August 3

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Rashi (1040-1105) righteous of Israel

In 1105, on the twenty-ninth day of the month of Tammuz according to the Jewish calendar, the great medieval Biblical and Talmudic commentator Rashi died in Troyes, France after writing the word "pure."
Rabbi Shelomò ben Jizchaq, of which Rashi is an acronym, was born in Troyes in 1040 into a family of Talmudic scholars. After studying at the rabbinical schools of Worms and Magonza, he returned to Troyes and found work in a Jewish winery. From the fruitful union of his cultural sophistication with his love for the earth and simple human realities, Rashi drew the inspiration for his brilliant commentaries on the Hebrew Scriptures and Talmudic texts. Using language at once simple and profound, he clarified many obscure passages, and later Jewish writers rightly remarked that "without Rashi Israel would have been at a loss to understand the Babylonese Talmud."
Around 1070, Rashi founded his own jeshivà (academic institution), which quickly attracted disciples from all over France. A supreme asserter of the truth and a man of profound moral integrity, Rashi taught humility and understanding for human weakness with each of his actions and words. In the centuries following his death, his commentaries were well received by Christian biblical scholars, who were grateful to the master of Troyes for the light his words had shed on the First Testament. Rashi died in Troyes, just a few years before Jews began dying at the hands of soldiers of the First Crusade, whose failure he had predicted.

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (27 abib/hamle):
Abamon of Alexandria (3rd cent.), martyr (Coptic Orthodox Church)
Masqal Kebra (13th cent.), queen (Ethiopian Church)

LUTHERANS:
Josua Stegmann (d. 1623), poet at Schaumburg

MARONITES:
David (11th-10th cent. BCE), prophet

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
Isaac, Faustus and Dalmatius of Constantinople (4th-5th cent.), igumeni

OLD CATHOLICS:
Lydia (1st cent.), confessor