge of my garment and drew it up over my head, and I saw all my disease and sores adhering to my garment, and they were stripped off with it from my body. And he said to me : Be of good courage, my son, for behold, thou art cured. So when this father and monk had finished, I rose up healed. This is what happened to me, O my lord and father.

So I, Benjamin, beheld him with my eyes on that day, and he was healed; and I glorified the Lord Jesus Christ, who showed to me his power and wonders by the hand of the holy Saint Macarius, who heals souls and bodies by his intercession with God, and who is become a harbour for the salvation of the world. Blessed therefore is the Mountain of Nitria, which was worthy to be inhabited by Saint Macarius, the intercessor for us and for all who visit him. O mountain in which is the mystery of God! O mountain on which are assembled those elect ones who shine therein more |518 brightly than the light of the sun by day, and whose prayers ascend like a flaming fire! O mountain in which the spiritual fruit bears thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold! O mountain which salts souls, and restores them from sin, and purifies them by repentance, so that they are white like snow! Thou art the true mountain on which are assembled the kings and the rich men and the poor, to serve God there. Thou art the mountain of salt in truth, which salts souls that stank with sin and iniquity. It is thou that hast made robbers into teachers and martyrs and saints. Therefore may they pray now without weariness before our Lord Jesus Christ, that he may strengthen us in the orthodox faith, in his illuminating Church, that all of us who are baptized may exult at all times therein. And we pray him to deliver us from the persecutions of those who rule over us, and from the wiles of the hunter and enemy of the truth, Satan, the evil prince.

Glory and power and majesty be to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.» With the help of God is finished the first half of the first part of the book of the Histories of the Patriarchs in the great city of Alexandria, successors of Saint Mark the Evangelist. May God grant us the blessing of his prayers and of their prayers! And their number is thirty-eight patriarchs. [Footnotes moved to the end and renumbered] 1. 1. Eus., H. E., VII, 32; VIII, 13; IX, 6. ---- The seven mss. collated for the preceding fasciculus have been consulted also for the present one, the Paris ms. 4772 being here designated by the letter G. C. like E. contains an abridged text. 2. 1. See the three versions of the Acts of St. Peter, published by Baronius and afterwards Mai. Spicil. Rom., III, p. 673. Rome, 1840; Surius (25 Nov.); and Combefis, Illustrium Christi Martyrum lecti Triumphi, etc. p. 189, Paris, 1660. The last alone is in the original Greek, the others being Latin translations. Cf. Viteau (Greek text), Passions des saints Ecaterine, Pierre d'Alex., etc., Paris, 1897; Bedjan (Syriac version). Acta mart. et sanct., t. V, Paris. 1895, pp. 543-561; Hyvernat, Actes des Martyrs, tirés des Mss. coptes, etc.. Paris, 1886.

3. 1. S. John, xi, 50; xviii. 14. 4. 1. Ps, lxviii, 1 (Sept. lxvii). 5. 1. Psalm cxix, 131 (Sept. cxviii). 6. 1. S. Matth., vii, 7; S. Luke, xi, 9. 7. 1. S. Matth., xxiv, 2; S. Mark, xiii. 2; S. Luke, xix, 44; xxi, 6. 8. 1. Job, vi, 21 (Sept.). 9. 1. S. John, i, 18. 10. 2. S. Matth., i, 23. 11. 3. Is., vii, 14. 12. 4. S. Mark, xiv, 61, 62. 13. 5. I Tim., vi, 13. 14. 6. S. Luke, i, 32-35. 15. 1. Phil., ii, 6, 7. 16. 2. I Thess., i, 10; Hebr., i, 4-6, 13; ii, 5. 8, 9. 17. 1. S. Matth., xvii, 4; S. Mark, ix, 4: S. Luke, ix, 33. 18. 1. III Kings, xii, 16. 19. 2. The Acephali. 20. 1. Acts, viii, 20, 23. 21. 1. S. Matth., iv, 8-10. S. Luke, iv, 5-8.

22. 1. Ps. lviii, 4, 5 (Sept. lvii). 23. 1. Ps. lxxxv, 10 (Sept. lxxxiv, 11). 24. 1. Mukaukas seems to be the Coptic [Coptic], «Colchian» or «Caucasian», and to denote Cyrus, bishop of Phasis. appointed by the emperor Heraclius to be patriarch of Alexandria, and prefect of Egypt. See Dr. A. J. Butler, On the identity of Al-Mukaukis of Egypt in Trans. of Soc. of Bib. Arch. 1901. 25. 1. Ps. civ, 27, 28; cxlv. 15. 18 (Sept. ciii. cxliv.) 26. 1. Ps. xxxiv, 8 (Sept. xxxiii. 9). 27. 1. Ps. i. 1. 28. 1. Gen., xxviii, 17. 29. 2. Ps. lxxxiv, 1. 2. 3 (Sept. lxxxiii). 30. 3. II Cor., xii, 4. 31. 1. Isaias, xix, 19. 18. 32. 1. Daniel, iii. 52 (Greek).

Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — Introduction

HISTORY OF THE PATRIARCHS OF THE COPTIC CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA — III — AGATHON TO MICHAEL I (766)

ARABIC TEXT EDITED, TRANSLATED, AND ANNOTATED BY B. EVETTS

Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — AGATHON, THE THIRTY-NINTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 661-677

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the one God. The second division of the histories of the holy Church, consisting of six chapters and the lives of fourteen patriarchs. Agathon was the son of the patriarch Benjamin in the spirit, not in the flesh; and he is the thirty-ninth in the series of the patriarchs. When the great champion and maintainer of the faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and teacher of the orthodox creed, Abba Benjamin, returned from banishment, and resumed his seat upon the evangelical throne in the Church of God, he restored that which had been overthrown by Heraclius, and by the impure Chalcedonian Council, in the person of Proterius. For this Father Abba Benjamin reconstructed all things, and set them in order with the help of the Lord Christ, the Good Shepherd, who gave his life for his |4 sheep, according to his words in his pure Gospel : «The Good Shepherd gives his life for his sheep». So Benjamin walked in the footsteps of his Lord, and carried his cross and followed him, and endured trials and woes and great temptations till death for the right faith, but neither retreated nor turned backwards in his conflict, until he had finished it; so that he received his reward with the saints, his fathers, who preceded him. As David says in the Psalms : «Precious before the Lord is the death of his pure ones».

So the Father Benjamin died. And the faitful God-fearing people, by the command of the Lord, took that God-fearing priest Agathon, and enthroned him as patriarch, according to the agreement of his name with his actions; for he was good and his conduct was good, adorned with every noble deed, full of the grace of the Holy Ghost and of the orthodox faith. Now the Muslims were fighting against the Romans furiously. And the Romans had a prince whose name was Tiberius, whom they had made their ruler, and who possessed many islands. So the Muslims took

the Romans captive, and carried them away from their own country to a strange land. Thus with regard to Sicily and all its provinces, they took possession of that island, and ravaged it, and brought the people captives to Egypt. And this holy patriarch Agathon was sad at heart when he saw his fellow-Christians in the hands of the Gentiles; and as the conquerors had offered many souls of them for sale, he bought them and set them free. But they |5 were followers of the impure and heretical sects, known as the Gaianites, who do not communicate with the orthodox, and as the Barsanuphians.

And Abba Agathon did not neglect to ordain bishops in every place, that they might bring back the sheep which Satan had led astray to the Church of the Lord Christ. Therefore Satan brought down upon him great trouble on account of his purity of heart and excellence of character.

In those days Alexandria was governed by a man whose name was Theodore , who was a chief among a congregation of the Chalcedonians, and was an opponent of the orthodox Theodosians. This man went to Damascus to the leader of the Muslims, whose name was Yazîd, son of Mu’âwiyah, and received from him a diploma giving him authority over the people of Alexandria and Maryût and all the neighbouring districts, and declaring that the governor of Egypt had no jurisdiction over him; for he had given Yazîd much money. Then Theodore returned and tyrannised over the father, Abba Agathon, and troubled him; not only demanding of him the money which he was bound to pay, and taking from him thirty-six denarii as poll-tax every year, on account of his disciples, but that which he spent upon the sailors in the fleet he also exacted from him. And whenever he wanted funds he required the patriarch to supply them. But the community of the Chalcedonians would not associate with this man. The |6 patriarch needed seven thousand denarii to satisfy the demands of Theodore the Chalcedonian, besides the taxes upon his property, and was prevented from leaving his cell by the governor’s cruel hostility on account of his orthodox faith, for he even issued a command, saying : «Whoever shall see the pope of the Theodosians going out by night or by day, may stone him to death, and I will be responsible for him».

So the Father Agathon lay hid during the days of that impious official, praying for him according to the injunction of the Gospel : «Love your enemies, bless those that curse you». In the days of Abba Agathon was built the church which was dedicated in the name of the Father Macarius. And the brethren multiplied so that they built the cells near the Marsh; and they increased by the grace of the Lord Christ, and the believing brethren assisted them. In those days there appeared at the monastery a man, pure in body and clean of heart, learned in the two kinds of wisdom, the ecclesiastical and the secular, whose name was John, a native of Samannûd. While he was making a pilgrimage to the desert he was attacked by a sore sickness, and none of the seniors believed that he would be healed. Then one

night he saw a dream as if one in human form giving forth light and in great glory, sitting on the throne of the Seraphim and surrounded by a multitude, |7 alighted near the door of his cell. And he beheld a band of seniors, the holy fathers who live in the desert, going forward to receive the blessing: of him that sat on the throne. And he said in his own mind : «If I had some one who would take me, I also would go forward to this great heavenly king, and receive his blessing, and then perchance I should recover from this sickness and pain».

At that moment there approached him one of those who had been standing around the throne and him that sat upon it, a man clothed in the raiment of the patriarchs and apostles, and holding upon his breast a book like the gospel; and he said : «Wilt thou that I bring thee to our Lord that he may grant thee the grace of healing?» Then John prostrated himself before that man with tears and prayed him saying : «Have pity on me, O my Lord, and take me to him, for I am in great trouble». So that holy one answered and said to him, for he was a priest : «O John, tell me that, if thou shalt be healed by the Lord, thou wilt be a son to me, and I will take thee to him». And he promised him in the vision that he would be a son to him until the day of his death; and that man took his hand and brought him to the Saviour of the world. Thereupon John fell prostrate at his feet, and the Saviour said to him : «O John, why love ye vanity, ye sons of men, and neglect the truth, and seek lies ?

Behold, didst thou intend in coming hither to build for thyself a cell of clay which will quickly disappear, or to lay up for thyself treasures in heaven, |8 and erect for thyself in the heavenly Jerusalem, the new city, a mansion which will not perish?» So he fell at his feet and prayed to be forgiven. And the Lord raised him up and said to him : «Now I grant thee the healing of thy sickness for the sake of Mark the Evangelist; therefore depart, and do all that he bids thee». Then the Lord ascended to heaven with glory and majesty.

After that John awoke from his dream, healed of his sickness. And he meditated, saying : «What is this that has now been done?» Then consolation descended upon him from that day. And he went to a monastery in the province of the Faiyûm, accompanied by his two disciples; and he concealed himself there. Subsequently there appeared to Abba Agathon one who said to him : «Send to John the priest, who is of Samannûd, that he may help thee and assist thee; for it is he that shall sit after thee upon the throne». Accordingly the patriarch despatched some of the clergy to the bishop of the Faiyûm, Abba Mennas, and wrote bidding him send to him the priest John. Now that bishop loved John, and profited by his discourse, but he could not contradict the Father Patriarch. So he sent the messengers to John, and they brought him in a boat, and the bishop despatched him to Alexandria.

When the patriarch saw John he rejoiced over him. because he was very wise; and therefore he delivered to him his church, and gave him |9 authority over it and over the city. And some of the people prayed him to ordain John bishop over Upper

Egypt, and others suggested some other see. But God was reserving him for his gentleness like David, that he might accomplish for him what had been promised in the vision in Wadî Habîb. And that true father, Agathon, was occupied all his days in providing for the ordination of priests who were worthy of the laying on of hands and were fall of the fear of God; while men thanked God for his deeds. In his time lived the blessed bishop Gregory, bishop of Al-Kais, and a Syrian, whose name was Joseph. In his days also appeared the foul heresy of the Monk. There was a commander among the Muslims, whose name was Maslamah, and he called together seven bishops, and sent them to Sakha on business connected with some people there, who were alleged to have burnt with fire some of the clerks employed there. The bishops were directed to try the accused; and, when they arrived at Sakha, they acted in concert with a man who was a magistrate there, named Isaac, and they corrected the state of affairs; and those men were healed from the burning. And the said Isaac came to an agreement with the governor of Sakha, and together they prevailed over Theodore the Chalcedonian who was at Alexandria. For this Isaac had received authority over the whole province on his account, because of the harm that he had done to the patriarch. |10

Then the patriarch Agathon finished his days in a good old age, and at the end he fell sick after remaining seventeen years upon his throne, and went to his rest on the 16th of Babah. And his body was placed, as it is written in the history of Saint Macarius, with the Father Benjamin. He died keeping the orthodox faith, and is now wearing the crown of righteousness with all the saints in the land of the living for ever and ever. Amen.

Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — JOHN III, OF SAMANNUD, THE FORTIETH PATRIARCH. A. D. 677-686

When the holy father, Abba Agathon, went to his rest, Theodore the Chalcedonian laid his hand on everything, so that they did not find even bread to eat on the day of the patriarch’s death; for he set his seal on all that belonged to Agathon, and on all that they had. But at last the Lord took vengeance on Theodore by a sore plague in his vitals, namely the disease of the dropsy; and he began to eat every day twelve pounds of bread and twenty-four pounds of meat and two baskets of figs, and to drink daily one skin of wine of Maryût; and yet neither his hunger nor his thirst was satisfied, nor was his belly filled. Thus he died an evil death. And his son was appointed governor instead of him, and became like a son to our father Abba John, for he had confidence in him and love for him. Thus the Father Patriarch led him like a son. At the beginning of his |11 occupation of the see took place the slaying of Tiberius who was prince of Byzantium; and his son took the empire, and his name was Augustus. And when this man began to reign, he made war upon the coasts which the Muslims had taken, and recovered them. And he took many islands of which the Muslims had gained possession, and so likewise he restored Sicily.

At that time there arose one who was no true monk in the city of Constantinople, whose name was Maximus; and he stirred up disturbance and trouble in his country. For he said : «If you truly believe in the faith of Chalcedon, then confess the doctrine of two Natures and two Persons and two Hypostases and two Wills and two Velleities, which the council taught.» So many people followed him; and there arose a great dispute between the two parties. And Augustus the prince was angry with them, and sent this man who was no true monk into exile. And this prince went to Sicily after a time, and was killed there like a slaughtered victim by one of his two attendants. After him his son Justinian ruled the empire instead of him,

and he was a bold prince; and the fear of him fell upon the hearts of the Muslims as when a lion leaps out upon a pack of wolves.

But in those days, after the death of Yazîd, the son of Mu'âwiyah, there arose from the land of the Muslims a prince, whose name was Marwân, who rushed forth like a lion when he comes out of his den hungry, and |12 devours the rest or tramples them under foot. He took possession of the East and of Fustât Misr. And he made his sons governors over all the provinces. To the eldest of them, whose name was Abd al-Malik, he gave Damascus; and to the second, Abd al-Azîz, he gave Egypt. And there was great enmity between Marwân and the Egyptians, because they had set their hopes on the arrival of another man, whose name was Ibn az-Zubair. But when he arrived, Marwân defeated him. And there were appointed for Abd al-Azîz two secretaries, trustworthy and orthodox, whom he set over the whole of the land of Egypt and Maryût and Marâkiyah and Pentapolis which is Libya. One of them was named Athanasius, and he had three sons, and was a native of Edessa in the land of Syria; while the other's name was Isaac, and he and his two sons were natives of Shubrâ Tani, of a good and orthodox family.

And when Abd al-Azîz became governor of Egypt, the Father Patriarch wrote from Alexandria to Misr to the two scribes who presided over his divan, to make known to them what had been done concerning the seal, which was set upon all the places, and the trouble with the misbelieving Chalcedonians from which he was suffering. Thereupon the said scribes sent messengers to Alexandria with instructions that the seal should be broken in the places named, and that all the property of the Church should be delivered to the Father Patriarch.

Now this father was a saint, and the grace of God appeared in his face |13 as in Moses the prophet, so that none could look upon his face, nor discern its features nor the sockets of his eyes, on account of the great light which was upon it. And the Lord healed many of the sick through his prayers; and he was a virgin in soul and body; and he lived in peace with all men. And his deeds and wonders were manifested, so that even the prince and all in his palace heard of them, and sent gifts to him from Constantinople. And in the first year that Abd al-Azîz became governor, he went to Alexandria, according to the custom of those who were appointed governors, to receive its taxes, which were every day a thousand denarii in cash. Then much money was sent to the prince of the Romans; and there was a truce for ten years without war. When the governor arrived at the city, since his entry was not public but private, the patriarch did not go forth to meet him, because he did not know of his coming. Thereupon he was denounced by many people, misbelievers and heretics, whose leader was a man named Theophanes, the husband of the sister of Theodore the Chalcedonian; for they said that he did not go forth nor meet him on account of the greatness of his pride and haughtiness, and his great wealth.

Then Abd al-Azîz sent in anger and summoned the blessed Abba John to the palace, and made him stand before him, and said to him : «What is the cause of thy stiff-necked pride and of thy delay in coming forth to meet me outside this city?» The blessed one answered and said to him : « God knows that I did not |14 do this on account of stiffness of neck, but on account of my weakness, and because I cannot always go forth from the city to another place». Then the Amir was angry and delivered him to certain officers until he should pay a hundred thousand denarii; and he was received into custody by the governor of a castle, who was named Samad, a man without mercy, hard of heart and full of evil. This man received the patriarch on the first day of the Great Week before Easter; and took him and brought him to his dwelling, to torment him until he should pay the money. Afterwards he made him stand before him; and there were with the patriarch two men of good families, namely Arâs the priest, steward of the property of the Church, a man of peace, adorned with every excellence, famous for his gentleness among the inhabitants of the whole city, and the deacon, his secretary, a wise man, loving his fellows, learned in the Scriptures, and virtuous.

So when that evil man made our father, the patriarch, stand before him, he said to him : «I require of thee one hundred thousand denarii, which the Amir commands thee to pay». So he answered and said to him calmly and quietly : «Thou demandest of me one hundred thousand denarii, and I have not out of that sum one hundred thousand drachmae. But my God has not put in his law a command that I should save anything for myself, or gain money at all, for it is the root of all evil. Do therefore whatever it pleases thee to do. My body is in thy hands, but my soul and body are both in the hands of my Lord Jesus Christ». When the misbeliever heard this, |15 he was greatly indignant, and he gnashed with his teeth at the saint, and commanded that a brazen vessel full of coals of fire should be brought, and his feet placed in it until he should say that he would pay the money. But God, the ruler of his servants, sent down that night upon the wife of the Amir Abd al-Azîz a sore sickness, so that she was troubled and sent her eunuch to Samad, to say to him : «Take heed that thou do no harm to that man of God, the patriarch, whom they have delivered to thee; for great trials have befallen me on account of him this night».

So Samad against his will released the patriarch, as well as his two good and excellent sons, until the morrow, that he might take thought as to what he should do with him.

Then at the time of cock-crow Samad went to the Amir and had an interview with him, and made known to him what had happened, and that he had not put the patriarch to the torture. So the Amir said to him : «Beware of touching his body, because of what has befallen us this night on his account. But whatever thou canst

obtain from him, take it from him by gentle means, and if that be impossible, yet do no harm to him, for God has revealed to me that he is his servant».

So Samad returned to his house. And it was now Tuesday in the Great Week. So he summoned John, the holy patriarch, before him, and threatened him with many threats, and brought him the garments of a Jew, and swore that if he would not pay the sum of money that he had first |16 required of him, he would clothe him with those garments, and defile his face with ashes, and lead him round the whole city. But John was not at all afraid, but kept saying to him with a brave heart : «Even if the Lord my God does not save me from thy hand, yet thou hast no power to do aught to me except by his command». Then Samad the misbeliever said to him : «I will yield to thee fifty thousand denarii; and thou shalt pay fifty thousand denarii; and I will release thee to negotiate as thou canst, and raise that sum for me». The saintly patriarch answered and said to him : «The only things that I can dispose of are my garments which are upon my body». After that Samad did not cease to lower his demands until he reached ten thousand denarii. So the patriarch said to him : «I will not promise what I cannot perform». Then when the news came to the secretaries who administered the affairs of Alexandria that the sum demanded had come down to ten thousand denarii, they sent to Abba John and said to him : «Undertake to pay the ten thousand denarii, and we will divide the debt among the bishops and the secretaries and the divans in which we serve, so that nothing may happen to the Church».

Then they went to Abd al-Azîz, and prayed him to summon the patriarch, and hear from him what he had to say. And that day was the Great Thursday. So when the governor had sent for him, and raised his eyes to him, he saw him as if he were in the similitude of an angel of God. Then he commanded at once that an ample cushion should be brought for Abba John; and when it was laid down, he sat upon it. And Abd al-Azîz said to him : |17 «Knowest thou not that the governor may not be thwarted?» The saint answered and said to him : «The governor’s command is obeyed in what is right, but his orders are disobeyed when they are displeasing to God. For our Lord says in the Gospel : Fear not those that kill the body, and have no power over the soul, but fear him who can destroy the soul and the body together : that is to say God, who alone can do this» Then the Amir said to him : «Thy God loves honesty and truth». The patriarch replied : «My God is all truth, and there is no lie in him; but he destroys all those that speak lies». The Amir answered and said to him : «Thou art honest with me. Therefore whatever the Christians shall give to thee, because I demanded it of thee, give it to me, and I will require no more of thee». So the secretaries said to the patriarch : «Do this». Accordingly the patriarch accepted that proposal, and the Amir released him with honour and joy, while gladness and rejoicing were spread among the orthodox, but sorrow and shame among the enemies of the Church.

And the blessed patriarch rode forth from the governor's palace, amid the acclamations of the people, who walked before him, while he was mounted on his horse, with chanting and singing, until he entered the church. There he blessed the basin of water, and washed the feet of the people; and afterwards he celebrated the Liturgy, and carried the Holy Mysteries, and |18 communicated the people. Then he returned to his Cell, by the mercy and help of God. Much shame and sorrow came to the heretics from this, and more to those who had accused him than to any other, and especially to Theophanes the governor of Maryût. For in those days the Amir arrested him suddenly, and delivered him to the secretary, who sent him to prison, and afterwards put him to death after severe torments. And he went to Hell.

God, the only worker of miracles, vouchsafed to the Father Patriarch acceptance and favour with the Amir, who commanded throughout the city that none should address the patriarch except with good words nor say any evil of him, and that none should hinder him in what he desired, nor in going out of the city nor coming into it. Then the magistrates and believing scribes and all the orthodox people found their opportunity, and assisted Abba John, until he had paid the Amir the sum that he had finally demanded of him. And after that they assisted him also in the rebuilding of the church of the glorious martyr and evangelist Saint Mark; and he completed it in three years with every kind of decoration, and bought for it house-property in Misr and in Maryût and in Alexandria. And he built a mill to grind wheat into flour for making biscuit, and a press for linseed oil, and many houses which he settled upon the church of the holy Saint Mark. And the Lord blessed him in every way in his deeds and words. In his days also the orthodox received into their community the people of Agharwah and the people |19 of the Xoite nome, who had been Chalcedonians. Thus the grace of Christ helped and strengthened him.

And he prayed the Lord to reveal to him who was fit to sit after him upon the throne. So when he heard of a brother, named Isaac, learned, excellent, clothed with every virtue, who was serving God in the monastery of the holy Saint Macarius in Wadî Habîb, and had been spiritual son to a bishop, named Zacharias, full of the grace of the Holy Ghost in his venerable character and dignity and humility and good deeds, then the holy patriarch John wrote and summoned that brother to himself, and guarded him like the pupil of his eye. And the brother Isaac was engaged in the works of God, and in writing and copying books; but the patriarch notwithstanding that commanded him to become his partner in administering the affairs of the Church. Then there came a dearth in the days of the holy John, the said patriarch, which lasted three years; but God assisted this father in supporting the poor of the city during three years; for, if he had not done so, they would have perished in the famine. He gave them their food twice every week, and also

gave them money; and the mill for biscuit did not cease working night or day, but continued to grind for those that were destitute. |20

And the patriarch's eye was full of affection, and he was great in charity, and used to give alms as abundant as the sea; and he neglected nothing in his works which could please God, like John the Evangelist. At last he was attacked by a disease in his feet, arising from the gout, and he was greatly tormented by it, until the physicians treated him by the advice of his family and of the brethren who surrounded him.

At that time Abd al-Azîz journeyed to Misr, and Abba John travelled in company with him, until he arrived at the capital. There the patriarch suffered from a sharp pain in his side; and when the Amir was informed of it, he was sorry for him, and sent the secretaries to visit him; and they prepared a boat for him, that he might return down the river to Alexandria. And the writer of this history was with him, for he was his spiritual son. When he arrived at the city of Alexandria, the news was brought to the assembly of the bishops that he was prostrate with fever. So they entered to him. And there were in company with them Gregory, bishop of Al-Kais, and Abba John, bishop of Niciu, and Abba James, bishop of Arwât, and Abba John, bishop of Sakhâ, and Abba Theodore, bishop of Metelites, and a body of the laity: and they were all sad because they saw their shepherd called from earth to heaven. For indeed none remained in their generation |21 like him in his deeds. And when he came to the church of the holy Saint Mark the Evangelist, which he had rebuilt by the incomprehensible decrees of God, they carried him and brought him into the great altar. Thereupon he stood up by the power of the Spirit, and said the whole of the prayer of thanksgiving; and then he lost consciousness. After that they carried him and brought him into his chamber; and so he gave up his spirit into the hand of the Lord Christ in glory and honour.

The period during which he remained on the throne was nine years; and he went to his rest on the first day of Kîhak. And his body was laid in the place which he had built for himself before his death, in the church of Saint Mark the Apostle, with chanting and praises ascending to God. To whom belong glory and honour and praise and majesty and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — ISAAC, THE FORTY-FIRST PATRIARCH. A. D. 686-689

This is the father, Abba Isaac, of whom it was revealed to the father, Abba John, that he should sit after him, by his prayers and wishes, |22 according to what has been related before. For the Scripture says that the Lord visits his chosen ones. And it says also : «None shall take an honour by himself unless it be given him by the Lord from heaven». And it says in the Psalm : «Blessed is he whom thou choosest and receivest unto thee». For when Abba John departed to the Lord in good remembrance, the bishops assembled together under the presidency of Gregory, the bishop of Al-Kais; and James, bishop of Arwât, and John, bishop of Niciu, and a body of bishops and of the Christian laity took counsel with the clergy of Alexandria, and associated with themselves the secretary who was commissioner for the city; and they agreed that they should promote the deacon George, who was a native of Sakhâ, to the dignity of patriarch, without consulting the Amir Abd al-Azîz. For they said : «If he is angry with us or murmurs, we will tell him that Abba John, the patriarch, commanded us that this man should sit in his place after his death, and made us promise and swear to this, and so we could not oppose him». Then they took the deacon George, and ordained him priest, and clothed him with the monastic |23 habit;

and they proclaimed in the church that on the morrow the patriarch would be consecrated, forgetting the words of the Scripture : «The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought, and maketh the thoughts of the people to be of no effect, and hindereth the commands of princes». And when the morrow came, they clothed the deacon George with the vestment of the patriarchal office, and prepared what they needed, and brought him forth in pomp. But while they were intent upon his consecration, they met the archdeacon of the city, whose name was Mark, and who

was a man of understanding, virtuous, and of high reputation in the city; and he forbad them, saying : «If you will not come to the church on Sunday, according to the custom prescribed by the canons, when all the people of the city shall be assembled, I will not assist in the ordination of this man». Now this was God's command, that he might promote that man whom he had chosen at first, namely Abba Isaac, the monk, who was a native of Shubrâ.

For when the morrow came, some of the attendants of the Amir arrived and said : «Where is he whom they have appointed patriarch, and where are the bishops and the priests who appointed him, that we may take them to Misr under our charge?» So they took them and departed. Then, when they had enquired into the affair, they found that the documents bore witness that it was not George of whom Abba John had spoken during his lifetime. So the Amir Abd al-Azîz was angry, and cancelled George's nomination, and commanded them to appoint Isaac. And the thing was |24 from God. So the bishops took him, and ordained him, and he sat upon the patriarchal throne for three years. And the Lord was with Abba Isaac helping him, so that he repaired the Great Church of the Holy Mark, when its walls were sloping in, and also renewed the episcopal residence. And by his means the liturgies in the churches of the orthodox, where they could not be performed before, were restored. And he built a church at Hulwân, because at that place he used to go to visit the Amir Abd al-Azîz, who had commanded the magistrates of Upper Egypt and all the provinces to build, each one of them for himself, a residence at the town of Hulwân.

In those days the patriarch addressed letters to the king of the Abyssinians and the king of the Nubians, bidding them make peace together and praying that there might be no ill will between them; and he wrote this on account of a dispute which there was between the two. Thereupon certain intriguers seized the opportunity of slandering Abba Isaac before Abd al-Azîz, who was greatly incensed, and sent his officers to bring him that he might put him to death. But the secretaries wrote letters different from the patriarch's letters, and gave them to the messengers whom he had sent to the Abyssinians, and took those first letters from them, in fear for the patriarch. This they only did lest evil should befall the Church. And before the patriarch was brought before the Amir, they informed him that the messengers were there, and the letters with them. So he sent |25 in haste to seek them, and took the letters; and when he had perused them, he found nothing in them of what had been told him. Thus his anger was pacified, and he sent at once, and bade the patriarch return to Alexandria, and did not cause him again after this to come up southwards.

Then he commanded to destroy all the crosses which were in the land of Egypt, even the crosses of gold and silver. So the Christians in the land of Egypt were troubled. Moreover he wrote certain inscriptions, and placed them on the doors of the churches at Misr and in the Delta, saying in them : «Muhammad is the great

Apostle of God, and Jesus also is the Apostle of God. But verily God is not begotten and does not beget.»

Then the blessed one went to his rest and departed to the Lord in peace, keeping the orthodox faith, and wearing the crown of righteousness with all the Saints; and after his decease, his body was put in the place which he had prepared in the church of Saint Mark, with chanting and hymns. And the people and the priests took care as to whom they should promote after him upon the throne of the patriarchate. And a dispute took place between the clergy of Saint Mark the Evangelist and the clergy of the church of the Angelion in the city. For some said with regard to John, the Hegumen in the Monastery of Az-Zajâj, which is called in Greek To Enaton, that he was worthy of this office, because he was a learned man and a writer, |26 and he was also godfather to the government-secretary; but others spoke of a man, whose name was Victor, Hegumen of the Monastery of Taposiris, who was also an excellent person. When the people of the church of the Angelion were informed of John, they rejoiced, and the secretary supported them, because it was the Great Church, and there were one hundred and forty ecclesiastics attached to it. So Theodore, the magistrate of the city of Alexandria, wrote for them to the Amir Abd al-Azîz, to inform him of John, the Hegumen of the Monastery of Az-Zajâj; saying that the choice of the community had fallen upon him, that he should be patriarch.

Now the period, during which our father, the patriarch Abba Isaac, remained on the apostolic throne, was two years and nine months. And he went to his rest on the second day of Hatûr, and departed to the Lord Christ, keeping the faith, and ruling his flock. According to another copy, however, he is said to have remained in the patriarchal office three years. May the Lord have mercy upon us by his prayers, and the prayers of all whose works he approves! Amen. |27

Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — SIMON I, THE FORTY-SECOND PATRIARCH. A. D. 689-701

There was with Abba John in the monastery a holy man fearing God, excellent, learned more than many in his generation, whose name was Simon, of the people of the East, whose parents had brought him to Alexandria in his youth, and given him as an offering to the Church like Samuel, for the sake of the body of the holy Saint Severus; for it lies in a shrine in that monastery, and the Syrians used to bring to it gifts and votive offerings. Then the aforesaid Theodore took Simon, who was then a deacon, at the beginning of the days of Abba Agathon, and brought him to Abba John, that he might teach him the art of writing, and the sections of the Scriptures. And by the grace of the Lord Christ who was with him he learnt the Old Testament and much of the New in a short time, for Abba John was excellent as a teacher. So, when Abba Agathon saw that Simon was good in his conduct, he ordained him priest, so that he was the second in rank in the monastery, after his spiritual father John. Then, in consequence of what has been related, the Amir wrote a letter, and sent to summon John, whose spiritual son Simon travelled with him, besides some of the clergy of Alexandria, and Theodore the magistrate in their company. When they arrived, they gave the Amir their letter, containing the name of John: and |28 so the Amir wished to see him. And when the Amir saw John, his heart inclined towards him, because he was a handsome person, beautiful in countenance. Then he asked the priests and bishops concerning him, and they answered : «Yea, he is fit».

But there happened on that day a wonderful thing, like the matter of Phares and Zara, or like Adonias and Solomon, the sons of David. And this was that, after the appointment of John had been confirmed, God raised up one of the bishops like Daniel at that time, without collusion or consultation with anyone, and he said :

«This man shall not be our patriarch». Thereupon silence and wonder fell upon all the people, so that none answered him a syllable. So the Amir enquired : «Then who is fit, sayest thou?» Then the bishop said in the presence of the assembly : «Simon is worthy of this degree». So the Amir commanded that Simon should be brought before him. And when he saw him, he asked them and said : «Whence comes this man?» So it was told him : «He is a Syrian of the people of the East». When he learnt this, he said to the bishops : «Then can you not appoint one of your own country?» And they answered him and said to him : «Verily the man whom we chose we brought before thee; but the matter belongs to God, and in the second place to thee». Then he turned to the blessed Simon, and asked him whether he approved this |29 venerable John as patriarch.

And Simon gave his assent and said to him : «There is not found in the land of Egypt nor in the East one who is as worthy as this man, and he is my spiritual father, and my master from my youth; and his life is as the life of the angels». So when the Amir heard this, he marvelled greatly. And there was a great multitude assembled; and a shout was raised among the magistrates and bishops and clergy, who cried : «May God prolong the life of the Amir for us many years! Deliver the see to Simon, for he is worthy to be patriarch. As was Abba Benjamin, so is Simon. Verily the Church supports them». When the Amir looked at them, and heard their words with regard to a foreigner whom they had not known at all for more than two days, then he bade them with God’s help take him and ordain him patriarch. And he commanded the greater part of the bishops to travel in his company. Accordingly they brought him to Alexandria, and enthroned him upon the apostolic throne in the Great Church, called the Angelion. Thus the orthodox people had great joy and peace and unity in the Church, and her affairs grew in prosperity day by day.

Then Abba Simon set his spiritual father John over the affairs of the |30 Church, while he devoted himself to the study of the holy Scriptures. And as long as John lived, the Father Patriarch did not occupy himself with any of the affairs of the Church, but gave all that up to John his father, in the same way that he used to do with him in the monastery, obeying him and calling him «My Father». Then Abba Simon wrote a synodical epistle to Julian, patriarch of Antioch, at which the latter marvelled; and Simon sent it by certain bishops, and in it he reminded Julian of unity, and that this one faith and unity were between the two sees, Alexandria and Antioch. Then, when Julian studied it, he found it full of the wisdom of God and of the spiritual books, and he rejoiced greatly; and he preached in his church in the name of the father Abba Simon. He also wrote him an answer to his synodical letter, and sent back his envoys with rich gifts to Egypt.

When Simon had continued three years, his father John went to his rest in peace, and was counted worthy that the blessed Simon the Patriarch should lay his hand upon his eyes, and even shroud him with his own hand. Thus he received his

father's blessing and carried him to the monastery, and buried him, and remained beside him forty days, until he had built a tomb for him. And he laid his body in it, and made it large enough to contain his own body, when he should die, that he might be buried with him therein.

Then there came to Abba Simon a trial from God, who proves his elect and purifies them like one who purifies pure silver from dross, so that they |31 become like pure gold; and by the grace of the Lord Christ he endured until he obtained the crown. For he was a man salted with salt, like the salt of the Gospel, having no hypocrisy nor greediness of comfort or of meat or drink, but during his whole life his breakfast was bread and crushed salt with cummin and purslain or such like herbs, that he might weaken the force of his bodily appetites, and make the flesh the servant of the spirit. He used not to associate with the bishops or clergy, because he used to seek solitude so as to observe the times of prayer; and for this reason he was hated by the people of Alexandria. Therefore some of the clergy went to certain magicians, and gave them gold so that they made for them by their magic art a deadly poison, which they put in the vessel in which the Father Simon, the patriarch, used to drink, and brought it to him that he might take some of it. But he had communicated of the Holy Mysteries before he drank of it, and therefore, when he swallowed it, it did not injure him. Then those parricides did the same thing a second time, but it did not hurt him nor do him injury.

So when the magicians saw this, they were amazed at what had happened to this saint. Then indeed they took fair figs out of season, and put deadly poison in them, and charged the priests, and said to them : «Give him these to eat, while he is fasting without food, and has not made his communion, and then he will burst asunder in the midst». So they brought him the fruit with cunning and |32 hypocrisy, and begged him and entreated him to eat of them; and there were some who pointed them out to him, and induced him to swallow of the poisoned figs. Accordingly his bowels were moved that night, and he remained forty days in great anguish, so that every one thought his death inevitable. But the Lord who gives life raised him up, and showed forth a miracle in him. And there appeared to him in a vision one who said to him : «For what cause dost thou endure these trials?»

So when the Amir came to the city, he looked upon Abba Simon, and his appearance was changed through that which had happened to him; and when the Amir asked the reason of this change, he was told by the scribes that four of the priests had given the patriarch poison to drink. Thereupon the Amir commanded that they should be burnt alive, and the magician with them, outside the city, on the north side of it, in a place called Pharos. But when they were about to burn them, the patriarch fell upon his face with many tears before the Amir, and interceded with him for them, saying to him : «If anything happens to them on my account, I must be suspended from my office, for it is not right that I should be patriarch after

that». Then the Amir marvelled at the goodness of his acts, and commanded that the ecclesiastics should be released, but that the magicians should be burnt alive on account of their former deeds. So they were burnt in the fire.

After this, Abba Simon committed to Abba John, bishop of Niciu, the management of the affairs of the monasteries, because he was conversant |33 with the life of the monks, and knew their rules; and he gave him authority over them. At this time the monks were industriously rebuilding the cells, while the officials took charge of their maintenance. Then, however, some of those who were given up to their appetites took a virgin out of her monastery, and conveyed her to Wadî Habîb and committed sin with her secretly. When this was made known among the monks, there was great distress among them, the like of which had not been heard of in that place. So the bishop took the monk who had committed the sin, and inflicted a painful beating upon him; and ten days after his punishment that monk died. Then when the affair became known, all the bishops in the land of Egypt assembled in secret and enquired of the bishop what had happened to the monk, so he informed them concerning the event, and confessed that it was he who had beaten him; and therefore they condemned him to be deposed, because he had transgressed the limit of what humanity required in him. So they deposed him, and he was silent while they did so; and they had said to him : «It is unlawful for thee henceforth to approach any of the vessels of the sanctuary, but thou shalt receive the Mysteries like a mere monk».

Then he cried and said to the people : «Since you have deposed me unjustly, the Lord, the God whose name I know, shall make you |34 all, O ye bishops, strangers to your sees until the end of the time during which you have condemned me». Then they appointed another man, named Mennas, of the monastery of Saint Macarius, to be bishop in his stead; yet he was a man held in honour, powerful in words, loving the brethren.

But after a few days the saying of this holy bishop was fulfilled upon the bishops who assisted to depose him, and upon all the bishops; for a calamity came upon them. There were at that time men who were like the Gentiles, and abstained from their lawful wives, and took unlawful mistresses, showing their subjection to their passions; and yet they said that they were Christians. But the bishops rejected them, and repulsed them from the Holy Mysteries. So some of them went to the Amir and said to him : «We are forbidden to marry, and they have cast us out so that we are forced to commit fornication». Then he was angry, and assembled the bishops from their sees to Alexandria. Accordingly sixty-four bishops were gathered together, but they knew not why they had come nor the cause of their meeting; and they used to pay their respects to the Amir every week. And the heretics, who were no true bishops, also met there, namely, Theophylact, a bishop of the Chalcedonians, and Theodore, who was one of the Gaianite adherents of

Eutyches; and of the followers of Barsanuphi there was George, besides a number of others who were called bishops, and who had also been called together. |35

Then when it was Sunday, news came to the Amir that the army of the Romans had risen against the prince Justinian, and deposed him, and had appointed Leontius instead of him. So the governor at once commanded that the magistrates of every province should be gathered together, and the people of Alexandria and the bishops and the Muslims, that he might make known to them the disaster of the Romans. So a great multitude was then gathered together, and they said : «It has always been the custom of. the Romans that one prince is deposed and another takes his seat». Then the Amir commanded on that day that the Liturgies of the Christians should be forbidden. For the Muslims said that the Christians were in error, giving God a wife and a son, and uttering many falsehoods in their religion; and the Amir rebuked their want of agreement in the doctrines of religion.

Then he turned to Theodore the bishop, chief of the Gaianites, and said to him : «Of these three bishops, which is nearest to thee, and whom does thy soul receive?» He answered : «Abba Simon». Then the Amir turned to Theophylact, the bishop, leader of the Melkites, and said to him : «Which is nearest to thee, and whose religion preferrest thou?» So he said : «I prefer the religion of Abba Simon.» Then Abd al-Azîz said to George, the Barsanuphian : «Which is the nearest to thee of these bishops, and whom does thy soul receive?» He replied : «My religion and the religion of Abba Simon are one, and it is he whom my soul loves». Then |36 he turned lastly to the father, Abba Simon, the preacher of the truth, and said : «Which of these is the nearest to thee, and the one whom thy soul loves?» So he answered and proclaimed in the assembly in a loud voice, saying : «Not one of these is near to me, nor do I love one of them, but I excommunicate by writing and by word of mouth them and their vile doctrine and their fellowship; and those who favour them and those who communicate with them I contemn as Jews». Then the people cried with a great voice, saying : «Abba Simon confesses the truth without error». Thereupon those men were overwhelmed with shame.

After this there came a priest from the people of the Indians to Abba Simon, to ask of him that he would ordain for him a bishop for the Indians. Now the people of the Indians were not subjects of the Muslims. So the patriarch said to the Indian priest : «I cannot ordain a bishop for you without the command of the Amir, who is governor of the land of Egypt. Go to him, and make thy need known to him. Then, if he bids me, I will do for thee what thou requirest, and thou shalt return in peace to thy country with companions». So the priest went from the patriarch’s house to go to the Amir. Then some of the Gaianites met him. and took him to Theodore, the chief of the Phantasiasts. and told Theodore the cause which had |37 brought the priest from his country. Therefore Theodore said to him : «I will do what thou needest for thee». Then Theodore took a man of Maryût, and ordained him bishop

for him, and ordained two priests for him, and sent them away secretly to India. But after they had travelled twenty days, the guardians of the roads, who were employed by the Muslims, seized them, and sent them to the caliph, whose name was Abd al-Malik. The Indian priest, however, escaped, and returned to Egypt; but they brought the three others bound to Abd al-Malik.

And when the caliph knew that they were of the land of Egypt, and from Maryût, and were travelling to a foreign country, he cut off their hands and feet, which he sent to Egypt, to Abd al-Azîz, to whom he wrote, reproaching him with incapacity, and saying : «It seems that thou knowest not what takes place in thine own country, namely that the patriarch of the Christians, who lives at Alexandria, has sent information of the affairs of Egypt to India. Now, when thou readest this letter, thou must inflict upon him two hundred stripes, and take from him one hundred thousand dinars, and send the money to us forthwith by the envoys who come to thee, without delay».

Now the patriarch, Abba Simon, was at that time at Hulwân, accompanied by a bishop. When the letters came to the Amir from his brother at the second hour of the night, he sent some Slavonians and summoned the holy Abba Simon, and his two spiritual sons, that is to say, his scribes. And |38 the Amir said to him : «Fear God, and take heed of thyself, and let no lie come forth from thy mouth with regard to that on which I shall question thee». So the patriarch answered : «I fear my God, and govern my soul in my conduct so that it may be saved by doing good at all times; and as for lies, not only to-day, but during my whole life I have despised them, for they come from Satan, the enemy of mankind. Thus I am ready either for death or life. With regard to the truth as far as I know it, I will tell it before God and thy authority». Then the governor’s anger blazed less furiously, and he said to him : «Didst thou indeed appoint a man to the bishopric of the Indians?» So he answered and said to him : «There came to me a priest from, their country, and requested this thing of me, but I sent him away, telling him that, unless he would bring me an order from the Amir, I could not do this thing. Then I wrote for him to the secretaries, that they might inform thee of his business;

and he left my house, when I was at Alexandria, and has not returned up to now». When the Amir heard these words, he imagined that the blessed one was afraid of death, and for that reason concealed the truth; so he said to him : «Woe to thee! Behold the hands and feet of thy friends, which the caliph has sent to me. And he commands also that I take from thee one hundred thousand dinars, after inflicting upon thee five hundred stripes. Thou hast concealed the truth, therefore I will destroy thee, and kill the bishops with the sword, |39 and pull down all the churches. Yet now this is my sure promise to thee. If thou wilt tell me the truth, I will pay the money instead of thee from my own treasury, and no harm shall befall thee from me. Now be honest with me».

Now this was at night. Then the holy man answered without fear and said to him : «It is the glory of the prince that he love justice, and the lips that are moved in hatred shall be despised. And now, as I think, if a voice came from heaven, bidding me deviate from the truth, I would say no otherwise. But thou wilt not believe me because of what is between us with regard to the coming of the letters to thee, concerning the people whose limbs were cut off, and the men by whom they were cut. Yet now they and the letters will bear witness to me and show the truth. So if I find grace before thee, write that the men may be sent to thee, that the truth of the matter may be known from them and from the letters which were found intheir hands, and that they may tell you who sent them. Then if anything appears which contradicts my words, do what thou wilt». But the Amir answered and said to him ; «How shall they bring hither men whose hands and feet are cut off? thou think that there is any other patriarch of the Christians in the city of Alexandria besides thee? Why dost thou |40 dispute with me?» Then the holy man Simon answered and said to him : «I am pressed on every side. Thou dost not accept the truth from me, but thou desirest to force me to accuse myself of that which I have not done.

Yet by the love of God in thy heart grant me a delay of seven days, and thou shalt know all that took place according to the truth». So he said to him : «Perchance thou desirest to flee or to kill thyself. But this monk, what is he in relation to thee?» The patriarch replied : «He is my son». The Amir enquired : «Hast thou confidence in him?» He answered : «Yea he is as my own life». So the Amir said to him : «As my brother did to the men who were taken while they were travelling to India, so I will do to thee if thou dost not tell me the truth». The holy man answered and said : «Behold, we are before thee with God, therefore do whatever thou wilt. For I have told thee already what took place with me». Then the Amir was silent for a time, and at length said : «I will grant thee a delay of three days. Therefore depart, and beware what thou doest, and perchance God will let know me the truth».

So he went out from his presence and prayed to God humbly with tears, and begged him to show the Amir his innocence of the charge which he laid against him in this matter. And at sunset on the second day his spiritual son, the monk, looked towards the river bank, and saw walking there that black Indian priest and monk, who had come to Abba Simon and asked |41 him to ordain a bishop for him, and who did not know anything of what had happened since then, because he had been a fugitive. So he went to that Indian, and grasped him and brought him to the holy patriarch, and said to him : «O my father, God has accepted thy prayer, and exposed the unjust treatment that we suffered». And he made known to the patriarch that he had taken the Indian priest, and he brought him in. And the Indian told Abba Simon what had taken place, and how Theodore the Gaianite had ordained for him a bishop and priests. So when the morning of the third day came, he took him to the Amir, guarding him and taking thought how to save him, and to save Theodore

also from death. When the Amir saw him, he said to him : «Perchance thou wilt now tell the truth without lies».

So the holy Simon answered him, after adoring God upon his face, and said : «The authority of men comes from the authority of God, and he who exercises authority in this world must be long-suffering, and willing like God most high to grant respites with generosity. Now I desire that thou give the promise of God to me and to those present with me in regard to this occurrence, that them wilt do them no harm, but wilt pardon them for God's sake; and then the truth shall be made known to thy lordship». So he gave him his hand that he would do him no evil. Accordingly he brought before Abd al-Azîz the Indian priest, who made known to him all that had |42 happened, and that Simon was innocent of this occurrence. When the Amir learnt this, he sent the Indian to prison, and commanded that Theodore should be taken and crucified. And he thanked the holy man, Simon the patriarch, and rejoiced over him, and acknowledged his honesty. He wrote also to Abd al-Malik, his brother, to inform him of what had happened and that the patriarch of the Christians in the city of Alexandria had nothing to do with this matter, but was innocent of it; and he praised him to the caliph, and recounted his goodness and uprightness and chastity. And Abd al-Azîz performed for Abba Simon what he had promised, by sparing for his sake Theodore and the Indian priest; for he had learnt that there was no deceit in him.

And after three years Abd al-Azîz dismissed the bishops to their sees, and commanded them to build two churches at Hulwân. And the bishops spent of their own means upon the building of them; and the governor deputed Gregory, bishop of Al-Kais, to superintend the building of them. Now the Amir loved building, and therefore he built Hulwân, and constructed reservoirs there; likewise at Misr he built houses and market-places and baths; and so he did in every town on the river from Misr to Alexandria. He commanded also to dig the canal of Alexandria on the north of the city near the pool of Nicetas; and he ordered that milestones should be set up along it as far as Alexandria. So also he did in the city itself, for he restored her streets after they were ruined. For he made use of men as |43 Pharao did in his time; and there are many things which he did, but which this biography has no room to relate, for fear of making it too long. Meanwhile this holy man Simon was striving all his life to prevent difficulties between the Christians and the Muslims, so that none might suffer loss through him. And through him the Lord used to show his wonders. He had an oeconomus whom he entrusted with the care of the diaconicon, and who was a priest, and in his charge was all that belonged to the church.

And the patriarch used to exhort him at all times and say to him : «O priest Mennas, see that thou be not careless with regard to the church, in leaving in thy house a book or anything that belongs to it, for otherwise trouble will come upon thee».

But Mennas was not pleased with these warnings. And the Lord gave this priest no child, as he smote the firstborn of Egypt in ancient times; yet though he thought of repentance he was not converted. Then God sent down upon him suddenly a disease through which his tongue clove to his palate, and his reason left him, and he used to bite his tongue while he was sleeping upon his bed. And three men took him on account of what he did to himself, and carried him to his house. And the Father Simon, the patriarch, was troubled about him and about the property of the church, because it was in his charge, and no one besides him knew the amount of it. So he remained awake, and prayed the Lord Jesus Christ to raise Mennas up from this sickness for the sake of the church. Then when midnight came, news was brought to the Father Patriarch that |44 the priest Mennas was near death. So he sent his son to him, and bade him ask his wife if he had said anything to her about the property of the church;

but before the patriarch's messenger arrived at the house, there was heard the voice of one crying that the priest was dead. And when he expired, they dressed him in the priestly garments, and laid him on his bed, according to the custom of the Alexandrians, vested in his liturgical vestments. Therefore when the patriarch's son came to the house in which Mennas was laid out, with a great number of the clergy around him, because of his priestly office and his rank, the brother bent over him to kiss him. And the priest sat up and clasped his hands round his neck, and said : «God is the One, the God of the blessed Abba Simon». So when all those who were around him saw him, they fled in fear from that brother whom he had embraced. Thereupon he said to him : «Be confident and of good courage, and be patient, O priest Mennas». Then he answered and said to him : «Through the prayers of my Lord, the Father Patriarch Abba Simon, God has given me life a second time». Then the brother called the clergy and the rest of those who were in the town, and made known to them that the priest Mennas had spoken; and the priest Mennas said to them as they stood astonished and amazed : «Verily I died like all men who die, |45 and two shining men led me before the throne of Christ, the great and mighty King;

and I saw the fathers and patriarchs in their ranks, beginning with the Father Isaac back to the Evangelist Saint Mark. And they reproved me saying : Why didst thou hide the property of the church and all that belongs to it from our successor Abba Simon? Then I was placed before Christ the King, and he said : Take him into outer darkness. And while they were dragging me away, the holy patriarchs prostrated themselves before the Lord Christ, saying with supplications : Have pity on our son, this servant, and release him this time, because he has not given an account of the property of the Church, and this our brother Simon is praying for him. Therefore Christ commanded that I should be brought back a second time, and he said to me : Thus thou diest and art worthy of death, but for the sake of our chosen one and vicar, Simon, I release thee this time. Yet if thou repentest not and takest not heed

to thyself, thou shalt return hither, and I will accept no prayers on thy behalf». Then Mennas arose and stood upright, and he had recovered from his sickness. Afterwards he brought forth all the property of the church, and delivered it to the holy Father Abba Simon; and the Father Patriarch delivered it to his spiritual son. And Mennas remained with him to the time of his death in the fear of God.

And all the people glorified God, the doer of wonders among his saints, on account of this great miracle.

Then the Father Patriarch, Abba Simon, chose spiritual men, brilliant |46 in their deeds, deeply learned in the scriptures and in wisdom and sciences, and ordained them bishops over every place. And the first of these sons of his was the Father Abba Zacharias, bishop of the city of Sakhâ; and he made Abba Ptolemy, the spiritual brother who was his brother in the monastic life, bishop over the see of Upper Manûf. And there are many others whose names are forgotten. These he ordained and distributed the dioceses among them that they might feed the reasonable sheep. And he remained patriarch nine years and a half. Then he fell ill on the day of Pentecost, and recognised that it was a mortal sickness. So he said to his son : «Let us travel to the holy valley, Wadî Habîb, that I may receive the blessing of the holy fathers and the monks; for I shall not see them again after this time in the body». So he went down from Hulwân, for he had gone thither from Alexandria for the sake of the bishops, until he had dismissed them to their dioceses. And he went down to Wadî Habîb, and received the blessing of the holy fathers, the monks; and then he went on to Alexandria.

And he was removed by the incomprehensible decrees of God to the land of the living on the 24th of Abîb, which corresponds to the 18th of July according to the Roman months, in the year 416 of Diocletian, the unbelieving prince, the slayer of the Martyrs. And he bad his sons lay his body in the Monastery of Az-Zajâj, in the place where the body of his |47 father John was laid. Accordingly the monks of the monasteries assembled together at Henaton, until they had finished the prayers over him. And his body was lowered into his tomb with hymns of worship and praise to the Lord Christ, to whom glory and honour are due, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the Giver of life, for ever and ever. Amen.

Here ends the sixteenth chapter wherein the History of the Fathers is completed, as far as the life of Abba Simon, the forty-second patriarch. May God grant us the blessing of their prayers! Hereafter will follow that which we have translated from the documents in the Monastery of Saint Macarius, namely the history of ten patriarchs, from Michael the Last to Sinuthius the First. We also translated in this monastery the lives of nine other patriarchs, in the year 796 of the Martyrs. This is written by Apacyrus, the deacon, and Michael, son of Apater, of Damanhur. Through the grace of God, which enabled us to find the histories in the Monastery of Saint Macarius, with the help of the brother Theodore, the steward, son of Paul,

on Sunday the 6th of Ba’ûnah, in the year 797 of the Righteous Martyrs. We have compared the manuscripts with one another, and found them |48 corresponding to what we copied; and so we assured ourselves of their authenticity.

Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — ALEXANDER II, THE FORTY-THIRD PATRIARCH. A. D. 705-730

We must now record the events which took place after the death of the glorious, venerable, and blessed father, the good shepherd Abba Simon, who heard from the Lord Jesus Christ the words : « O thou faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over little, I will set thee over much. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord». When his death was made known to the Amir Abd al-Azîz and to the scribes at Misr, these latter were afflicted with grief and sadness because all the Christians had lost their shepherd, at a time of difficulty and trials, caused by the civil governors. But the Lord Christ did not cease to govern the Church. And Athanasius, the believer, was president of the Divân; and he protected the interests of the churches. On this occasion he and the scribes went to the Amir with one consent, and said to him : «The property of the Church at Alexandria obliges her to pay |49 a heavy tax. Therefore we pray thee to despatch the bishop Gregory to Alexandria, to watch over the possessions of the Church and everything connected with it. So may God lengthen thy life, O Amir!» Then Abd al-Azîz consented to what Athanasius asked for, and despatched Gregory, bishop of Al-Kais, to Alexandria, and gave him authority over the property of the churches and the establishment of the patriarch, with free power of administration; and accordingly he wrote a decree for him to that effect. So Gregory took the decree and departed.

And they began to take thought as to whom they should promote to be patriarch, in accordance with their desire for a man known for wisdom and learning. So they waited three years in this state, until it was the Lord’s will; and at length the heart of the civil governors was well disposed in this matter, after much supplication.

Then by the will of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who knows whom he will choose from among the pure and chaste and clean of heart, they brought forward the priest Alexander from the Monastery of Az-Zajâj. He was a monk, a virgin, humble, without defect, learned in the Scriptures from ins youth. And they brought Alexander to the Amir, who saw the grace in his face, and so allowed them by the will of God to promote him to the patriarchal office. |50

So the orthodox laity agreed together, in the presence of an assemblage of bishops and priests and the secretaries of the divan. Then the Father Alexander was consecrated patriarch on the festival of the holy Saint Mark, namely the last day of Barmudah, in the year 420 of Diocletian. And the land of Egypt rejoiced greatly, and especially the orthodox, because the Church had been left in solitude three years, and they were therein like orphans. And the Lord was with the Father Alexander, making all his affairs easy, on account of his humility and chastity and trust in the Lord alone as his ruler. Then when a short time had passed, during which he remained in peace, Satan stirred up strife against the bishops, as we will relate.

Abd al-Azîz, the governor of Egypt, had a son, the eldest of his sons, called Al-Asbagh, and he thought that he would sit in the seat of government in his father's room when he died. So he made him ruler over the whole country as wâli and receiver of the revenue, and all ranks obeyed him with fear, because he was the Amir's son, and because of the authority which he had given him. Now Al-Asbagh was a hater of the Christians, a shedder of blood, a wicked man, like a fierce lion. At that time a deacon, |51 named Benjamin, became attached to him and grew intimate with him; and Al-Asbagh loved him more than all his companions. And he treacherously revealed to Al-Asbagh the secrets of the Christians, and even expounded the Gospel to him in Arabic as well as the books of alchemy. For Al-Asbagh sought out books that they might be read to him, and so for instance he read the Festal Epistles, in order that he might see whether the Muslims were insulted therein or not. And he did not shrink from any cruelly that he could inflict upon the Christians. For as the damned heretics were in the habit of calumniating the Christian monks and saving that they did nothing but eat and drink, he sent one of his trusted friends, named Yezîd, accompanied by another, and mutilated all the monks in all the provinces and in Wadî Habîb and on Mount Jarâd and in other places. And he laid a poll-tax upon them of one dinar from each individual, and commanded that they should make no more monks after those whom he mutilated. Now this tax of the infidel Al-Asbagh was the first poll-tax paid by the monks.

After this, Al-Asbagh compelled the bishops of the provinces to furnish a sum of two thousand dinars besides the taxes on their lands, and this sum they paid every year. And he acted proudly, and compelled the people to pray as he bade them. And Benjamin, the monk and deacon, was a |52 worse enemy to the Christians than any other, and excited his friend to every kind of persecution. So he forced many

persons to become Muslims, among them being Peter, governor of Upper Egypt, and his brother Theodore, and the son of Theophanes, governor of Maryût, and a body of priests and laymen not to be numbered on account of their multitude. But the Lord Jesus Christ did not long respite Al-Asbagh, and in a short time hurried him out of the world, because he hated the Christian people. This took place as follows. On the Saturday of Light he entered into the Monastery of Hulwân, and looked at the pictures being carried in procession according to the rule. And there was a picture of our Pure Lady Mary and of the Lord Christ in her lap; so when he looked at it and considered it, he said to the bishops and to several people who were with him : «Who is represented in this picture?» They answered : «This is Mary, the mother of Christ».

Then he was moved with hatred against her, and filled his mouth with saliva, and spat in her face, saying : «If I find an opportunity, I will root out the Christians from this land. Who is Christ that you worship him as a God?» And that night God sent down vengeance upon him. For in the morning he came to his father, and found him sitting, surrounded by a body of Muslims and Christians. And the day was Easter Sunday. So Al-Asbagh sat down and said to his father; «O my Lord, the devils have chastised me this night». His father said to him : «How, |53 my son?» He replied : «I looked, and there was One sitting on a great throne, exceedingly awful and terrible; and his face shone with light brighter than the rays of the sun; and round him were thousands and tens of thousands bearing weapons, and their garments were white as snow; and I and thou stood behind him, bound with iron chains. And I asked one in a low voice : Who is this who has taken the government of the land of Egypt from my father? He said to me : Hast thou not known him till now? So I asked him in the dream : And who is he? Then he answered and said : This is Jesus Christ, the King of the Christians, who is more glorious and higher than all the kings of the earth.

This is he whom thou didst mock, and in whose face thou didst spit. He shows thee thy weakness in this dream, thou wretched one, together with thy father; and he shows thee his glory and majesty». And while he was saying this to me, behold, one of those bearing weapons came to me, I being naked, and he struck me with a spear in my side, and did not take it out again until I had given up my spirit to them; and they were the devils who mocked me». When his father heard this tale he was very sad. And the young man was immediately seized with a violent fever, and was carried away forthwith; and they laid him upon his bed, and he did not open his mouth after that, nor did he eat or drink. So at the second hour of the night he died. And he was buried; and none could comfort his father because of him. And |54 after forty days his father also died, according to the dream which his unbelieving son had seen.

When these things had happened, Athanasius, the believer and lover of Christ, went with his sons to the sovereign prince Abd al-Malik at Damascus. But Abd al-Malik arrested Athanasius there, and called him to account, and took from him all the gains that he had acquired in Egypt since the collection of the taxes had been left to him. Then the prince sent one of his sons, named Abd Allah, to govern the land of Egypt; and when he came to Egypt, he also did evil deeds; and all the officials feared him on account of the deeds to which Satan tempted him. For he made instruments with which to torture the people, and was like a fierce wild beast; so that often when he sat at table men were put to death in his presence, and perchance their blood spurted out into the dish from which he was eating, and he took pleasure in that. In those days the blessed Alexander went forth, and travelled to Misr to salute Abd Allah, according to the custom among patriarchs and governors. But when Abd Allah saw him, he said : «What is this man?» They replied : «This is the father and patriarch of all the Christians». So he took him, and gave him over to one of his chamberlains, to whom he said : «Humiliate him in whatever way thou wilt, until he shall pay three thousand dinars». So he took him, and he remained with him three days.

And the Christians continued to petition |55 the governor that he would remit part of what he had said, but he would not. And all the people in the country were in great distress on this account; and great fear fell upon the bishops and monks on account of the money which he tried to extort from the patriarch. So when George the deacon, a native of Dimru, saw this, that Abd Allah would not set the patriarch free until he had received the money, he went to him and said to him : «O our Lord, dost thou desire the life of the patriarch or money?» He answered : «I wish for the money». So the deacon George said to him : «Trust me with him for the space of two months, that I may go down with him to the North, to beg for him from the officials and Christians, and I will pay thee for him three thousand dinars». So the governor gave the patriarch up to him, and he went round the cities and villages with him, and visited those who believed in Christ, until he had collected the money and brought it to Misr. And he used to assemble to himself the bishops and principal men and monks, and then mock them, and speak proudly with hard words, saying to them : «You are to me like the Romans, and if a man slays one of you, God will pardon him, because you are the enemies of God».

And when he received from the people the taxes which they were accustomed to pay, he demanded the double amount from them, requiring a dinar and two thirds from those who were bound to pay one dinar, so that many churches were ruined for that cause; for he loved money greatly. |56

Then Abd Allah commanded that of the youths of his country all those should be gathered together that were twenty years old or under. So they went and assembled together; and the leaders whom he appointed were two men, friends of his,

named Asim and Yazîd, and with them a body of officials; and they brought down great trials upon the people, and many were killed on this account. And they branded the strangers whom they found, on their hands and foreheads, and sent them to places which they did not know. Thus there was trouble and confusion in the land. The governor also gave orders that no dead man should be buried until they had paid the poll-tax for him; and he appointed a man named Muhammad over this business, so that even the indigent, who could not buy bread, were not buried when they died, except by his command. How great then were the sadness and misery and sighing in the provinces of Lower and Upper Egypt on account of the deeds of these men, until the Lord took vengeance suddenly on Abd Allah, after he had continued for two years to do such deeds! For the Lord took away the life of his father, Abd al-Malik, whose eldest son, named Al-Walîd, became ruler in his stead. When Al-Walîd took his seat on the throne of the empire, he began to remove the provincial governors, and to nominate others from among his friends. So he appointed as governor of Egypt one named Kurrah. But that infidel Abd Allah did not know of this change; and while he was sitting in his |57 official residence, the governor appointed to replace him arrived unexpectedly, and took his seat in his place. Thus great ignominy and shame came to him on this account.

And Kurrah brought down great trials upon the friends of Abd Allah, both Christians and Muslims, and cast them into prisons where they remained for a year. And there was in his days a man of the orthodox faith, named John, a native of Damirah, who had authority to command or forbid. But Kurrah caused trials among the churches and the monks, as shall be described. Meanwhile the Roman monarchy was like a game for children. For when the Romans had deposed Justinian the prince, they made Leo their ruler in his place. But Leo was put to death before he had completed the third year of his reign; and after him reigned Apsimarus, who put many patricians to death at Constantinople; and he also killed the patriarch. When Apsimarus came to the throne, he released many captives from his country, and they returned to their own homes; and he provided each one with three dinars for the expenses of the journey. After him reigned Philippicus. Then after two years Anastasius was made prince of the Romans, and is still reigning. (N. B. By saying «still» the writer means at the time of composing the history.)

Now the president of the divan of Alexandria in those days was |58 Theodore; and there was great hostility between him and the Father Patriarch, Alexander. For when Kurrah came to Misr, the Father Patriarch went according to the custom to congratulate him on becoming governor, and to salute him. But Kurrah arrested him on his arrival, and said to him : «Thou must pay me a sum equal to that which Abd Allah, son of Abd al-Malik, took from thee». The Father Patriarch said to him : «Our Law bids us not to lay up treasure and not to multiply gold or silver, but that we spend something day by day on account of what we need for daily use and for the poor and the needy. Abd Allah acted as he did towards me only through

the calumnies of evil men, because of which he treated me unjustly and exacted three thousand dinars from me. But he found none of that money in my possession, so that he sent me out into the country like a beggar asking alms, until God gave me what I needed; and even now I owe five hundred dinars. So whence shall I get anything?» Then the Amir said to him : «Wilt thou swear to me then that thou hast no gold?» The patriarch answered : «God has commanded us not to swear at all. Believe me therefore now that the taxes on my property which must be paid are beyond my means, and God knows that I have no gold».

Then the Amir said : «These words will not avail. If thou must sell thine own flesh, thou must pay me three thousand dinars, and if not, thou shalt not escape from my hand». So when he saw that he could not escape from him, he begged him |59 to let him travel to Upper Egypt, and whatever God allowed him to collect by the alms of the people he would send it to him. Then Kurrah released him, and he went up to Upper Egypt, and went round the cities and villages, and begged. And the Lord Jesus Christ healed many sick persons by his prayers, and every one rejoiced in him, saying : «Since the time of the Father Benjamin we have not seen a patriarch in Upper Egypt until this father». But he suffered fatigue and trouble and the miseries of travel, and at last Satan, who hates the good, did this thing of which an account follows. There was a hermit, named Petubastes, who dwelt on a rock with two monks, his sons. One day their father, the hermit, bade them clean out for him a place away from the rock; and while they were clearing it and digging, they found five brazen pots full of money in Roman coin. So they hid one of the pots, and showed the other four to the hermit. So the old man said to them in his simplicity : «Is this all that you found?» And when they said that it was all, he was glad at that.

Then he said to them : «The Lord has disposed this money for the Father Patriarch, because he is required to pay what he does not possess». Afterwards he sent to the patriarch’s steward, whose name was George the monk, and to his scribe, and summoned them both, and delivered to them the four pots, and said to them ; «Take these and give them to the governor for the father Alexander, the patriarch ». So they took the pots and went |60 away and buried them dishonestly. And the Father Patriarch was absent collecting money in Upper Egypt. So the monks, the sons of the hermit, took the pot of money, and divided it between themselves, and began to act impiously; for they abandoned the monastic life, and bought fine raiment and maidservants. So the governor of the town and the clerk seized one of them and said to him : «Whence hast thou this money?» And when he was chastised, and the stripes caused him anguish, he said to them : «Promise me that you will do me no hurt, and I will make everything known to you». So they promised him, and he informed them of the affair of the five pots, and that he and his comrade had taken one of them, and that the other four pots were in the possession of the patriarch’s steward and scribe.

Then they at once informed Kurrah of this, and he commanded that the patriarchal residence should be shut, and all the vessels and gold and silver and books and cattle in it seized. And he brought down great trials upon the friends of the patriarch, and took the four pots of money, besides the vessels of the church and the goods found in the patriarchal residence, and he sent to Upper Egypt, and summoned the patriarch, and was minded to slay him because he had sworn that there was no gold in his possession. And when he took from them the four pots, all the friends of the patriarch fled like the apostles at that time. Then when they brought the patriarch before Kurrah. he gnashed his teeth upon him and wished to slay him, but the Lord restrained him; so he |61 loaded him with iron fetters, and cast him into prison, where he remained seven days. Then after that he compelled him to pay the three thousand dinars, and great trouble and distress came upon him, until one thousand dinars were paid to him after two years; and many trials came to the holy father, but he endured them patiently. Afterwards wicked people went and accused him falsely of having men in his house, who coined dinars, and alleged that he possessed a die for stamping coin.

And while he was sitting at the ninth hour of the day, on a certain day, breaking his fast, and ignorant of what was to happen, before he knew anything, they had surrounded the patriarchal residence, and the people of the city of Alexandria with the town-clerk, by command of Kurrah, had seized the patriarch and his companions; and they threw him to the ground, and beat his companions, who were tortured till their blood flowed on the ground, and they almost died by the torture; and after all they found what they had accused him of to be false. And they did not cease from these persecutions till the second day of Amshir, in the year 430 of Diocletian.

Then after these persecutions which the father suffered, the people and clergy of Alexandria rose against him, and demanded that he should pay them some of the dues and church-rates on the third day of the Feast of Easter, but he had nothing to give them. And he said to them : «O brethren, you have seen how we have been robbed of all the property of |62 the church, even of the cups in which the Pure Blood is offered; so that we have been forced to make chalices of glass and patens of wood instead of the gold and silver vessels, because Kurrah has robbed us of them». But they reviled him with many hard words, while he patiently endured their abuse, and prayed to the Lord Christ, the chief shepherd, that he would receive his people from him and grant them salvation.

And the Lord Jesus Christ did in his days wonderful things, because he cares for the salvation of each one among men. For there was a man named John, an official, to whom God gave favour with the governors. So he went to Kurrah and said to him : «It is right that thou shouldst know that the taxes weigh heavily upon the monks and bishops in every place. Here then is an easy matter, for some of them are rich; while others have not the means of nourishment; and we know the state

of all the Christians; if therefore thou thinkest fit to set me over their affairs, I will collect the taxes». So he set him over the bishops and monks. And when Kurrah gave him authority, he said to him : «There are among them some who do not believe in the faith of the Coptic Christians, and yet will not pray with the Muslims. What then thinkest thou that I should do to them?» The governor answered : «Do to them according to the law of the Christians, and take a double poll-tax from them». Accordingly John went out from before him, by the dispensation of God, and went first to the |63 diocese of Sa, which was his own diocese, where there were certain heretics, Gaianites and Schematics, living without the blessing of God. He therefore put a stop to their foul heresy, and baptized them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, enlightening them with the illumination of baptism;

and their souls were filled with joy. Then John went to Al-Munâ, where the bishop of the diocese was Abba Hor, and baptized the monks there, after they had abjured their heresy; and thus the Gaianites and the Barsanuphians, who were there, were led by him into communion with the orthodox. When he left that place, he journeyed to Wadî Habîb, where also the heresy of the Gaianites had existed during a hundred and seventy years, from the time of the schism caused by Julian; and he brought them also back to the orthodox faith. Thus he united all the churches in one body by the grace of the Lord Christ who helped him; not only these, but those in every place in which he found roots of bitterness, that is to say, foul heresies among the monks or others. For in the city of Banâ and Busir and Samannûd and the neighbourhood, and at Rosetta and Damietta, the Lord rooted out their false principles and cast them away; and he united the whole land of Egypt in one faith with true agreement, and brought all the foul heresies to nought. |64

And the Amir Kurrah was a great lover of money; and whenever an official died, he seized all his goods. Thus on the death of the chief of the Divân of Alexandria, and of Apacyrus of Tinnis, who was a clerk, and of an innumerable multitude of officials at Misr, he confiscated their property; and he even took away the endowments of the bishops. By these means he added a hundred thousand dinars to the established revenue of the country. And men began to flee from place to place with their wives and children, but no place would harbour them because of the troubles and the exaction of taxes; and his tyranny was greater than that of any of his predecessors. Then Kurrah appointed a man, named Abd al-Azîz, of the city of Sakhâ, who collected the fugitives from every place, and brought them back and bound them and punished them, and sent everyone to his own place; and the people endured heavy trials. After this, God sent a great plague upon Egypt, and the number of those who died daily was not known ; but the majority of those who died were Muslims. At last the plague entered the house of Kurrah, and his wives and his pages died; and he fled from place to place in fear of death, until he finished the term allotted to him, and then died suddenly a painful death.

Now Julian had been patriarch of Antioch, and had charge of the church from the days of John, patriarch of Alexandria, to the days of the Father Alexander; but he had gone to his rest, and departed to eternal |65 happiness. So the bishops of the East assembled in order to appoint his successor; but their prince, whose name was Al-Walîd, would not allow them to do this. For he said : «I will not permit a patriarch to be appointed in my days». And the bishops were sad because of this; and therefore they took a God-fearing bishop, filled with the grace of the Holy Ghost, named Elias, and seated him upon the throne in the church of Antioch. And he wrote a synodical letter according to the law of the ancient canons, and despatched it by a bishop, named Stephen, to the Father Patriarch Alexander, because of the agreement between the two prelates. But the holy Alexander was visiting various places, so the bishop found him in Wadî Habîb, and delivered to him the synodical letter from the bishop Abba Elias, whom they had seated on the throne of Antioch. And Alexander found the letter in accordance with the orthodox faith, and.

therefore he accepted it with joy, and summoned the chief men of the provinces, and made known to them what had happened in the East, and how the prince had forbidden the faithful to appoint a patriarch, but that the bishops had given the late patriarch a successor, so that he might consecrate the bishops until the season of wrath should cease. And a similar occurrence had happened in the time of Gregory Theologus and our Father Theophilus with the Arians and Acacians, and the distress lasted until they called the aforesaid Gregory to Constantinople, and the church was delivered |66 to him. Therefore the bishops of Egypt and the patriarch were consoled, and he wrote an answer to the synodical letter, and gave it to Stephen and his companions; and Stephen departed in peace to his own country. And when Theodore undertook the government of Alexandria in the reign of Al-Walîd and in the days of the Father Alexander, there was there a physician, a native of the city, named Onopes, which means Ass’s face. When this man gained influence, he begged the Amir to command Theodore to appoint him patriarch of Alexandria; and he was a Roman, and a blasphemous Chalcedonian. The Amir accepted his petition; and a certain clerk named Anastasius, a native of Alexandria, gave to the Amir a thousand dinars, and so induced him to establish this false Chalcedonian patriarch in the city of Alexandria. And he opposed the right faith and derided Abba Alexander, especially when he was enduring trials at that time.

After that the people wished to depose the Chalcedonian, and rose against him; so he fled, and went to the Father Alexander, and prayed him humbly, and begged to be excused for what he had endured through him, and requested him to receive him into the orthodox faith. Therefore Alexander received him with Christian charity, and obeyed the |67 commandments of God, who says : «If thou seest the ass of thine enemy lying under his burden, turn not from him until thou hast raised him up». And he did not cease to hold the orthodox faith.

Then there arose trials in the Church, and a wicked edict was issued that the coloured pillars and the marble which were in the churches should be taken away, and they were all carried off. And the Father Patriarch was sad for the sake of his church, because it became a ruin through that which was done with him. But in spite of this he gave thanks to God, and was bravely patient. At that time two serious disasters happened, in the year 431 of Diocletian, in the 13th year of the Indiction, on account of our sins and our evil deeds. For after the death of Kurrah, Al-Walîd sent to Egypt as his successor a governor named Usâmah. This man, when he arrived at Al-Fustât, demanded a description of the boundaries of all the provinces, and wrote it down in Arabic; and he was a man of great intelligence. Then, when he had begun this, there came a great dearth, the like of which had not been heard of since the earliest ages; and more died in that dearth than had died in the plague, for all the rich and the poor were threatened with death. Afterwards a great abundance came, till wheat sank to twenty-five ardebbs for one dinar. But after a short time the plague returned, and destroyed the people; and |68 if the Lord had not taken pity on those that remained of them on the earth, not one would have survived.

And the Amir continued to do evil, while all the Muslims and Christians feared him. For he commanded that no one should lodge a stranger in the churches or at inns or on the wharfs, and the people were afraid of him and drove out the strangers that were in their houses. And he commanded the monks not to make monks of those who came to them. Then he mutilated the monks, and branded each one of them on his left hand, with a branding iron in the form of a ring, that he might be known; adding the name of his church and his monastery, without a cross, and with the date according to the era of Islam. Thus there was, in the year 96 of the Hegira, trouble among the monks, and oppression of the faithful. If they discovered a fugitive or one that had not been marked, they brought him to the Amir, who ordered that one of his limbs should be cut off, so that he was lame for life; and the number could not be counted of those whom he maimed for this cause. And he shaved off the beards of many, and slew a great multitude, and put out the eyes of many without mercy, and killed many under punishment with scourges. And out of love for money he commanded the governors to put the people to death, and bring him their money;

and he wrote to them, saying: «I have delivered up to you the lives of the people, therefore collect all the wealth that you can, from bishops or monks or churches or any of the |69 people, and bring stuffs and money and cattle and all that you find belonging to them, and respect no one. And whatever place you visit, pillage it». Accordingly the officials laid the country waste, and carried off the columns and the woodwork, and sold what was worth ten dinars for one dinar, until silver sank to thirty-five dirhems for a dinar, and wheat to forty ardebbs for a dinar, and wine to forty wineskins for a dinar, and oil to a hundred kists for a dinar. And everyone who possessed anything was afraid to show it, lest he should be put to the torture;

and through anguish and distress men were minded to sell their own children. Yet when the Amir was informed of these things, his heart was not softened, and he had no mercy, but increased in his wickedness. For he wrote and said : «Wherever a man is found walking, or passing from one place to another, or disembarking from a boat, or embarking, without a passport, he shall be arrested, and the contents of the boat confiscated, and the boat burnt». And if any Romans were found on the river, they were brought to him; and some of them he slew, and others he impaled, and the hands and feet of some he cut off.

At last the roads were made impassable, and no man could travel or sell or buy. The fruits of the vineyards were wasted, and there was no one to buy them for a single dirhem, because their owners remained within their houses for two months, awaiting the passport to release them thence. If a mouse ate a man’s passport, or if it were injured by water or fire or any accident, whether part |70 or the whole of it remained to his possession, if its lettering were damaged, it could not be changed for a new one until he paid five dinars as a fee for it, and then it could be changed for him.

Now there was a poor widow who received a passport for her son, who was her only one and fatherless, and to whose labour she trusted for her sustenance. So she departed from Alexandria to go to Aghrawah. But when the young man went out to the river to drink water, a crocodile devoured him with the passport which was fastened to him. And his mother wept and mourned for him, and then returned to Alexandria, where she informed the unbelieving Amir of what had happened to her; but he had no pity on her, and kept her prisoner until she paid ten dinars for the passport, because she had entered the city without a passport. And she sold her garments and all that she had, and went about begging, until she had paid the ten dinars. And Satan, whom the Amir resembled in heart, suggested evil to him all day long. After this he sent his officers to inquire into the state of the monasteries, and found there many monks who had no mark of a ring on their hands; so some of them were beheaded, and some died under the lash.

Then he nailed up the door of their church with iron nails, and demanded of them a thousand dinars, and assembled the superiors of the monks, and tortured them, and required a dinar from each one of them, And he said : |71 «If you do not pay this, I will destroy the churches, and turn them into ruins, and make you serve on board the ships of the fleet». So the seniors of the monks were troubled; and they longed for death, and knew not what to do, and could only assemble in the churches, and pray, and humbly entreat the Lord Christ in grief and sadness that he would have pity on them. At last the gracious and merciful God heard their supplication, and delivered them suddenly; for Sulaiman, son of Abd al-Malik, who was at that time the sovereign prince, died and was succeeded by Omar, son of Abd al-Azîz who had been governor of Egypt. And by the will of the merciful God,

Omar at once sent a governor to Egypt, who fastened a mass of iron to the feet of Usâmah, the evil one, and a block of wood to his hands, and put him in prison; and he was kept in darkness until he should make up his mind concerning him. Then he took him, and brought him out from Alexandria to Misr. But God took away his life on the way in a grievous and painful manner, as he deserved.

Yet this Omar, son of Abd al-Azîz, though he did much good before men, acted ill before God. He commanded that there should be no taxes upon the property of the church and the bishops, and began to set the churches and bishops free from the impost on land; and he abolished the new taxes, and rebuilt the ruined cities; and the Christians were in security and prosperity, |72 and so were the churches. But after that be began to do evil; for he wrote a letter charged with sadness to Egypt, in which were written the following words : «Omar commands saying, Those who wish to remain as they are, and in their own country, must follow the religion of Muhammad as I do; but let those who do not wish to do so, go forth from my dominions». Then the Christians gave him all the money that they could, and trusted in God, and rendered service to the Muslims, and became an example to many. For the Christians were oppressed by the governors and the local authorities and the Muslims in every place, the old and the young, the rich and the poor among them; and Omar commanded that the poll-tax should be taken from all men who would not become Muslims, even in cases where it was not customary to take it. But God did not long respite him, but destroyed him swiftly, and granted him the government no longer, because he was like Antichrist.

Then Yezîd reigned after him; but we have no wish to relate nor describe what happened in his days, on account of the miseries and trials; for he walked in the path of Satan, and deviated from the paths of God. As soon as he undertook the government, he restored the taxes of which Omar had relieved the churches and bishops for one year; and he required great sums of money from the people, so that everyone was distressed in his dominions. And he was not satisfied with this only, but he even issued orders that the crosses should be broken in every place, and that the pictures |73 which were in the churches should he removed. For he commanded this, but the Lord Christ destroyed him for this reason, and took his soul, after he had endured before his death many sufferings. And the time during which he reigned was two years and four months.

And after him reigned Hishâm his brother, who was a God-fearing man according to the method of Islam, and loved all men; and he became the deliverer of the orthodox. For when he learnt that we Christians had had no patriarch in the East since Julian, the late patriarch of Antioch, in whose stead the bishop Elias had taken his seat, and that Elias also had died, he took a man named Athanasius, full of every spiritual grace, who also was a bishop, and gave him the patriarchate of Antioch. So the bishops laid their hands upon him in turn, and made him patriarch.

This Athanasius wrote a synodical letter with learning and great humility to the blessed Father Patriarch Alexander, saying : «Verily I am unworthy of this degree on account of my sins; yet I have not been promoted by my own will, but by that of the prince». For he had known him before this time. So Alexander received the letter with joy, and then wrote an answer to it, asserting the unity of the faith, and containing good wishes and salutations. At the end he wrote thus : «We bless the prince Hishâm, and pray that he may enjoy |74 a reign of many years, and overcome his enemies, so that he may do that which is right before the Lord». And he dismissed the envoys in peace.

After this, Hishâm wrote to Egypt, commanding that a receipt in his name should be given to everyone who paid the taxes, so that none might be unfairly treated, and that there might be no injustice in his dominions. So God gave him a prosperous reign, and he continued to rule for twenty-two years; and no war continued against him, but everyone that rose up against him was delivered by God into his hands, through the prayers of the two glorious patriarchs, Alexander at Alexandria and Athanasius at Antioch. Now the orthodox church at Damascus was adjoining the palace in which Hishâm resided. Then he commanded that the patriarch should build his house next to the prince’s reception-hall, because of his great love for him, so that he might hear him pray and read. For he often used to say to him : «When thou beginnest to pray at night I receive great comfort, and I cease to trouble about the affairs of the empire, and then sleep comes to me restfully». And Hishâm loved Athanasius greatly for that reason; and he gave great gifts to the churches and the Christians. And there was at his court a Muslim who greatly loved the orthodox churches, and he was named Ubaid Allah. And when the prince Hishâm saw him act so, he rejoiced greatly, and made him governor of Egypt, and commanded him to act with kindness towards all baptised Christians.

When Ubaid Allah came to Egypt, he commanded that the people and the cattle should be numbered, |75 and the lands and vineyards measured with measuring lines, and accordingly this was done; also that a leaden badge should be placed on the neck of every man, from the youth of twenty to those who were a hundred years old; and he had them numbered, and wrote down the names of all of them, and the number of their beasts, young and old, and an account of the bad lands, difficult of cultivation, which produce coarse grass and thorns. And he set up milestones in the midst of the enclosed lands, at the boundaries and on the roads, throughout the land of Egypt; and he doubled the taxes.

So after Ubaid Allah had accomplished all that we have related, and had committed much injustice which we have not related, when he came to Al-Fustât, he went to the city of Memphis and remained there four months. And he commanded that the chief men of the towns should assemble at Memphis. And he had the mark of a lion put on the hands of the Christians, according to the words of the Book,

which John the Son of Thunder uttered, saying : «None shall sell or buy except those upon whose hand is the mark of the lion». Then, when he had accomplished this, he wrote to the provinces of Egypt, saying thus : «If anyone is found in any place without the mark on his hand, his hand shall be cut off, and he shall be heavily fined, because he has disobeyed the commands of the prince and acted rebelliously towards him». Now he had two sons, one of whom he |76 despatched to the South, and the other to the North, and there was great distress and perturbation in all the land of Egypt. Then Ubaid Allah arrived at Al-Gizah, and built a large house for himself there; and he wrote to the provinces of Egypt, commanding that a body of men should be collected for him, that he might set them to work as long as he wished. And he built at Al-Fustât, until the men perished through fatigue from the great labours which he imposed upon then.

In consequence of these things, when the forced labours and the payment of the taxes which he had doubled became grievous, war broke out between the Christians and Muslims, so that much blood was shed in the land of Egypt between the two factions, first of all in the city of Banâ and the city of Sa and the city of Samannûd and their neighbourhood, and in many places in Lower Egypt; and there was likewise fighting on the roads and mountains and by the canals; but if we were to relate the history of it the account would be too long. When the governor of Alexandria entered that city to mark the people, he seized the patriarch in order to brand him, but he refused to be so treated. Yet the governor would not release him, and, though the patriarch requested to be allowed to go to the prince, would not consent to that. Then after a time he sent the patriarch to Misr, with a troop of soldiers who were to bring him to Ubaid Allah; and accordingly, when he appeared before him, he made known to him the cause of his arrival. But Ubaid Allah would not let him go without branding him. Therefore when the Father Patriarch Alexander saw that he |77 could not escape, he said to Ubaid Allah, the Amir : «I pray thee to grant me a delay of three days». So he consented to this, and granted him the respite.

Then the patriarch entered his private chamber, and prayed the Lord not to suffer him to be branded, but to remove him from this world speedily; and when God saw the thoughts of his servant that they were good, he visited him; and accordingly he fell sick on the third day, and the sickness increased each day upon him. When he knew that the Lord Christ had heard him and received his prayer, he sent trustworthy persons and certain chiefs of the orthodox, his children, to Ubaid Allah, to beg him to release him, that he might depart to his see before his death. But he would not allow him, suspecting that this was a ruse, and that he was not sick. So when four days had passed, the father said to the brethren : «Prepare the boat at sunset that we may depart, for to-morrow the Lord Jesus Christ will visit me». Accordingly they departed; but not one of the bishops was with him, except Abba Shamul, bishop of Wasîm. Then when they had descended the river in their flight,

they reached Tarnût by the morning; and at that hour the blessed Alexander went to his rest at that place. When Ubaid Allah learnt that the patriarch had escaped without |78 leave, he despatched an officer to bring him back with his companions; but when he came up with them and took them into custody to bring them back in wrath, he found that the Father had gone to his rest.

So he left him alone, but seized Abba Shamul, and conducted him to Ubaid Allah, who said : «The truth is that thou didst induce him to flee, therefore thou must pay a thousand dinars to the government treasury». But Abba Shamul was poor, in want of sustenance from day to day, and went thinly clad; and he was sweet of countenance and virtuous in conduct; and he used to exhort sinners, and they listened to him; and likewise he confirmed those who were weak in the orthodox faith. So he swore to the Amir that he could not pay a single dinar, and did not possess one; but he would not accept this excuse, and gave him up to two officers of police. Then when those two Muslims, whose names we will not record, had taken him, they gave him up to some Berbers, like lions in their actions, who hauled and dragged him away through the midst of Misr, until they brought him to the door of the church of Saint George, trailing him along. And there was there a great crowd assembled of sellers and buyers; and many began to run after him through Misr. And they demanded a thousand dinars of him in spite of the exiguity of his possessions;

and they began to torture him that day without mercy, and stripped him of his garment, and clothed him in a hair-cloth, and hung him up by his arms, thinly clad as he was, while all the people looked on, and scourged him with whips of |79 cowhide until his blood ran on the ground. And the multitude beheld him and what befell him at the hands of the police ; but they continued for a week to torture him in this way until the people collected for him three hundred dinars. But when there came down some of the friends of Ubaid Allah to interview him, while the chiefs of the Christians said to them : «He is near death, and he is guiltless of any fault in this matter according to what we know», then upon that they released him after severe torments, for he was near death.

Thus when the Father Alexander, a saint indeed, went to his rest in a good old age, great sadness fell upon the Christians because of his death. For he had remained for twenty-four years and a half upon the throne. And there were during the days of his life certain very holy men in the land of Egypt, in the deserts and monasteries, who wearied themselves in the service of God, and by whom wonders and signs were manifested. For there was a man, who was a priest and at the same time a fisherman, in the province of Isnâ, who laboured with the nets, while he followed the rule of the monastic life. And after a long time he departed and built a monastery on the mountain, and many became monks with him there; and they lived in virtue and poverty. And the fame of that old man went forth through the

outer country; and his name was Matthew, and he was a native of Asfant. So God manifested by his means many wonders among the sick and the |80 lepers; and he healed those in whom were unclean spirits, and raised the dead in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And after some days a great miracle took place in his presence. There was a Copt at Asfant, who had two sons and one daughter, all of whom he kept in his house; and they were pure virgins, serving God.

But Satan led the three astray by a vile deed, namely that he entered into the elder of the sons, and said to him : «Since thy father will not give thee a wife, go in to thy sister, and sleep with her, for she will be sufficient for thee for a time». And he made this deed seem pleasant to him, so he committed it. Likewise he tempted the other younger brother to sin with her also. Thus the two brothers did with their sister that foul deed; but the one did not know of the other; and that perverse girl kept this secret, until she speedily became pregnant. And her parents kept her on account of the shame, and they did not know what had been done; so she remained many months without bearing a child. Then they set her upon a beast, and took her to the holy Matthew; and when they drew near to the mountain, the old man came forth, fleeing and tearing the hair of his beard, until he met them at the foot of the mountain. Thereupon the parents made known to him what had happened to her, and wished to give him gifts, that he might pray over her, that she might bring forth; so he bade them take her gently down from the back of the beast; and she alighted, being in great agony.

Then he said to her : «Make known to me what thou hast done, thou vile woman!» So she made known to him what we have recorded, |81 and more also. Thereupon he raised his hands to heaven, and prayed; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed her up. And many were present, and witnessed this; and one who was present bore witness to us, being a truthful and trustworthy man, of the children of the Church, that that spot became like a dark well, descending into the depths of the earth, and remained so six months, while fire ascended from it into the air, and an evil smell came up from it, so that none could approach it. The place was at some little distance from the monastery, about twenty-five bowshots.

Likewise in the monastery of the holy Abba Sinuthius on the Mount of Adriba, you know that many of the saints were confirmed there, and especially the blessed Archimandrite Abba Seth. For he was a man who walked in a good path during his life; and after his departure to the Lord, we beheld with our own eyes his tomb, which was built over him in gratitude for the many miracles and the healing and the cures, which take place through his holy body to this hour, and are innumerable from their multitude ; for wonders are worked by it every day.

In the desert of Wadî Habîb also there were holy men who saw visions and revelations, to whom God disclosed that which took place in the world, so that they beheld it as if they were present everywhere. For to some of |82 them the Lord

Christ and the holy Apostles appeared, and raised them up in their poverty and devotion; and to some of them the angels appeared. And there was among them an old man in the monastery of Saint Macarius, named John, a native of Shubrâ Maisinâ, which is also called Arwât. Him the Berbers seized three times, and took, prisoner; and they made him a slave, and ill-treated him and caused him to suffer. But the Lord looked upon his patience continually, and restored him to his holy monastery. After this he became hegumen, for he was a priest; and this was a rule in the desert of Wadî Habîb, that every monk who attained the rank of priest was appointed hegumen. And he never communicated of the Holy Mysteries without seeing the Lord and Saviour in his vision, with our Lady the Virgin; and great secrets were made manifest to him. And there were holy men with him of this desert, whose history we need not relate. And he had a disciple, named Epimachus of Arwât, who was counted worthy of the office of hegumen after him, and was like him in his heart in all his actions; and upon him was much grace, like Moses the prophet in his time; for he healed the sick, and cured every disease, and lived for more than a hundred years.

And the grace of the Holy Ghost descended upon him, and he learnt glorious matters, so that he even knew what he had neither seen nor heard |83 before anyone questioned him upon it. He had two spiritual brothers, one of them being Abba George and the other Abba Abraham, and they were holy and famous for virtuous living and great deeds; and trustworthy men bore witness of them, that they walked in the way of the great Anthony, and brought it to perfection. Now the lay monks at that time worshipped God zealously; and these two holy men beheld the baptized people in the church like white sheep, both old and young. But lo, one of the community became slothful, and went back from the good service of God; and so these two old men beheld him with his colour changed to black in the midst of the brethren. And when the priests had dimissed the brethren, those two went to the cell of that brother, and said to him : «Turn from thy sloth». And they exhorted him and comforted him. So on the morrow, when he came to the church, those two looked upon him, and he had become whiter than all the brethren; and therefore they praised God for his mercy to the race of men, In this way, if thou wilt that I record the deeds of the saints, they would be too many for the time, and too numerous for the pens, and too many for the sheets of paper. Glory be to God for ever and ever! |84

Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — COSMAS I, THE FORTY-FOURTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 730-731

When the Father Alexander went to his rest, they appointed instead of him a man named Cosmas, who was a holy monk of the desert of Saint Macarius, and a native of Banâ. So they seated him on the throne against his will; but he did not cease to pray night and day to the Lord Christ that he would receive him to himself. And at the end of fifteen months he went to his rest with glory and honour, on the last day of Ba'unah.

Now there was outside Maryût a monastery called Tamnûrah, in which there was an old monk, holy and spiritual, and also a young monk; and they used to chastise their bodies with iron and with chains. For the superior, whose name was John, was endowed with grace and the power of prophecy, and saw wonders many times, and he had a disciple who served him and was named Theodore; and this man envied his deeds, and imitated his life and all his works with spiritual love, and surpassed all in the monastery in his conduct, in the diaconicon and at the table of the brethren and in all the affairs of the monastery and its service, seeking abasement at |85 all times. For Theodore used to follow the words of Christ to his disciples : «He among you who desires to be great, let him be to you a servant». And he acted in this manner until he grew old, as he said to us with his own holy mouth when he was counted worthy of the patriarchal dignity; for he taught us and incited us to humility at all times. And in the lifetime of Alexander, his spiritual father said to him prophetically : «O my son Theodore, believe that I do not lie». He answered : «Yea O my father, I have never heard the name of a lie from thy mouth». The father said to him (another copy reads, The old man said to him) : «O believer in God, verily in the year in which Alexander dies, I in my meanness shall die with him, and thou shalt sit upon the throne of the glorious Father Saint Mark, not after

the Father Alexander, but after him who shall follow him». And the words of that orthodox old man, the Archimandrite, were fulfilled.

For the people of Alexandria, the priests and officials, were taking thought as to whom they should appoint in the room of Abba Cosmas, until the Lord recalled to their minds the memory of the holy father and monk Theodore. Therefore they journeyed to the monastery, and took him and brought him to Alexandria. |86

Vol. 1, Part 3 -- Agathon to Michael I (766 AD) — THEODORE, THE FORTY-FIFTH PATRIARCH. A. D. 731-743

And an assembly of the holy bishops met together and consecrated the holy Father Theodore patriarch by the command of the Lord Christ. And the affairs of the patriarchate and of the orthodox church grew and prospered during all his days, until they returned to their former state, and became still more flourishing, so that it seemed as if the church had never been plundered. And Theodore was a good man, tranquil, full of charity towards all men, beautiful in countenance like an angel of God; and in his days nothing evil was done.

But Ubaid Allah, the ruler in Egypt, brought punishments and trials and losses upon the people of Egypt, and added an eighth of a dinar to every dinar of the taxes; and through his oppression of the people the dinar grew rare and rose in value. Yet when he continued long in this course, God would not suffer him, but raised up against him some of the chief among the Muslims, who went to Hishâm the prince, and made known to him the evil which he did, and the troubles that he had caused in Egypt. Therefore Hishâm was filled with wrath against Ubaid Allah, and wrote at once to remove him, and despatched an officer with many attendants to Egypt in great anger. And he commanded that he should be banished with his younger son, Isma'îl, to the land of the Berbers in the province of Africa, |87 and that Isma'îl should be exiled thence to the land of the Setting Sun, and punished because he did not do what was commanded him. So this was speedily done to him. Hishâm made Ubaid Allah's elder son, Al-Kasim, governor in Egypt, and set him over her affairs instead of his father, who was banished to the Berbers. When he had remained there a short time he ruled over the Berbers in Africa, where his son Isma'îl was, until he was banished whither the prince commanded.

For Ubaid Allah wrote to Hishâm, seeking to conciliate him, and expressing repentance of what he had done, and begging him to make him governor of that country; and so he was made governor over the Berbers in Africa. Yet his deeds were again evil, for he seized the daughters of rich men and the daughters of the chiefs and officers, and sent them to Hishâm the prince as maidservants, writing to him that they were slave-girls whom he had bought for him as maidservants. Likewise the sheep, when they- were near parturition, he ripped them open, and took out the lambs just covered with wool, and took their skins and made pelisses of them, and sent them to Hishâm, saying that he had bought them for him; so that he destroyed large numbers of sheep from that country. Therefore the Berbers conspired against him, forming a plot to kill his son Isma'îl and the people of his house; and they seized Isma'îl and his wives and concubines and all that belonged to him, and killed them all in his presence, while he looked on. And they ripped the women open, and took the infants from them, and threw them down before him. |88

Then they brought Isma'îl to Africa, taking him bound to his father, and killed him in his presence while he looked on, after ripping him open and striking his father on the head and face with his dead body; and afterwards they drove his father away from their country, following and insulting him, while he was sad and weeping. And our father Theodore lived to see all these things. Then the Lord visited him, and he departed to him in a good old age and in the grace of the Lord Christ. And the Church was growing, without adversaries or internal divisions, all his days. He remained upon the apostolic throne eleven years and a half, and went to his rest on the seventh day of Amshir.

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