# The Lausiac History of Palladius, first book (Syriac version, Budge translation)

Palladius of Galatia (c. AD 363–420)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

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# The Epistle of Palladius to Lausus

And again we begin to write the Book of the Triumphs of the Holy Fathers who were Monks, which is called Paradise.

**The First History**
The Epistle of Palladius, the Bishop of the city of Helenopolis, which he made (or wrote) to Lausus the prefect who asked him to write for him an account of the lives and deeds of the Fathers who were monks; and he wrote thus: Palladius the Bishop to LAUSUS the prefect: greeting (or peace).

I ascribe blessing to thy beautiful desire, for we may begin [this] epistle with blessing, because whilst many men are devoted unto vain things, and build buildings of stone wherein there is no profit, thou hast shown thyself strenuous to learn concerning the building of the words of the narratives of holy men. For there is One alone Who hath no deed of doctrine (or learning) that is to say, God, Who is over everything, for He existeth of Himself, and there is no other being who existed before Him. Now all rational beings are learners, because they are beings who have been made and created. The ranks of the celestial hosts who existed first of all, and the orders of beings who are the most exalted of all possess teachers in the Trinity, Who is exalted above everything. The orders of beings of the second group learn from the beings of the first group, and those which belong to the third group learn from those of the second group, which is above them, and in this manner each of the later groups learneth from that which is above it, even down to the lowest group of all; for those among them who are superior in respect of knowledge and excellence teach knowledge unto those who are inferior to them. Therefore those who imagine that they have no need of teachers, and who will not be convinced by those who teach them things of good, are sick with the want of the knowledge which is the mother and the producer of pride. Now those who are princes and the foremost ones among these in respect of destruction are those who intentionally (or wilfully) fell from sojourning in heaven, and from the service thereof, and these are the devils who fly in the air because they forsook the heavenly Teacher and rebelled.

For polished words and sentences, or words strung together in admirable order, are not doctrine, for these things are for the most part found with evil-doers and sinners; but this is doctrine, which is the correction of the natural habits and disposition, and the leading of a life of spiritual excellence according to rule, by which I mean the possession of the faculty

which shall make a man superior to affliction and to emotion, and to timidity, and to wrath; and which shall make him to possess freedom of speech before every man, and which shall, through the fervour of Divine Love, produce works that shall be like unto coals of fire. For if doctrine be not this, the Great Teacher would not have said unto His disciples, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart" (St. Matthew xi, 29), for He did not instruct (or order) His Apostles merely in the beauty of speech, without at the same time making manifest a proof (or work) in His own Person. And He caused grief unto no man except those who spurned doctrine, and those who hated their teachers. It is meet that the soul which leadeth its life in God should either learn in faith that which it knoweth not, or should learn wisely that of which it hath knowledge; but if it will do neither of these things it is, if it be possible, sick through madness.

The beginning of instruction (or discipline) is the fullness which is of doctrine, and density of speech is a helper of the fear of God, and for these things the soul of him that loveth God hungereth continually. Be strong then, and play the man. Farewell. And may God grant thee the gift of pursuing at all times the knowledge of Christ.

**The Plan of the Book [of Paradise**

In this book are written the excellent deeds and the marvellous lives of the holy and blessed Fathers, who took upon themselves the yoke of the solitary life, and who made themselves to be remote from the world, and who lived in the desert, and who wished to live wholly the heavenly life, and to travel on the road which leadeth unto the kingdom of heaven. Let us emulate their example and endeavour to do with all our might what they did! And together with these we commemorate also the marvellous women who led their lives in the Divine Spirit, and who waxed exceedingly old, and who with a brave mind brought to an end the strife of the labours of spiritual excellence, according to the Divine manifestation and love, for they wished to lay hold upon their souls, and to bind [upon their heads] the crown of holiness and impassibility.

And as for myself, (because of the sweet manners of the man by whom I have been commanded [to write], whose mind is full of doctrine (or learning), whose habits are those of a lover of peace, who feareth God in his heart, who loveth Christ in his mind, who in the things which are needful is an associate, and who, because of all these qualities, hath been chosen from among many, and hath been honoured with the highest rank of all), being protected by the might of the Holy Spirit—especially if it be right to speak the truth—I would rouse up our heavy minds to the contemplation of the things which are spiritually excellent, so that we may strive to imitate the most excellent lives and deeds of the pious men, and of the immortal and spiritual fathers, whose lives in the flesh were passed in laborious and stern service and in pleasing God. Of the virtues of such athletes of the fear of God it is my desire to set down some account in writing and to send it to thee, and I would make clear in my discourse the manifest spiritual excellences of each one of these great men. And he who loveth a divine and spiritual desire like unto this is thyself, Lausus, who art tri-

umphant among men, and who, in accordance with the Divine nod, hast been established as the guardian of this kingdom which loveth Christ.

But inasmuch as I have not been trained in language (or speech), and as I possess spiritual knowledge only in the very smallest degree, and am unequal to the task [of describing] the company of the holy Fathers and [their] spiritual lives and works, I am afraid of the greatness of [thy] command which surpasseth my capacity. I have, therefore, up to this present, been urging myself to escape(?) from this work, because I am in great need both of the wisdom which is [essential] externally and of spiritual understanding. But being put to shame first of all by the strenuousness of the excellence of him that stirred me up to [do] this work, and considering also the benefit which shall accrue to those who shall come across these histories, and being, moreover, afraid of the danger of the penalty of disobedience, which is right, I will first of all commit the weight of the matter unto the Providence of God, and I will, with all diligence, make use of the prayers of the holy Fathers, so that I may be able to mount up as upon wings to the place where their contests were waged, and may tell the story briefly of those athletes, who though young became great and divine men who did valiantly and who triumphed in the works and deeds of spiritual excellence. And I will also relate the histories of those blessed women who were adorned with the fair garb [of the monastic life], and who attained to pre-eminence in divine labours. Now some of these divine persons of whom I am about to tell the story I was held to be worthy to see face to face; and concerning the heavenly lives of the others who died in the contest of the fear of God I have learned from the athletes of Christ, who were arrayed in God.

Therefore, through very many cities, and villages, and in caves and holes in the earth, and in the tabernacles which the monks had in the desert for a distance as far as a man could walk have I gone round about for the sake of the labour of the fear of God, and I have set down in writing with exactness the things which I have seen. And I have also made known unto thee in this book the things which I have heard from the holy Fathers concerning the triumphs of great men, and concerning the women who for the sake of the hope which is in Christ performed mighty works which were above nature, and I have sent it to thy hearing which loveth divine words. O thou Lausus who art triumphant among men, and who art fair among the friends of God, and who art the ornament of this believing and God-fearing kingdom, and art the true friend and servant of God, I have written down for thee as far as my feebleness is able, the [history of] the strife of each of the athletes of Christ, both male and female, a name which is honourable and which meriteth praise. And I have narrated unto thee only very few of the very many exceedingly great triumphs which belong to each one of these athletes, and of many of them I have added [the names of] their families and cities, and also the places where they lived.

And we have also commemorated the men and women who, indeed, attained to the highest excellence in the labours of the spiritual life, and who, because of the pride (or arrogance), which is the mother of that [quality] which is called vainglory, were brought down to the lowest depths of Sheol, and so wasted the great work in the spiritual qualities which they

had only acquired after a very long time, and the triumphs in the ascetic virtues which they had won, through [their] pride and boasting in one brief moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Nevertheless, by the Divine Grace of our Redeemer, and by the carefulness of the holy Fathers, and by the cherishing influence of the mercy of the Spirit, they were plucked [finally] out of the net of the Calumniator.

**Counsels to Lausus**

Let the following be before thy mind in all [thine] acts, and thou shalt sin in no particular. I. To do good to the fool and to bury the dead; both are alike. 11. It is meet that a man should put on armour over the breast, and the word of our Redeemer Christ [over] grief; armour and shield will hide the breast, but [only] faith and action [can hide] the soul. 111. As it is possible to see the skill of the painter on a small tablet, so a small gift [sheweth] the greatness of the disposition of the soul. IV. Have no confidence in the belief that that which is placed outside thy soul is thy possession. V. Clothes and raiment drape statues, but habits and manners drape men. VI. An evil word is the beginning of evil deeds. VII. Speak thou according to what is right, and where it is right, and concerning the things which are right, and hearken not unto that which is not right.

VIII. It is better to shake a stone vainly than [to utter a vain] word, and it is better to be under subjection to the Barbarians than to evil passions. IX. The excellence of a horse is made apparent in battle, and the disposition of a friend is put to the test in tribulation. X. It is impossible to divide the sea, and it is also impossible to still the waves thereof, although for them it is always easy [to still themselves]. XI. The wise and God-fearing man is he who hateth that which is not right. XII. The gentle and gracious man is he who treadeth pride under foot; but he who is set upon that which is the contrary of this is one who is governed by arrogance. Xiii. Constant prayer is the strength, and the armour, and the wall of the soul. Xiv. Wine maketh warm the body, and the word of God [warmeth] the soul.

Xv. Know thou that not even much time will bring oblivion upon one act which thou wouldst hide. Xvi. The believing mind is a temple of God which it is meet for a man to adorn daily and to burn incense therein, inasmuch as it is God Who dwelleth there. And numbers upon numbers of books at divers times and in various ways have they left unto the habitations of men, and some of them are according to the Mind which is above and Divine Grace, and were [written] for the edification and protection of those who wished to [follow] carefully after the faith and the doctrine of our Redeemer, and some of them are according to the adulation of the children of men, and the corrupt mind which is mad after the lusts of the body, [and some of them] are for the consolation of those who destroy vainglory; but others are from some vain madness and the

81 agency (or operation) of that evil Devil who hateth the things which are good, and [their writers] made use of arrogance and hatred, and in order to corrupt the children of men whose minds have been laid waste and who have no understanding they introduced [them] that they might defile the purity of the holy Catholic Church, and hinder its pure life and deeds of ascetic excellence. And, moreover, it hath seemed to me—I who fall short of the hope

which is in Christ, and who am shamefaced before the command of thy greatmindedness—O thou man who lovest doctrine, that I ought first of all to narrate to thee the story of how I was reared, and concerning the gradual growth of my mind of such excellence as I possess towards God. I lived a life of rule and was in a monastery of solitary brethren for the first part of my life, that is to say until the thirty-third year of my age, and I served the office of Bishop for twenty years; thus the whole period of my life hath included fifty-six years.*

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary, inasmuch as it hath seemed to me that thou art very anxious to hear the triumphs of the holy Fathers, because of the divine and spiritual profit [which is therein], that I should tell thee in writing [concerning] the men and the women, of whom some I have myself seen, and concerning others of whom I have heard from believing men, and concerning others whom I have met with when I was travelling about in the land of Egypt, and in Libya, and in the Thebaïd, and also in the region of Syene, and among those who are called men of Tabenna, and afterwards in Mesopotamia, and in Palestine, and in Syria, and among these in the countries of the West, and among the Romans, and among the people of the Campagna. And I must also set down in writing with careful exactitude the history of everything which appertaineth closely to these men from the very beginning and set before thee as an example that which will be a most excellent memorial and a benefit of the soul, that is to say, a sure and certain binding up, so that by means of it thou mayest be able to dispel from thy soul all the slumber of error, which cometh into being through irrational desire, and all the doubts of the soul in respect of faith, and sluggishness in respect of the things which are useful, and all loathing and littleness of soul concerning habits of virtue, that is to say, keenness of wrath and perturbation and animal ferocity and empty fear.

Then shalt thou flee from the vain and corrupt delight of this world, and through [thy] constant eager desire thou shalt * There is some mistake in the numbers here given, for 33 + 20 = 53.

draw nigh to the hope which is in God; and thou shalt govern thyself in the desire of the fear of God, and those who are with thee, and those who are under thine authority, and moreover, unto him that feareth God thou wilt become king. For through these triumphs all those who have become friends of Christ shall hasten to be united unto Him, and they shall also look for the loosing of the soul from the body, for it is well known that daily [they will do this], even as it is written, "I am constrained by the good desire which I possess [to wish] to become free and to be with Christ" (Philippians i, 23). And exceedingly excellent is all that which is said, "Make ready thy works for [thy] going forth, and prepare thy field" (Proverbs xxiv, 27). For he who remembereth death continually, [and keepeth in his mind the knowledge] that he must most certainly die, will neither be negligent of nor commit sin in respect of great matters, even according to what is said, "In all thy words remember thine end, and thou wilt never commit sin" (Ecclesiasticus vii, 31). And beside all these things I will add this also, so that thou mayest not belittle the tradition of this our faulty history, and mayest not hold in contempt the simplicity and want of polish of the language [thereof]; for

this matter appertaineth not to the divine doctrine (or teaching), that we should compose speech with wise skill, but we should strengthen the mind with sure and certain words of understanding, according to that which is said, "Open thy mouth with the word of truth, and judge every man in a sound manner" (Proverbs xxxi, 9); and moreover "thou shalt not forget the narratives of the old men, because they also have them from their fathers" (Ecclesiasticus viii, 9).

I therefore, O thou lover of doctrine, thou godly man, have lighted upon many things with the holy men, not through making use of ordinary thought, but by making journeys [among them] which have lasted thirty days, yea, even thirty days twice told. And [I say it], as before God, that in travels and journeyings I would have trodden the whole of the territory of the Greeks so that I might have the opportunity of conversing with each of the lovers of God, and I would have undertaken the labour of a journey such as this gratefully so that I might be able to traffic for a profit (or benefit) which I did not possess. For if that man who was far more excellent than I am, and perhaps far more excellent than the whole world, and who in his life and works, and in his knowledge, and in his wise opinions of the Spirit, and in his faith which was in Christ, surpassed many, I mean the blessed man Paul, who in order that he might see James, and Cephas (Peter), and John made a journey from Tarsus to Judæa, and it is well known that he

83 6a related the fact of this journey somewhat as a boast when he was declaring abroad and revealing his labours in order that he might stimulate those who were living lives sluggish and indolent in respect of spiritual excellence, and when he said, "I went up to Jerusalem (Galatians i, 18) that I might see Cephas (Peter)," not that he was denying the spiritual excellence of Peter of which he had received [information] by report, but because he was longing for converse with him also. [Now, if this Paul had need of converse with Peter], how much more did I, who am a debtor of ten thousand talents, need to do this (i.e., to visit the holy men), for the sake of the benefit, not for the sake of any good which I could do them but for the sake of the advantage which I the sinful man should myself gain? And moreover, the things which writers have written down about the holy Fathers, I mean Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and Elijah, and the other saints, were not composed and narrated to glorify them, but that those who should peruse them might profit thereby.

Therefore, O chaste and believing man, Lausus, thou servant of God, knowing these things, and having also instructed thyself in many others, be convinced by our discourse also and let the matters thereof be laid up in thy God-fearing mind as in a secure storehouse which is not wont to be disturbed by evil things of divers kinds, either visible or invisible, and which only constant prayer and the converse which concerneth the service of the soul can make to be moved. For many of these brethren who in the fear of God won spiritual excellence, and who waxed great in ascetic labours and lovingkindness, and who were famed (or boasted) because of their perfect chastity and virginity, and who protracted to great length their meditations upon the Holy Scriptures, and placed their trust upon [their] strenuousness in spiritual doctrine, were never held to be worthy of the state of impassibility, because they

served with a mind which possessed not discretion and employed only the form of the fear of God, and because they were diseased with the love of external converse, wherefrom are produced all vices which enter [into a man] from without, and which eradicate that which is the mother of the service which taketh place in the soul.

Be strong, therefore, in all wisdom, and nourish not thy soul in the riches which thou hast made (or gotten), having made them sufficiently little by means of the gifts to those who are needy, so that the ministration which ariseth therefrom may perfect the service of excellence, for [this] cometh into being neither through any urging whatsoever, nor through the foolish thoughts of any form whatsoever for the sake of vainglory. And do not bind thyself to [do] anything under a penalty [secured] by oaths as many men do, as for example those who for the sake of vainglory strive eagerly neither to eat nor to drink, for though by the force of [such] oaths they may bring their feeble will into subjection, through this same thing they fall miserably, either by means of pleasures and the loathing [which followeth thereafter], or through the sickness of the body, or else through the delightful gratification of some lust they bring forth falsehood. And as thou receivest [what is good] according to reason, so according to reason shalt thou make thyself to be remote [from what is evil], and thou shalt never sin at all; for by the word of God shall all motions of fear be extinguished, and thou shalt draw nigh unto the things which bring [thee] profit, and shalt trample down those which would cause [thee] loss. For for the righteous the Law was not laid down.

It is better to drink wine in moderation than to drink water immoderately, and it appeareth to me that those who drink wine in moderation are holy men, and that those who pridefully use water in an immoderate fashion are depraved and pleasure-loving. Do not therefore ascribe blame or praise to the eating [or not eating] of food, or to the drinking [or not drinking] of wine, but ascribe praise, or woe, unto those who make use properly or improperly of meat and drink. Joseph in olden time drank wine with the Egyptians, and was in no way injured in his mind thereby, for he took good heed unto [the admonitions of] his understanding; but Pythagoras, and Diogenes, and Plato, and with them also the Manichaeans, and other sects of philosophers [did not], and they came thereby to such a pitch of licentiousness and vainglory that they even forgot the God of the universe and worshipped soulless images. On the other hand, the blessed Apostle Peter and those who were with him drew nigh to wine and made use thereof, and because of this the Jews reproached our Lord, the Redeemer of all [men] and their Teacher, and made complaints against Him, saying, "Why do not Thy disciples fast like John?" (St. Matthew ix, 14; St. Mark ii, 18.) And again they lifted themselves up (?) against the disciples and blamed them, saying, "Why doth your master eat and drink with tax-gatherers and sinners?" (St. Matthew ix, 11; x, 18, 19.) Now they did not make their complaints about bread and water only, but also about wine and delicate viands, for it is evident that they only wanted to lay blame upon the disciples in everything.

Thereupon our Redeemer made answer, and said, "John came in the path of righteousness, neither eating nor drink-ing"—now it is well known that flesh and wine [are here referred to], for it was impossible for him to live without food of other kinds—" and ye say that he

hath a devil in him; and " the Son of Man hath come, eating and drinking, and [ye] " say, 'Behold a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax- " 'gatherers and sinners!' " What then is it right for us to do, so that we may neither go after those who make complaints [of our acts], nor after those who praise them? For we must either fast with John according to discretion, even though the Jews said that there was a devil in him, and that he was certainly mad, or we must drink wine with Christ with knowledge, if the body shall have need thereof, even though the children of men shall say concerning us, "Behold a glutton and a " winebibber. For in very truth neither the eating of food nor the abstaining therefrom is anything, but the faith and love which are made perfect in works; for when a man followeth after faith wholly by actions, he who eateth and drinketh is blameless for faith's sake, for everything which is not of faith is sin.

But perhaps one of those who love the carnal lusts, or perhaps one of those who sin not, will say that if they eat in faith, or if they do anything else by the irrational thought of the carnal appetite, or through a corrupt intent, those who support themselves on faith commit sin. Now our Redeemer made a distinction, saying, "By their fruit ye shall know " them" (St. Matthew vii, 20); and the fruits may be recognized by the word of God, and by spiritual wisdom, according to the word of the blessed Apostle, who said, "Love, peace, " gladness, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meek- " ness, patient endurance" (Galatians v, 22, 23)—these are the fruits of the Spirit according to the word of the Apostle.

Whosoever then is eager to possess these fruits will never, without reason and without thought on any occasion, eat flesh, or drink wine, or dwell with a man with evil intent. Moreover, the blessed Paul saith, "Whosoever is about to strive in a con- " test preserveth his mind free from every other thought, and " thus keepeth his body healthy, and maketh himself to be remote " from the things which would make him fat" (Compare 1 Corinthians ix, 25, 27). But if he fall into sickness, or into severe sufferings, or he become a companion unto afflictions which fight against him externally, he must then make use of meat and drink by way of a binding up, and a healing medicine for the things which work tribulation for him. Let us then keep ourselves remote from the evil things which are wrought in the soul, I mean anger, and envy, and vainglory, and dejection, and evil discourse, and the suspicion which is not seemly, for whilst a man is giving thanks unto God he cannot commit sin.

Now therefore, having spoken sufficiently concerning these things, I have another entreaty to bring nigh unto the love of doctrine which is in thee, that is to say, I would that thou didst flee with all thy strength from the converse of men from whom thou canst gain no benefit, although their outside skin be ornamented with various patterns; even if they be orthodox they will cause thee to suffer loss, and if they be heretics that loss will be very much greater. And although they appear to be exceedingly aged, and their bodies be shrivelled and withered, and it may seem to thee that thou canst not in any way be injured by them because of the beautiful dispositions which are in them, that which is in them and which appeareth to thee to be a small matter, will do thee an injury; for thou shalt become lax in thy mind in respect of them, and whilst laughing at them thou wilt become unduly exalted,

and that thou shouldst be driven to arrogance would be a loss for thee. Follow then after the mind of pious men and women who shine with the light which entereth in through the windows, so that by means of these, like a book the lines of which are extremely close together, thou mayest be able clearly to see what is in thy heart by comparison with them, either of sluggishness or strenuousness.

For there are very many things which testify concerning spiritual excellence, [such as] the colour of the face which blossometh with ascetic labours, and the manner in which the apparel is put on, and a peaceable manner, and a mode of speech which is not inflated, and modesty of the countenance, and a discourse which is not crooked, and cheerfulness of the mind, and an understanding which is full of knowledge; by these things both thine own fair beauty will be made strong, and also all those who follow after the goal of the fear of God, even though they be [living] in a state of negligence or in some other similar [vice]. For, according to the word of the wise man, the behaviour of a man, and the gait of his legs, and the laughter of his mouth testify concerning him (Ecclesiasticus xix, 30).

# Chapter 1. The History of Abba Isidore [Bishop of Hermopolis Parva (Damanbur) in Lower Egypt].

By the help of our Lord I will, therefore, begin [to write] for thee, [O Lausus,] the histories of the holy Fathers, and I will omit nothing concerning them which I will not make known in [my] discourse, neither the histories of those who lived in cities, nor of those who lived in villages or in caves, nor of those who became famous in the desert. Nay, I will even add to my discourse the histories of those who lived among the general assembly of a community, for no special country or place wherein they lived and wherein they perfected the life of ascetic excellence needs to be sought out, for [everywhere] they led the pure life and conversation of chastity and integrity, and performed the deeds of the simple mind wherein, through the help of Christ, they wrought and fulfilled the lives and deeds of angels.

Now at first, when I went to Alexandria in the second consulship of the Emperor Theodosius the Great, who now because of the orthodoxy of his faith in Christ sojourneth with the angels, I met in the city a wonderful man who was adorned in every respect with the most beautiful qualities of speech, and knowledge, and life and conversation, whose name was Isidore. He was a priest and was the overseer (i.e., manager or secretary) of the hospital, of the church of Alexandria, and it was said of him that in his early youth he had lived in a monastery in the desert, and that he triumphed in the contest of the ascetic life: I saw, moreover, his cell in the mountain of Nitria. I met him when he was an old man seventy years of age, and when he had lived fifteen years longer he departed from this world. Now to the end of his life this holy man never put on either a linen tunic or even a head-covering; he never washed, and he never ate flesh, and he never ate a full meal seated comfortably at a table; and yet, through Divine grace, his body shone.

He possessed a sound and healthy body, and he was, by the grace of Christ, so fully endowed with strength that those who beheld him and who did not know him would not be persuaded that he lived a life of self-denial, and they thought and said that he must lead a life of great

luxury and that he must eat abundantly of rich meats. Now, if I were to undertake to declare the marvellous character of his life and deeds, and wished to recount the excellence of his soul, and to make manifest every fact concerning them, all time would not suffice [for me to declare them], nor would paper [suffice for me to write them]. For this man was so lovingly merciful and so full of peace that, by the reason of orthodoxy of his faith in Christ, even his enemies who did not believe were put to shame by him, from his early youth up, and at his good deeds and at the abundance of his graciousness were put to the blush; for he was gracious unto every man.

Now he possessed the gift of the spirit and the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and the comprehension of divine learning, and he kept the commandments [so strictly] that at noon, the time when the brethren were wont to take their food, the mind of this holy man was carried away as it were in a slumber, and the greater number of the brethren were marvelling at his example and knowledge, and many, many times they tried to persuade him to relate unto them the things which he saw, and entreated him to tell them concerning the marvellous state which had come upon him, but he could not be persuaded [to do so]. Finally he was constrained by the power of their love, and he answered and said unto them, "My mind departed and was carried away by contemplation, and I was snatched away by the similitude of a thought, and I was fed with the food of glory, which, however, it is impossible for me to describe."

Now I knew this man, and on several occasions he burst into tears at the table; and when I asked him, "What is the cause of these tears?" he said unto me, "I am ashamed of myself because, being a rational being, I eat the food of an irrational creature; I desire to live in Paradise, where I should enjoy the food which is imperishable. For [although] we have received that power which is from Christ, yet am I drawn to partake of the food which perisheth. I would partake of the food which is spiritual, and I would that I were in the Paradise of delights in the dominion which God hath given unto me; and behold I am eating the food of the beasts." And unto this man were known all the members of the Roman Senate and the free-born women of the nobles [of Rome], because in former times he had gone with Bishop Athanasius to that city, and he had also been there with the holy man Bishop Demetrius.* And Isidore, having great riches, and wanting nothing, was wont to give abundantly and without

* Bishop of Pessinus in Galatia Secunda, and friend of St Chrysostom, whose letter to Innocent I he took to Rome; he was in Rome again in 405. sparing to the poor and needy. And when he had ended his days and came to die, he made no will whatsoever; and he left no money to any man, and he left nothing to his brethren. To his sisters who were virgins he also left nothing, and he made no provision at all for them, but committed them to the care of Christ, saying, "He who created you will provide for your living and also whatsoever things of which ye have need, even as He hath [provided] for me." Now with his sisters was a company of about seventy sisters. Now when I had come unto him to be his disciple, and I was persuading him to hold me worthy of the rank of those who lived in a monastery, being

in the vigour of my early manhood and needing not the word only but also the labour of the body, and severe physical exercises, even like the young unbroken animal, I besought him to teach me his beautiful way of life and to let me dwell by myself, for I was heedful of nothing, being in the vigour of my early manhood, and I had no great need of doctrine, but only [to learn] to subdue the passions of the flesh. Then, like a good teacher, he took me outside the city unto a place which was six miles distant, and wherein there was restful solitude, and he handed me over unto an anchorite whose name was Dorotheos,

# Chapter 2. The History of Dorotheos of Thebes

And whose life was one of spiritual excellence, and who had lived in a cave for sixty years. And he commanded me to live with him, and to lead a life of self-denial with him for a period of three years, so that the passions of the flesh might leave me. For the blessed Isidore knew that blessed old man, and he knew that his life was stern and severe, and he admonished me, saying, "When thou hast completed this period of three years, return unto me for the remainder of the doctrine of spiritual knowledge." But I was unable to fulfil these three years with him, on account of a severe illness into which I fell, and so I departed from Dorotheos before the end of the period, and I returned to him that had brought me out, and entered his abode [that I might learn] the doctrine of the spirit.

Now the life of Dorotheos was one of exceedingly hard toil, and the manner thereof was severe, and his food was meagre and wretched, for he lived on dry bread. And he used to go round about in the desert by the side of the sea the whole day long in the heat of the noonday sun and collect stones with which he built cells, which he used to give unto the brethren who were unable to build [cells for themselves]; and he used to finish one cell each year. One day I said unto the holy man, "Father, why workest thou thus in thine old age? for thou wilt kill thy body in all this heat. And he said unto me, "I kill it lest it should kill me. He used to eat one small bread cake, which weighed about six ounces, each day, and a little bundle of green herbs; and he drank water by measure. What then? I know not. As God is my witness I never saw this man stretch out [his legs] and lie down as [men are] wont [to do]; and he never slept upon a bed of palm leaves, or upon anything else, but he used to work the whole night long weaving baskets made of palm leaves to provide himself with the daily bread which he required and food.

Now I imagined at first that he used to work in this manner because I was present, and then I thought, "Peradventure it is only for my sake, and to show me how to perform such severe labours, that [he doeth this]. So I made enquiries of many of those who had been his disciples and who were then living by themselves and were emulating his spiritual excellencies, and I also asked others of his disciples who were living by his side if in very truth he always laboured in this wise, and they said unto me, "He hath held to this practice from his youth

up, and he hath never been in the habit of sleeping according to what is right. In the daytime he never sleepeth willingly, but [sometimes] when he is working with his hands, or when he is eating, he closeth his eyes and is snatched away by slumber. As he sitteth working he eateth, and unless slumber overcame him [suddenly] he would never sleep at all. Many and many a time he is overcome by slumber while he is eating, and the morsel of bread falleth out of his mouth because he is overcome by drowsiness. And when from time to time I used to urge him to sit down, or to throw himself upon a mat of palm leaves and to rest a little, he would answer and say unto me in a grieved manner, "If thou art able to persuade the angels to sleep, then thou wilt be able to persuade me."

One day, towards the ninth hour, Dorotheos sent me to the fountain from which he drank water to fetch him some water, so that he might eat his meal, for he used to eat about this time, and when I had gone there I chanced to see a viper going down the well; and because of [my] fear I was unable to fill [the pitcher] with water, and I went back to him, and said unto him, "O father, we shall die, for I have seen a viper [going] down into the water." Now when he heard [these words] he laughed reverently, and constrained himself, and he lifted up his face and looked at me not a little time, and he shook his head, and said unto me, "If it were to happen that Satan had the power to shew thee in every fountain an asp, or again to cast into them vipers, or serpents, or tortoises, or any other kinds of venomous reptiles, wouldst thou be able to do without drinking water entirely ? " And when he had said these words unto me, he went forth and departed [to the fountain] and drew water, and brought [it back], and having made the sign of the Cross over it he straightway drank therefrom before he ate anything. And he constrained me to drink and said unto me, " Where the seal (or sign) of " the Cross is, the wickedness of Satan hath no power to do " harm."

And this blessed man Isidore, the overseer of the hospital [in Alexandria], related unto me the following story, which is worthy of record, and he heard it from the blessed Anthony where he lived with him in the desert in the days of Emperor Maximinus, the prosecutor.

# Chapter 3. The History of the Virgin Potamiaena

There was a certain young virgin [called Potamiaena] who was exceedingly beautiful and she was a Christian; she was the handmaiden of a certain worldly man who was given over to a life of pleasure, and she lived in very great luxury, and her master flattered her greatly, wishing to destroy her. And being unable to bring her into subjection to his will, he at length was seized with madness, and he became furiously angry with her and delivered her over to a certain prefect who lived at that time in Alexandria (i.e., Basilides), saying, " She " is a Christian, and she revileth the government, and uttereth " blasphemies against the Emperor. And he promised to give him much money saying, " If she can be persuaded to do my " will, keep her for me without disgrace and punishment, but " if she persisteth in her obstinacy of heart, punish her with " every kind of torture thou pleasest, and let her not remain " alive to laugh at me and at my luxurious way of life. And when they brought the valiant woman before the throne of the judges, she was greatly moved, but she was not persuaded; and the prefect tortured the body of the virgin of Christ with many different kinds of tortures. Then again after these things he thought out a crafty plan, and invented a method of punishment by torture which was as follows.

He commanded them to bring a huge cauldron which was full of pitch, and to light a fierce fire under it, and when the pitch was melted and was boiling, the judge cried to her, saying, " Go thou and submit " thyself to the will of thy lord, and know thou if thou doest " not this thing thou shalt straightway fall into this cauldron. Now when she heard this, she sealed her soul, and answered and said, " Thou judgest with iniquity, O judge, for thou com- " mandest me to become subject unto fornication. I am the " handmaiden of Christ, and it is meet that I should stand before His throne without blemish. And when the judge heard this, he was straightway greatly troubled and filled with wrath, and he commanded them to bring her and to cast her into the cauldron. Then the virgin said unto him, "I adjure thee, by the head of the Emperor, if thou condemnest me to this thing of thine own self, to command them to put me into the cauldron little by little, without stripping my apparel from me, so that thou mayest know the patient endurance which I have through Christ for the sake of my purity. And as they were dipping her little by little into the cauldron, for a

very short space of time, immediately the pitch reached her neck it became cold; thus she delivered her soul unto God, and she was crowned with a good martyrdom.

And a great congregation of holy men and women were made perfect (i.e., they suffered martyrdom) at that time in the church of Alexandria, and they became worthy of that land which the meek inherit. [Potamiaena was martyred, with her mother Marcella, in the reign of Septimius Severus.]

Here end the triumphs of Isidore, and Dorotheos, and the Virgin Potamiaena

# Chapter 4. The History of Didymus [born A.D. 309 or 314]

Together with these I also saw a certain blessed man who was in Alexandria, and whose name was Didymus, and who also, with us, wrote these things; now he was blind, and he could not see at all; he was a marvellous man, and I went several times to see him. He was eighty years of age, and he told me that he became blind when he was four years old and could not see at all, but according to what he himself related to me, ”After forty years I perceived the faces (or external aspects) of things. And although this man had never learned the Testaments, and had never entered a school, the gift of an excellent and healthy mind had been given unto him by God, and he became learned in the knowledge of books through an enlightened understanding. And he was adorned with goodness and with the knowledge of the truth to such a degree, and was so ready and was so wholly wise that there was fulfilled in him that which was written, ”The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind” (Psalm cxlvi, 8). He could interpret the Old and New Testaments word by word in its proper place, and had investigated carefully the commandments and could repeat all the words which were in them.

And he was so thoroughly well acquainted with the belief of the truth (or of the true faith), and he comprehended so deeply all heresies that his knowledge was more excellent than that of many who were before him in the Church. Now [once] when he was urging me to make a prayer in his cell and I was unwilling to do so, he spake unto me and related unto me concerning Abbâ Anthony who, he said, ”came three times and visited me in this cell. And when I begged and entreated him to pray, straightway he knelt down upon his knees, and prayed, and waited not for me to speak one word about it, but at the first word he corrected me by his obedience. He did not let me finish my speech, but by work he made manifest obedience. And Didymus said unto me, ”Thou also, if thou wishest to walk in his footsteps and [to imitate him] in [his] life and deeds, and in hospitality, and if thou wouldst walk in the life of excellence and in the love of God, remove thyself from contention.”

And this blessed man Didymus himself told me the following ing story. ”Once on a time I was suffering by reason of the wretched Emperor Julian. Now one day, when it was eventide, and I had eaten no food through my anxiety about this matter, whilst I was sitting on my

seat I dropped into a light slumber, and there fell upon me a marvellous thing. I saw and behold there were white horses galloping about, and they had on them riders who were dressed in white, and they were crying out and saying, 'Tell Didymus that Julian died this day at the seventh hour. Rise up, then, and eat, and send and make [this news] known unto Bishop Athanasius, so that he also may know and rejoice.' And I wrote down the day, and the hour, and the month [wherein this vision took place], and it was found that it had happened even as it had been told me in the vision."

And the blessed man himself also told me the following story:

# Chapter 5. The History of the Maiden Alexandra

There was a certain maiden of Alexandria whose name was Alexandra, and she left the city and shut herself up in a tomb until the end of her life; she used to receive her food and whatsoever she needed through a window, and no man and no woman saw her face, neither did she see the face of any man, for twelve years. And a few days afterwards she yielded up her soul, and she lay down and went to her rest in peace. Now when her serving woman went to visit her according to her wont, she knocked at the window, but Alexandra gave her no answer, and straightway she knew that she was dead, and she came and made known unto us concerning her mistress. And we took off the door of her cell and we found her body dried up.

Now the blessed woman Melha also related unto us the story of Alexandra, saying, "I have [never] seen her face to 'face. And I stood outside the cell, close to the window, and entreated her to tell me for what reason she had shut herself up in the grave. And Alexandra answered and said unto me, Inasmuch as the thought of the love of God was present in my mind, I prayed before the Lord, and I entreated Him to permit me to offer unto Him my virginity in the state in which it had been born with me. Now a certain young man regarded me in his thoughts, and looked upon me, and desired me, and sought to destroy me. But because I did not want to grieve him, or to say what was evil unto him, or to be to him an occasion of sin, I chose rather to shut myself up alive in this grave than to cause a man who was made in the form of the image of God to stumble.' And I 'said unto her, How canst thou bear [to] live here not seeing the face of any man without being driven to despair?' Then 'she answered and said unto me, I occupy myself with my prayers and with the work of my hands, and I have no idle moments. From morn until the ninth hour I weave linen, and recite the Psalms and pray;

and during the rest of the day I commemorate in my heart the holy fathers, and I revolve in my thoughts the histories of all the Prophets and Apostles, and Martyrs; and during the remaining hours I work with my hands and eat my bread, and by means of these things I am comforted whilst I await the end of my life in good hope.' These things we have heard from the blessed woman Melania who told the story of the maiden Alexandra. But in this

history I must not underrate those who have toiled in the faith of Christ, to the glory of the perfect and to the admonition of those who hear.

# Chapter 6. The History of Abba Macarius [the Alexandrian] and a certain Virgin

There was in Alexandria a certain virgin who though meek in appearance was of a haughty disposition. Now she was exceedingly rich and had possessions without number, but she never relieved the poor, and the strangers, and those who were in misery, and she never gave a drachma to the Church, and notwithstanding the frequent rebuke with which the Fathers rebuked her, she never allowed any portion of riches to leave her. And this woman had kinsfolk, and she adopted her sister's daughter, to whom she used to promise by day and by night [to give her] all that she had, for she had fallen from heavenly love. Now, it is a customary thing which belongeth to the deception of Satan that he produceth avarice under guise of love of family, for that he hath no genuine care for kinsmanship is well known from the fact that he taught murder in order that he might make war [between] brethren, and is admitted by the Holy Book. (Compare St. John viii, 44. And, if he imagined that he implanteth solicitude for kinsfolk in [the hearts of] men, [it must be remembered] that he is not moved to do this on their behalf because of [his] love for them, but only that he may minister unto his own will, for manifestly he knoweth the sentence of judgement which hath been passed, that the wicked shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians vi, 9).

For if a man be moved by spiritual understanding and by divine desire, he will be able to care for his kinsfolk if they be in want without bringing himself into contempt; but if he devoteth the whole of himself to the care for his kinsfolk, and he bringeth himself into contempt by making himself to labour under poverty, he will fall from the divine law. And the divine man David singeth in the Psalms concerning those who possess themselves of the solicitude of the fear of God, and he saith, "Who shall go up into the mountain of the Lord? (Psalm xxiv, 3. Now, inasmuch as he saith, "Who," he maketh known concerning the smallness of the number [who shall go up]. And [again he saith], "Who shall stand in His holy place? He whose hands are clean and whose heart is chosen, and "who giveth not

himself unto poverty" (Psalm xxiv, 3, 4). For those who devote themselves to poverty are those who think that the soul is dissolved with this body.

Now this virgin, who was so in name only, became a stranger unto the various kinds of [spiritual] excellence. And there was a certain priest whose name was Macarius (or Isidore) who wished to cut away as with iron and to lighten the weight of the possessions of those who loved money, and he had the care of, and was the governor (or secretary) of a house for the poor who were sick and infirm in their bodies. And this man thought out the following plan whereby he might entrap the virgin. From his youth up he had been a skilful workman in the cutting of gems, and he went to her and said, "Certain very precious emeralds and gems have fallen into my hands, and whether they have been stolen or not I do not know; their value cannot be ascertained, because they are above price, but the man who hath them will sell them for five hundred dînârs. If thou wishest to take them thou wilt be able to recover the price of five hundred dînârs from [the sale of] one of the gems, and the rest thou wilt be able to employ in the adornment of thy sister's daughter." Now when the virgin heard this she was perturbed, and she fell

97 down at his feet making entreaty unto him, and saying, "I beseech you to let no other person take them." Macarius saith unto her, "Come to my house and see them," but she would not consent to this; and she poured out for him five hundred dinârs, and said unto him, "According to what thou dost require even so take, but I do not wish to see the man who is selling them."

And having taken the five hundred dinârs he spent them on food and on things for the use of those who were hungry, and on the poor. And when much time had passed, inasmuch as he was a famous man in Alexandria—now this blessed man was well known for his love of God, and for the merciful disposition which was in him, and he was almost one hundred years old, and we also knew him and had tarried in his house with him—the virgin was ashamed to call the matter [of the five hundred dinârs] to his mind. But finally she found him in the church and said unto him, "I beseech thee [to tell me] how thou hast disposed of the gems for which we gave thee the five hundred dinârs. And he answered and said unto her, "When thou gavest me the money I gave it for the price of the gems; if thou wishest come and see them in my house, for there are they deposited. Come and see them, if it pleaseth thee [so to do], and if thou wilt not then take thy money. So she went with him joyfully. Now the place to which [she went] was a house of the poor; in the upper parts thereof were lying women whose bodies were destroyed, and in the lower parts were men. And when they had come there Macarius brought her in through the door, and said unto her, "Which wouldst thou see first, the emeralds or the gems?

She saith unto him, "Whichever thou pleasest. Then he took her up to the upper parts of the house and showed her the women whose faces and bodies were diseased and deformed, and said unto her, "These are the gems"; and he brought her down to the lower parts, and showed her the men, and said unto her, "These are the emeralds. If these please thee [good and well]; but if not take thy money. Then was the virgin ashamed, and she went forth and

departed, and by reason of her grief she fell into a sickness, because it was through God and of her own will that she had in this wise performed the matter. Finally, however, she came to herself, and was exceedingly grateful to the priest, and as for the maiden for whose wedding feast she was laying up her riches, she died.

# Chapter 7. Concerning the Monks who lived in Nitria

Now having held converse with many of the saints, and having gone round about among the monasteries which were nigh unto Alexandria for three years, & having met about two thousand of the great and strenuous men who lived there, and who were adorned with the excellence of spiritual lives, I departed from there and came to Mount Nitria. Now between this mountain and Alexandria there lieth a certain lake which is called ”Mareotis,” which embraceth a space of seventy miles. And having seated myself in a boat I crossed this lake in a day and a half, and I came unto the mountain to the south, whereunto is joined the desert which reacheth unto Cush (Ethiopia). In this mountain of the Mazaki and of the Mauritanians there live excellent men who are adorned with divers kinds of ascetic virtues; and every monk leadeth the ascetic life as he wisheth and as he is able, either by himself or in a community. Now in this mountain there are seven bakers who make bread and who minister unto them, and unto the chosen men of the inner desert, of whom there are six hundred, and also unto the people of that mountain. And when I had dwelt in this mountain for a year, and had profited by the fathers, the pious and blessed men, I mean Rabbâ Barsîs [i.e., Arsisius], and Bûsîrîs, and Petâ-Bast, and Agîôs, and Khrônîs, and Serapion, the elder, and had learned from them also concerning the ancient and first spiritual fathers [who had lived there], I entered into the inner desert wherein is Mount Nitria.

In this mountain is a great church, and in the courtyard thereof are three palm trees, in each of which hangeth a whip. One of these is for the correcting of the monks who transgress through folly; the second is for the punishing of the thieves if they be found falling on the place; and the third is for the chastising of the strangers who flock there and who transgress in any matter whatsoever. And it is the same with anyone who shall commit any offence, they bring him to the palm tree and punish him, and he receiveth upon his back the number of stripes which they have appointed unto him. Adjoining the church is a house in which the strangers who arrive there may lodge, and if any man wisheth to work [there] one year, or two, or until he departeth of his own accord [he may do so]; and every week of days they permit him to rest, so that he may do nothing, but they give him work during the remaining days of the week, either among the bakers, or in the refectory. And if there was among these anyone who was suf-

99 7a ficiently educated they used to give him a book to read, but they did not allow him to hold converse with any man until the sixth hour. There were also in this mountain physicians for the use of the sick, and those who sold cakes; and they also used wine which was sold there. All these people worked at the weaving of flax with their hands, and there was no needy man there. Now when the evening cometh thou must rise up to hear the praises, and the Psalms, and the prayers which are sent up to Christ by the people from the monasteries which are there, and a man might imagine, his mind being exalted, that he was in the Paradise of Eden. Now the monks only came to church on the Sabbath and on the First Day of the week. Belonging to this church there were eight priests and governors, but as long as the first one lived none of the others ministered in the church; he neither judged nor spake with any man, and they lived with him a life of silent contemplation. Now this great man Arsisius and many of the ancient holy men whom we saw were followers of the rule of the blessed man Anthony, and Arsisius himself told me that the holy man Ammôn, who was from Nitria, and whom he knew, and whose soul was taken up and carried by the angels into heaven, even saw Anthony. And Arsisius also spake to me concerning the blessed man Pachomius, who came from Tabenna of Hekhâm, and who possessed the gift of prophecy and who became the governor and head of three thousand men; of this man I will relate the virtues at the end [of this book].

# Chapter 8. The History of Abba Ammon, [the ”Father of Egyptian Monasticism”]

Concerning the blessed man Ammôn, he used to say: He became a monk in this wise: When he was a young man, and was about twenty-two years old, he was left an orphan by his parents. His father’s brother wanted to give him a wife, and because he was unable to resist the counsel of his uncle he was compelled by force to marry one, and to fasten the crown of bridegrooms upon his head, and to take his seat in the marriage chamber, and to fulfil everything according to the law of the marriage feast. Now, Ammôn submitted to everything outwardly, but after every one had gone forth having put Ammôn and his wife to bed in the marriage chamber, the blessed man rose up and shut the door and seated himself. And he called to the true and blessed woman his spouse, and said unto her, ”Henceforth thou shalt be my lady” and my sister; come therefore, and I will relate unto thee ”concerning a matter which is more excellent [than marriage].

”The marriage which men contract is a perishable thing, but let us choose for ourselves the marriage which perisheth not, and the marriage feast which never endeth. Let us each sleep alone, for in this wise we shall please Christ; and let us guard the glory of our virginity unspotted, so that we may take our rest at the marriage feast which is incorruptible.” Then he took out a book from his bosom and read to the maiden [passages] which were uttered by the Apostles and by our Redeemer, and since she had no knowledge of the Scriptures he added unto their words from his own divine mind. And he read many passages unto her and talked much to her concerning virginity and purity, and at length, by the grace of Christ, she was persuaded. Then she answered and said unto him, ”Master, I know well that a rule of life of purity is very much more excellent [than marriage]; therefore whatsoever pleaseth thee that do. And I also from this time forth will be persuaded [to do] whatsoever thou wishest to do.”

Then Ammôn said unto her, ”I beg and entreat thee to let each of us from this time forth dwell alone”; but she would not agree to this, and said, ”Let us live in the same house, and let each of us have a separate bed. So they dwelt together holily in the same house for eighteen years.

In the morning Ammôn used to go forth and pass the whole day in cultivating the balsam trees which he had in his garden; now the balsam tree is like unto the vine, and must be planted and pruned and cultivated, and it demandeth great attention—and in the evening he entered into his house, and recited his prayers, and then ate with her. And he also rose up to [say] the praises (or hymns) of the night, and as soon as the dawn had come he would depart to the garden. Now as they were doing these things they both removed themselves from passions, and attained unto impassibility, and the prayers of Abbâ Ammôn helped [his wife]. And at length the blessed woman said unto him, "Master, I have something to say unto thee, if thou wilt hearken unto me, and I am convinced that for God's sake thou lovest me. The blessed man said unto her, "Tell [me] what thou wishest [to say]";

and she said unto him, "It is not right (seeing that thou art a God-fearing man, and one who liveth a life of righteousness, and that thou hast also made me, outwardly, to yearn for this path [of life], and by the help of divine grace I have gotten purity), to live with me. It is not good that, for my sake, thou who dwellest with me in purity for our Lord's sake, shouldst hide the spiritual excellence of thy philosophy; for it is not seemly that thy fair deeds should be hidden, and should not be known. Let thy dwelling be apart from me and [thus] thou shalt benefit many. Then Ammôn praised God, and said unto her, "O lady, this mind is beautiful, and if it be acceptable unto thee do thou remain and abide in this house in peace, and I will go and make another for myself. And having gone forth from her Ammôn departed and entered into Mount Nitria, where as yet the monasteries were not numerous, indeed up to that time there were no monasteries at all there; and he built himself a habitation there, and dwelt therein for two and twenty years. And having attained unto the highest practice of the labours of the ascetic life he ended his days, that is to say, the holy man Ammôn went to his rest and slept when he was sixty-two years of age. Twice in the year he used to go and see his spouse;

and he died in his virginity, and his wife likewise brought the years of her life to an end in purity.

Now the following wonderful thing is told concerning him by the blessed Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, in the book which he composed about the life and deeds of the blessed Anthony. Once when he was about to cross the river which is called "the Wolf" with Theodore his disciple, he was ashamed to take off his clothes [lest] he might see the nakedness of his person. And being doubtful in his mind (literally thoughts) how he should cross over wonder fell upon him, and through an angel he crossed the river without any [boat] whatsoever [on his part]. It was the same Ammôn who saw the blessed man Anthony, who lived and died in such wise that his soul was taken to heaven by angels, and it was he who passed over the waters by the might of the Holy Spirit. Now as concerning this river which is called "the Wolf," I myself was once in great fear when I was crossing it in a boat, because it is filled with the overflow of the waters of the Nile.

# Chapter 9. The History of the Blessed Man Hor

Now in Mount Nitria there was a certain man whose name was Hor, concerning whom men, especially all the brotherhood, testify to many of his triumphs, and also that marvellous and excellent woman Melhá (i.e., Melania), the handmaid of Christ, who went into this mountain before I did. As for me, I never became acquainted with this man. And in his history they say this one thing: "He never told a lie in his life, and he never used oaths; he never uttered a curse, and beyond what was absolutely necessary he never spoke at all."

# Chapter 10. The History of the Blessed Man Pambo [died A.D. 393]

In this mountain there also lived the blessed man Pambô (or Panbîs), who was the teacher and master of the Bishops Dioscorus, Ammonius, Eusebius, [Euthemis] (Eutymius), and Origen the nephew of Dracontius, a marvellous man. Now this man Pambô possessed [the power to utter] words of prophecy, and splendid triumphs, yet with all these he despised gold and silver, even as the Word demandeth. Now the following things [concerning him] were related unto me by the blessed woman Melhâ (i.e., Melania):

When I first came from Rome to Alexandria I heard concerning the life and deeds of Pambô, inasmuch as the blessed man Isidore, who also brought me unto him in the desert, told me about him. And I brought unto him a basket which was filled with stamped silver (i.e., coined money) three hundred pounds [in weight], and I begged him to accept some of my possessions for his needs. He was sitting and plaiting the leaves of palm trees, and as he was doing this he merely blessed me, and said, "God give thee thy reward!" Then he said unto his steward, whose name was Origen, "Take and distribute [this] among all the brethren who are in the 'Island' and in Libya"; for these monasteries are exceedingly poor, and he commanded the steward not to give unto any man who dwelt in Egypt, for those who dwell therein have [abundant] means of subsistence. Now I stood there and I expected to be treated with honour or to be praised for the greatness of the gift, but when I heard nothing from him, I said unto him, "Master, knowest thou how much money it is, and that there are three hundred pounds [in the basket]?" Then Pambô, without lifting up his gaze, said unto me, "My daughter, He unto whom thou hast offered thy money hath no need [to know] the weight. For He who weighed the mountains in a balance knoweth how much is the weight of thy silver. If thou hadst given the money unto me thou wouldst have done well to have informed me concerning the weight thereof; but since thou hast given it to God, Who did not despise the two mites of the widow, [what need hast thou to tell Him?] Hold thy peace."

Now our Lord so directed that in the day on which I entered the mountain this blessed man died without having been ill, for he died whilst he was sewing together palm leaves for mats, without fever and without sickness. And he was seventy years old. Now he was sewing together palm leaves for a mat, and coming to the end of it he sent and called me.

And when he had finished sewing it, he said unto me, "Take this mat from my hands, so that thou mayest keep me in remembrance, for I have nothing else whatever to leave thee"; and having given it unto me he straightway died. And I wrapped his body in linen swathings, and buried him, and then I departed from the desert; and I shall treasure the mat as a sacred relic until the day of my death.

Now at the time of the death of this holy man Pambô there were standing before him certain famous men, Origen the priest and steward, and Ammonius, together with the remainder of the brethren, and they told [me] that at the time of his death, he said, "From the day wherein I came into this desert and built this cell in which I have lived [until this day] I know not that I have [ever] eaten the bread of idleness (or bread) which did not come from the labour of mine own hands; and my soul repenteth not that I have ever spoken an empty word in my life; thus I go to God like one who hath, as yet, not made a beginning in the fear of God. And Origen and Ammonius, the servants of Christ, in telling us the story of his life, bore witness concerning him that he was never asked a question by any man about a saying from the Book, or about the rules and labours of the ascetic life which he did not either answer immediately, or say, "I have not as yet understood the matter. Now there were times when he spake these words [only] after three months' consideration of a matter; and he used to make answer with such understanding that every man received the things which were said by him with as great reverence as if they had [been said] by God. Now this excellence was also attributed to Anthony the Great and to the rest of the holy men.

Among other things which are said concerning the holy man Pambô is the following. The blessed man Pîôr once went to Pambô's cell and took with him some bread, and Pambô made a complaint, saying unto him, "Why hast thou done this? Then Abbâ Pîôr made answer, saying, "Let [this thing] be not grievous unto thee"; but Pambô was silent and sent him away. And after some time Rabbâ Pambô went to the cell of Abbâ Pîôr, and he took with him bread which had been dipped in water; and being asked, "Why hast thou done this? the blessed man Pambô said unto him, "Let it not be grievous unto thee that I have also dipped the bread in water."

# Chapter 11. The History of the Blessed Ammonius

Now this man Ammonius and his three brothers [i.e., Dioscorus, Eusebius, and Euthymius, who were called the "Tall Brothers" by Sozomen] and his two sisters were disciples of Rabbâ Pambô; and when they had attained unto the perfection of divine life and conversation they departed from the desert, and founded two monasteries, I mean, one for men and one for women, but they placed the monastery of the women at a sufficient distance from that of the men, for Ammonius did not greatly love the intercourse of speech. It was for this reason that a certain city desired that he should be its bishop, and the people thereof drew nigh unto the blessed man Timothy, Bishop of Alexandria, and entreated him to make the blessed Ammonius their bishop; and Timothy [who sat from 381-385] told them to bring Ammonius unto him and that he would make him their bishop. Then they took with them much people, and they went unto Ammonius to bring him, and when he saw them he tried to find means to take to flight. But when he saw that he was unable to escape from them, he tried to persuade them, with many oaths, that he would not accept it, but he was unable to make them give up their intention.

And when they would not be persuaded by him, he seized a razor and cut off his left ear at the root, and said unto them, "Now I am indeed persuaded that 'I cannot be that which ye are urging me to be, for the Law also commandeth, The man whose ear hath been cut off shall not draw nigh unto the altar'" (Leviticus xxvi, 17); so they left him and went and informed the Bishop, who said unto them, "This law is observed among the Jews, but even 'if his nose was split and he had fine qualities I would make him Bishop. Then the people went to Ammonius again and entreated him [to come], and when the pious man would not be persuaded by them, they wanted to take him and to make him come by force; but he said unto them, "If ye do [not] 'leave me I will also slit my tongue"; and when they heard this they left him and departed.

Concerning this man Ammonius so wonderful a thing as the following is said. Whenever a carnal thought entered his mind he never spared his body, but he would make a piece of iron hot on the fire and lay it upon his members, so that they might always be in a state of wounds. From his youth up his rule was as follows: whatsoever had been cooked by fire

he would never eat. He could repeat the books of the Old and New Testaments by heart, and he used to read also the books [which were composed by] excellent men, by Origen, and by Didymus, and by Pierius, and by Stephen [containing] about ten thousand six hundred sayings; concerning this the great fathers who lived in the desert bear witness. It is also said that this man possessed the power of foretelling events, and living in his cell he was so great a comforter to the brethren who lived in the desert that no other man could be compared with him. Now the blessed Evagrius, who was clothed with the spirit, and was skilled in examining thoughts, used to say, ”I never saw any man who had attained more closely unto im-passibility than Ammonius.”

Once a certain need of those who were dwelling in the desert called the blessed man Ammonius, and Rufinus who was at that time the prefect [also] greatly persuaded him, and he went up to Constantinople. And with him there were also the holy bishops, and other monks who had come from various provinces [to be present] at the service of restoration of a certain martyrium which Rufinus had built. And Rufinus wished him to receive him after holy baptism at the service of restoration of the temple which he had built, and so the blessed man received him from the bishops who had baptized him. Thus, as was right, Rufinus paid to the blessed man Ammonius the honour which is due to a life of asceticism, and he used to listen to him in everything; and after a short time he died and was buried in the martyrium which is called the ”martyrium” of Rufinus,” and many helpful acts took place at his grave on behalf of those who [were worthy] of help.

# Chapter 12. The History of the Blessed Benjamin

And there was also in the mountain of Nitria a marvelous man whose name was Benjamin, who attained to a high state of perfection in the ascetic life, for he had fasted and toiled for eighty years. Now he was held to be worthy of the gift of the craft of the physician, and from every wound (or stripe) upon which he laid his hand, and which Christ blessed or gave [him the power to heal], straightway every pain departed. And this man, who was worthy of such a gift, collected water in his body for eight months before his death, and he was so much swollen that he might well have been called a second Job. And Dioscurus took us, that is to say, the blessed Origen and myself, and said unto us, "Come ye and see a new Job, who whilst [suffering from] such a severe disease of the body as this healeth others. And Benjamin gave thanks concerning his affliction beyond measure, and glorified God continually, and his soul rejoiced and was glad in the hope which it laid up for the saints. Now when we had gone and seen the swelling of his body we found that it had become so large that a man could not with all his hand encircle one of his fingers; and being unable to look upon such a terrible affliction through disease we turned away our eyes. Then the blessed man Benjamin said unto us, "My sons, pray that the inner man may not collect water.

Even when this my body was in health it in no wise helped me, and now that it is sick it in no wise hindereth me. Now during the [last] eight months of his illness they made a broad chair for him, and he used to sit therein always, because he was not able to lie down upon a bed by reason of the necessity of his belly and of the other [members of his] body. And whilst he himself lived in such suffering through all his affliction he was healing others, and it is for this reason that I am compelled to narrate to you concerning the affliction of this righteous man, so that when such an affliction as this happeneth unto the righteous we may not hold the matter to be hard. Now when this blessed man died, the whole of the framework of the doorway had to be removed to enable them to bring out his body from his cell, for his body was very large indeed.

# Chapter 13. The History of Apollonius the Merchant

And again another man, whose name was Apollonius, used to dwell in this Mount Nitria; and he was a merchant who had come there to learn to lead the life and conversation of an anchorite. Now this man found no handicraft at the exercise of which he could employ himself, and he could neither fast nor keep vigil like the other ascetics to any great extent. During the twenty years which he lived in this mountain it was his rule of life and triumph that by his own labour and toil he used to buy from Alexandria everything which was required by the brethren, and the things which were needed for the healing of the sick, and carry them to the sick. And it was a marvellous thing to see him going about among the monasteries and cells of the brethren each day, from the earliest dawn, when he set out, until the ninth hour, and he used to stand by the door and say, "Is there, peradventure, anyone sick here?" And he carried about pomegranates, and dried cakes, and raisins, and eggs, and the things which are necessary for the sick. Now he found this rule of life easy to acquire, and to continue until his old age, and he was able to attend to the affairs of the five thousand brethren who were dwelling in the mountain. And when he died he left whatever he had unto another man like unto himself, and he begged him to carry out this ministration, because the [place where the monks lived] was a desert and was destitute of the things of the world

# Chapter 14. The Histories of the natural Brethren Paesius and Isaiah

And there were also there two brethren, whose names were Paesius and Isaiah, who were the sons of a certain merchant who traded in Spain; and when their father died they divided his inheritance between them, and there came to each of them money which amounted to five thousand dinârs, and furniture, and raiment, and slaves, and property of all kinds. And these blessed men took counsel together and meditated together and said unto each other, "By what manner of trafficking shall we live in this world? If we continue to exercise the trade of our father, we shall only double our labour and toil for [the benefit of] others; and perhaps [our wealth] will fall into the hands of thieves by land or of pirates by sea. And whilst they were being troubled by such thoughts as these they answered and said unto each other, "Let us come to the way of truth, and let us acquire the life and conversation of the Christians, whereby we shall both keep the benefit of what our father hath left us, and get possession of our soul. And this proposition concerning the labour of the dwellers in the monasteries was pleasing unto them, and each of them found in his discipleship the power to judge as to what work he should embrace. And having divided their father's inheritance they both possessed the eager care to please God by the various kinds of labours of life of the mourner.

One of them divided everything which had come to him and gave it to the churches and monastic habitations, and distributed it among the poor and needy; and he learned a handicraft at which he could work and earn [his] daily bread, and he was constant in prayer and fasting. The other brother did not distribute [his possessions], but he built himself a monastery and gathered together unto him a few brethren and providing therefor became a care unto him. All strangers and poor folk, and all the aged men and sick folk who thronged unto him he used to receive and relieve their wants. And every first day of the week, and every Sabbath, he used to prepare three tables and relieve the wants of every one who happened to be present there; and thus he spent all his possessions.

Now, when the two brothers died abundant blessing was ascribed unto them by the whole brotherhood, but the one brother pleased some of them [most], and the other the others; and although the brethren praised both brothers, a dispute arose among them concerning the superior merit of one or the other of the two brothers. Then the brethren went to the blessed Pambô and related the matter unto him, and wished to learn which rule of life and labour was the greater and more excellent. And Pambô said unto them, "They are both perfect. One man made manifest the work of Abraham by his hospitality, and the other the self-denial of Elijah. And again the brethren said unto him, "How is it possible for the two to be equal in merit? We praise and magnify him who embraced poverty, for we find that he did the work of the Gospel in selling everything that he had and giving it to the poor, and that every day, and at every season, both by day and by night, he took up his cross and followed after his Lord by his fasting and his prayers. And again the other brethren contended with them, saying, "The other brother showed such supreme compassion on those who were strangers and on those who were afflicted that he would even sit in the highways and gather together the passers-by who were in trouble;

and not only did he relieve his own soul, but he also brought a lightening unto many souls that were heavy laden, and he would make ready the dead for the grave and bury [them]. And the blessed Pambô said unto them, "Again I say unto you that both are equal [in merit], and I will tell you how each of them became so. Unless the one had fasted he would not have been worthy of the goodness and compassion of the other, and again, the other in relieving the wants of strangers also lightened his own load, for although a man may think that he hath trouble in receiving [them] yet he also gaineth rest of body. But tarry ye here a few days so that I may learn [the answer] from God, and come ye [back] to me and I will declare [it] unto you. And after a few days they came unto him, and they asked him to tell them what had been revealed unto him; and he answered and said unto them, I have seen them both standing in the Paradise of Eden, as it were in the presence of God."

# Chapter 15. The History of Macarius, the Child of his Cross

There was also a certain youth whose name was Macarius, and when he became a young man about eighteen years old, he used to pasture flocks and herds, along with [other] young men of his own age and position, by the side of the lake which is called Mareotis, and without wishing to do so he unwittingly committed a murder; and without saying a word to any man he straightway rose up and departed, and he went out and journeyed into the desert. Thus he attained to the fear of God, and to the love of men, in such wise that he esteemed himself lightly; and he passed three years in the desert, in the open air, and without a roof [over his head]. Now in that country no rain falleth, and this every one, so to say, knoweth, either from hearsay or from actual experience. And after three years he built himself a cell, and he dwelt therein for five and twenty years [and performed] great labours; and he was held worthy of the divine gift of being able to treat with contempt the devils, and he was completely happy in the ascetic life and in the noble labours thereof. Now I dwelt hard by this man for no short time, and once I asked him, "What is thy thought about the sinfulness of that murder [which thou didst commit]? And he said unto me, I am entirely untroubled by it, for I am bound to confess that the sin of [this] involuntary murder was the good cause of the redemption of my life, and the testimony of the Book confirmeth this view, saying not even Moses, the servant of the Lord, would have been held worthy of the divine vision unless, through fear for the murder which he had committed, he had forsaken Egypt, and come unto Mount Sinai, where he was held to be worthy of converse with God, and to compose the commandments of the spirit."

Now we speak these things, not because we wish to help murder, but only in order that we may particularly shew that spiritual excellences spring from tribulations, when a man is not of his own will persuaded to draw nigh unto goodness. Some spiritual excellences arise from the will, and some from tribulation; and in the works which I have found appended to this history I have discovered that the murder which Macarius committed belonged to this latter class. And Macarius prayed always, and he prayed with his arms and hands extended in the form of a cross. And when he had drawn nigh to the end of his course, which was not caused by illness, at that time [I say] he stood up in the corner of his cell, and extended his hands and arms in prayer, and thus praying he yielded up his spirit. And when he who

used to bring him food came and saw him standing by the side of the wall with his hands stretched out, he remained standing outside thinking that Macarius was standing up in prayer, as was his wont. Then, having waited for about three hours, he opened the door and went in, and he said unto him, ”Bless, master! And when he did not answer him he drew nigh and shook him; and when he saw that he was dead he came to us and told us, and having come we saw him standing in the form of a cross, and we marvelled.

Now when we had laid him out upon the ground we were unable to bring his hands nigh unto his body, and so we dug his grave in the form of a cross and laid him in it. And I was sorely grieved because of his departure, and I fell into a slumber and slept, and a voice came unto me, which said, ”Inasmuch as during his lifetime he loved the cross, which he bore through his good works, in it also he shall have his rest; in the form of that which he desired longingly hath he been buried, and in the same form shall he stand up at the right hand on the day of Christ. And having heard these things I awoke, and I glorified God and the power of the Cross.

# Chapter 16. The History of the Blessed Nathaniel [died about 376 A.D.]

And there was also another man among the aged ones whose name was Nathaniel, and him I never met in his life, for he died fifteen years before I entered into this mountain; but I have met those who dwelt with him for a long time. And having made enquiries of these I learned concerning the triumphs of the man, and they also shewed me his cell wherein at that time no man was living, because it was nigh unto the world; but Abbâ Nathaniel built it long ago when the monks were few in number.

Now they used to relate concerning this man that his patient endurance in his cell was such that he never moved from his place to go outside the door of his habitation for the disposition of his will. At the beginning he was laughed at by the Evil One, who mocketh at and leadeth astray every man, and he made Nathaniel to feel weariness in his first cell, and he went and built himself another cell in the neighbourhood of the city. Now after he had built the other cell and had dwelt therein, some three or four months later the devil, who had waged war against him from the beginning, came by night holding in his hand a sling like a hunter, and he was dressed in the garb of the Romans, and he was slinging [stones] with the sling which he was holding. Then the blessed man Nathaniel answered and said unto him, "Who art thou who doest these things in the place wherein I dwell? The devil said unto him, "I am he who made thee to flee from thy first cell, and I have come that I may make thee to flee from this place. Now when he knew that the devil was laughing at him because he had departed from his first [cell], straightway he turned and went back thereto, and he lived in his first cell for the space of thirty and seven years in such strict abnegation that he never passed outside the door, and meanwhile he was warring with the devil.

And the wicked devil made him to experience so many afflictions and troubles in order to drive him out of his cell that it would be impossible for [any] man to recount them. But the Evil One watched [and obtained his opportunity] in the arrival of the Bishops who came to Nathaniel (now they were all holy men), and whether the ordering of the matter was due to the will of God, or to the temptation of the Evil One, we know not, but he made

Nathaniel to fall away somewhat from his intention. For when the Bishops had prayed and had gone forth, Nathaniel did not escort them the distance of one step, and the servants who were with them said [to him], "Dost thou possess the faculty of pride that thou wilt not accompany the Bishops? Then Nathaniel said unto them, "I died once and for all to my lords the Bishops, and to the whole world, and I have a secret matter concerning which it is God only Who knoweth my heart, and why I did not go forth and escort them."

Then that devil, who was still making a mock of this self-abnegation, nine months before Nathaniel's death took upon himself the form of a young man who was about twenty years old, and he was following after an ass which was carrying bread in the bed of the river. Now when it was far into the evening the young man passed close to the cell, and pretended that the ass had fallen down under its burden, and he began to cry out, and said, "Abbâ Nathaniel, help me, and come and render me assistance." And Nathaniel heard the voice of the young man who he thought was crying out, and he opened the door, and as he was standing inside, he spake with him, and said unto him, "Who art thou? And what dost thou want me to do for thee?" And the young man said unto him, "I am such and such a young man, and I am carrying bread to such and such a brother because he wisheth to make a love feast, and the day which dawneth to-morrow will be the Sabbath, and [bread for] the Offering will be necessary. I beg of thee, therefore, not to tarry in assisting me, lest the hyenas come and devour both me and the ass." Now there were many hyenas in that place.

Then the blessed Nathaniel stood still in great astonishment, and he was much troubled in his mind by the mercy which had revealed itself to him, and he meditated within himself, saying, "It is either through the command of God that I must fall, or through my will [having reached] its limit." Finally he meditated within himself and said, "It is better for him who hath guarded for all these years the limit of his will, and hath not passed over his door, to remain in the same condition which will put the Evil One to shame than to go out"; and he prayed to God. Then he made answer unto him whom he believed to be a young man crying out, and said unto him, "Young man, hear me! I believe that the God Whom I serve will send thee help if it be needed by thee, and that neither the hyenas nor anything else will harm thee; but if thou art a temptation may God discover thy craftiness!" And he shut the door and held his peace. And that devil was put to shame, and by reason of his wickedness he took the form of a whirlwind and the forms of wild asses which dance about and skip and break wind. This is the [story of the] triumph of the blessed Nathaniel, and this is the [story of] his labour and of his ending.

# Chapter 17. The History of the two exalted and excellent men, Macarius the Egyptian, the Disciple of Mar Abba Anthony, and Macarius the Alexandrian

Concerning the holy and immortal fathers, that is to say Macarius the Egyptian, and Macarius the Alexandrian, who were men to be feared and who were invincible athletes, and concerning the strife of their life and deeds, and conversation, it is exceedingly right and good that we should tell the story. Perhaps it will not be accepted by the unbelievers, and therefore I find it difficult to relate their history, and to set it down completely in writing, lest by so doing I should be accounted a liar; and that the Lord destroyeth those who speak falsehood the Holy Spirit maketh clearly manifest. Now, as I myself do not put to the lie the help of Christ, do not thou, O Lausus, thou believer in men, become an unbeliever in the triumphs of the holy fathers which are spoken of, but adorn thyself more and more with the deeds and conversation of these glorious men who were in very truth, even as they are called, blessed men.

The athlete of Christ, the first Macarius, was by race an Egyptian, and the second Macarius, although he was second to him in the matter of age, was nevertheless first in the opinion of the monks (or solitaries); and this man, whose name also was Macarius, which is interpreted ”blessed,” was from the city of Alexandria, and he was [one] of those who sold dried fruit and wine. In* another manuscript I have found a different version [of the history of the two Macarii which I have used] in the preparation of [this] history, and I set this down here also; now it reads as follows: And as concerning the two blessed men whose names were the same, inasmuch as their rule of life and conversation were of an exceedingly exalted character, perhaps many will not believe [what I write]. I, however, am afraid lest I may understate and belittle their triumphs in any way whatsoever, and lie

* This is a note of a careful scribe or editor.

113 concerning them, for it is written, "Thou wilt destroy those who speak falsehood" (Psalm xii, 3). The Holy Spirit hath passed this sentence upon me, therefore, O beloved and faithful men, believe ye me. Now one of these two blessed men was an Egyptian by race, and the other was an Alexandrian who sold dried fruits. First of all I will tell the story of the ascetic excellences of Macarius the Egyptian, the whole of whose years were ninety; he was thirty years old when he went up to the desert, and [he] lived therein for sixty years. And he was given the gift of [performing] mighty deeds in such a remarkable manner that he was called by the fathers "the aged youth," because straightway and quickly he ascended to the highest grade of ascetic excellence and gifts, and to the power of interpreting the Scriptures, and to spiritual foresight. And the gift of possessing power over devils was also given to him, and he was also esteemed worthy of the priesthood. With this blessed man there lived in the further (or inner) desert, which is called "Scete," two disciples; one of these was his servant, for many folk were wont to come unto him to be healed, and the other remained always in a cell which was nigh unto Macarius.

And when much time had passed by, Macarius looked and said unto him that ministered unto him (now his name was John, and he afterwards became the elder in the place of the blessed man), he answered, I say, and said unto him, "Hear me, O John, and receive the rebuke with which I rebuke thee. For thou art suffering temptation, and behold the spirit of the love of money (i.e., avarice) tempteth thee, for even so have I seen. And I know that if thou wilt listen unto me thy end in this place shall be praised, and no harm shall draw nigh unto thy habitation. But if thou wilt not hearken unto me, because of the love of money which moveth thee, the leprosy of Gehazi (2 Kings v, 27) shall come upon thee at the end. And it came to pass some fifteen or twenty years after the death of the blessed man, John forgot his commandment, and because he used to steal from the poor, his body became so covered with leprosy that there was not in the whole of it one sound spot large enough for a man to lay his finger upon. Thus the prophecy of the blessed Macarius concerning John actually came to pass.

Now if we were to attempt to describe the food and drink of the holy man, we should do what is superfluous, because among the thoughtless monks who lived in that place there was not to be found any one thing which could lead to excess either in eating or drinking; first because of the poverty of the spot, and secondly because of the divine zeal which they display towards each other. But I may mention his sad and stern habits of self-denial in various other ways. And they relate concerning him that he was at all times in a state of wonder at some divine vision, and that he used to become like a drunken man by reason of some hidden vision, and that his mind was more often exalted unto God than it was concerned with the things which are in this world, and those which are under the heavens. And, as concerning the wonderful things which God wrought by his hands, it is not seemly that we should keep silence, and of him the following marvellous things are told.

A certain Egyptian loved another man's wife, but since he was not able to incite her to love him and to make her yield to his will, he spake unto a certain magician, saying, "Make this

woman to love me, or employ thy sorcery in some way so that her husband may hate her, and cast her out." Now when the magician had received money not a little, he made use of his sorceries, and he made the woman to appear in the form of a mare; and when her husband went into his house from outside, and saw her, astonishment seized him [at the sight of] a mare lying upon his bed. Then he lifted up his voice in a sorrowful cry, and he wept tears, and heaved sighs; and he spake with her, but she made no reply unto him, and she answered him not a word. And having seen what had taken place, he went to the elder of the village (i.e., the Shêkh al-Balad), and told him concerning this matter, and brought him and took him in and shewed him what had happened. And for a space of three days he knew not what the matter was, for the mare neither ate dried grass like an animal, nor did she partake of bread like a daughter of man; and she did without food of either kind. Finally, however, in order that God might be glorified, and a miracle might also be made manifest at the hands of the blessed Macarius, and his spiritual perfection be made known, it entered into the mind of the man who was the woman's husband to take her to the desert to the blessed Macarius. And having saddled her like a mare, and thrown over her a halter, like an animal, he led her away and departed to the desert.

And when the man arrived at the cell of the blessed Macarius, the brethren who were standing by the side of the cell of the blessed Macarius saw him, and they wanted to keep back the husband of the woman, and strove with him, saying, "Why hast thou brought this mare into the desert?" And the man said unto them, "That she may receive mercy, and be healed." They said unto him, "What aileth her?" And he answered and said unto them, "She is a woman who hath been suddenly transformed into a mare, and behold, she hath eaten no food for three days." Then the brethren went and told the blessed 115

8a Macarius what the matter was, and when they came to inform him they found him standing inside [his cell] and praying for her, for God had already revealed this matter unto him, and he was praying for the woman. And the holy man Macarius answered and said unto his disciples: "Ye are mares which have the eyes of horses; but that mare is a woman. She hath not been changed from her nature of a woman except in the sight to those who have made a mistake; and that she appeareth as a mare is only an error of the sight of those who see her." Then the blessed man took water and blessed it, and he threw it over her head and it ran down all over her body; and the blessed man prayed and straightway he made her to appear in the form of a woman to every man. Then he gave her some sacramental bread and made her to eat it before every man, and then he sent her away healed with her husband; and they departed from him rejoicing and praising God. And the blessed man exhorted the woman, and said unto her, "Be not at any time remote from the Church, and deprive not thyself of the Holy Mysteries, for all these things have happened unto thee because for five weeks thou didst not partake of the Offering."

Let us now speak about his other excellences, and also of his sad and stern habits of self-denial in other particulars. Now because the large numbers of people who came to be blessed by him gave him much trouble, he thought out the following plan in his mind. He dug out

a passage (or trench) in his cell which was about twenty measures [in width], and he made from it a tunnel of considerable length, [and it extended] from his cell to the distance of half a mile; at the place where the passage came to an end he made above the end of it a small cave. And when large numbers of people came to him and troubled him, he used to leave his cell secretly and pass along hidden by the tunnel and hide himself in the cave, where no one could find him. Now he used to do this whenever he wished to escape from the vain praise (or glory) of the children of men. And one of his most strenuous disciples told us, saying, "As he was going from his cell to the cave he used to recite four and twenty antiphons, and as he was coming back four and twenty also; and whenever he went from his cell to the church he used to pray four and twenty prayers during his passage [thither], and four and twenty as he was coming back." And moreover, they say that he gave life to a dead man in order that he might convert a certain heathen who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, and this was spoken of throughout the desert.

Once a certain unmarried man who was vexed by an evil devil was brought unto Macarius, being carefully fettered by two other men, and his mother had caused him to be brought unto him. Now the devil used to act upon him in the following manner. After he had eaten three baskets of bread and drunk three bottles of water he used to vomit, and scatter the bread and water in the air in the form of smoky vapour, and in this wise his food and his drink were consumed in waste, even as anything which is cast into the fire is consumed. Now there are certain kinds of devils which are called "fiery," for there are varieties among devils even as there are among men, in disposition if not in nature. And inasmuch as his mother had not that wherewith to satisfy him, he used to eat his own offal and drink his own water; and his mother besought the blessed man with tears on behalf of her son, and Macarius took him and prayed over him, and entreated God on his behalf. And a day or two after he had healed him of his trial, the blessed man cried unto the mother of the young man, and said unto her, "How much hast thou need of for the food of one day for him?" And she said unto him, "Ten pounds of bread." Then he rebuked her and said, "Thou hast said too much." And after seven days Macarius made the young man so that he needed to eat three pounds [only, which was sufficient for him] to work upon and live. Now this miracle God wrought by the hand of the blessed Macarius, whose soul now sojourneth with the angels. I never saw this man, for he died one year before I entered the desert.

# Chapter 18. The History of Macarius the Alexandrian, the Glorious

As for the other Macarius, the Alexandrian, I did see him, for he was an elder in the place which is called the "Cells," wherein I myself lived for nine years, and he lived for three years after I entered therein; some of [his] wonderful acts I myself have seen, and some of them I have learned from others, and [of others] I have also heard rumours. Now his sad, stern life of self-denial was as follows: Whensoever he heard of any beautiful deed being done by any man whatsoever, he must straightway carry it into practice in a fuller form. He once heard from a certain man that all the brethren of Tabenna never tasted any food whatsoever which had been cooked by fire during the whole of the Forty Days' Fast, and he straightway determined within himself that for seven years he would not eat any food which had been cooked by fire, and that he would not partake of anything except young wild herbs, and vegetables which had been made soft by soaking in water, or similar things. And when he had completed this rule of life he heard of a monk in a certain monastery who only ate one pound of bread each day, and he straightway broke his bread into pieces and cast it into a vessel with a narrow mouth, and he determined within himself that he would eat nothing that his hand could not draw up out of the vessel the first time [he put it in].

And time after time, he used to tell the story with a smile, and say, "When I put my hand down I could fill it readily, but I could not draw it up full because the mouth of the vessel was [too] narrow, and it would not let me take it out full. Now he lived this hard life for three years, and ate [daily only] four or five ounces of bread; and of water also he only drank sufficient to enable him to eat his bread. Of oil [he took] only one flask each year, making use of it only on the great First Day of the Resurrection, and on the great day of Pentecost, and at the Nativity, and at the Epiphany, and when he received [the Mysteries] during the Forty Days' Fast. I will tell also of the various other practices of his sad, hard life. He determined [once] to vanquish sleep, and it is related that he never entered under a roof for twenty days, and that he was burnt up by the exceedingly great heat of the sun at noonday during all this time, and that during the nights he was without rest. And he himself told

us, "Had I not quickly gone in under a roof and slept, and rested myself the brains in my head would have dried up, and I should become like a drunk man.

But," he would say, "I have been conquered against my will, for although the nature of the body hath been overcome I have given it what it needeth."

And again, once when he was sitting in his cell a gnat bit him in the leg and he suffered pain, and he crushed the gnat in his hand and killed it. Then straightway he despised himself because he had avenged himself upon the gnat, and he passed upon himself the sentence that he should go to the place which is called "Scete," that is to say, the inner desert, and sit there naked for six months. For there were many great gnats (i.e., mosquitoes) there, and they were so savage that they could pierce the skins of pigs, and they resembled wasps; and his whole body was so eaten and swollen that a man would have thought that he had the hide of an elephant, and when he came [back] to his cell six months later they could only recognize from his voice that he was Macarius.

And again he desired greatly to go and see the garden of Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Egypt, because, as he himself told us, they had obtained power, and riches and dominion, and had built there a tomb, and had established there great works in marble; now their tomb was ornamented with many things, and they had also placed there gold and things of a marvellous character, and trees and plants, for the place had been made into a garden, and they had also dug a well there. Now because Macarius did not know the way, he observed the course of the stars, and travelled thereby; and thus he journeyed through the open desert as upon the sea. And he took with him also a bundle of thin reeds, and at the end of each mile he used to drive a reed into the ground like a rock, so that he might be able to find the way when he had to come back. And when he had journeyed for nine days, and had drawn nigh the place wherein was the tomb, the Evil One, who always wageth war against the athletes of the Lord, gathered together all the reeds which the blessed man Macarius had driven into the ground, and put them under his head for a pillow whilst he was asleep, when he was about one mile from the garden, and when the blessed man woke up he found the reeds.

Now it is probable that God permitted this thing to happen for His own glory and for the triumph of His servant, so that Macarius might not put his confidence in reeds, but upon God, Who by means of a pillar of cloud led the children of Israel in the desert for forty years. And Macarius told us, saying, "Seventy devils came forth against me from that garden, and they flew about before my face like ravens, and they were crying out and groaning, and saying, 'What seekest thou here, O Macarius? What seekest thou, O monk? Why hast thou come hither? Thou canst not stay here.' And I said unto them, 'I only want to go in and see [the garden], and then I will depart.' And I entered therein, and I saw everything, and [I found] hanging over the well an iron chain with a brass bucket, but they were rusted through age; and the pomegranates which were therein were dried up and burnt by the sun. And having seen [the garden] he turned and came back in twenty days.

Now when he was coming back he lacked water, and the bread also which he had carried was finished, and he was nigh to perish, and was in great tribulation through thirst, when suddenly he saw a damsel who was arrayed in a spotless linen garment and who carried a pitcher of water wherefrom water dripped, and she was distant about half a mile from him. Then he followed her for three days, thinking that he would overtake her and drink, but he did not do so, although she seemed to him to be standing still in one place and bearing a pitcher. Then he despaired of obtaining water to drink, and he was brought very low, when suddenly there appeared unto him there a herd of buffaloes. And among them there was one which had with her a little sucking calf, and she stood still before him; and he drew nigh and sucked milk from her. And she came with him through all the desert even unto his cell and gave him milk to drink, and she would not let her calf suck from her in those days.

And on another occasion the brethren were digging a well in a certain place which was called Thrônôn, when a serpent which belonged to the class of deadly serpents bit him. Then Macarius took hold of the serpent with his two hands by his upper and lower lip and, grasping him tightly, tore him in twain, from his head even unto his tail, and said unto him, "Since Christ did not send thee, why didst thou dare to come [here]?" Now the blessed man had four cells in the desert: one in Scete, in the inner desert, one in Libya (?), one in the "Cells," and one in Mount Nitria. [Two] of these were without windows, and in them he used to dwell in darkness during the Forty Days' Fast, another was so narrow that he could not stretch out his legs, but another, wherein he used to receive the brethren who came unto him, was wide and spacious. And he healed so many people who were possessed by devils that no man could count them. Once when I and the blessed Evagrius were there in his cell they brought unto him from Thessalonica a certain virgin who had been a paralytic for many years, but by means of prayers and by anointing her with oil with his hands he cured her in twenty days and sent her away whole to her city and home; and when she had departed she sent to him gold and goods of various kinds.

And again, he heard from a certain man that the monks of the Monastery of Tabenna lived stern lives of self-denial, and he took counsel with himself, and put on the garb of a young man and a husbandman, and in fifteen days he went up to the Monastery of the Broken Ones by the way of the desert, and came to the Monastery of Tabenna, seeking to see the head of that Monastery whose name was Pachomius. Now Pachomius was a man elect and perfect, and he had the gift of prophecy, but the [business] of the blessed Macarius was hidden from him. And when Macarius saw him he said unto him, "Abbâ, I beseech thee to receive me into thy monastery that I may be a monk therein." Pachomius said unto him, "Thou art an old man, and art not able to fast. The brethren are men who fast, and thou canst not endure their labours, and because thou art not able to do this [thou wilt] be offended, and thou wilt go forth and wilt abuse them"; and he would receive him neither the first day nor the second day, nor any day until seven days [were passed]. But since he remained fasting throughout all these days he said unto the head of the monastery, "Abbâ, receive me. And if I do not fast like unto you, and toil as ye do, command them to cast me out;" so the head of

the monastery persuaded the brethren to receive him. Now the number of the members of the brotherhood of that monastery were four hundred men, [and they are thus even] unto this day; and they brought in Macarius.

And when a few days had passed, the Forty Days' Fast drew nigh, and Macarius saw that large numbers of the brethren kept the fast and observed the rule of the house in various ways. There were some who ate daily at eventide, and some [who fasted for some] nights, and there were also some who ate once in five days; and some stood up the whole night through, and sat down in the daytime. And the blessed man Macarius took a large quantity of leaves of date palms, and brought them [to his cell], and he stood up in one corner thereof, and he neither touched bread nor water, nor bent the knee, nor lay down, until the forty days had passed, and the days of unleavened bread had come; but each Sunday he used to eat a few moist cabbage leaves so that he might pretend to be taking food. Whensoever he went outside his cell for a needful purpose he returned straightway and stood up in his place without speaking a word unto any man; and he stood in his place and held his peace, and he used to do nothing else except pray within himself, and as he stood up he wove rope of the palm leaves.

And when all the brethren saw him they made a tumult against the head of their monastery, and said unto him, "Whence hast thou brought upon us this man, who hath no body and who is incapable of being tired out, to judge us and to take vengeance upon us? [Either send him away and let him depart], or know that we all will go away. Now when the head of the monastery had heard from the brethren concerning the fasting of Macarius and his rule of life, he prayed to God and entreated Him to reveal to him who this man was, and it was revealed unto him by God. Then he went and took him by his hand, and he brought him to the house of prayer to the place where the altar was stablished, and he answered and said unto him, "Come, O blessed old man, thou art Macarius, and thou hast hidden thyself from me. For many years past I have earnestly desired to see thee, and now I thank thee that thou hast broken the heart of the brethren somewhat, so that they may not imagine any longer that they observe their fast with excessive rigour. Go then in peace to thy place, for in no slight measure hast thou edified us, and do thou continue to pray for us"; then Pachomius having persuaded him, Macarius departed from thence.

And Macarius used to say, "Every kind and variety of rule of the life of self-denial and fasting which I have desired to observe with all my heart have I kept, but there came upon me the desire that my mind should be with God in heaven [if] only for five days, and that I should be exalted above the anxious cares and thoughts of material things. And having meditated upon this thing, I shut the door of the courtyard and of the cell, and I constrained myself so that I might not give a word to [any] man. And I continued thus, and I began [to fulfil this thought] on the second day of the week, and I commanded my mind, and said unto it, 'Thou shalt not descend from heaven, for behold, there thou hast angels, and the princes of angels, and all the hosts which are in heaven, and especially the Good and Gracious God, the Lord of all. Thou shalt not come down from heaven.' And continuing thus I was sufficient for this

thing for two days and two nights, and I constrained the Evil One to such a degree that he became a flame of fire and burnt up everything which I had in my cell, and at length the very mat upon which I stood blazed with fire, and I thought that I should be wholly consumed. Now when, finally, fear of the fire took hold upon me my mind came down from heaven on the third day, because I was unable to keep my mind collected in the state in which it had been, and I came down to the contemplation of the world and the things thereof. And this happened so that I might not boast."

And on another occasion I went to his cell, and I found a priest lying there by the side of the door; his whole head was consumed, and was eaten into holes by the disease which is called cancer, and the bone of his skull was shewing through. Now this man had come unto him to be healed, but Macarius did not wish to see him. And I myself besought the blessed man and said unto him, "I beseech thee to have mercy upon him, and to give unto him a word. Then he answered and said unto me, "He is not worthy to be healed, for [this] punishment was sent upon him from God. But if thou desirest that he shall be healed persuade him to forsake the ministration at the altar, for he used both to be minister at the altar and to commit fornication, and for this reason he was punished. Persuade him then to forsake [his ministrations], and God will heal him. And having said these things to the sick man he pledged himself and swore an oath, saying, "I will never minister at the altar again"; and afterwards Macarius received him, and said unto him, "Dost thou believe that God existeth? and the priest said unto him, "Yea, master. And again Macarius said unto him, "Peradventure thou art able to scoff [at God]," and the priest said unto him, "Nay.

Then the blessed man said unto him, "If now thou dost acknowledge thy folly, and also that thy punishment was from God and that it was a fitting punishment for thy deeds, first of all confess thy transgressions. And the priest gave a promise that he would not sin again, and that he would not minister at the altar, but that he would lead a life which was suited to the capacity and grade of those who were in the world; and Macarius laid his hand upon him, and in a few days he was made whole, and the hair grew upon his head [again], and he went to his house healed whilst I was looking at him.

And again a certain young man who had an evil devil was brought unto him and he laid one hand on the head of the young man and another on his heart, and he prayed until he made the devil to rise up in the air, whereupon the young man breathed out his breath and became like a great [empty] skin bottle; and he suddenly uttered a cry, and water flowed out from all parts of his members, and he was made whole and became as he was before the devil entered into him. Then Macarius anointed him with the oil of the martyrs, and commanded his father that he was not to taste flesh or wine for forty days, until he was thoroughly healed. And again on a certain occasion certain thoughts of vainglory vexed him, and urged him to go forth from his cell and to depart and heal the multitudes in Rome and to give assistance unto those who were lying [there] sick, for the grace and might of God were inciting him greatly to heal those who were possessed of devils and to make whole those who were diseased; but although he was much disturbed in his mind [on this

matter], yet he was not persuaded to go, for the Evil One greatly pressed upon him in his thoughts. Finally, however, he lay down inside the door of his cell, and having set his legs (or feet) on the threshold, he cried out and said, "Pull, unclean devils, pull hard, for I will never go [thither] on my legs, and if you are able to carry me you must do so thus." And he took an oath to them [i.e., the brethren], saying, "I continued to lie thus until the evening, and if ye had not lifted me up, I should never have moved from my place." And when the night had come he stood up.

And again, on another occasion, when these thoughts were mounting up [in his mind] he filled with sand a basket which held two or three bushels, and lifting it on his shoulders he began to wander about [with it] in the desert. And his kinsman Theosebius the Antiochian met him and he said unto him, "What art thou carrying on thy shoulders, father? Tell me, so that I may carry thy load, and that thou mayest not toil thyself." And he said unto him, "I am making to work that which hath made me to work, for it wisheth to go forth from its state of rest, and it fatigueth me"; and having walked about for a long time he went into his cell, having exhausted his body.

And one day there laid hold upon me the chills of fever, and I went and sat down, and watched him from the window (or opening in the wall), in the feebleness of his old age. And I was thinking about him that he was like unto one of the brethren of old, and I began to listen unto him that I might see what he was saying, or what he was doing; now he was alone inside [his cell], and he was one hundred years old, and moreover, his teeth had fallen out by reason of his old age. And I listened unto him and to what he was saying, and he was striving with his soul and with Satan, and he was saying unto himself, "What dost thou wish for, O thou wicked old man? Behold, thou hast eaten oil, and thou hast drunk wine, what more dost thou wish for? Wouldst [thou] eat Satan's white food?" And he was reviling himself. And moreover he said unto Satan, "I cannot conquer thee in any wise, and thou art not able to do anything unto me; get thee gone from me." And again he said unto himself, "How long shall I be with thee?"

And moreover, Paphnutius, the disciple of this man, related unto myself and unto the blessed Evagrius, saying, "One day a female hyena took her whelp, which was blind, and came and knocked with her head at the door of the court when he was sitting therein, and she dropped the whelp at his feet. And he took up the whelp, and prayed, and spat in its eyes, and straightway its eyes were opened and it saw; and its mother gave it suck, and then took it up and went forth. And one day later she brought unto the blessed man a sheep-skin cloak, that is to say, a skin which hath been stripped off a sheep; and the blessed woman Melania spoke unto me concerning this sheep-skin cloak, saying, 'I myself received this sheep-skin cloak from the hands of Macarius as a blessing." And Paphnutius also spake thus, "From the first day whereon he received baptism he never spat upon the ground, and he lived for sixty years after his baptism."

Now in his latter days he was beardless, and he only had a small quantity of hair upon his [upper] lip and upon his chin; because by reason of his excessive fasting and the abstinence

of his solitary life not even the hair of [his] beard would grow. I once went unto him when weariness of the ascetic life had laid hold upon me, and I said unto him, "Father, what shall I do? For my thoughts vex me, and say unto me, 'Thou art doing no [good], get thee gone from here.'" And he said unto me, "Say unto thy thoughts, 'For Christ's sake I will guard these walls.'" I have written for thee these few things out of a very large number concerning the life and deeds of the holy man Macarius, and concerning the solitary monks who were his companions; and everything is indeed true. I entreat all those brethren who read in this book, or who desire to take a copy therefrom, not to forget [to write] after [this section] the narrative which is found in certain of the codices at the end of the above history which relateth unto the matters of Macarius, as if these histories had been composed by Hieronymus, but they must know that of a certainty that they were composed by Palladius. For I have found the absolute ending of this book which belonged to the histories of the matters of Macarius, with an apology and a preface which were composed by Palladius [and addressed] to Lausus the Prefect, wherein he maketh known concerning all the various kinds of the divers histories of men and of women which were composed by him; and I will prepare this apology and preface, and by the help of God I will write them down in the proper place.

# Chapter 19. Of the Blessed Man Paul the Simple, the Disciple of Abba Anthony

Now there was a certain husbandman whose name was Paul, who was more simple and innocent in nature than are [usually] the children of men; and he had a wife who was beautiful in her appearance, and wicked in her deeds and actions, and she had wandered from him and had been committing adultery for a long time. And one day, suddenly Paul went into [his house] from the field, and he found her and another working impurity together; now this took place so that Divine Grace might incite Paul [to follow] that which was more excellent. And having [gone in and] seen them, he laughed chastely, and answered and said, "It is good, it is good, truly she is not accounted mine by me. By Jesus, henceforth I will not take her again. Get thee gone, and behold she is thine, she and her children: and as for me, I will go and become a monk. And saying nothing unto any man he went away a journey of eight stages, and he arrived at the cell of Mâr Anthony the Great. And having knocked at the door, the blessed man Mâr Anthony went out, and he said unto Paul, "What dost thou seek? Paul said unto him, "I seek to become a monk. Mâr Anthony answered and said unto him, "[Thou art] an old man eighty years old, and it is impossible for thee to become a monk here;

but depart to the village, and work in the fields for thy living, and give thanks unto God at the same time that thou art not able to endure the afflictions of the desert. And again Paul answered and said unto him, "Whatsoever thou wilt teach me, that will I do. Anthony said unto him, "I have told thee that thou art an old man, and thou canst not [do it]; but if thou wishest to become a monk, get thee gone to some monastic house, and abide where the brethren are many, and where they will be able to bear with thy sickness (or infirmity). As for me, I live by myself alone here, and I only eat once in five days, and even then I do not eat a full meal. With these and suchlike words did Anthony frighten Paul. And as he would not be persuaded to depart, Anthony went into [his cell], and shut the door upon himself for three days, and because of him he did not go outside his cell for three whole days, not even for his need's sake. Nevertheless Paul did not go away; and on the fourth day, when

his need compelled him, Anthony opened the door and went forth. And again he said unto Paul, "Get thee gone, O old man, why dost thou trouble me? It is impossible for thee to stay here. Paul said unto him, "It is impossible for me to die in any other place except this."

And the blessed Anthony, having looked carefully and seen that he was carrying no food with him, and no bread and no water, and that he had fasted during the four days which he had remained, said within himself, "Peradventure he will escape and die, and will plunge my soul in tribulation"; so he accepted him and brought him into [his cell]. And because of Paul during those days Anthony performed exceedingly severe ascetic labours, the like of which, even in his early manhood, he had never performed. And he soaked [palm] leaves in water, and gave them unto Paul, and said unto him, "Take these palm leaves, and weave a mat therefrom even as do I myself." And the old man Paul took [them], and wove them [into a mat] fifteen cubits [long], until at the ninth hour he was exhausted. And Anthony, seeing what he had woven, was angry with him, and said unto him, "Thou hast woven [the leaves] loosely, unweave [them], and weave [them] over again neatly and closely." And Paul unwove what he had woven, and wove the leaves over again, but still he wove too loosely, because the leaves had become twisted through [the former] weaving and unweaving. Meanwhile Paul was fasting all these days, and Anthony laid these hard labours upon him while his soul was vexed with hunger, so that he might become disgusted and depart from him.

Now when Anthony saw that Paul was neither angry nor wrathful, and that he made no complaint, his mercy made itself manifest; and behold when Paul had lived [there another] day, he said unto him, "Dost thou wish to eat a piece of bread?" The old man Paul said unto him, "As it pleas-eth thee, father." And this also especially shamed Mâr Anthony, that he did not hasten in his desire to the promise of food, but that he cast all his desire upon him. Thereupon Anthony said unto him, "Set the table and bring bread." And Anthony placed on the table four loaves, each of which was of the weight of about six ounces, and he dipped them in water because they were dry, and he placed one before himself and three before Paul. And having placed them [there] he sang a psalm which he knew twelve times, and he recited twelve prayers that he might try Paul, but Paul prayed with him in gladness; and after the twelve prayers they sat down to eat in the late evening. Having eaten one loaf Anthony did not touch another, but the old man Paul ate slowly, and [when Anthony had finished] he had still some of his loaf [to eat], and Anthony was waiting for him to finish it. And having finished it, he answered and said unto him, "Little father, wilt thou eat another loaf?" And Paul said unto him, "It thou wilt eat another I will also; but if thou wilt not, I will not." Anthony saith unto him, "I have had enough, for I am a monk." And Paul said unto him, "I also have had enough, for I also seek to become a monk." And after these things Anthony again stood up, and made twelve prayers, and when they had said together the psalms twelve times they slept for a little during the night, and then they sang and prayed until the morning.

And when Anthony saw that the old man was carrying out with gladness a rule of life similar unto his own in every respect, he said unto him, "If thou art able to bear every day passed

in this wise, then stay with me." Paul said unto him, "Although I know nothing else, yet the things which I do know I can perform easily"; and on another day Anthony said unto him, "Behold, thou hast become a monk." And a few months afterward when Anthony saw that his soul was perfect before God, and that he was simple beyond measure, and that Divine Grace was helping him, he built him a cell at a distance of about three or four miles away, and said unto him, "Behold, thou art a monk, and henceforth thou must live by thyself so that thou mayest receive the temptation of devils." Now when Paul had lived by himself for a year, the gift of healing and of casting out devils was given unto him

And in those times they brought unto Anthony a certain man who was vexed by a fierce devil, and that devil was one of the princes of the devils, and he was so fierce that he would even revile and blaspheme the heavens. And when Anthony saw the man he said, "I cannot heal this man, for [over this race of princes] neither the gift nor the power [of healing] hath been given unto me; unto Paul it belongeth to heal this man. And Anthony therefore took them with him and went unto him, and said unto him, "O Abbâ Paul, cast out this devil from this man, so that, being made whole, he may depart to his house. Then Paul said unto him, "And what wilt thou do? And Anthony said unto him, "I am not able to do it, for I have other work [to do]"; and he left the man with Paul and went [back] to his cell. Then the old man Paul rose up and prayed a prayer with great feeling, and he began to speak unto that devil, saying, "Father Anthony saith, 'Go forth from this man.'" And the devil answered with blasphemies, saying, "I will not go forth, O thou who eatest white bread"; then the old man took his shoulder garment (or skull cap), and began to smite the devil on his back and sides, saying, "I tell thee that Abbâ Anthony saith, 'Get thee forth from him'; whereupon the devil began to curse and revile Abbâ Anthony and the old man Paul.

Finally Paul said [unto him], Wilt thou go forth, or must I go and tell Christ, yea Jesus? For if thou wilt not go forth I will go and tell Christ, and great woe shall come upon thee"; and again he blasphemed and said, "I will not go forth. Then was the blessed man Paul wroth with him, and he went out from his cell; now it was the season of noon, and the heat with the Egyptians [at this time] is so fierce that it is akin to the heat of the fiery furnace of the Babylonians. And he stood upon a stone and prayed, and spake thus, "Behold, O Jesus Christ, Who wast crucified in the days of Pontius Pilate, I will not come down from this stone, and I will neither eat nor drink until I die unless Thou dost cast out that devil from this man, and dost set him free from him. And whilst these words were yet in his mouth the devil cried out by reason of his tribulation, and said, "By Hercules, by whom am I ruled, by Hercules, I am being persecuted with violence, for the simplicity of Paul pursueth me; whither shall I go? Paul saith unto him, "To the uttermost depths of the abyss";

and straightway the devil went forth from the man, and he transformed himself and became like unto a mighty dragon seventy cubits long, and he wriggled along the ground and in this wise went down to the Red Sea, that might be fulfilled that which is written, "Perfect faith removeth mountains" (St. Matthew xvii, 20). This is the triumph of Paul, who was called the "Simple" by the whole brotherhood.

# Chapter 20. Of the Blessed Man Pachomius

And there was also another man whose name was Pachomius, who was seventy years old and who dwelt in that mountain which is called Scete; unto him I once went when lustful thoughts concerning women were afflicting me, and when my mind was dark and obscured by the thoughts of lust, and by the visions and heaviness of the nights, and when I was well nigh departing from the desert, for lust laid upon me many things [hard to bear]. Now I did not reveal unto my neighbours and unto the brethren who were living with me my tribulations, and not even unto my master Evagrius; but I went forth and I began to wander about in the desert, and I saw one of the old men who had grown old in the place—now they were all perfect fathers—and after this I saw this blessed old man Pachomius, and I found that he was superior to them all in his life, and deeds, and in his understanding. And I took courage to reveal unto him the strife of my mind, and he spake unto me thus: "Do not imagine that this is a strange matter in any way. This thing hath not happened unto thee through thine own negligence, and the place itself in which thou livest is a witness for thee, for it is restricted in the matter of things of every kind, and there is no woman therein; this lust hath fallen upon thee through [thy] strenuousness.

For this warfare of lust and also of fornication is of a threefold [character]; sometimes it setteth our body against us when it is healthy and well fed, and at others lust itself, with the natural passion which is implanted in us [attacketh us], and at others the Evil One himself because of his envy. And I have watched many times, and I have found that it is even as I have said unto thee. And he said unto me, "I, the old man whom thou seest, have lived in this cell for forty years, and I have taken the utmost care for my life and for the redemption of my soul, and even in this period of great old age, wherein thou seest that I am, I am greatly tormented by lust."

And he assured me with an oath, saying, "When I was fifty years old lust placed itself [upon] me for twelve years, never going away from me either by day or by night, and I thought in my mind that God had forsaken me, and therefore (for to such an extent had lust gained dominion over me) I determined in my heart that I would either suffer death through dumb

beasts, or that I should become a laughing-stock or a man condemned through the lust of the body. And I went forth and wandered round about in the

129 desert, and I found a den of hyenas, and I laid myself down naked at the entrance thereof that they might come out and devour me. And when it was evening—as it is written, 'He hath made the darkness, and it becometh night, wherein all the beasts of the forest do move (Psalm cxiv, 20), and the lions roar to break [their prey]'—the hyenas, both male and female, came out, and they all sniffed at (or smelt) me, and licked my body from my head to my feet, and while I was thinking that they would eat me they went away from me; and there I remained the whole of that night, and they ate me not. And again I thought that God had had compassion upon me, and straightway I returned and came to my cell. And that devil of lust, having forborne with me a little, returned once again, and moreover he attacked me more fiercely than before, and he did so with such vigour that by reason of my affliction I well nigh cursed myself.

Now, this devil of lust used to take the form of an Ethiopian damsel whom I saw in my early manhood gathering canes in the summer, and he came in her form and sat upon my knees, and he used to set me on fire with lust to such an extent that I imagined I was having intercourse with her, and when through the burning of my heart and the madness thereof, I gave her the cheek, straightway she would lift herself up from me and take to flight. And from the time when I touched her my hand was so polluted that for the space of two hours [afterwards] whensoever I brought my hand near me I was unable [to free it] from her foulness. But again I went forth because of my affliction, and I began to wander about in the desert, and I found a small asp, and I took it and placed its head upon the members of my body, and I squeezed the head of the asp so that it might bite me and I might die, and so find relief, but it bit me not. And after this I heard a voice which came to my ears and said unto me, 'Depart, Pachomius, and be strong;

I have allowed thee to be overcome in order that thou mightest not imagine that thou wast a mighty man and a man of perfection, and that thou hadst triumphed through thine own life and deeds, but that thou mightest know thine infirmity, and the feebleness of thy nature, and that thou mightest not rely upon thine asceticism but mightest confess the help of God and cry out to Him always.' And having heard these words I returned to my cell, and I dwelt therein with great boldness of heart, and I never again had anxious care concerning this warfare of lust, but I continued in peace for the rest of my days after this warfare. Now, the devil of lust, seeing that I no longer meditated about the matter, never again approached me. With these words about the striving against Satan the holy man Pachomius confirmed me, and he made me strong to play the man more and more, and to be mighty in the warfare against the devil of fornication, and he dismissed me and said unto me, "Be strong and mighty in our Lord."

# Chapter 21. Of the Blessed Man Stephen

Stephen was a man who was by race of the Libyans who [dwell by] the side of Marmarica and Mareotis, and he lived there for sixty years. Now in another codex [the text readeth] differently, thus: There was also in the desert a certain blessed man whose name was Stephen, and he was by race a Libyan from the border (or side) of Marmarica; and he dwelt there in the desert for sixty years. And having attained unto the heights of a perfect rule of life, he was esteemed [by Divine Grace] worthy of the gift of discerning prudence and of the faculty of giving consolation to such an extent that whosoever drew nigh unto him, being afflicted in any way whatsoever, departed from him with joy. Now the blessed Anthony was acquainted with this man. And this Stephen continued in this life even unto our own days, but I never lived with him and I never met him, because the mountain [wherein he dwelt] was a long way off from me. The holy men Ammonius and Evagrius, however, who went to visit him related unto me stories concerning him, and they said, "Having gone to him we found him grievously sick of a certain sore sickness which had come upon him, for a cancerous sore had broken out in the lower parts of his body; now this sore is called 'gangrene,' and we found him being cut by a certain physician.

Nevertheless the holy man was working with his hands and was plaiting [palm] leaves, and he held converse with us whilst portions of his body were being cut off. And he possessed the faculty of patient endurance to such a degree that it seemed as if the body of some one else was being cut instead of his own; now when his members had been shorn off like hair he continued, through the grace of God, to be without perception thereof. And whilst the physician was binding him up he sat still and plaited baskets with his hands, and he conversed with us, rejoicing and giving thanks unto God. And moreover, he displayed such patient endurance whilst his member was being cut off that one might have thought that it had not been cut off at all, and he resembled altogether a man from whose body threads of hair are being plucked. Now we stood there and marvelled at this affliction, for we could not bear to see the man who had led a life of such ascetic and spiritual excel-

131 9a lences fall into such a state of suffering that at length amputation of his members was necessary. And the blessed man, having perceived our thoughts and seen that it grieved us,

answered and said unto us, 'O my sons, be not ye afflicted concerning this matter, and do not lessen your faith because of this thing, for God never performeth anything whatsoever that is evil, on the contrary, He looketh for a happy conclusion [to His work]. Oh, how many were the times when these members were condemned to punishment! For they merited being cut off, and it is better that they should receive their reward here than after their departure out of this world.' These were the things which he spake unto us, and he comforted us and sent us away, say- 'ing, Be not ye scandalized when ye see trials of this kind coming upon holy men, for by such God hath built us up and comforted us, and hath made us to be confirmed in the laws which are against tribulations.'" I have related these things in order that we may not wonder when we see the saints falling into tribulations.

**A Preface concerning those who have fallen into the Errors of Sins**

It is very necessary, O my brethren, that we should also keep in memory the histories which concern the life and deeds of those who have tripped up and fallen as an excellent admonition of those who come across this book (just as among the trees that were in Paradise the Tree of Good and Evil was also found), so that if it happen that certain men lead good lives through the Grace and help of God, Who is wont to help those whose motive of soul is [directed] straight to the mark, they may not be exalted overmuch and have pride in their works of ascetic excellence. For on many occasions this very excellence itself hath been the cause of a fall when it hath not been made perfect by means of a correct motive, for it is written, "I have seen the righteous man who hath perished in his righteousness, which also is vanity" (Ecclesiasticus vii, 15).

# Chapter 22. Of Valens the Palestinian

And there was a certain man whose name was Valens, who was by race a Palestinian and by education a Corinthian; now the blessed Paul ascribed to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians iv) as a special attribute the passion of pride and inflatedness. And having come to the desert and dwelt with us for many years, at length he arrived at such a degree of vaunting that he was laughed at by the devils; and from this state he went astray, little by little, until he was derided by them, and they became able to make him think that angels were appearing unto him. Now therefore one day, according to what they relate concerning him, as he was working in the dark at the labour of his hands, the needle wherewith he was sewing together the palm leaves fell down [on the ground], and although he searched for it he could not find it; and a devil lit a fire for him until he found it, and because of this thing he became the more proud. And at length he became so proud, and allowed such arrogant thoughts to rise up in his mind that he despised and thought scorn of the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ. And moreover, it came to pass that certain men of discernment came and brought unto the church some dried fruits as a [means of obtaining a] blessing, and the blessed Macarius, our elder, received [them] and sent [them] to the brethren, that is, some to every man in his cell, and among the brethren he also sent [some] to Valens. And Valens took the man who had been sent to bring the fruit to him, and heaped insults upon him and smote him, saying, "Go and say unto Macarius: 'I am neither inferior unto thee" 'nor am I more of a servant than art thou, that thou shouldst" 'send me a blessing.'"

Now Macarius knew that he had been laid hold upon by error, and he rose up and went unto him at the turn of the day that he might persuade him, and he said unto him, "Valens, Valens, thou hast made thyself a laughing-stock, and hast fallen into error; receive then correction"; but seeing that he was unwilling to hearken unto his admonition and reproof he left him and departed. And having become more confirmed in his pride, and having reached the summit thereof, that devil, who had completely led him astray, went and made unto himself a form wherein he resembled our Redeemer; and he came unto him by night, together with phantoms of angels in great numbers who marched along bearing lamps and wax candles, and they advanced with chariots and carriages of fire, as if that devil were Christ Himself. Then one of the angels came forward unto him, and said unto him, "Christ"

loveth greatly thy life and deeds, and thy boldness of speech, "and He hath come to see thee. Get thee forth from thy cell, and do nothing whatsoever except such things as I shall tell" thee. When thou seest Him afar off fall down and worship "Him, and go back to thy cell. Now therefore when Valens had gone forth and seen the ranks [of phantoms] bearing lamps of fire, and Antichrist himself sitting upon a chariot of fire—now he was distant from him about a mile—he fell down and worshipped him.

And Valens was so much injured in his mind that at the turn of the day he was sufficiently mad to come into the church and to say before all the brotherhood who were assembled therein, "I have no need to become a partaker in the offering, for this day I have seen Christ Himself. Then the fathers tied him up and put iron fetters upon him for about the space of one year, and in this way they made him whole; and he was praying continually, and they humbled him and brought him down from the exalted conception which he held concerning himself by means of sundry and divers works of a lovely and humble character, and thus they rooted out from him pride, even as it is written, "Each opposing sickness must be healed by medicines which are contrary and opposite thereto."

# Chapter 23. Of Hero the Alexandrian [Bishop of Diospolis about A.D. 365]

And there was also my neighbour, a man whose name was Ahrôn (Hero), who was by race an Alexandrian; now his early manhood was exceedingly glorious, and he was enlightened in his mind, and his intellect was keen, and the habits of his life were pure. This man, I say, after [performing] many labours was also seized by the passion of boasting and pridefulness, and he wavered and fell; and he evolved in his mind and imagined great things against the fathers, and he reviled also the blessed Evagrius, saying, "Those who allow themselves to be persuaded [into accepting] thy doctrine certainly go astray and err, for [men] require no other teacher than Christ." And he put forward and urged in witness of his words, with foolish intent, the speech from the Gospel (which our Redeemer also spake), "Ye shall call no man master on the earth" (St. Matthew xxiii, 8). And his understanding became so greatly blinded that at length on him also iron fetters fell, and he was fast bound, because he would neither be persuaded nor would he receive or be a partaker of the Holy Mysteries, although he loved the truth greatly. Now, the food upon which he lived was too little and the habits of his life were immeasurably strict, for, according to what those who were continually with him used to relate, on several occasions he only partook of a meal once in three months, the participation in the Mysteries only being sufficient for him; but if it happened that he came across some wild herbs by chance [he would eat them].

Now I myself, with the blessed man Albinus, received an experience of him when we were going to Scete. Scete was forty miles distant from us, and we partook of two meals and drank water three times [on the way], whilst he tasted nothing at all during his journey with us. He travelled on foot, and he was repeating [passages] from the Scriptures by heart; during the time that he went with us, he repeated [passages] from the Scriptures and sang fifteen Psalms, and he repeated the Beatitudes and the Epistle to the Hebrews, and [the book of] Isaiah the Prophet, and a portion of Jeremiah, and after [that] the Gospel of [Saint] Luke, and after [that] the Proverbs; and in spite of all this we were unable to overtake him as he trudged along. Now therefore this man was at length persecuted by lust as by a fire,

and he was never again able to dwell in his cell, but he went to Alexandria, and by reason of his pride it happened unto him, through Divine Providence, even as it is said, "One good is rooted up by another. Nevertheless, having fallen willingly into a state of indifference, he finally found redemption. Now he was present continually at the shows of the theatres and circuses, and he was never absent from the public drinking rooms of the taverns; and thus whilst he was leading this life of prodigality and drunkenness he fell and was brought to a standstill in the miry ditch of the lust of women.

At length he went to one of those women who are at the head of the grade of harlots, and because of his passion with all boldness he held converse with her, and these things having thus been done by him there broke out in the place of his nature a carbuncle which grew with great vigour, and his sickness waxed sore upon him for a space of six months, and his members rotted away and they had to be cut off. By these means he became finally cured, but he remained without members; and afterwards he went back again to the integrity of [his] nature, and to divine thoughts. [And he came to the desert] and confessed all these things to the fathers, and though he remained not a long time [there] he did not flee from leading the ascetic life, nor from weeping because of what had happened to him, nor from offering up the repentance which was meet. And after a few days he died and departed from this world.

# Chapter 24. Of Ptolemy the Egyptian who was in Scete

And there was also another man whose name was Ptolemy, and he was by race from Egypt, and he observed a rule of life which no man is able to describe, or rather it is very difficult to relate the story of his life. He dwelt away beyond Scete in that [district] which is called "Klimax." Now the place which is thus called it is impossible for a man to dwell in by reason of its ruggedness, and it was distant from the stream of water wherefrom the brethren used to draw twelve miles. Now this man Ptolemy used to take many vessels for water, and carry [them] to a certain spot where much dew fell, and in December and January he used to collect it, for in those countries the dewfall is abundant. And having gathered together for himself water in sponge[s] from time to time they were squeezed out by him, and the water which he had collected from the dew ran out, and this he was in the habit of doing during the fifteen years which he dwelt there. Now this man, having for much time been deprived of doctrine (or teaching), and of the meetings with the holy fathers, and of the intercourse of edifying speech, and especially of participation in the Mysteries, went as wholly astray from the straight path as if he had said, "The matters of service, that is to say, the Holy Mysteries, are nothing at all." And from this state he senselessly departed and went on until at length he went into Egypt and delivered himself over to prodigal and riotous living, and he never more spake a word of excellence unto any man. And his madness came upon Ptolemy also because of the senseless and exalted opinion which he held of himself, even as it is written, "Those who are not under the law of the governors shall fall like leaves."

# Chapter 25. Of Abraham the Egyptian

And there was also a certain man whose name was Abraham, and he kept a rule of life of the sternest hardness in the desert; and he was hurt in his understanding by reason of the vain opinion which he held concerning himself. One day he came to the church and strove with the elders, saying, "I have been made an elder by Christ during the past night, and ye must associate me in the ministrations of the priesthood." And when the fathers had come to a decision concerning him, and had brought him out of the desert, they laid a light rule of life upon him, and in this manner they cured him of his arrogance, and brought him to the state of being sensible of his feebleness, and of having knowledge of his infirmity, through which the devils made a mock of him.

# Chapter 26. Of a certain Virgin who was in Jerusalem

And moreover, I saw a certain virgin in Jerusalem who had been clothed in sackcloth for three years, and she had secluded herself in a solitary cell, and had never permitted herself to enjoy any of the desirable things wherein there is pleasure. Now this woman, having been forsaken by the Divine Providence, because of her immeasurable pride and arrogance fell into the ditches of fornication, and she opened the window of the habitation in which she had secluded herself, and received [the rein] the man who ministered unto her, and she had intercourse with him. And because she did not continue to persevere in faith and in the ascetic life with a perfect will, and with a mind which possessed Divine love, but [departed therefrom] for the sake of men, that is to say, for the sake of vainglory, doing so, moreover, with an evil intent and with a corrupt and lascivious mind—for her own thoughts having been cut off, since they had been robbed of the Divine understanding, she came to the condition of casting blame upon others—the guardian of chastity did not remain with her.

# Chapter 27. Of the Virgin who was in Caesarea of Palestine*

And again there was a certain virgin who was the daughter of an elder in Caesarea, and having been beguiled and led astray by a man, he who led her astray taught her to bring an accusation against a certain reader of the church of the city. And the time having arrived when it was known [unto all] that she was with child, and being called upon by her father to confess her matter, she made an accusation against that reader. Now her father, the elder, because he believed [her] implicitly, made known the matter unto the Bishop, and the Bishop was a holy man, and a fearer of God, and one who did not hastily pass sentence of death or punishment upon any man, and then only when it was revealed unto him by God whether he who was accused before him was indeed guilty [or not]. So the Bishop went and shut himself up until the matter was made plain [unto him]; and because God informed him that the reader had never been nigh unto the woman he held him to be innocent, and condemned the virgin.

# Chapter 28. Of a certain Woman who fell and repented

There was a certain virgin who was a nun, and who dwelt with two other nuns, and she had led a life of abstinence and voluntary self-denial for nine or ten years. And having been beguiled and led astray by a certain singer of Psalms, she tripped, and fell, and conceived, and gave birth to a child; now she hated with the fullest hatred him that had beguiled her. [And she repented within herself with a perfect repentance,] and she followed after repentance with such vigour that she went beyond the bounds of what was seemly, *See Chapter xix.

and she continued to observe fasts with such self-denial and strictness that she well nigh died of hunger. In her prayers she used to make supplication, saying, "O God, Who dost support and sustain all creation, and Who desirest not the death and destruction of those who err and commit sin, if Thou wishest me to live before Thee, shew me a marvellous thing in this matter, and gather in this fruit of sin which I have brought forth, lest, because I cannot again attain to chastity, I kill myself through reproach and disgrace." And having made supplication for this thing, she was hearkened unto, and he who had been born unto her did not remain very long alive. And from the day wherein she fell and onwards she neither saw him that had beguiled her and led her captive, nor held converse with him, but she gave herself to frequent fasting and to ministering unto the women who were sick and smitten with disease for the whole of a period of thirty years; and thus her repentance was accepted by God, and He at length revealed unto a certain holy old man concerning her, saying, "Such and such a woman is very much more pleasing unto Me by her penitence than by her virginity." Now I write down these things in order that, if any man be observing a correct rule of life of any kind whatsoever which is pleasing unto God, he may take heed lest he fall, and that even if he be tripped up in a snare and fall he may not come to despair, and remain in his fallen condition, but that by leaning upon the staff of the hope of the Divine Mercy, and by arraying himself through repentance in the apparel of simplicity and humility he may again become strong enough to stand up, for we should not despise those who truly repent.

# Chapter 29. Of another Virgin who fell and repented

A certain virgin, the daughter of an elder in Caesarea of Palestine, having been beguiled and led astray by a man, fell, and he who had beguiled her instructed her to make an accusation against a certain reader of the church of the city. And the time having arrived when her conception became known, and being called upon to confess her matter by her father, she made the accusation against that reader, and the elder, her father, thereupon, like one who believed [her] implicitly, made the affair known to the Bishop. Then the Bishop laid his hand upon the shrine, and commanded that the reader should be called, and his affair having been enquired into, like one who was confident in his own integrity, he was unwilling to confess [that he had done the wrong]; for how was it possible for him to accuse himself of that which he had not done? And the Bishop becoming angry said unto him, "Wilt thou not confess, O wretched and polluted man, thou guilty one who art full of uncleanness?" And the reader made answer unto him, saying, "Master, I have neither knowledge nor feeling about this matter, for my thoughts and mind are clean in respect thereof, and [no thought] concerning this woman hath ever entered my mind. But if thou wishest to hear that which hath never taken place [I will say that] I myself committed the offence"; and having spoken thus, the Bishop straightway removed the reader from his position. Then the reader drew nigh and entreated the Bishop, saying, "Master, since I have tripped up and fallen, give the command that the woman be given unto me to wife, for I am no longer a cleric, and she is not a virgin"; so the Bishop gave the woman to the reader to wife, because he thought that he was held by love of her, and that he could not cut the affair concerning her out of his thoughts.

And when the reader had received the woman from the Bishop, he placed her in a religious house for women, and he begged the woman who ministered unto the wants of the sisters to take great care of her straightway. Now a short time afterwards the day arrived wherein she must give birth to her child, but the poor creature was not able to bring it to the birth, and although she could hardly bear the cruel and violent pains of her birth-pangs which were bringing her to the house of the dead, her child did not come forth. And one, two, three days passed by until the seventh [day arrived], and by reason of her great and frequent sufferings the woman was nigh to come unto Sheol; and she neither ate, nor drank, nor slept, but

she was crying out and saying, ”Woe unto me, for I am dying, and I made an accusation of fatherhood against such and such a reader. Now the women who were standing before her having heard these words made them known to her father, who, however, fearing lest he should be blamed severely because he had made an accusation of fatherhood against the reader, held his peace concerning the matter for another two days; and meanwhile the young woman neither gained relief from her sufferings nor died.

Now therefore when the nuns could no longer bear the pain of her violent shrieks, they ran and told the Bishop, saying, ”Such and such a woman hath for some days past been crying out and confessing that she made an accusation of fatherhood against the reader. Then the Bishop sent deacons unto him with the message, ”Pray thou that the woman who made an accusation against thee may have relief”; but the reader answered them never a word. Now he had not opened his door since the day on which the accusation had been made against him, but he entreated God and made supplication unto him that the matter might become known and the truth revealed. Thereupon the father of the woman went to the Bishop, and prayer was offered up in the church, but even by these proceedings the woman did not obtain relief. Then the Bishop rose up and went to the reader, and knocked at the door and the reader opened [it] to him, and he went in to him and said, ”Eustathius, rise up and unloose that which thou hast fastened. And at once the reader knelt down with the Bishop, and they prayed to God, and straightway the woman gave birth to her child. Thus were the supplication of this man and his constant persistence in prayer able to clear away oppression and to chastise and rebuke also the woman who made the false accusation, for from that day onwards she fulfilled the days of her life with good works;

and we should learn to be constant in prayer and to recognize the power thereof when it is offered unto God with the deep feeling of the whole heart.

# Chapter 30. Of the Blessed Woman Thais or Thaisis

And now I desire to narrate unto you the excellent history and the great repentance of the blessed woman Thais or Thaisis, for speech concerning her is most excellent, and it is full of encouragement and penitence of soul unto those who love God. Now this woman had a mother who, because her daughter was beautiful of face, made her to take up a position in the market, and the rumour of her beauty travelled unto every place, and those who were living afar off desired greatly to see her; and no man who looked upon her was satisfied with the sight of her face, because she burned like a flame of fire into the hearts of those who saw her, and many by reason of their mad love for her sold whatever property they had to her parents that they might have commerce with her. Now when Bessarion, the servant of God, heard these things concerning this woman and that through her beauty she was dragging many to destruction, he arrayed himself in the apparel of a man who was in the world, and took with him one dinâr and went unto her, and when he saw her he brought forth the dinâr and gave it to her; and having taken the dinâr she said unto him, "Let us go into a room," and he said unto her, "Yea, let us go in.

And having gone in, the blessed man Bessarion saw the couch which was laid out, now it was a very high one, and the woman said unto the old man, "Come, get up on this bed"; and he said unto her, "Hast thou not inside this chamber another room? and she said unto him, "Yea. Then he said unto her, "Let us then go in there. And Thais answered and said unto him, "If it be that thou art ashamed of men [seeing thee, know] that no man can see [us] in this chamber; but if it be God of Whom thou art afraid He can see us in whatsoever place we enter. And the blessed man Bessarion hearing these words, said unto her, "My daughter, dost thou know that God existeth? And she said unto him, "Yea, I know that God existeth, and [that there will be] kingdom, and judgement. Then the old man said unto her, "If thou knowest that God is, and [that there will be] kingdom and judgement, why dost thou destroy men in this manner? And straightway the woman cast herself at his feet, and said unto him, "I know that there is repentance for those who sin. But I beseech thee, master, to tarry with me for three hours, and whatsoever thou wishest to do unto me that do because of all the evil things which have been wrought by me"; and having told her in what place he would await her he left her and went away.

Then in that same hour the woman took everything which she had gained by fornication and burnt it with fire in the midst of the city, and she said, "Come, O all ye who have had commerce with me, and see that I am burning before you eyes every possession which I have gathered together by means of sin"; and the things which were burned were [worth] three hundred pounds of gold, and there were there also goods and apparel of all kinds; and after she had burned up everything she went to the blessed man Bessarion. And when Bessarion saw her he took her by her hand and led her along and brought her to a religious house of sisters, and he shut her in a little cell, leaving her only one small window in the wall through which a woman passed in food to her. And the blessed Bessarion said unto the head of the house, "Give her a pound of dry bread each day, and water according to her need. Then the blessed woman Thais said unto the venerable Bessarion, "With what petition dost thou command me to pray unto God? That He should forgive me my sins? The blessed Bessarion said unto her, "Thou art neither worthy to pray unto God, nor to make mention of His Name with thy lips, nor to stretch out thy hands unto Him; for thy lips are unclean and polluted, and thy hands are contaminated with impurity;

the shalt only sit down and gaze towards the East, and thou shalt say nothing except, 'O Thou who didst create me, have mercy upon me.'" And having dwelt in that cell for a space of about three years, the blessed Bessarion had mercy upon her, and the blessed man went to Abbâ Anthony that he might learn from him whether God had forgiven her her sins or not. Then having spoken concerning her unto Anthony that blessed man called unto his disciples, and said unto them, "Let each one of you shut himself in [his] cell all night, and pray ye unto God that we may see unto whom shall be revealed the matter concerning which the blessed Bessarion hath come unto us [this day]."

And when they all had done as they had been commanded and when a long time had elapsed, the blessed Paul, the chief of the disciples of Mâr Anthony, looked into the heavens and saw a couch which had been spread with great splendour, and three angels who were carrying three lamps were standing before that couch, and a crown of glory was laid thereupon. And having seen all this glorious sight, he said, "This couch can only be for my father Anthony." Then a voice came unto him from heaven, saying, "This couch is not for Anthony, thy father, but for Thais the harlot"; and the blessed Paul rose up early in the morning and related the vision which he had seen. And the blessed Mâr Bessarion came back from Abbâ Anthony in great joy, and he went to the religious house of the sisterhood, and he opened the door that he might bring the woman out from the cell wherein she was secluded; but she made entreaty unto him, saying, "Leave me here until my death, for my sins are many." Then the blessed man said unto her, "Behold the merciful God hath had compassion upon thee, and He hath accepted thy repentance"; and then she wished to go forth from her cell. And she answered and said unto him, "Believe me, O Father, from the day wherein I entered this cell I have made all my sins a mighty burden and I have set it before my eyes, in suchwise that as the breath of my nostrils hath not separated itself from me, so my sins have not separated themselves from me until this hour."

And the blessed Bessarion answered and said unto her, "God hath not forgiven thee thy sins because of thy repentance, but because of the thought which thou hadst—that thou wouldst deliver thyself over unto Christ." Now this blessed woman Thais lived (literally, made) after her repentance fifteen days, and she departed unto our Lord in peace. Thus was the crowning of the blessed Thais, who was lost and was found, and was dead and who came to life by the grace of Christ, unto Whom belong mercy, and compassion, and glory, and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

# Chapter 31. Of the Blessed Man Abba Elijah

There was a certain man whose name was Elijah who loved the virgins exceedingly, for there are souls which are thus inclined, and having compassion upon the order of virgins [and] women who lived celibate lives in Thebes, and in the cities which were [round about], and in the city of Atrêpe (near Akhmîm), and possessing many flocks and herds, he built a large nunnery, and he gathered together thereunto every woman who chose to adopt the garb of the nun, and placed them therein. And with ready will he took care to provide them with everything which was necessary for them, and he supplied everything required for their well-being, and he also made a garden for them, and he filled their every want with great zeal and care, for our Lord's sake. And inasmuch as these women were gathered together from various places, they used to quarrel with each other continually, and because it was meet to keep them in order (now he had gathered together about three hundred), he was obliged to take means to pacify them; and he hearkened unto their affairs and arranged the disputes which broke out among them for the space of two years.

Now this man being young, that is to say being about thirty or forty years old, more or less, was vexed by the passion of lust, and for this reason he departed from that nunnery, and wandered about for two days in the desert, and he made entreaty and supplication unto God, saying, "O Lord, either kill me so that I may not see those who are in trouble and may not become afflicted thereby, or remove from me this passion, so that I may be able to provide for the women in everything. And when the eventide had come he lay down and slept in the desert and, according to what he related, three angels came to him and took hold of him, saying, "Why didst thou go forth from the nunnery? And he related unto them the matter and said unto them, "I was afraid lest I should do harm not only unto them, but unto mine own soul also. The angels said unto him, "If now we make thee to be free from this passion wilt thou go and take care of the women in the nunnery? And having promised that he would do this they required from him an oath, and the oath which he uttered was as follows; the angels said, "Swear an oath unto us," and he said: "I swear by Him Who taketh care of me, that I will take care of them.

Then having laid hold of him by his hands and his feet, one of them took a razor and mutilated him, not indeed in very truth but only apparently and in a phantomlike manner, and he imagined in the vision that, as one might say, he had been cured of his malady. And next they asked him, ”Feelest thou that thou hast been helped? And he said unto them, ”I am greatly relieved, and I feel sure that I have been set free from the pain and suffering, and that I have already been delivered therefrom. Then the angels said unto him, ”Depart and return. And after five days, whilst the women who were in the nunnery were weeping because of what had taken place, and because he had forsaken them, and because the care which he had taken for their needs had come to an end, he entered into the monastery wherein they were; and he dwelt there from that time onward in the cells, in a place which was nigh unto them, and according to his power he ordered their lives for them. And he lived other forty years, and he said unto the fathers, ”This passion of lust hath never since roused itself up in my mind”; now this act of grace happened to that holy man because of care which he exhibited in respect of that nunnery.

# Chapter 32. Of the Blessed Dorotheos

Now there was there besides this man Elijah, the chosen man Dorotheos, who had grown old therein leading a life of excellent and sublime ascetic rule; and as he did not wish to dwell in the nunnery by the side of the women, as Elijah had done, he shut himself up in a certain upper chamber, but left therein a window which faced and looked into the interior of the nunnery; and when he knew that it was proper to do so he used to open it or shut it. He always sat by the window, and he shewed the women that he knew everything which they were doing, and by these means they were rebuked and prevented from quarrelling. And thus he grew old in that upper chamber, and no women ever went up to him, and he was unable to go down to them, for there was no ladder, and in this manner of life he brought his days to an end according to the will of God by the help of His grace.

# Chapter 33. Of the Blessed Pachomius the Great, and of the Sons of his Monastery, and of the Hunneries which were in the Thebaid

In the country of Thebes, and in the district thereof which is called Tabenna, there was a certain blessed man whose name was Pachomius, and this man led a beautiful life of ascetic excellence, and he was crowned with the love of God and of man. Now therefore as this man was sitting in his cell, there appeared unto him an angel who said unto him, "Since thou hast completed thy discipleship it is unnecessary for thee to dwell here; but come, and go and gather together unto thyself those who are wandering, and be thou dwelling with them, and lay thou down for them such laws as I shall tell unto thee"; and the angel gave him a book (or tablet) wherein was written the following: "I. 'Let every man eat and drink whensoever he wisheth, and according to the strength of those who eat and drink impose work; and thou shalt restrain them neither from eating nor fasting. Furthermore, on those who are strong thou shalt impose severe labours; and upon those who are of inferior strength and upon those who fast thou shalt impose light labours.

" II. 'And thou shalt make for them a cell, and they shall dwell together three by three. " III. 'And they shall partake of food all together in one chamber (or house). " IV. 'And they shall not take their sleep lying down, but thou shalt make for them seats so that when they are sitting down they shall be able to support their heads. " V. 'At night time they shall put on garments without sleeves, and their loins shall be girded up, and they shall be provided with skull-caps; and they shall partake of the Offering on the Sabbath and on the First Day of the Week, wearing skull-caps without any nap upon them, and each skull-cap shall have in the front thereof a cross [worked in] purple. " VI. 'And thou shalt establish the monks in four and twenty grades, and to each grade give a letter of the Greek alphabet from Âlâf to Tâw (i.e., from A to Z); every grade a letter.'"

And the blessed Pachomius performed and fulfilled [these things] according as he had been commanded by the angel; and when the head of the monastery asked him that was next to him concerning the affairs of the brethren, the man said unto him, "The voice of Alphâ [and] the voice of Bîtâ salute the head [of the monastery]." Thus the whole of that assembly of brethren had letters of the alphabet assigned to them, according to the designation of the four and twenty letters. To those who were upright and simple he assigned the letter yôdh (i.e., ı), and to those who were difficult and perverse he assigned the letter ksî (i.e., ξ), and thus according to the dispositions and according to the habits and rules of life of the orders [of monks] did he assign letters unto them. And he (i.e., the Angel) commanded that "a monk who was a stranger and who had a different garb from theirs should not enter in with them to the table; the man who sought to be accepted as a monk in that monastery was obliged to labour there for three years, after which he was to receive the tonsure. When the monks were eating together they were to cover up their faces with [their] head-coverings, that they might not see each other eating, and might not hold converse together over the table, and might not gaze about from one side to the other." And he commanded that during [each] day they should repeat twelve sections of the Psalter, [and during [each] evening twelve sections of the Psalter], and during [each] night twelve sections of the Psalter,

145 and that when they came to eat they should repeat the Great Psalm. And the blessed Pachomius said unto the angel, "The sections of the Psalter which thou hast appointed unto us [for repetition] are far too few"; and the angel said unto him, "The sections of the Psalter which I have appointed [are indeed few], so that even the monks who are small (i.e., weak) may be able to fulfil the canons, and may not be distressed thereby. For unto the perfect no law whatsoever is laid down, because their mind is at all seasons occupied with God, but this law which I have laid down for those who have not a perfect mind is laid down for them, so that although they fulfil only such things as are prescribed by the canons they can acquire openness of face." Now very many nuns hold fast unto this law and canon.

And there were living in that mountain about seven thousand brethren, and in the monastery in which the blessed Pachomius himself lived there were living one thousand three hundred brethren; and besides these there were there also other monasteries, each containing about three hundred, or two hundred, or one hundred monks, who lived together; and they all toiled with their hands and lived thereby, and with whatsoever they possessed which was superfluous for them they provided (or fed) the nunneries which were there. Each day those whose week of service it was rose up and attended to their work; and others attended to the cooking, and others set out the tables and laid upon them bread, and cheese, and vessels of vinegar and water. And there were some monks who went in to partake of food at the third hour of the day, and others at the sixth hour, and others at the ninth hour, and others in the evening, and others who ate once a day only; and there were some who ate only once a week; and according as each one of them knew the letter which had been laid upon him, so was his work. Some worked in the paradise (i.e., the orchard), and some in the gardens, and some in the blacksmith's shop, and some in the baker's shop, and some in the carpenter's shop, and some in the fuller's shop, and some wove baskets

and mats of palm leaves, and one was a maker of nets, and one was a maker of sandals, and one was a scribe; now all these men as they were performing their work were repeating the Psalms and the Scriptures in order.

And there were there large numbers of women who were nuns, and who closely followed this rule of life, and they came from the other side of the river and beyond it, and there were also married women who came from the other side of the river close by; and whensoever anyone of them died, the [other]

women would bring her and lay her down on the bank of the river and go away. Then certain brethren would cross over in a boat and bring her over with the [singing of] psalms and with lighted candles, and with great ceremony and honour, and when they had brought her over they would lay her in their cemetery; without elder or deacon no man could go to that nunnery, and then only from one Sunday to the other (i.e., they could go only on Sundays). Now it happened that a certain tailor, who was a stranger, came to that nunnery looking for work, and one of the sisters went forth to talk with him, and she said unto him, "We have our own tailor"; and one of the sisters saw her speaking with him, and she held her peace and informed no one concerning the matter. And after a short time the two women had a dispute about a certain matter, and the sister who had seen the other talking to the tailor went and brought an accusation against the other before all the sisters, saying about her in an evil manner, "This is the Satan who hath sown the strife among us"; and then many of the women having heard [these things] believed [them]. And the sister, not being able to endure the accusation wherewith she had been accused without cause, by reason of her distress went and cast herself into the river and was drowned;

and when the sister who had made the accusation against the other perceived this, seeing that she had calumniated her evilly, and that she had caused the sisters pain in a most serious manner, she also secretly drowned herself. And the elder who had been made [guardian] of them, knowing this matter, commanded one of them that none of the sisters who had believed that sister who had made the accusation against her companion should receive the Offering, and he was not reconciled unto them, and prevented them from [participating in] the Offering for seven years.

Now in that same nunnery there was a certain sister who was a virgin, and she made herself an object of contempt, and she had had a devil in her; and the [other] sisters used to treat her so contemptuously that they would not even allow her to eat with them. And the woman herself was well content at this [treatment], and she would go into the refectory and serve the food and wait upon the whole company [there], and she became the broom of the whole nunnery; and indeed she made manifest that which is written [in the Book of] the blessed Apostle (1 Corinthians iii, 18), who said, "Whosoever wisheth to become a wise man in this world, let him become a fool in order that he may become wise." And this woman used to throw over her head a roughly cut piece of cloth, whilst the other women wore veils, well cut and well made, according to

147 10a the rule which they had, and in this garb she used to minister in the refectory, and they would not allow her to sit down with them at the table. And whilst she was eating they never looked at her, and she never touched a whole loaf of bread, but used to eat the broken bits and crusts [that fell] from the tables, and [she drank] the rinsings of the basins and of the hands, and they sufficed her; and she neither reviled anyone of them, nor murmured, nor spoke superfluous words, though they constantly reviled her, and struck her, and thrust her away with harsh words and blows.

Now at that time the blessed Pitéroum (Piterius), that man of wonder, appeared, and he dwelt in the region which was called "Porphyry Mountain," and an angel appeared unto him and said, "Why holdest thou in thy mind the proud opinion that thou art more excellent in ascetic practices than many? If thou wishest to see a woman who is more excellent than thou, go to the nunnery which is in Tabenna, and behold thou shalt find there a woman [with a roughly cut piece of cloth thrown over her head] who is far superior to thee in ascetic practices; and this woman is far more excellent than thou art, for although she ministereth as a servant to a great congregation her whole heart is set upon God, whilst as for thee, though thou dwellest here, thy mind wandereth about in many countries. And when the man who had never gone forth from his monastery had heard those things, he went quickly to the nunnery, and he besought their visitor (or inspector) that [he might be allowed] to see the nuns; and when he had gone inside the house they all came that they might be blessed by the blessed man (Piterius), but the woman who had made herself a creature of contempt did not show herself at all. Then the blessed man Piterius said unto them, "Have all the sisters come, for there is one lacking?

and they said unto him, "Master, we have one more, but she is a woman of no account, and she is in the refectory. And Piterius said unto them, "Bring her that I may see her also"; and they went to bring her, but she did not wish to come, for she felt that the matter of herself would be certainly revealed unto him. Now since she did not wish to go to the blessed man they dragged her along and brought her unto him by force, saying unto her, "Mâr Piterius wisheth to see thee"; and when she had come, the blessed man looked and saw the roughly cut piece of cloth which was thrown over her head, according to the sign which the angel had given concerning her. Then he bowed down before her, and said unto her, "Bless me, Mother," and she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, "Bless thou me, master. When the sisters saw [this] they were all struck with wonder, and said unto him, "Let there be no disgrace to thee, master, for she is a creature of no account. Then the blessed man Piterius answered [and] said unto them, "Ye yourselves are creatures of contempt, but this woman is your Mother and mine, and I entreat God that He will give unto me a portion with her in the day of judgement.

Now when all the sisters heard this from the blessed man Piterius, they fell down at her feet, and offered unto her regret for everything which they had been accustomed to do unto her; for some of them used to throw the rinsings of the vessels over her, and others used to buffet her, and she endured many insults from them all. So the blessed Piterius prayed

over them and went forth from that place. And a few days afterwards, because the blessed woman could not endure the honour and the praises of all the sisters, and the penitence which they showed unto her, she went forth from that house altogether, but where she went and where she died no man knoweth.

# Chapter 34. An Apology, and Preface, and Admonition

Now therefore, O my brother, it sufficeth for me that I have called to mind all these things, and that I have handed them on in writing; for this thing did not happen without [the Will of] God, because thou wast moved in thy mind to command me to make this compilation and also to hand down in writing an account of the lives and acts of the holy fathers. And, according to the command of the love of God which is in thee, I will write down also the upright lives of holy women who have prospered in the good works of patient endurance, and afterwards I will also write down the account of the stumblings of those who have fallen away from a straight rule of life through the pride which seized upon them, and through the wicked and vain opinion that came upon their souls, and who were tripped up, and stumbled, and fell through their weakness and the war of the Adversary, although not of their own will, for after their fall they triumphed still more gloriously, and acquired rectitude. And I will do this for the benefit of those who are about to meet with this compilation, so that they may set the edifice of their building upon the firm ground of humility with zeal and care, and may fly from pride, and may take refuge in humility;

and it shall be my object to write with extreme care concerning the humility of the holy men, and concerning their long-suffering, and concerning their patient endurance, and the questions which they asked each other, together with their answers, and the sundry and divers things which I shall be able to call to mind concerning the lives of the holy fathers. And, O thou faithful servant of Christ, having lighted upon this book with pleasure, and having derived therefrom sufficiently a demonstration of the Resurrection, and of the lives and labours of the holy fathers, and also of their patient endurance, and being able to grow up in a good hope, and to advance easily in virtues, turn thyself round for once, so that thou mayest see that which is behind thee, and seeing my feebleness do thou pray for me. And take good heed to guard thy soul, even as I know thou [hast been able to do] from [the time when] thou didst hold the consular power of Titianus unto this day; and again as I found thee when thou wast the prefect and officer of the bed-chamber of the God-fearing king. For the man who hath such power as this, and who is able to enjoy himself with wealth in abundance, must not forget the fear of God, and he must take the greatest care possible

to emulate Christ, Who heard from the Calumniator [these words], "All these things will I give unto thee if thou 'wilt fall down and worship me" (St. Matthew iv, 9).

Therefore take good heed unto thyself, and be vigilant, so that thou mayest at all times be exalted over the neck[s] of thy secret and invisible enemies. Amen.

**The Triumphant Deeds and Exploits and Histories of Holy Women — Of the Virgin of Alexandria who bid Athanasius**

Now therefore it is necessary for us to remember also the chosen and mighty women unto whom God also gave an equal measure of strength of will as unto men, so that they might have no cause for being feeble in the performance of the labour of ascetic excellence. I have seen large numbers of widows who were exceedingly glorious and excellent in the performance of ascetic virtues, and among the chaste virgins whom I saw in Alexandria there was one whom I estimated to be seventy years old, and all the clergy testified concerning her that when a young woman, about twenty years old, she possessed exceeding beauty, and she was more looked at than many women, and because of her beauty she fled lest she should become the cause of stumbling unto men. Once when the Arians were plotting against the blessed Athanasius, the Archbishop of Alexandria, and were acting craftily in respect of him that they might do him harm through the prefect Eusebius, and through the wicked men who were his partisans in the days of the Emperor Constantine the Less (i.e., Constantius), and were spreading abroad infamous reports about him, and were accusing him of many things which were unseemly for Christians to do, Athanasius fled that he might not be condemned in their wicked and corrupt hall of judgement, and he told no man, neither kinsmen, nor friends, nor ecclesiastics, nor any other men [where he was going].

And as soon as certain men from among the magistrates had entered into the episcopal palace suddenly, and begun to search for him and to enquire for him, he rose up at midnight, and took his tunic, and fled to this virgin who, being greatly astonished and struck with wonder at the matter, was moved exceedingly. And the blessed Athanasius said unto her, "Because I am sought for by the Arians, who are making unseemly accusations against me, and because I do not want to spread about an unseemly opinion of myself, and I wish not to prepare a great punishment for those who would be condemned for my sake, and be made guilty for me, I determined to betake myself to flight, and God gave me a revelation this night, saying, There is no other person with whom thou canst find deliver- 'ance except this virgin.'" Now therefore because of her exceedingly great joy she removed from herself and set aside all thoughts [of shame], and she became wholly [the servant] of our Lord, and she hid that holy man for the whole period of thirty years, that is to say, until the death of Constantine. She used to wash his feet, and she prepared everything of which he had need, and she attended to his bodily wants, and whatsoever he needed that she provided, and she borrowed books and brought [them] to him; and no man in Alexandria knew during that whole period of thirty years where the blessed Athanasius was.

And when the death of Constantine (i.e., Constantius) was announced, and Athanasius also heard thereof, he rose up and came by night and he was suddenly found to be in the church,

and all those who saw him marvelled as they looked carefully at him, for he was like unto a man who had risen from the grave. And he made an apology to those who truly loved him, and spake unto them, saying, "I did not flee unto you, for the reason that there might not be unto you an occasion for swearing [false] oaths. And moreover, because of the search and enquiry which they were sure to have made for me I fled unto that woman concerning whom no man could suspect of harm, for she is young and beautiful. And I have gained two things, my own life and hers; I have helped her in many things, and I have taken care and preserved myself."

# Chapter 35. Of Diamon the Virgin

Piamon was a virgin who lived all her days with her mother, and she spent her nights in constant vigil, and she ate food at the time of evening, and she laboured at the [weaving of] linen; and she was held to be worthy of the gift of knowing what was going to happen before it happened. Now it happened on a time that there was in Upper Egypt a certain village which was fighting with another village, for the villages quarrelled with each other concerning the division of the waters [of the Nile], and they fought so violently that frequently murders were committed, and men were beaten to death. And the village which was stronger than the village of this virgin rose up against it in fierce wrath, and there came against the inhabitants of her village a crowd of boastful and violent men carrying staves and spears to kill them; and the angel of the Lord appeared unto her, and revealed unto her the craft of those who were ready to fall upon them secretly. Then she sent and called the elders of the church of her village, and said unto them, "Go ye forth to meet the inhabitants of that village, for behold they are coming against you, lest peradventure ye and the village perish; and make entreaty unto them that perhaps they may be turned aside from their daring attack, and they may spare the village."

Now the elders of the village were afraid, and they fell down at her feet and made supplication unto her, saying, "We do not dare to go forth to meet them, for we are well acquainted with their miserable nature and their arrogance; but if thou wishest to spare the village and thine own house, do thou thyself go forth to meet them." And the virgin would not undertake to go forth, but she went up upon the roof, and stood up there in prayer the whole night long, without once kneeling down, and she made bowings and entreaties unto God, saying, "O Lord, Thou Judge of the earth, Who hast no pleasure in whatever is iniquitous, O my Lord, when the prayer which Thine handmaiden prayeth and her supplication reach Thee, let Thy power transfix [the enemy] in the spot wherein they are"; and straightway, on that very day, at a distance of three miles from the village they became fettered, and stood still, being unable to move [from] the spot. And it was revealed unto them also that they were hindered from moving by the supplication of that woman, and thereupon they sent to the inhabitants of the village, and made peace with them, and became reconciled unto them, and they also sent a message unto them, saying, "Give ye grateful thanks unto God, for it was the prayers of Piamon which prevented us [from coming to you]."

# Chapter 36. Of our Blessed Mother Talida, the Old Woman of Antinoe

Now in the city of Antinoë there were twelve nunneries, and the women thereof conducted themselves according to a rule of beautiful spiritual excellence; here I saw the aged handmaiden of Christ whose name was "Mother Talidâ," who had dwelt in the holy house, according to what she herself and those who were her associates told me, for eighty years. And there lived with her sixty virgins who followed the path and rule of the ascetic life in purity, and they led a life of happiness under the teaching of this good old woman, whom they loved, and on whom they depended; and because of the great affection which they poured out upon her, the key was never taken away from any one of them, as is customary in other religious houses for women, and through her divine doctrine she changed them into a state of incorruptibility. Now this old woman arrived at such a state of impassibility that when I entered into her presence and sat down by her side, she stretched out her hands and laid them upon my shoulders, in the boldness and freedom which she had acquired in Christ.

# Chapter 37. Of the Virgin Taor

Now in this nunnery there was a certain virgin whose name was Taor, who was the disciple of a certain old woman of ascetic excellence, and who had lived therein for thirty years; and she would consent to receive neither beautiful apparel, nor a veil, nor sandals, saying, "I do not require [them], for I am not compelled to go down into the market." Every First Day of the Week the other women used to go down to the church to partake of the Offering, but this virgin used to remain by herself in the nunnery dressed in rags, and she would sit at her work at all hours. And by these means she acquired such a sagacious, wise, and ready appearance that every man who was wont to abhor the sight of women would have been nigh to being snared and falling at the sight of her, had it not been that shamefacedness, which is the guardian of chastity, was ever with her, and that she ordered her gaze in a chaste manner by means of shame and fear.

# Chapter 38. Of the Virgin and the Martyr Colluthus

Now there was another virgin there who was a neighbour of mine, and who dwelt near me, but whose face I had never seen, for, according to what they said about her, she had never gone down to the market from the day whereon she had become a nun, but had completed sixty years with the head of her nunnery. And finally, when she was about to depart from the world, the martyr, whose name was Colluthus, who had lived by the side of the nunnery, appeared unto her, and said unto her, "This day thou art about to depart from this world unto thy Lord, and thou shalt see all the saints; but come and eat a meal with us in the martyrium." Thereupon she rose up early in the morning and arrayed herself in her apparel, and taking bread, and olives, and garden herbs in her basket, she went forth as she had done for many years; and having gone to the martyrium, she prayed, and having watched for the space of the whole day for an opportunity when no man would be found therein, she drew nigh and cried out unto that martyr, and said unto him, "Ask a blessing on my food, O Saint Colluthus, and accompany thou me on this my journey by thy prayers." And having eaten her food and prayed, she came back at sunset to her nunnery, and she gave unto the head thereof the Book of Clement which is called "Stromata," and [containeth] a commentary (or explanation) of Amos the prophet, saying, "Give this book to the Bishop who is in Alexandria in exile, and say unto him, 'Pray for me,' for I am about to depart." And she died in the night without suffering either sickness or from pain in her head, but she rolled herself up in her garments and died.

# Chapter 39. Of the Virgin and of Magistrianus who fought with Wild Beasts for her Sake

In the ancient book which was ascribed to Hippolytus, who knew the Apostles, I have found the following history written:—There was a certain woman who was of noble birth and beautiful in her face, and who came from the city of the Corinthians, and who continued to live in a state of virginity, and certain people laid an accusation against her before the governor, who was a heathen, at the time of the persecution [of the Christians], and calumniated her, saying, "She hath abused the Government and the Emperors, she hath uttered blasphemies against the gods (i.e., the idols), she hath treated the sacrifices with contempt"; such were the lying words which the wicked men concocted [about her], because they had been led captive by her beauty. Now because the governor was more addicted than they all to lasciviousness, he accepted such calumnies as those, and he became mad with desire like lustful stallions, even as it is written, "He was in-flamed by lust" (Jeremiah v, 8).

And having tried to seduce her by means of cunning schemes of every kind, and being unable to do so, he became furious with her and handed her over to be punished, not by means of stripes and scourgings, but he wanted to make her earn her living by fornication. And he commanded the man unto whom he had delivered her to collect daily from the money which should be paid to her for hire three darics and to bring them to him; and this man, in order that he might not make use of the command in any sluggish manner, and that he might not lose money and also make the governor exceedingly angry, set her up as a gift before all those who wished [to have her]. Now, therefore, when those who were as keen in their lust for the maiden as are hawks for a snared sparrow perceived those things, they thronged into the tavern of destruction (i.e., brothel), and having given money unto the man to whom the virgin had been delivered, they drew nigh unto her and spoke unto her such things as [they thought] would be helpful to their intentions. But the virgin, who was wise among women, urged them on with blandishments in a gladsome manner, and strengthened her mind in the hope of Him for whom she had guarded her virginity, and she made petitions unto them, saying, "I have a hidden sore in a certain place, and the smell of its running

is exceedingly strong; and I am afraid that after ye have embraced me it will bring you to hate me and that your souls will loathe me. I therefore beseech you to wait a few days until I am well again, and [then] ye shall have the power to do whatsoever ye like with me for no-thing."

And having with suchlike words dismissed them, she offered up unto God during those days with her whole heart prayers, and supplications, and bowings to the ground that He would help her, and that she might be saved and delivered from such hateful destruction as this, and that she might be kept in a state of unsullied virginity. Then God seeing her chastity sent a fervent longing [for her] into a certain young man [called] Magistrianus, who was wholly excellent, both in mind and in body, and it burned like fire even unto death. And he went as it were in a lustful passion, and at the time of evening he entered the house of the man who had been commanded to receive the money, and he gave him five darics, and said unto him, "Let me be with the virgin this night"; and he permitted him to be with her. Then having gone into the place which was her sleeping room, he said unto her, "Rise up and save thyself." And having stripped off her apparel, and dressed her in his own clothes, and covered her with his cloak, and completed her attire after the manner of that of a man, he said unto her, "Muffle up thy head in the hood of the cloak, and go forth," and having done this she signed herself with the sign of the Cross, and went forth. And at the turn of the day the fraud became known, and Magistrianus was delivered up and was cast to the beasts. Thus was the evil Devil put to shame because that martyr, who is worthy of admiration, was able to crown himself with the two crowns of a double martyrdom, one on behalf of himself, and one on behalf of that blessed woman.

# Chapter 40. Of the holy Woman Melania the Great

Melania, the holy woman who is worthy of all blessings, was of Spanish origin, and she grew up in Rome, for she was the daughter of Marcellinus, a man who had held consular rank. Now her husband was a man who performed a large number of duties under the Government, and she became a widow when she was twenty-two years old. Now this woman, having been held worthy to be seized upon by divine love, revealed the matter to no man, for she would not have been permitted to perform her own will, because she lived in the time of the rule of Valens (A.D. 364-378); and having arranged that he should be named the procurator of her son's affairs, she took everything which she possessed which could be easily moved and carried off, and placed it in a ship with tried servants, both men and women, and sailed hastily to Alexandria, where she sold her property and changed it into gold. And she went into the mount of Nitria, and saw the fathers, that is to say, Pambô, and Arsenius, and Serapion the Great, and Paphnutius of Scete, and Isidore the Confessor and Bishop of Hermopolis, and Dioscurus; and she remained with them for half a year, and she went round about through all that desert, and saw all the holy men and was blessed by them. And when Augustus, who was in Alexandria, sent into exile to Palestine and Caesarea, Isidore, and Pissimius, and Adelphius, and Fîsânîs, and Paphnutius, and Pambô (now with these also was Ammonius, that is to say, twelve* holy bishops), this blessed woman clave to them, and she ministered unto them of her own possessions. And when the servants whom she used to send unto them were stopped, this brave woman (according to what the holy men Pîsânîs, and Paphnutius, and

* Some of the names of the twelve are omitted. Isidore, and Ammonius related unto me, for I used to hold converse with them) used to clothe herself in the garment of one of her servants, and carry unto them late in the evening the food which they needed. Now when the governor of Palestine learned this thing, wishing to fill his purse, and hoping and expecting to make profit by her, he seized her and cast her into prison, being unaware that she was a woman of noble rank. Then she sent unto him a message, saying, "I am the daughter of such and such a man, [and the wife of such and such a man], and I am the handmaiden of Christ. Do not treat lightly my poor garb and estate, for I have the power to exalt myself if it pleaseth me to do so, and thou hast no authority either to hamper me in this fashion or to carry off any

of my property. Now, in order that thou mayest not dare to do anything in ignorance, and so fall under condemnation, behold, I send thee [this] message; for it is meet that towards senseless and foolish men we should act in a masterful manner, and with pride, even as our noble rank enableth us to do, and should treat them as fools and men of no understanding." And when the governor learned this thing he apologized to Melania, and entreated her to forgive him, and he fell down and did homage unto her, and gave orders that she should have the power to visit holy men without hindrance.

And after the return of these blessed men from exile, this holy woman built a house in Jerusalem, wherein she dwelt for twenty-seven years, and wherein she had a congregation of sisters, who were in number about fifty; and moreover, the honourable nobleman Rufinus, who came from Italy and belonged to the city of Aquileia, clave unto her her whole life long, and he led a life of glorious works, and finally he was held to be worthy of the office of elder. Now among men one would not quickly find one who was more understanding, and gracious, and pleasant than he. And Rufinus and Melania during the whole of that period of twenty-seven years received and relieved at their own expense all those people who came unto Jerusalem to pray, bishops, and dwellers in monasteries, and virgins, and they edified and benefited all those who thronged to them. Now they healed the schism of the Paulinists, who were in number about four hundred monks, and they all were heretics who fought against the Holy Spirit; and having made entreaty unto them they turned them back unto union with the Church. And they loaded with their gifts all the clergy who were in the cities, and they provided with food all those who were strangers and needy [therein]. In this manner they ended their lives, and they never became a stumbling-block unto [any] man.

Now as concerning the possessions of which she stripped herself, and the things (i.e., money) which she distributed, being hot as fire with divine zeal, and blazing like a flame with the love of Christ, I alone am not able to recount, for it belongeth also unto those who dwell in the country of the Persians [to declare it]; for there was no man who was deprived of her alms and gifts [whether he came from the] east, or the west, or the north, or the south. She lived in exile for thirty-seven years, and her possessions sufficed for her to give alms to churches, and to religious houses, and to strangers, and to those who were in prison. And meanwhile her relatives and her kinsfolk were sending [money] unto her continually, and her own son, and those who had charge of her property also sent some of their own money unto her; and she never lacked anything, and during the whole of the time in which she was in exile she never consented to the acquisition of a span of land. And she was never drawn to long for her son, and the love for her only child neither parted her nor divided her from the love of Christ, but through her prayers her son attained unto perfect discipline and unto the ways and habits of excellence; and he became the son-in-law of honourable and noble people, and there also came upon him much power and divers positions of great honour;

now he had two children, one boy and one girl.

Now after a long period of time had elapsed, when she heard that the daughter of her son and her husband wished to be sanctified, and fearing lest they should fall into the hands of

the heretics who would sow in them evil doctrines, and lest they should grow up in a life of dissolute luxury, that old woman, who was then sixty years old, embarked once again in a ship, and sailed from Caesarea, and after twenty days arrived in Rome. And whilst she was there she converted and made to become a Christian a man called Apronianus, who was of exceedingly high rank and was also a pagan; and she moreover persuaded him by means of most perfect admonition and exhortation to become sanctified, and also his wife, who was her own sister and whose name was Avita, to receive the garb of the followers of the ascetic life, and to become prosperous in all patience in the labours of the life of abstinence and self-denial. And she also strengthened by means of her excellent counsels the daughter of her son, whose name was Melania, and her husband, whose name was Pinianus, and she also converted her daughter-in-law, whose name was Albînâ; and she persuaded all these to sell everything which they possessed and to give [the money] to the poor; and she brought them out from Rome, and led them into the quiet and peaceful haven of the life and labours of asceticism.

And she contended with all the women of senatorial rank and with the women of high degree, and strove with them as with savage wild beasts, for the men tried to restrain her from making the women do even as she had done, that is to say, to prevent her from converting them and making them to forsake their worldly rank and position. And she spake unto them thus, "My children, four hundred years ago it was written that that time was the last time (1 St. John ii, 18). Why do ye hold fast thus strenuously to the vain love of the world? Take ye heed lest the day of Antichrist overtake you, and keep not fast hold upon your own riches and the possessions of your fathers"; and having set free all these she brought them to the life of the ascetic and recluse. As for her [grand] son Publicola, who was a child, she converted [him] and brought [him] to Sicily; and she sold the whole of the residue of her possessions and taking the price [thereof] came to Jerusalem, and, having distributed it in a wise fashion and arranged all her other affairs, after forty days she died at a good old age, being crowned with an abundance of gratification and happiness; and she left in Jerusalem a house for religious folk and money for the maintenance thereof.

Now therefore when all those who clave unto her had gone forth from Rome the great barbarian whirlwind, which had also been mentioned in ancient prophecies, came upon the city, and it did not leave behind it even the statues of brass which were in the market-places, for it destroyed by its barbaric insolence everything whatsoever; and it so thoroughly committed everything to destruction that the city of Rome, which had been crowned and adorned for twelve hundred years with edifices and buildings of beauty, became a waste place. Then those who without contention had been converted by means of her admonition, ascribed glory unto God Who, by means of a change in temporal affairs, had persuaded those who did not believe her; for whilst the houses of all the latter were plundered, the houses of those only who had been persuaded by her were delivered, and they became perfect burnt-offerings unto the Lord, through the care and solicitude of the blessed woman Melania. And it happened by chance that I and they once travelled together from Aelia to Egypt, and we were accompanying on our journey the gentle virgin Sylvania, the sister of Rufinus, a man

of consular rank, and Jovinianus was also with us; now he was at that time a deacon, but subsequently he became bishop in the Church of God of the city of Askelon, and he was a God-fearing man and was exceedingly well versed in doctrine.

And it came to pass that a fierce and fiery heat overtook us on the way, and we came into Pelusium that we might rest therein; and Jovinianus, who is worthy of admiration, came by chance upon a trough for washing, and he began to wash his hands and his feet in a little water that by means of the coolness thereof he might refresh himself after the intensity of the blazing heat. Then having washed himself he threw on the ground a sheep-skin whereon he might rest from the labour of the journey. And behold, the mighty one among women stood up over him like a wise [mother], and in her simplicity rebuked him by her words, saying, "Seeing that thou art still in the heat of youth how canst thou have confidence that by means of carefulness [on thy part] thou wilt be able to resist the [natural heat of] the constitution of the body which still burneth in thy member[s]? And dost thou not perceive the injurious effects which will be produced in thee by [this washing]? Believe me, O my son, for I am this day a woman sixty years old, from the time when I first took upon myself this garb water hath never touched more of my body than the tips of the fingers of my hands, and I have never washed my feet, or my face, or any one of my members.

And although I have fallen into many sicknesses, and have been urged by the physicians, I have never consented nor submitted myself to the habit of applying water to any part of my body; and I have never lain upon a bed, and I have never gone on a journey to any place reclining on a cushioned litter."

Now this wise and blessed woman also loved learning, and she turned the nights into days in reading all the books of the famous Fathers, I mean to say the works of the blessed Gregory and of the holy man Stephen, and of Pierius and of Basil also, and of other [writers], more than two hundred and fifty thousand sayings; and she did not read them in an ordinary fashion or just as she came to them, and she did not hurry over them in an easy and pleasant manner, but with great labour and with understanding she used to read each book seven or eight times. And because of this she was enabled, being set free from lying doctrine, to fly by means of the gift of learning (or doctrine) to great opinions, and she made herself a spiritual bird, and in this wise was taken up to Christ her Lord. And may He in His mercy grant unto us through her prayers the power to act mightily, even as she did, and may we see her with all the saints who love Him, and with them may we lift up praise to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

# Chapter 41. Of the Blessed Woman Melania the Younger

Now inasmuch as I have already promised above to relate the history of Melania the Younger it is meet that I should pay [my] obligation, for it is not just that I should consign to oblivion a young woman who, though so very young in her years, by reason of her indefatigable zeal and knowledge was very much wiser than the old women, or that I should omit to make manifest by words the history of one who, though a girl in stature, was old in the mind of the fear of God. Now therefore the parents of this maiden drew her by force into marriage, and they united her unto one of the nobles of Rome, but she kept in mind continually the words which had been spoken unto her by her aged relative, and kept herself as was fitting, and became strengthened especially in the fear of God. And she had two sons, and as both of them died she came to be possessed of such a hatred of marriage that she said unto her husband, whose name was Pinianus, the son of Severus, a man of consular rank, "If thou wishest 'to live with me a life of purity I will regard thee as the husband and lord of my life; but if, inasmuch as thou art a young man, this is too hard for thee, take everything which I have and leave only free to me my own body, for in this way I shall be able to fulfil my desire which is in God, and I shall become the heir of the excellences of that woman after whose name I have been called. For if God desired me to lead the life of this world He would never have taken away the children to whom I gave birth."

And when they had been for a long time debating the matter, at length God had mercy upon that young man, and He placed in him the zeal of the fear of God to such a degree that he also sought to be excused from all the material things of this world, and thus was fulfilled the word which had been spoken by the Apostle, saying, "How knowest thou, O woman, whether 'thou shalt give life to thy husband [or not]? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt give life to thy wife [or not]?" (1 Corinthians vii, 16.) Now when she was married to her husband she was about twelve [or thirteen] years old, and she lived with him for seven years, for she was twenty years of age when she withdrew from the world. First of all she bestowed all her raiment of silk upon the holy altars, which also did Olympias, the handmaiden of Christ, and the remainder of her apparel of silk she cut up, and made it suitable for the service of the church in other ways. Her silver and gold she entrusted to an elder whose name was Paul, who was a monk

161 from Dalmatia, and she sent it by sea to the countries of the East, I mean to Egypt and to the Thebaïd, to the amount of ten thousand darics; and she sent in this manner ten thousand darics to Antioch, and to the countries which were nigh thereunto, but to Palestine she sent fifteen thousand darics. To the churches which were in the islands, and to the people who were in exile she sent ten thousand darics, and to those who were in the West, I mean in the churches, and in the monasteries there, and the houses for the reception of strangers, and to all those who were in want she distributed [her gifts] with her own hands. And I speak as before God [when I say] that she must have given away four times these [amounts besides], and that she snatched away [her money] from Alaricus her confidential servant as from the mouth of a lion. Of those who wished to be free among her servants she gave freedom to about eight thousand in number, and on the remainder who had no wish to have their freedom, and who preferred rather to remain in the service of her brother, she bestowed three thousand darics. All the villages which she had in Spain, and in Aquitania, and in the island of Tarragon, and Gaul she sold, as well as those which she had in Sicily, and in Campania, and in Africa, and received [the proceeds thereof] in her own hands, so that she might give them to the monasteries, and churches, and all those who were in want. Such was the wisdom of Melania, this lover of Christ, and such was the mature and divine opinion which she adopted in respect of the weighty burden of these riches.

And her manner of life was thus. She herself ate once a day, though at the beginning she ate once in five days, and the young women whom she had converted and who lived with her she commanded to partake of food every day. And there lived with her also the mother of Albînâ, who observed the same rule of life, and who distributed her possessions among the needy after the manner of Melania; and sometimes they dwelt in the plains of Sicily, and sometimes in the plains of Campania, and they had with them fifteen men who were eunuchs, and a proportionate number of virgins who ministered as servants. And Pinianus, who had once been her husband, was now one who helped in the work of ascetic excellence, and was her associate, and he dwelt with three hundred men who were monks and read the Holy Scriptures, and he enjoyed himself in the garden, and conversed with the people. Now these men who were with him helped and relieved us in no slight degree, and we were very many in number, when we were going on our way to Rome on behalf of the blessed man John the Bishop, for they received us with the greatest good will and they supplied us with provisions for the way in great abundance, and they sent us on our way in joy and gladness.

And their kinsman, whose name was Pammachius, a man of consular rank, withdrew from the world as did they, and he lived a life which was pleasing unto God, and during his lifetime he distributed his possessions among the needy, and left them [to them] after his death; and thus he departed unto our Lord. In like manner the man Macarius, and Constantinus, who was the assessor to the prefects in Italy (now they were well known men and men who merit mention), arrived at the highest pitch of ascetic excellence which I describe even as it is; and they abide in the body at this present and lead a life of glorious and divine deeds, and are awaiting the perfect life which is full of happiness.

# Chapter 42. Of the Blessed Woman Olympias

Now the holy and chaste woman Olympias, whilst journeying in the footsteps of this woman Melania, was emulating her in the excellence of her divine life and labours, and she was seized with a fervent desire of travelling in the path which leadeth to heaven, and in every respect she made herself cling close to the Divine Books. This woman was in the flesh the daughter of Count Seleucus, but, if we say what is true, in the spirit she was the daughter of God. Now she was the daughter of the son of Ablavius, a man who had held consular rank in Constantinople, and she was for a few days the daughter-in-law of Nebridius, the sub-prefect of Constantinople, but in truth she was not the wife of the man, for they say concerning her that she died in purity and in her virginity, and that she only lived according to the Divine Word in chastity, wherein was mingled true humility, and that she made herself a friend of and ministered unto all those who were needy. Now her abundant riches sufficed for this work, and it is impossible to reckon up that which she used to distribute to every one with a sincere intent; for there is not a city, or a district, or a desert place, or an island, or a shore which did not enjoy the gifts of this glorious woman. And she gave gifts also to the churches for their maintenance, and to the houses wherein strangers were received, and also to the prisons and, moreover, to those who were in exile, and, so to speak, on the whole world this blessed woman scattered her alms broadcast. And she leaped upon and ascended the uppermost part of the lofty mountain of humility, wherein nothing whatsoever was to be seen of the acts and deeds of vainglory or of deceitful action (or appearance), but the life of simplicity, and

163 11a the common garb, and the emaciated body, and the submissive mind, and the understanding which is without arrogance, and the lowly heart, and the watching of vigil, and the spirit which is without anxious care, and the love which hath no limit, and friendship without end and the holding in contempt the operation of the feelings, and the restraint from everything [harmful], and the mind which is simple towards God, and the hope which never faileth, and the lovingkindness which is unspeakable, and the thoughtful care of all poor folk.

Now this woman suffered many temptations through the agency of that evil devil, who loveth hateful things and who hath never had experience of things which are good, and she endured great contendings for the sake of the name of Christ. And she gave herself unto tears which were without measure both by day and by night, and she submitted herself unto all sorts and conditions of the children of men for the sake of God, and she bowed down reverently before the holy Bishops, and she paid homage to the elders, and she entreated in an honourable manner the clergy, as well as the orders of monks who dwelt in the monastic houses, and she received with welcome the virgins, and she visited the widows, and she reared the orphans, and she strengthened [those who were in a state of] old age, and she had care for the sick and she mourned with the sinners, and she led the erring into the right path, and she tended every one, and she converted many women among those who did not believe, and prepared them for life. She left behind her to the world a beautiful remembrance, and she changed the slavery into freedom of all the members of her household, who were about a myriad in number, and she shewed unto them honour in the same degree as to her noble family; and if, as is right, we must tell the truth, she made them to become of more account than herself.

It was impossible for any man to see apparel worse than hers on anyone, for the garments of this brave woman were not as good as those of the people who cover themselves with the oldest rags; and the food which she offered to her body was of such an inferior class that on account of its poorness it was rejected even by her servants. By this woman who was clothed in Christ, no blame was ever found in anyone, not even in her neighbours, all through her life—which was not a life—by reason of the repentance and in the vehement tears wherewith she burned; one may perchance see a fountain which, owing to the violence of the heat, hath dried up, but no man ever saw the eyes of this woman, which were fixed upon Christ, lacking tears. But of what use is it for us to tell and to devote myself so strenuously to narrate [things] concerning her? For the contendings of this woman, who was perfect in excellence, were so exceedingly numerous that they were more in number than those which were declared concerning her, and men would only imagine concerning me that I was narrating from hearsay great things which were not true about this woman Olympias, who became a vessel of honour of the Divine Spirit, and who was above [all] passions.

Nevertheless I was a spectator of her excellence and of her angelic acts and deeds, and I was, as it were, a member of her household, and her kinsman in the Spirit, and she made, by my counsel, [gifts] unto many from her possessions. And this woman who never thought about the things which were in the flesh, suffered many vain calumnies for the sake of the truth, and those who were living in Divine fear in Constantinople rightly deemed that she should be numbered with the confessors, because even unto the death she persisted in striving for righteousness' sake, and in [performing her works] she received perfection, and she waited hopefully for the never-withering crown, which was full of all blessings in the everlasting mansions on high, with all the saints who were like unto her, and she sought after the reward of her good deeds with freedom (or boldness) of speech.

# Chapter 43. Of the Blessed Woman Candida

And after the manner of the blessed woman Candida, the daughter of the blessed man Trajan, the general, also laboured, and she arrived at the perfection of ascetic excellence; and she offered unto the Bishops, who were the ministers of the Mysteries of Christ, the homage which was meet for them, and she provided suitably for the performance of all the service of the church, and supplied the clergy with gifts, unto each man according to his grade. She converted her daughter and placed her in the ranks of the virgins, and she offered unto God this gift of the fruit of her womb, and sent [her] before her, and finally she herself also became like unto her daughter in the chastity of her purity, and she distributed her wealth among the poor and needy. And I know that night after night this brave woman used to rise up [from her bed] and grind corn, and heat the oven, and make bread for the Offering, and bake it with her own hands, and she was wont to say that she did this in order to reduce the strength of her body, for, she added, "Because I am unable to receive any benefit from fasting I have taken upon myself this labour for watching, so that I may do away with the greedy appetite of Esau." Now she separated herself from every kind [of meat] where there is blood, fish alone excepted, and she made use of oil and vegetables, but these only on festival days; and on all other days she used to live on dry bread dipped in vinegar, and it sufficed her. And she awaited with hope the Resurrection which was to be full of happiness, in return for these stern labours, and she hoped to enjoy the everlasting delights which God hath prepared for those who love Him.

# Chapter 45. Of the Blessed Woman Gelasia

And Gelasia, the daughter of a man of the rank of tribune, desired earnestly to follow in the fear of God after this woman whose life and deeds were glorious, and her excellence consisted in never allowing the sun to go down upon her wrath against man, neither against her servants nor against [any] other man; and this blessed woman fled from the path of men of wrath which leadeth unto everlasting death.

# Chapter 46. Of the Blessed Woman Juliana

And again, there was a certain virgin, whose name was Juliana, in Caesarea of Cappadocia, and it was said concerning her that she was a believing woman, and a woman of understanding, and that in the time of the persecution when the writer Origen was fleeing from the heathen she received [him] and hid him [in her house] for two years; and she fed and kept him at her own expense, and made him to be satisfied and content with her ministration. Now I have found these things set down in a certain book which was in the handwriting of Origen himself, and I found this book in the possession of the excellent virgin Juliana in Caesarea who had hidden it, and who used to say that she received it from Symmachus, the expositor of the Jews. And I have not set down [in writing] the story of the excellences of these glorious women for any ordinary purpose, but that we may learn that by every means whatsoever we may, if we wish, find sundry and divers occasions for [obtaining spiritual] advantage.

# Chapter 47. Of Heronion and his Wife [Bosphoria]

In Ancyra, a city of Galatia, I met a man whose name was Heronion, an ”Apakomots,” and an enlightened man, and his wife whose name was Bosphoria (or Dosphoria), and of their mode of living and acts I experienced an example. Now these folk had such a firm hope in the happiness (or good things) which were to come, that they neglected even their children, for they awaited with hope the actual [fulfilment] of the things to come, and they distributed among the poor and needy the income which they derived from their villages, notwithstanding the fact that they had four male and two female children. To these [children] they never gave anything whatsoever, except to the daughters who had married husbands.

And finally, they used to say, ”After we are dead everything will be yours, but during our lifetime the income which we derive from our villages we shall take for ourselves.” Now they used to divide their moneys among the churches and monasteries, and houses for the receiving of strangers (or hospitals?) and among the poor and needy. And besides these things they performed the following act of excellence. There was a great famine, and every man shut up (or restrained) his mercy, but these folk opened the storehouses which they had in their villages, and gave [food] to eat to those who were famished, and through this act the heretics who were living in that country were changed and were turned unto the [true] knowledge when they saw their unspeakable lovingkindness; and they gave praise unto God for the simplicity of their faith. And other examples of their excellence were the following: The modest garb, common and simple apparel, food eaten but rarely, and then only in such quantity as was sufficient [to maintain] life; and they lived meanwhile in a state of chastity which was acceptable unto God. They dwelt in the fields several days [at a time], loving a life of silent contemplation, and they fled from the tumult of cities and from the evils which are begotten of them, lest when they were living among a crowd of people something might come upon them to disturb them, and they might fall from the[ir] divine state of mind. For this reason these blessed men were doing all these excellent things, because that with the eyes of the understanding they had already looked upon the good things which had been for ever prepared for them.

# Chapter 48. Of the Blessed Woman Magna

In this city of Ancyra there were also many other virgins who led lives of ascetic excellence, and they were two thousand, or more, in number; and they kept themselves in restraint and served God with great humility. And among them were also famous women who triumphed with glorious strenuousness in the contending of the fear of God, and of those was Magnâ, the chaste and proved wife; now I know not whether I ought to describe her as a virgin or as a widow, for this woman, owing to the pressure which was put upon her by her mother, was yoked unto a husband. But she used to make pretences to her husband in divers ways, and she avoided his embraces by urging the bodily sickness which she had on her as an excuse, and thus she was, according to what the members of her household said, preserved spotless from him. Now, after a short time the man died, and he left everything which he had unto her alone, and she exchanged the things of time for those which were everlasting, and she offered herself wholly to God and devoted herself unto the things which belonged unto the life which is to come; and thus she lived a life in the great chastity of the fear of God, and even the Bishops were put to shame by the sight of her. Now the rest of the building (i.e., the edifice of her spiritual excellences,) she made perfect in the furnace of the love of voluntary poverty, and whatsoever there remained unto her she gave, as it is written, gladly unto the churches, and monasteries and houses for receiving poor strangers, and unto the orphans and widows; and she abode continually in the church and served God, and awaited the hope which was to come.

# Chapter 49. Of the Monk [Misericors] who lived in Ancyra

And moreover, we found in this city a certain monk, and we met him at the time when he had [just] received the laying on of hands as an elder; formerly he had been a husbandman, but he had laboured in the life of a solitary recluse (or monk) for twenty years, and he had lived in close intercourse with the Bishop of the city, who was a holy man. He was such a benevolent man that even in the night time he would go round about and visit those who were poor and needy, and he was so indefatigable in his work that he neglected neither the prison-house, nor the house of the sick (i.e., hospital), nor the houses of the rich and poor, but he helped every one. He urged the rich with words which were full of mercy, and exhorted them to fair deeds, and he toiled with anxious care on behalf of the poor and needy, in respect of those things which were meet for them. Those who were struggling in contention he brought nigh unto peace, and those who were naked he clothed with raiment, and he laboured for the sick and brought them the bindings up which conduced to [their] healing.

Now there existed in this city of Ancyra that which existeth rightly in large cities, that is to say, in the porch of the church thereof there lay a great number of poor folk, who were in the habit of going about begging for their daily bread, and among them were certain men who had wives; and it fell out on the night of a certain day that one of these women was about to give birth to a child. And by reason of the pain which was darting through her, and the severe anguish of the birth-pangs, she cried out loudly, and the blessed man heard her outcries from the church as he was praying; and the blessed man ceased praying, and went forth to see [what was happening], although it was winter. And seeing that there was no man nigh unto her in her necessity, he himself filled the place of midwife, and he abhorred not the shame which at-tacheth unto those who give birth to children; for the great act of lovingkindness which he was about to perform did not grant unto him the perception of such things.

Now of this blessed man the garments (or possessions) were so utterly poor that they were worth nothing at all, for by reason of the great lovingkindness which dwelt in him he took no pains at all to acquire any possession whatsoever. For if anyone gave him a book he

straightway went and sold it, and unto those who enquired of him concerning it, saying, "Why didst thou sell [the book]?" he said, "How am I to persuade the Master (or Teacher) that I have in truth learned His handicraft, unless I make use of His testimony as to the true [meaning] of His handicraft?" And this holy man thereupon persisteth in this course of action until this day, and he hath left behind him unto all those who dwell in that country a never-fading remembrance. And he is happy in the expectation of the good things which are for ever, and he waiteth to receive the reward of the labours of his triumphs in the kingdom from Him Who said, "I was an hungered and ye gave Me to eat. I was naked and ye clothed Me" (St. Matthew xxv, 35, 36).

# Chapter 50. Of John of Lycus, a City of the Thebaid

John, who lived in the city of Lycus, and who had learned in his youth the craft of the carpenter, and whose brother was a dyer, afterwards, when he was about five and twenty years old, took upon himself the garb of monkhood; and having lived in divers monasteries for five years, he finally departed by himself to the mountain which is in Lycus, to the lofty eminence which is on the top of the mountain, and made three cells for himself there. Now he built and prepared these for himself in the first year after he went to the mountain and went up into it. The first cell was for the needs of the body, in the second he laboured at the work of his hands and took his food, and in the third he said his prayers, and during the three (or thirty) years in which he was in seclusion there he was wont to receive whatsoever was necessary for him through the window from him that ministered unto him.

Now this blessed man was worthy [to receive] from God the gift of being able to declare things before they came to pass, and on several occasions he made known things before they happened unto the blessed Emperor Theodosius, I mean he foretold that he would conquer Maximus the rebel and would return from Gallia, and he also announced to him beforehand concerning the defeat of Eugenius the rebel, and thus the fame of this holy man went forth greatly, and he was held to be a man of spiritual excellence. Now therefore when we were in the desert of Nitria, I and the members of the following of the blessed Origen wished to gain exact information concerning the state of spiritual excellence to which the man [had attained]. Thereupon the blessed Evagrius said, "I am very desirous of learning from some one who is skilled in the investigation of the mind and understanding what manner of man [John of Lycus] is; for although I myself am unable to see him, still I can learn from another man [concerning] his qualities of excellence if he be able to narrate them, but I cannot go so far as [his] mountain.

Now when I had heard these things I said nothing whatsoever to any man, and I held my peace for a day, but on the morrow I shut up my cell, and having confided myself to the hands of God I set out on my journey to go to the Thebaid, where I arrived after eighteen days, on some of which I walked on my feet, and on others I sailed on the river. For it was the period of the year when the river riseth, and when many folk fall sick, the which also

happened unto me. And when I had gone [to John of Lycus] I found that he had shut himself up in the place wherein he lived in seclusion, and I took up my abode with the brethren in a great house which contained about one hundred men, and which the brethren had built a long time; for though they shut in John during the other days of the week on Saturday and Sunday they used to open his window.

When therefore I had learned the rule concerning his seclusion, I waited until the Saturday, and at the second hour I drew nigh and found him sitting in the opening in the wall (or window), wherein he waited to administer comfort and consolation unto those who thronged unto him. And having saluted me he said unto me through an interpreter, "Whence art thou, my son? And why hast thou come? Thou appearest to me to belong unto the congregation of Evagrius." And I said unto him, "I am a stranger from [the country of] the Galatians," and I confessed that I also belonged unto those who were the followers of Evagrius. Now whilst we were conversing together behold, Alipius, the governor of the country, came unto him, and as the governor turned to him John ceased to talk to me and I left them for a little space and gave them opportunity to talk, and I rose up [and departed] from the mountain. And when they had passed much time in their converse I became impatient and angry, and I murmured against that excellent old man because it seemed as if he had treated me lightly and had paid honour to the governor; and being offended in my mind at this [treatment] I made up my mind to go away because of his disregard of me. Then John called unto his interpreter, whose name was Theodore, and said unto him, "Go and say unto that brother, 'Be not angry and impatient, for I will dismiss the governor immediately, and [then] I will speak with thee.'" Thus it appeared to me that, like a spiritual being, he had knowledge of secret things, and I made up my mind to remain.

And when the governor had departed John called unto me and said unto me, "My son, why wast thou vexed with me? What hast thou found which is worthy of [being considered] an offence? Thou hast imagined things which are not to be found in me, and which are not creditable unto thyself. Dost thou not know that it is written, 'Those that are whole have no need of a physician (St. Matthew ix, 12; St. Mark ii, 17; St. Luke v, 31); only those who are in very evil case have need of him.' Thee I can find whensoever I wish, and if I myself do not comfort thee the brethren and the other fathers will do so. But this governor who hath come to us is tightly bound unto the Calumniator by means of the affairs of this world, and, having obtained respite for a brief space from the vain labour of [his] abominable servitude, he fleeth like a slave from his master and cometh to be helped; therefore it would not be seemly to leave him, and to be constant in attention unto thee, for thou art at all seasons occupied with the cultivating of thy life."

And having said these things I entreated him to forgive me, and I became certain in my mind that he was a spiritual man. Then with a smile he patted my left cheek with his right hand, and said unto me, "Many temptations will rise up for thee to endure, and moreover, for many years [past] thou hast struggled to go forth from the desert, and thou strugglest even to this day, but thou hast been afraid; and the causes thereof, which were thought

[by thee to arise from] the fear of God, hath the Evil One himself sowed in thy mind; and although thou didst drive away thy thought from thee thou hast kept him with thee. For he sowed in thee the thought of desire, which was also pleasant unto thee, that is to say, thou didst care greatly to bring out of the world thy father and also thy sister that they might take upon themselves the garb of the monastic life. Now there still remain to thy father seven other years of life, therefore continue to abide in the desert, and do not on account of these thoughts desire to go to thy kinsfolk, for it is written, 'No man who hath put his hand on the ploughshare and looketh back is useful to the kingdom of heaven'" (St. Luke ix, 62). Now, therefore, being helped by these words whereby I triumphed I gave thanks and praise unto God Who had quieted and laid to rest in me the cause which was urging me to go forth from the desert.

Then afterwards he said unto me with a smile, "Wishest thou to become a bishop?" And I said unto him, "I have already been made one"; and he said unto me, "Where?" Then I answered and said unto him, "I am the bishop of the public eating-houses, and of the taverns, and of tables, and of wine-pots, for I am a visitor of them. And if the wine hath gone sour I know enough to observe it, and that which is fit [to drink] I drink. Similarly I visit the cooking pot and if it needeth salt, or any seasoning whatsoever, I season it with sauces and then I eat thereof. For this, that is to say, my visiting, is my episcopate, and it is the love of the belly and gluttony which hath made me the visitor of these." And with a smile he said unto me further, "Quit these [words] of jesting, for a bishop thou must needs be, and thou wilt have to labour and to be troubled greatly; now if thou wishest to flee from tribulations and temptations go not forth from the desert, for in the desert no man will make thee a bishop."

And when I had departed from him I came to the desert, that is, to my place wherein I dwelt, and having related these things unto the blessed fathers, who after two months went and held intercourse with him, I forgot his words. And three years afterwards I fell sick with a sore sickness which was caused by my kidneys and stomach, and I was sent to Alexandria by the brethren who believed that I was collecting water (i.e., becoming dropsical), and the physicians counselled me to leave Alexandria, and for the sake of the air (or climate) to go to Palestine, where the air (or climate) was temperate and light and would be beneficial to my body. From Palestine I went to Bithynia, where, for what reason I know not, whether by the care and solicitude of men, or whether by the Will of God, Who is exalted above all things, I was held to be worthy of the laying on of hands for the episcopacy, which was far above my deserts, and I became an associate in the temptation (or trial) which rose up against the blessed John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople. And having been secluded for a period of about eleven months in a dark cell I remembered that blessed man who had told me of the things which had happened to me before they came to pass. Now the blessed man John related the things unto me, according to my opinion, that by means of the narrative he might incite my mind and bring me to continue to dwell in the desert; and he said unto me, "Behold, I have passed eight and forty years in this cell, and I have never seen the face of a woman [during the whole time], and no man hath either seen me eat or drink."

Now the handmaiden of Christ Pœmenia came unto the blessed man and begged that she might see him, but the blessed man would not allow her to do so; and he sent unto her other spiritual words to give her consolation, and he commanded her that when she was going down from the Thebaid she should not turn aside to Alexandria, saying, that if she did so, she would certainly fall into temptations. But Pœmenia, forgetting this [advice] and never letting it enter her mind [again], turned aside to Alexandria that she might see the city, and on the way, by the side of the city Nicius, she stopped her ship that she might rest herself. And when her servants had disembarked, through some untoward circumstance strife broke out between them and the people of the country, who were truculent men, and they cut off a finger of one believing man, and another they killed, and without knowing it they drowned the holy Bishop Dionysius in the river. And they made the venerable woman to endure many revilings and threatened to do much violence unto her; and they beat all her servants with many severe stripes, and they would hardly allow them to proceed on their way.

# Chapter 51. Of the Blessed Man Possidonius

Now the things which [are narrated] concerning the holy man Possidonius the Theban are so many that it is impossible to describe them all; he was so gentle, and gracious, and patient, and enduring, and his soul had so much goodness in it that I do not know that I ever met another man who was like unto him. For I lived with him in Bethlehem for a year, at the time he was living beyond the Monastery of the Shepherds, which was close to the town, and I observed in him many qualities of excellence, of which I will relate [an example of] one or two. He told me one day when I was living by the side of Porphyrites, [saying], "I have not spoken to a man for a whole year, and I have not heard the speech of one. I have not eaten bread, but the insides of palm leaves soaked in water and, whenever I could find it, wild honey. Once, however, the time came when these things failed me, and I was in sore tribulation because of it. And I went forth from the cave that I might go to the habitations of men, and having journeyed on the whole day I was scarcely two miles distant from the cave. And I turned [and looked] behind me, and I saw, as it were, a horseman whose appearance resembled that of a knight, and he had upon his head the similitude of a helmet, and thinking that he was a Roman I turned back to the cave, and I found outside it a basket of grapes and new, ripe figs, and I took them and went with them into the cave rejoicing; and that food sufficed to be a consolation unto me for a period of two months."

And the blessed man wrought in Bethlehem the following miracle. A certain woman had conceived, and she was possessed of an unclean spirit, and being near to the bringing forth of her child she was greatly afflicted by birth pangs and was violently tortured by that spirit; and as she was writhing by reason of the workings of that devil, her husband came and entreated the holy man to go and pray over her, and we went into [her house] therefore that we might pray together. And having stood up and prayed, after he had knelt down twice he cast out that unclean spirit; when he stood up he said unto us, "Pray ye, for straightway the devil shall go forth." But there was a certain sign, the fulfilment of which [he wished] to shew us, and therefore when that devil had gone forth, he overturned the whole of the courtyard wall unto its very foundations; now that woman had not spoken a word for a period of about six years, but after that devil had gone forth she brought forth her child and spake.

And, moreover, I also saw [an example] of the prophecy of this blessed man. There was a certain elder, whose name was Hieronymus, who dwelt in these parts, and he was exceedingly well versed in the art and practice of grammar and of eloquence, and he was greatly skilled in the Latin language; but he possessed the vices of envy and evil-eyedness to such a degree that the excellence of his very great skill and ability was entirely hidden. Now the blessed man Possidonius had dwelt with him for many days, and he told me that the free-woman Paula, who had taken care of him, departed from this world before her time in order that she might escape from his envy, and, according to my opinion, it was on account of this man that none of the holy men would live in these districts; and the envy of this man continued to such a degree that it overtook his own brother, which thing took place even as he had foretold. And he also persecuted the blessed man Oxyperentius, who came from Italy, and the wonderful men, Peter the Egypttian and Simeon, who were seen by me. And Possidonius the Great himself told me that for the whole period of forty years he had not tasted food made of bread, and that wrath against any man did not abide with him as long as the half of the day.

# Chapter 52. Of Chronius who was from the Village of Phoenix

There was a certain man whose name was Chronius, who came from the village which was called Tomártá (i.e., Phoenix) which was nigh unto the desert; and when he had gone away a little distance from human habitations, and had departed from his village, having measured out along the road with his right foot about fifteen thousand paces, he prayed and dug in that spot a pit, and he found [therein] good and sweet water. Now the well was about seven fathoms in depth; and he built there a little habitation wherein to dwell, and from the day wherein he shut himself up in that place, he prayed to God that he might never return to a region inhabited by men. Now when he had dwelt there some few years, he was esteemed worthy to become a priest unto the brotherhood, for there were gathered together unto him about two hundred brethren. And these excellent things are said concerning him: that during the whole of the period of sixty years, wherein he was performing the ministrations of the altar, he never once went out of the desert, and that he never ate bread which he had not [earned by] the labour of his hands.

# Chapter 53. Of James the Lame [and of Paphnutius Cepbala]

Now by the side of this Chronius, who is [mentioned] above, there used to dwell a certain man who was called James the Lame, and he was an exceedingly learned man; now both of these men knew the blessed Anthony. And it came to pass one day that there happened to be there also Paphnutius, who is described as a man who watered gardens by machines, and who possessed the gift of knowledge to such a degree that he knew how to expound the Books of the Old and New Testaments without reading from them; and he was such a gentle man that his meekness overcame the gift of prophecy which was found with him; now the former was voluntary, and the latter was an act of Divine grace. And of this man it was said that he possessed spiritual excellence to such a degree that for a period of eighty years he did not own two tunics. Now when I and the blessed man Evagrius came to these men we desired to learn the reasons for the stumblings of the brethren and for their transgressions against the strict rules of the ascetic life.

And it came to pass in those same days that Chaeremon the anchorite departed from the world whilst he was sitting on his seat and holding his work in his hand. And it came to pass that another brother was buried by a fall of earth when he was digging a well. And another died of want of water as he was coming from Scete. And in addition to these [we wished to learn] concerning the matter of Stephen, which ought not to be spoken about, for he fell into foul lasciviousness.

And [we asked] concerning Eucarpius, and those which concerned Hero the Alexandrian, and the Palestinian, and Ptolemy the Egyptian, who were in Scete. And we were asking among ourselves the question, "What is the reason why men live lives of this kind in the desert, whereby some receive injury mentally, and some are ensnared by lasciviousness? Whereupon Paphnutius, that man of great learning, made answer unto us in the following words, saying, "All the various things which take place in the world must be divided into two categories, for some happen through the direct Will of God, and the others by His permission only; the things which are wrought to the praise of God, especially happen by the direct desire of God, but all those which appertain to loss (or injury), and danger, and to matters which produce tribulation take place by the permission of God. Now permission ariseth

from a fault on the part of the mind. For it is impossible for the man who thinketh rightly to fall into foul sins, or into the error which ariseth from the devils, for all of these take place through a corrupt intent (or disposition), and through the [love of the] approval of the children of men, and by the daring of the thoughts, [which] hope to make perfect spiritual excellence.

Such men fall into reprehensible wickedness, and God permitteth them so to do, that they may be a help unto others, that when they feel the difference which hath come upon them through this permission, they may remember themselves and may turn again unto spiritual excellence, either that which existeth in the mind, or that which existeth in deeds. And sometimes it is the mind which sinneth, that is to say, when that sin which taketh place is committed with evil intent; and sometimes it is the deeds themselves which must be rejected, as, for example, when they are performed in a manner which is quite beyond everything which is right and seemly, and this latter case happeneth frequently. Thus a man of lust will, with corrupt design, give alms unto young women in order that he may fulfil his foul desire, even though at the beginning he may say, 'It is a beautiful act for us to offer help to the maiden who is an orphan, and alone [in the world] and in misery.' And again it may happen that a man may begin to do alms with a good and acceptable intent to those who are sick, or to those who have lost their riches and become poor, and that though he giveth his gift in a niggardly manner, and may murmur [at the expense] and wax wroth, his motive in giving will be found to be a right one. Now the deed is not [to be thought] equal to the motive.

For it is right for the man who would shew mercy to make his gift gladly and with a good eye."

And they also spoke the following: "There is a difference between the gifts which exist in various souls. Some of them possess keenness of mind, and some of them find it exceedingly easy and simple to acquire the habits of ascetic self-denial, or to do that which is difficult for other souls to do; but when a man maketh use of [his] gift of keenness of mind without a good object for so doing, or when he exerteth his faculty of performing things because it is easy for him to do so, or when men exercise the gifts which they have received, they do not ascribe, as would be right, the correctness of their spiritual excellences unto God, but to their own desire, and to their own keenness of mind. And those to whom it is sufficient to perform fair works are permitted by the Divine Providence to be caught in a snare, either by filthy deeds or filthy passions, or by the contempt or by the disgrace which cometh unto them from the children of men, so that through the shame and the contempt which [they receive] from the multitude they may little by little and by degrees cast away from them their boasting about the spiritual excellence which they imagine they possess.

"For he who is inflated and unduly exalted at the keenness of speech [which he possesseth] doth not ascribe to God, as is right, such keenness, or the discovery of the knowledge which is from Him, but to his own training, forsooth, or to his own naturally keen disposition; [therefore] doth God remove from him the Angel of His Divine Providence, and the Angel

being separated from him, this man is immediately vanquished by his Adversary, and he who was [unduly] lifted up in his keenness [of mind and speech] falleth into lasciviousness, or into some kind of filthy passion, because he was [unduly] exalted. And because he was lifted up, and because the witness of chastity hath separated himself from him, the things which are said by him become unworthy of credence, and those who fear God flee from the teaching of the mouth of the man who is in this condition, even as they would flee from a fountain which is full of leeches, so that there may be fulfilled that which is written, 'Unto the sinner God saith, What hast thou to do with the Books of My Command-

177 ments? (Psalm 1, 16.) For thou hast taken My covenant in 'thy mouth.' "'For in very truth the souls of those who are moved by passions are like unto fountains of divers kinds; the souls of gluttons and of those who live in impurity and drunkenness are like unto muddy springs; and the souls of those who love money and are avaricious are like unto wells which are full of frogs; and the souls of those who live in envy and pride, even though there be found in their nature a facility for receiving doctrine, are like unto wells which breed snakes, and which, even though their flow be continual, no man is able to drink from because of the bitterness of their manners and habits. And because of this the blessed man David asked and entreated God to give him three things: graciousness (orsweetness), knowledge, and instruction. [For without graciousness knowledge hath no use], and if a man whose manner of life is thus correct shall himself lift from off himself the cause of the permission [from God], which is boasting, and shall take upon himself humility, and shall recognize his true capacity, and shall not, at the same time, exalt himself over any man, and shall confess (or give thanks unto) God, the witness of knowledge will return unto him again."

"'Now this is the behaviour of spiritual excellence. For the spiritual words of a chaste mode of life do not permit to grow up together with them the parched spear-grasses, and ears of corn which have been smitten by the south wind (or drought), and which by reason of their appearance make men think they are full, whilst there is no [flour of] bread in them. Every lapse (or calamity) which taketh place, either through the tongue, or through some feeling, or through some action, or through the whole body, taketh place in proportion to the measure of a man's pride, and by the permission of God, Who showeth compassion upon those who commit themselves to His Divine Providence. For if, in addition to their skill in ordering their speech and their keenness of nature, the Lord were also to testify to the beauty of their words by never permitting them to fall, the arrogance with which they would exalt themselves in impurity would probably surpass that of the devils.'"

And the following also did these men of the house of Abbâ Paphnutius say unto us: "When thou seest evil deeds and acts, that is to say, the conversation of him who leadeth an evil life [and knowest] that they are fair and exceedingly plausible, remember the Devil who, [as we learn] from the Holy Scriptures, spake with Christ [St. Matthew iv, 3ff.], and also the testimony which saith, 'Now the serpent was the most subtle (Genesis iii, 1) of all the serpents which were on the ' earth,' and that it was by reason of his subtlety that des- ' truction came upon him, because he possessed no other quality of excellence which attached

itself closely to his cunning. For it is meet that the believing man who feareth God should ponder upon that which God giveth unto him. And let him speak that which he meditateth, and let him do that which he speaketh. For if to the asseveration of words there be not attached a brotherhood in acts and deeds, it is bread without salt, which cannot be eaten, lest digestion be disturbed, even as the blessed man Job said, 'Can the thing which is insipid ' be eaten without salt? Or, is there any taste in the juice of the ' ox-tongue plant?' (Job vi, 6.) Even thus polished words possess no savour whatsoever unless they be made complete by works.

" Now therefore there is one kind of permission which hideth spiritual excellence in order that it may be revealed, as, for example, that of Job concerning which God made known when He said unto him (Job xl, 8ff.), 'Blame not My judgement, ' and think not that I have done these things unto thee for any ' other reason than that it might be known that thou art ' righteous. Thou wast known unto Me because I see secret ' things, but thou wast not revealed unto the children of men, ' because they thought that thou didst care exceedingly for ' riches that thou mightest make perfect My pleasure; it was for ' this reason that I brought upon thee the trial of stripping thee ' of thy riches so that I might shew them thy gratitude to- ' wards Me, and thy patient endurance.'

" And there is another kind of permission [which God giveth] in order to drive out pride (or arrogance), as in the case of Paul, for the blessed Paul was permitted by means of distractions and a goad, and he fell into divers tribulations, and he said, 'There hath been given to me a goad in ' my flesh, a messenger of Satan, (2 Corinthians xii, 7) to buffet ' me so that I may not be [unduly] exalted,' lest through the superfluity of the revelations, and signs, and gratifications [of the spirit], and prosperity and honours which were found with him, he might become lax and fall into arrogance. And the paralytic was permitted because of sin, even according to what our Redeemer said unto him, 'Behold, ' thou art whole; sin no more' (St. John v, 14). And Judas was permitted because he held money (St. Matthew xxvii, 5) in greater esteem than life, and because of this he hanged himself. And Esau (Genesis xxv, 32) was permitted, and he fell into filthy desire because he honoured the dung of the bowels more than the divine birthright. Therefore, because

179 1 2d the blessed Paul understood all these things, did he say concerning men, 'Because they have not decided within them- "selves that they will know God, He hath delivered them over unto an empty understanding so that they may work that which is unseemly' (Romans i, 21-28). And concerning 'other men who think that the knowledge of God is in them, together with the corrupt mind which they possess, he said, Because they have known God, and have not praised Him as God, and given thanks unto Him, He hath delivered them over unto the passions of disgrace.'" Therefore from these things it is meet that we should know that it is impossible for a man to stumble and fall into filthy desire without the permission of the Providence of God.

# Chapter 54. Of the Blessed man Solomon

Now I went about in Antinoë of the Thebaïd for a period of four years, and I learned concerning the whole of the system of the religious houses which were there; for there dwelt by the side of the city about twelve hundred men, who worked with their hands, and who lived the life of spiritual excellence. Among these there was a number of solitary monks who shut themselves up in caves, and among them was one who was called Solomon; he was a chaste and humble man, and unto him was given the gift of patient endurance. He used to say that he had passed fifty years in the cave, during which time he had fed himself by means of his labour, and he could repeat the Scriptures by heart.

# Chapter 55. Of Dorotheos the Priest

And there was Dorotheos, a priest, who used to live in a cave, and he possessed more goodness than many men, and led a spiritual life of high excellence; now he had been held to be worthy of consecration to the priesthood, and he performed the offices thereof for the brethren who dwelt in the caves. Unto this blessed man Melania the Less, the kinswoman of Melania the Great, concerning whom we are about to speak later, sent five hundred darics and begged him to spend them on behalf of the brethren [who were there]; but he only took three of them, and then sent the remainder to the wandering monk Diocles, a man of knowledge and understanding, saying, "O our brother Diocles, thou art wiser than I am; I am not equal [to spending these]"; and having taken them Diocles was able to spend them wisely on those whom he knew of a certainty to be in want.

# Chapter 56. Of Diocles

This man Diocles was originally [one] of those who were greatly skilled in grammar, but afterwards he became learned in philosophy. And having arrived at the period of the twenty-eighth year of his life, he was called by the Grace of God, and he departed and removed himself from the house of instruction, and delivered himself over to the promise of Christ; and having dwelt in caves for the space of thirty-five years, he said unto us, "The mind which removeth itself from the meditation of God falleth into lust." Now he used to say that lust was that of a savage, animal, and bestial character, for he said unto us, "The mind which falleth away from the meditation of God becometh either a devil or a beast"; and we asked him to explain this saying unto us, and he did so, and said, "The mind which maketh itself to be remote from the contemplation of God must, perforce, be delivered over either to the devil of lust, who leadeth [it] into lasciviousness, or to the evil devil of wrath, wherefrom are produced the animal passions." And he said, "The feeling of lasciviousness is a bestial thing, but the feeling of wrath appertaineth to the devil." And making answer I said unto him, "How is it possible for the human mind to be with God continually and uninterruptedly?" And he said, "The mind of that soul which liveth in the thought or the fear of God, no matter what it may be, is with God."

# Chapter 57. Of the Blessed Man Kapiton

Now by the side of this man there used to dwell Kapiton, a man who had been formerly a thief, and he had lived in holes in the rocks for fifty years, [at a place] which was about four miles from Antinoë; he never went down from his cave, not even to the river Nile, for he used to say that he was unable to meet in the congregation of the children of men him that still fought with him, namely, his Adversary.

# Chapter 58. Of the Monk who fell

And by the side of these blessed men I saw a man who also had made himself remote from the world, and he dwelt in holes in the rocks even as did they; now this man was mocked at by the devil of vainglory, and by the visions which he saw, and he was deluded (or snared) by things which appeared to approach him and then wandered away. And he was lacking in mind, even as it is written, ”Being exalted in his dreams he pastureth spirits and pursueth after a shadow”; now he was chaste in his body, perhaps owing to the length [of his years], or perhaps through vainglory, yet through the matters of spiritual excellence he destroyed his understanding, and he was corrupted by empty and polluted glory, and because of this he departed from the straight road of the ascetic life.

# Chapter 59. Of the Blessed Man Ephraim, the Deacon of the Church of Edessa

A certain man among the holy Fathers saw in a dream the company of the holy angels who came down from heaven by the commandment of God, and one of them held in his hand a roll which was written on the inside and on the outside; and the angels said unto each other, "Who is fit to be entrusted with this thing?" Then some of them mentioned one man and others another, and others answered and said, "Verily these [whom ye mention] are holy and righteous, but they are not sufficiently [so] to be entrusted with this thing." And having reckoned up many names of Saints, they finally said, "No man is fit to be entrusted with this thing except Ephraim"; and then they gave the roll to him. And when he had stood up in the morning, he heard that they were saying, "Behold, Ephraim teacheth, and [his words] flow from his mouthlike [water from] a fountain"; then the old man who had seen the vision knew within himself that the things which were proceeding from his lips were of the Holy Spirit.

Now therefore this Ephraim, who was [one] of those who had been held to be worthy of mention by the saints, travelled along the spiritual road nobly and straightly, turning neither to one side nor the other of the straight path; and he was held to be worthy of the gift of the knowledge which he possessed naturally, and subsequently he received the knowledge which enabled him to utter divine things, and perfect blessedness. Thus he lived throughout the period of a certain number of years a life of chastity, and stern asceticism, and contemplation, and he edified all those who thronged to visit him, each according to his peculiar needs; and finally he compelled himself to go forth from his cell for the following reason, namely, a mighty famine lay over the city of Edessa. For having compassion on the creatures of the human race which was perishing and being destroyed, he spake unto those who were heaping up grain in the store houses, for he saw that they were wholly without compassion, saying, "How long will ye refuse to bring into your memories the lovingkindness of God? How long will ye allow your wealth, which is corruptible, to be the means of the accusation and condemnation of your souls? Then they took counsel, and said unto him,

## *CHAPTER 59. OF THE BLESSED MAN EPHRAIM, THE DEACON OF THE CHURCH OF EDESSA*[1]

"There is no man whatsoever whom we can trust to relieve the wants of those who are dying of hunger; for all the people are crafty and they act in a lying fashion concerning affairs" [of this kind].

Then Ephraim said unto them, "What manner of man do ye imagine that I am? Now his character was held in the highest esteem by every man [in the city], and every man knew that he acted according to the truth and not falsehood. And the people said unto him, "O man, we know that thou art God"; and he said unto them, "Put your trust in me, then, and give me [the means of relieving] this distress, for behold, for your sakes, I will set myself apart to become the keeper of a house for receiving strangers. And he took money, and he began to fence off in the streets places which were suitable for his purpose, and he provided with great care three hundred beds, some of which were intended for use in the burial of those who were dying, and others were intended for those who, it was thought, would live; and, in short, he brought in from the villages which were outside the city all those whom famine had stricken, and put them to bed, and every day he performed for them with the greatest possible solicitude the constant service of which they were in need, [paying for the same] with the money which came to him, and he rejoiced by means of those who supported him in the matter.

And it came to pass that, when that year of famine had been fulfilled, and there arrived after it a year of abundance, and every man departed to his house, inasmuch as he had nothing else to do he went into his cell; and after a period of one month he brought his life to a close, God having given him the opportunity whereby he might be crowned at the end of his life. Now he left behind him many books, and writings of various kinds, which were worthy of being preserved with the greatest care. It is said concerning him that when he was a youth he saw a dream, that is to say a vision, wherein a vine grew up out of his tongue, and it increased in size, and filled the whole of the space which was beneath the heavens, and was laden with grape clusters in rich abundance; and all the feathered fowl of the heavens came and ate of the food thereof, and all the time they were eating the grape-clusters were increasing both in numbers and in size.

# Chapter 60. Of Innocent the Priest

Concerning the matters of the blessed priest Innocent, who [lived] in the Mount of Olives, I think that thou must have heard from many people, but thou mayest also learn from us not a few things, for we lived with him for a period of three years. Now therefore this man was exceedingly simple, and he was [one] of the nobles of the palace in the kingdom of the Emperor Constantine; he withdrew himself from the partnership of marriage, but he had a son whose name was Paule, who served in the household [of the Emperor]; and this son was caught in a transgression with the daughter of a certain priest, and Innocent was exceedingly wroth with him. Then Innocent made entreaty unto God, saying, "O our Lord, give thou unto him such a spirit that he will not be able to find time to sin in the lust of the body," for he thought that it would be better and more excellent in every way for his son to be delivered over to a devil rather than to fornication. And this actually came to pass to the youth, and he liveth to this day in the Mount of Olives loaded with irons, and admonished by a devil. Now this man Innocent, the father of Paule, because he was of a most merciful disposition—though if I were to tell [the whole truth] I should say that he appeared to me to be lacking in sense—on very many occasions stole [things] and hid them from the brethren, and gave them unto those who were in want; but he was a simple man and had no wickedness in him; and he was held to be worthy of the gift [of the possession of power] over devils.

For a certain maiden, in whom was a devil, came unto him, and whilst we were looking at her the devil smote her, and threw her down upon the ground and made her body to writhe and twist about; and when I saw [this] I wished to dismiss that maiden in order that she might go to her mother, because, on account of the cruelty (or violence) of that devil, I thought that she could never be healed. And whilst I was pondering those things the old man Innocent came, and he saw her mother standing, and weeping, and tearing her face with her nails, and plucking out her hair, because of the great madness, and the gnashing of the teeth, and the contortions of her daughter. When, therefore, that blessed old man saw her, his mercy revealed itself because he was grieved on account of her tribulation, and he took the maiden, and went into his martyrium, which he himself had built, and wherein was preserved a blessed [relic] of Saint John the Baptist, and having prayed there and made supplication unto God from the third unto the ninth hour, he gave the maiden [back] to her mother, and she was healed on that day, and he drove away from her the devil and [his]

struggles [with her]. Now the strugglings and contortions of the maiden were such that when she spat, she spat upon her side [instead of away from her]; to this extent was her body twisted.

And, again, a certain old woman lost a sheep, and she came to him weeping [about it], and he took her, and said unto her, Shew me the place where thou didst lose it"; and they came, therefore, to a place which was near the grave of Lazarus, where he stood up and prayed. Now certain boys had stolen the sheep and had already killed it. And Innocent having prayed, and the boys being unwilling to confess that the flesh of the sheep was buried in a vineyard, a raven suddenly appeared, though wherefrom no man knoweth, which had taken a piece of flesh from the carcass, and stood over the place where it was; and when the old man saw this he perceived that the sheep was buried there. Then those boys fell down and did homage to him, and they confessed that they had taken the sheep, and paid the price thereof to its mistress.

# Chapter 61. Of the Blessed Elpidius

In those caves which, in ancient times, certain men had hewn out of the rock in the valley of the river near Jericho, wherein those who had fled from before Joshua, the son of Nun, had gone up and hidden themselves, there dwelt Elpidius; now he was a Cappadocian, who had been converted in the monastery of Timothy the Chorepiskopos, and he was a wonderful man and was also held to be worthy of consecration to the priesthood. And he came and dwelt in one of these caves, and he shewed such patient persistence in his self-abnegation, that he surpassed and eclipsed many [thereby]; for he followed for five and twenty years his rule of life, and during that time he only ate food on the Sabbath day, and on the First Day of the week, and he dwelt like the chief and the king of the bees among the cells of the whole brotherhood. And he used to rise up continually during the night and pray; and I myself also dwelt with him. And he made that mountain to be so peaceful and to contain so many inhabitants that it resembled a city, and during the night season a man might see the various works, and the labours of all kinds which appertain to the ascetic life, being performed there.

One night, when this man Elpidius was reciting the service, now we were with him, a scorpion stung him, and he crushed the insect, without either leaving the place where he was or being in any way moved as a man usually is when he is suffering from the sting of a scorpion. And one day as he was holding in his hand a vine branch, a certain brother took it away from him; and as he was sitting by the side of the mountain, he dug a hole and pushed the vine branch into it, like a man who is planting [vines]; and although it was not the time for planting, the vine branch sprouted, and grew very large, and spread its branches abroad until it covered the whole church. Now the name of that brother was Ænesius, a wonderful man.

# Chapter 62. Of the Blessed Man Eustathius

Eustathius was a brother of Elpidius whom [we have mentioned] above, and this man followed so strenuously after the acquisition of impassibility, and made his body so dry (i.e., emaciated) by the labours of vigilant prayer, that the [light of] the sun could be seen between his ribs. And of him the following story is told by the brethren who were continually with him, that is to say by his disciples: He never turned himself towards the west, because close by the side of the door of his cave was a mountain which, because of its mighty bulk, was very hard [to ascend]; and he never looked at the sun after the sixth hour of the day, because the door of his cell was hidden by the shadow of the mountain so long as the sun was declining towards its place of setting. And moreover he could never see those stars which appear in the western part of the sky, and for five and twenty years from the time when he entered the cave wherein he dwelt he never went down from the mountain.

# Chapter 63. Of the Blessed Man Sisinnius

Now this holy man Elpidius had a certain disciple whose name was Sisinnius, who was a slave by birth, though a free man in the faith; by race he was a Cappadocian, and it is necessary that we should make known the fact that he was so, for the sake of the glorifying of Christ Who hath made us worthy to be accounted His kinsmen, and to be exalted to that true family, which is full of happiness, of the kingdom of heaven. Now therefore when this man Sisinnius had passed some time with Elpidius, and had struggled to lead the ascetic life strenuously for a period of seven years, he at length shut himself in a grave for three years, and he endured such privations therein that neither by day nor by night did he sit or lie down, and he never went out herefrom. And this man was held to be worthy of possessing the gift of authority over devils, and now that he hath come into his own country he hath been held to be worthy of the gift of the priesthood; and he hath made congregations of men and of women, which, according to a sure testimony, lead lives of purity and chastity. He hath trampled upon the lust which is in men, and he hath bridled the voluptuousness of the women, so that there hath been fulfilled that which is written, "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female" (Galatians iii, 28). And he was also a great lover of strangers and of voluntary poverty, which was a reproach unto those who were rich and miserly.

# Chapter 64. Of the Blessed Gaddai (Gaddanus), the Palestinian

And I saw a certain old man whose name was Gaddâi, who lived without a shelter all his days in the places which were by the side of the Jordan. On one occasion the Jews rose up against him in fierce hatred (or zeal) by the side of the Dead Sea, and they drew the sword against him, and one of them took up a weapon to smite him, when the following great and wonderful thing was wrought upon the man who dared to lift up a sword against the blessed man: the hand of the man who had drawn the sword withered immediately, and the sword itself fell upon the ground.

# Chapter 65. Of the Blessed Man Elijah

And there was in this place a solitary monk called Elijah who used to dwell in a cave, and he passed his life in performing the works of spiritual excellence, and was worthy of praise. One day, when a great many of the brethren thronged to him—now his [dwelling-place] was a cave—he lacked bread, and he made apologies [to us] because he was troubled on account of the insufficiency of the bread. Now therefore, when the brethren went into his cell they found three loaves of bread, and when twenty men had eaten and were satisfied, there still remained one loaf which, one said, satisfied him for five and twenty days.

# Chapter 66. Of Sabas, the Layman of Jericho

And there was a certain layman from Jericho whose name was Sabas, and he had a wife, and this man loved the monks so much that during the night season he used to go round about in the desert, and pass by the cells of the solitary monks therein, and outside the cell and habitation of each one of them he would set down a bushel of dates and vegetables, which would be sufficient for his wants, for the monks who lived by the side of the Jordan did not eat bread, and thus this man Sabas supplied the wants of the monks. One day as he was carrying along a load [of food] for the usual needs of the monks, through the operation of the Evil One, who is the Adversary of the monks, a lion met him, which terrified him, and wished to make him to cease from his ministrations to those holy men, and schemed to prevent him from performing his benevolent intent for their comfort. And the lion having overtaken him about a mile from the place where the monks were, and having seized him by his hand in order to turn him aside from his business, He Who by the hand of Daniel shut the mouth[s] of the lions, shut the mouth of this lion also (Daniel vi, 22; Hebrews xi, 33), and the beast did this lover of alms no harm whatsoever; and although the lion was exceedingly hungry he only took a very little of the things which Sabas was carrying for the old men, and then he departed. And it is manifest that He Who gave this man his life also satisfied the hunger of the lion.

# Chapter 67. Of the Blessed Man Serapion of the Girdle

And again there was a certain blessed man whose name was Serapion, who was called "Serapion of the girdle," because during his whole life he neither put on nor was clothed with anything except the girdle wherewith he was girt about; and he led a life of the strictest self-denial and poverty. And though he was a wholly unlearned man he could repeat all the Scriptures by heart. And by reason of the greatness of his self-denial and the repetition of the Scriptures he was unable to live in a cell, because he could not make use of anything which belonged to [this] world; but he went round about at all seasons and taught the multitudes, and he sold himself voluntarily, and he preached, and taught, and turned many people unto God. And this form of self-denial was of his own choosing, and [it was by such means as this that he made] his preparation [for heaven]; now there are very many ways of leading a stern life of self-denial. And many of the venerable fathers relate concerning him that on one occasion he took a fellow monk, who sold him to some comic actors for twenty dīnārs in a city of the heathen, and having received these dīnārs he tied them up [in a bag] and sealed them, and kept them carefully; and then he became subject to and ministered in all humility to those actors who had bought him until he had taught them and made them Christians, and had freed them from following the business of the theatre. And he never ate anything except dry bread and water, and his mouth never once ceased from uttering [the words of] the Scriptures.

Now the man [who was the master of the actors] was the first to become converted and enlightened by the word of God, and the next was his wife, and finally their whole house was converted. During the first years after the actors had bought him, and when they did not know who he was, he used to wash their feet with his hands, and having taught them and baptized them he made them to be remote from their occupation in the theatre, and they led a God-fearing life in all righteousness; and they held him in reverence, and honoured him, and marvelled at his radiant life. Finally they said unto him, "Come, O our brother, we will set thee free from this servitude, even as thou hast set us free from the slavery of heathenism. Then he answered and said unto them, "Since God hath helped [me], and your souls have been set free and they have life, I will tell you my story (or thing) and my contending. I undertook this kind of work in order that your souls might have life. By race

I am an Egyptian, and a free man [but] I am a monk [vowed] to self-denial and poverty, and for the sake of our Lord I sold myself to you in order that your souls might be set free from the impurity of this world;

since now our Lord hath worked through my meekness, and your souls live, take your gold, and I will go to another place, so that I may be able to benefit others also. And they begged and entreated him, saying, "Remain with us, and thou shalt be unto us a father and a master, and a director"; but he would not hearken unto their entreaty. And again they answered and said unto him, "Give the gold to the poor, and let it be a pledge of life for us; and we entreat thee to see us if it be only once a year."

Then, this man having gone round about came to Hellas, and stayed in Athens three days, and no man gave him a morsel of bread; now he carried nothing with him, neither purse, nor wallet, nor head-cloak, nor anything whatsoever. And when the fourth day had come, he waxed exceedingly hungry, and he went and stood up upon a certain high place where all the free men of the city were gathered together, and he began to clap his hands, and to cry out with a loud voice, saying, "O men of Athens, send [help]." And at [the sound of] his voice they all marvelled, and the free men and the soldiers ran to him, and said unto him, "What aileth thee? Whence comest thou? What hath happened unto these?" Then he answered and said unto them, "By race I am an Egyptian, and being a long way from my true country I have fallen into the hands of three creditors; now two of these have departed from me, having taken that which was theirs, and now they have no debt against me about which to chide me, but the third will not leave me."

And the philosophers made enquiries of him who these creditors were, and they said unto him, "Shew us who thy creditors are, and who it is that is afflicting thee, and we will entreat them [to desist]; shew us who they are, so that we may help thee." And he answered and said unto them, "From my youth up the love of money, and fornication, and the appetite of the belly have oppressed me; from the first two of these, that is, the love of money and fornication, I have been freed, and they no longer oppress me, but I am wholly unable to set myself free from the appetite of the belly. Behold, it is now the fourth day since I have eaten anything and the belly constraineth me, for it demandeth that which is its usual debt, and unless this debt [be paid] I shall not be able to live." Then certain of the philosophers thought that he had schemed this crafty device in order that he might gain some benefit, and one of them took a dînâr and gave it unto him, and having taken it he spent [part of] it in buying bread in their presence; and he took one [loaf of] bread, and straightway departed from the city, and did not come back to it again. Thus the philosophers knew that he was indeed a wonderful man, and they paid the price of the loaf of bread which he had taken, and received back the dînâr.

And having departed to another city he heard there concerning a certain other man, who was the chief of the whole city, and who was a Manichaean, with all his house, and who had several associates [in the city]. Then the monk, according to his former plan, sold himself to this Manichaean, and in two years he was able to turn this man and his wife [from their

error], and to bring them into the Catholic Church; and after they had learned who he was, they never again regarded him as a slave, but they honoured him as a father, and as a master, and they ascribed praise unto God.

And on another occasion he determined to go to Rome, and he embarked in a ship which was going thither that he might go with them (i.e., with the sailors). Now when the sailors of the ship saw that he boldly embarked in the ship carrying nothing with him, neither bread, nor anything [else], nor provisions for the journey, they thought that one of their number must have taken his baggage and placed it in the ship, and because of this thought they received him unquestioningly. And having embarked, when the sailors had sailed from Alexandria [a distance of] about five hundred stadia, each one of those who were sitting in the ship began at the time of sunset to eat, and the sailors also ate in their presence; and they observed that the monk did not eat on the first day, and thought that [he did not do so] because of sea-sickness, and thus also was it on the second day, and on the third day, and on the fourth day. Now on the fifth day, whilst all those who were on the ship were eating their meal he sat in his place and was silent, and as they were looking at him they said, "Why dost thou not eat? and he replied, "I have nothing [to eat]. Then they began to make enquiries and to cry out among themselves, "Who among you has taken his things, or his provisions for the way?

And when they saw that no man had taken anything from him [they began to] dispute with him, and to say unto him, "O man, how is it that thou hast embarked on the ship without provisions and money? Where wilt thou obtain the money to give us for thy passage? And he said unto them, "I have thought nothing whatsoever about it, [for] an Egyptian has no anxious care about anything; but carry me back whence ye took me and cast me out [if you wish]. Now even if he had given them one hundred dinārs they would not have been able to take him back [to Alexandria], and he therefore remained in the ship, and they fed him until he arrived in Rome. And having come to Rome he made enquiries and learned what monk or nun was there, and he found Runnin (or Dōmnin), the disciple of Evagrius, whose bed, after his death, cured every kind of sickness. And having seen him, and spoken with him he was greatly edified by him, for he was a man who was greatly skilled in the labours of the ascetic life, and in speech, and in knowledge, and he learned from him what monk, and nuns were in Rome, in order that he might see them.

[Here some editor of Palladius remarks, "In another manuscript the following is written":]

And the venerable fathers relate concerning him that he once heard that there was in the city of Rome a certain nun who led a life of the strictest seclusion, who had never seen a man, and who used to think concerning herself that she was perfect. Then this blessed man threw himself into a ship and came to Rome, and having learned where she lived he went and spake with the old woman who ministered unto her, and said unto her, "Get thee in and say unto the virgin, I desire to see thee most eagerly, because God hath sent me unto thee"; and he waited two days and then saw her. And when he saw her he said unto her, "Sit thee down," and she said unto him, "I will not sit down, but will depart." And he said

unto her, "Whither goest thou?" and she said unto him, "To God." And he said unto her, "Art thou living or dead?" And she said unto him, "I believe, by God, that I am dead, for who that liveth in the body is not able to depart [therefrom]?" And he said unto her, "If thou art dead, as thou sayest, do thou that which I do"; and she said unto him, "Tell me what can happen, and I will do it." And again he said unto her, "To one who is dead unto the world it is easy to do everything except commit sin," and he further said unto her, "Come down, and get thee out of thine house"; then she said unto him, "I have not gone out of it for five and twenty years, why should I go out of it now?" And he said unto her, "If thou art indeed dead unto the world, and the world is dead unto thee, it is the same thing unto thee whether thou goest forth or dost not go forth; come, get thee out." And she went out.

And after she had gone forth, she followed him to a certain church, and he said unto her in the church, "If thou wishest 'me to believe that thou art dead to the world and art not alive, in order that thou mayest be pleasing unto the children of men, do what I do, and then I will believe thee, and I shall know that thou art a dead woman, even as thou sayest.' And she said unto him, 'Tell me what it is meet for me to do, and I will do it.' Then he said unto her, 'Cast off thy garments and put [them] on thy head, and walk through the midst of the city, and I will do likewise, and will go in front of thee in this guise.' And the nun said unto him, 'I should offend many folk by such a remarkable act as this, and then they would say, This woman hath gone ' mad, and hath a devil.' And he said unto her, 'What need hast thou to consider [their words] even if they should say, ' She hath gone mad, and hath a devil?' For, according to 'what thou thyself sayest, thou art a dead woman unto them.' And the nun said unto him, 'If there be any other thing [except this] tell me, for I cannot come to such a measure of disgrace as this.' Then he said unto her, 'Do not imagine in thy mind that thou art more perfect than anyone else, or that thou art dead to the world;

for I am far more dead to the world than thou art, and I can show thee that I am indeed so, and that I can boldly do this thing without '[feeling] shame or disgrace.' Then having broken her spirit and humbled her pride, he departed from her. And there were many things of the same kind which this same Serapion did in the world, for he despised both worldly shame and the glory which passeth away; he died at the age of sixty years, and was buried at a good old age, being adorned with all virtues.

# Chapter 68. The Triumph of the Blessed Man Eulogius, who ministered unto the Arian, whose Body was destroyed for the sake of Christ

The following story] was related unto me by Cronius, the priest of Nitria, [who said]:—When I was a young man I abhorred the monastery, and I fled from it, and from the head of the monastery who was my instructor, and having lost my way and gone round about, I came unto the Monastery of Mâr Anthony; now he used to dwell between the mountains of Babylon and Herakleia, in a parched desert which led to the Red Sea, about thirty miles from the river [Nile], and I was there in that monastery wherein dwelt those disciples of his who buried him when he died, now their names were Macarius and Amatus, in a place which was called Espîr. And I remained there for five days, so that I might be able to see the blessed Anthony, for they used to say that he was in the habit of coming to this monastery from the Inner Desert once every five, or ten, or twenty days, according as God directed and brought him, to give help unto the souls who thronged into his monastery, and who awaited him there, in order that they might be relieved by him. And the brethren also were assembled there and waited for him also, each one of them having his own individual matter [to lay before him].

Now among them was a certain man from Alexandria, whose name was Eulogius, and with him was another man, an Arian, whose body was destroyed (i.e., he was a leper), and they had come because of this matter. And this man Eulogius was a scholastic, and he was the most educated of all the learned men [of this time], but the love of the living God had suddenly come into his mind, and he made himself to be remote from the world, and he distributed all the money which he had among the poor, and he left himself only a small sum which was just sufficient for his bodily needs, for he was unable to work or to enter into

a monastery with many monks in it, and besides this lassitude was contending with him, and he sought a little companionship.

Now [he went forth] seeking to buy something which he wanted in the city, and he found in the market a certain man who was an Arian, and whose whole body was destroyed; he had neither hands nor feet, but his tongue was sharp, and he employed it unsparingly upon every man whom he met. And when Eulogius had seen him, and looked at him, he lifted up his eyes and his mind towards God, and he prayed and made this covenant between himself and God, saying, "O our Lord Jesus Christ, in Thy Name, O my Lord, I will take this man, who is sick in his body, and I will relieve [his wants] all the days of my life, so that through him my soul may live before Thee; but I beseech Thee to give me power to endure in my ministrations to him." And having prayed, he drew nigh unto the man, and said unto him, "I beseech thee, O man, to let me take thee unto my house and to relieve thy wants." And the sick man said unto him, "Why not?" Then Eulogius said unto him, "I will therefore bring an ass, and carry thee off," and he promised him [saying], "I . . . . ."; and he went and brought an ass and carried him to the place where he lived, and he took care of him with the greatest diligence. And for a period of fifteen years Eulogius relieved his wants with the greatest and most careful attention, and he even washed him with his own hands, and he did everything he could to alleviate the affliction of his sickness.

193 Now after fifteen years a devil began to stir in that Arian, and he began to revile Eulogius, and to offer resistance to him, and he cursed him and hurled after him insults and abuse, saying, "O thou runaway [slave], who hast eaten thy lord, thou hast stolen the riches of other folk and art spending them upon me, and thou thinkest to have life through me! Cast me out into the street, for I wish to eat flesh. And Eulogius brought him flesh, and again he cried out, and said, "Thou wilt not persuade me [to remain here] by these means; I wish to go forth into the street, and I desire to see the world. By Jupiter, carry me out and cast me where thou didst find me. If I only had hands I would strangle myself. Now [he spake] thus through the madness of the devil which was with him. Then Eulogius rose up and went to the neighbouring monks and said unto them, "What shall I do? for this deformed man hath brought me to despair. I would set him free, only I have given [my] right hand in covenant to God, and I am afraid [to do so]; but on the other hand, if I do not cast him out he will bring upon me bad nights and bitter days. What to do with him I know not. And they said unto him, "[Anthony] the Great is still alive, go to him;

take the man with thee in a ship, and go thou up to him, and carry the man to his monastery, and wait there until he cometh from the desert and then tell him thy business. And whatsoever word he shall say unto thee thou shalt perform, for God shall speak unto thee through him. Then Eulogius was persuaded by them, and he placed the man in a small boat, and he carried him to the monastery wherein were the disciples of Anthony.

And it came to pass that on the very day after Eulogius had arrived there that great man came from the inner desert to his disciples in the late evening, and he was clothed in [his] skin cloak. Now whensoever he came to his monastery he was in the habit of calling out

to his disciple Macarius, and saying unto him, "O brother Macarius, have any brethren come this day from anywhere?" And Macarius would say, "Yea." Then Anthony would say, "Are they Egyptians or Jerusalemites?" Now he had given Macarius this sign:—"When thou seest brethren who are simple and innocent say they are Egyptians; but when thou seest brethren who are venerable and are skilled in speaking, say they are Jerusalemites." Therefore according to his custom Anthony asked Macarius, "Are they Egyptian brethren or Jerusalemites?" and Macarius said, "They are neither Egyptians nor Jerusalemites." Now when Macarius would answer, "They are Egyptians," Anthony would say unto him, "Cook them a mess of lentils that they may eat, and then dismiss them, and let them go in peace"; and he would say a prayer on their behalf, and would straightway send them away. And when Macarius would answer, "They are Jerusalemites," Anthony would sit down the whole night, and would converse with them to the benefit of their lives.

And on that night he sat down, and called unto them all, and he discoursed without any man having told him the name of one of them, and it was dark and the night had come; and suddenly he cried out three times, thus, "Eulogius, Eulogius, Eulogius. And Eulogius the scholastic answered him never a word, because he thought that Anthony was calling some other person, and again Anthony cried out to him, "Unto thee I speak, O Eulogius, who hast come from Alexandria. Then Eulogius said unto him, "Master, what commandest thou [me to do? Tell me], I beseech thee. And Anthony said unto him, "Wherefore hast thou come? And Eulogius answered and said unto him, "Let Him that hath revealed unto thee my name declare unto thee for what purpose I have come. Then Anthony said unto him, "I know why thou hast come, nevertheless declare [it] before the brethren in order that they may hear. And Eulogius answered and said unto him, "I found this Arian in the street (or market), and I gave the right hand to God (i. e., made a covenant with God), that I would minister unto him, [that] I might live because of him, and he because of me. And behold I have ministered unto him for the last fifteen years, and now, after all these years he stirreth [himself] up against me, and causeth me tribulation, and I have had it in my mind to cast him out;

therefore I have come unto thy holiness so that thou mayest advise me what I should do, and that thou mayest pray on my behalf, for I am greatly oppressed and am in sore straits. Then Anthony said unto him angrily and in a hard voice, "If thou sendest him away, He who created him will not send him away; if thou dost cast him out, God, Who is better and more excellent than thou, will gather him [to Himself]; and when Eulogius heard these words he set a bridle on his mouth and was silent.

And having left Eulogius [Anthony] came to chastise the Arian with his tongue, and he cried out and said unto him, "O thou deformed Arian, thou art worthy neither of heaven nor of earth. Wilt thou not cease to contend against God? Knowest thou not that he who ministereth unto thee is Christ? How canst thou dare to utter these words against our Lord? Was it not for Christ's sake that Eulogius gave himself to thy service?" Then having made the man sorrowful, he ceased from Eulogius and the Arian, and spake unto all the brethren who were there, unto

195 every man according to his business. And he called unto Eulogius and the Arian and said unto them, "Turn ye not unto any [other] place, but depart and separate not yourselves from one another, and return ye to the cell wherein ye have lived so long a time, for behold God will send upon you [your] end. And behold, this trial hath come upon you because the end of both of you is nigh, and because ye are esteemed worthy of crowns. Therefore do not ye act in a contrary manner, and let not the angel come after you and not find you in your place[s], [lest ye be deprived of your crowns];" so the two of them departed and came to their cell. And in less than forty days Eulogius died, and in less than three days afterwards the Arian died. Now this Chronius, who related unto us the narrative of this matter, tarried for a time in the monasteries which were in the Thebaid, and he came down to the monasteries which were in Alexandria; and it happened that the brethren were gathered together commemorating the death of Eulogius after forty days, and the death of the Arian after three days. And when Chronius heard he marvelled, and he took down a Book of the Gospels, and set [it] down among the brotherhood, and then related what had happened; and he took an oath and said, "In all this affair I was the interpreter for Mâr Anthony because he did not know Greek; but I know both languages, [and I acted interpreter for both sides, turning Greek into Egyptian for Eulogius, and Egyptian into Greek for Anthony.]"

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