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

Palladius of Galatia (c. AD 363–420)

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Chapter 1. The Triumph of the Blessed Man Mark the Mourner

Macarius the priest told us the following story:— ”At the time when I was administering the Holy Offering I took good heed unto Mark the mourner, and I never gave it to him, but an angel did so from the altar; I saw, however, the palm of the hand of the angel who gave it unto him.” Now this Mark was a young man, and he could repeat by heart the New and the Old Testaments; he was meek beyond measure, and both in body and in thought he was purer than many.

Chapter 2. The History of Mar Paulus (Paulo) the Prince of Monks and Anchorite

Concerning Abbâ Paulus there were questions among the monks and anchorites who were living in the land of Egypt, and they asked who were the first monks who lived in the desert. And some of them remembered the saints of olden time, and said, "It hath been proved that the first to dwell in the desert were Saint Elijah the Prophet, and John the Baptist, and it is manifest that Elijah was immeasurably superior in ascetic excellence to the [other] monks, and, moreover, John was proclaimed in the womb to be a prophet before he was born." Now there were many who contradicted this opinion and who asserted with firmness that Mâr Anthony was the first and the prince of them all, and also of the order [of monks]; but if we wish to learn the whole truth we shall discover that it was not Mâr Anthony who was the first [monk] that dwelt in the desert, but the blessed man Mâr Paulus. For I myself have seen the disciples of Mâr Anthony who buried him, and they it was who related unto us the history of the man Paulus the anchorite, the Theban, who was indeed the first [monk to live] in the desert; therefore we believe that it was not the blessed man [Anthony] who was the first to do this, as some men say, but Paulus, and for this reason I wish to narrate briefly the history of Paulus the anchorite, and how he began and how he ended his [career] in the days of Decius and Valerianus the persecutors, and [how] Cornelius made an end of the strife of his testimony for the sake of the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in Rome.

Now this blessed man Paulus dwelt with his sister, who was the wife of a certain man; and their parents died and left them great riches when the blessed man Paulus was sixteen years of age. And he had been educated in the learning of the Greeks and the Egyptians, and he was meek of soul, and he loved God thoroughly. And when the persecution of the Christians waxed strong, he remained continually in one place, and he took care of himself at all seasons (or continually). Now the avarice which constraineth the race of the children of men to commit evil deeds did not cease from him, for his sister's husband, instead of hiding him, endeavoured most strenuously to give him up [to the persecutors], and he neither had pity upon the tears of his wife nor did he fear the judgement of God; and he desisted not

from this iniquitous conduct, but continued in his envy and sought always to give him up because he was a Christian. And the wise young man, having comprehended his guile and knowing that he was lying in wait for him, took to flight secretly, and he went to a certain high mountain which he found to be not what he desired, and he changed his place [of abode] on account of the violence (or necessity) of the persecution;

but as he was living there, little by little he found out in the mountain a rock, wherein was a large cave, which was shut in with a stone, and having lifted up the stone he found within great repose, and he looked inside with great desire. And he discovered that the cave was clean, and that the dust of the ground also was fair, and he loved the place and dwelt there, and he gave thanks unto God Who had given it unto him for a dwelling-place; and he lived in that mountain all the days of his life, and his food and his raiment were made of the palm trees which were in the mountain. Now in order that no man may say, "How is this possible? I take God and His holy angels to witness that we have seen many monks [living] in this fashion, and that they have brought their lives to an end in this way, and have not been afraid of Satan.

I must not, however, neglect the history of the blessed man Paulus. This holy man lived a heavenly life upon the earth in love to our Lord for one hundred and thirteen years; and Mâr Anthony, who was ninety years old at the time, was living in another desert. And Mâr Anthony on one occasion told me the following: "I once thought within myself that there was no man living beyond me in the desert, and on the night wherein I pondered upon these things in my mind, it was revealed unto me from God [by one] who said unto me, 'Beyond thee [in the desert] there is a man who is more excellent than thou art, and it is meet that thou shouldst [go and] see him with all diligence, and with great joy.'" And when the morning had come, the blessed old man Mâr Anthony took the palm branch whereon he leaned his weight, and he began to walk in the desert as his mind directed, because he did not know the way; and when it was noon, although the heat of the sun was fierce and burning, the blessed old man did not turn aside from the way, but he said, "I believe that God will not withdraw [His] hands from me, but will shew me His servant concerning whom He hath sent me a revelation."

And as he was thinking thus about him he suddenly saw a man who possessed two natures, one half of him being that of a man, and the other half being that of a horse; now the poets call this being a "centaur. Then the blessed Anthony called unto him and said, "I, a man of God, say unto thee, 'Where " 'dost thou dwell here?'" And the creature returned him an answer in a barbarous language with words of impurity, and his mouth was full of fear; so the old man went on his journey seeking out the way. And as Anthony was marvelling [at this thing] the animal passed in front of him as if [it were going] to a broad field, and [Anthony knew that] it was Satan who had taken the form of the creature in order that he might terrify the blessed man, and he wondered at the similitude of the form which he had seen in the animal. And having passed on a little way further he saw another animal, which was smaller in stature than the first one, and he was standing on a rock, and he had

horns upon his head and on his forehead; and when the blessed Anthony saw him he put on the helmet of faith and [took the] shield of righteousness, and he asked him, "Who art thou whom I see here?

And the creature answered and said unto him, "I am a mortal man and one of these who are in the desert, whom the heathen call 'satyrs,' and whom because of their error concerning them they worship as a god"; and the beast having spoken these words the old man Anthony went on his way, and his tears were flowing and they ran down upon the ground, but he rejoiced because of the glory of Christ, and because of the destruction of Satan, and he wondered within himself how he had been able to understand the words of the animal. Then he smote the ground with his staff and said, "Woe be to Alexandria! Woe be to the city of the heathen, wherein are gathered together all the devils of all creation!"

And Anthony went on his journey thinking anxiously [how] he could attain to the end thereof, and he wished to find the servant of God; and whilst he was meditating what he should do and where he should go, he observed on the flat surface of the desert the footprints of an animal which had passed over the spot that very day. Then he meditated within himself, saying, "It is impossible for our Lord to forsake me"; and he journeyed on his way during the night with his prayers in his mouth continually. And when the morning had come he saw a huge hyena, running with all its might up to the top of a mountain, and he followed in its footsteps, and having ascended the mountain he came nigh unto a cave, and saw the hyena going into it; and he looked into the cave and saw perfect love, that is to say, Mâr Paule, the old man. Then he cast away from him all fear and doubtful thoughts, and looking into the cave he saw that there was much light therein, and he approached the door of the cave, and knocked thereat with a small stone, but as soon as the blessed man Paule heard the sound of the knocking he rolled the stone [down] quickly and closed the entrance of the cave. Then Anthony fell upon his face before the door of the cave and besought him to let him come in, and said, "I am alone";

[and the blessed man Paule answered and said, "Why hast thou come?"] And Anthony said, "I know that I am not worthy to see thee, but since thou receivest wild beasts why dost thou hold the children of men in abhorrence? I have sought and have found [thee], and I knocked with confidence; open thou then the door unto me. And if this may not be I shall die here, and when thou seest my dead body do thou bury it. And when with these words Anthony had taken up his position there the blessed man Paule answered from within and said unto him, "No man who is angry cometh [in here], and no man entreateth [for admission] and maketh accusations"; then he spake unto him words of gladness, and he opened unto him the door, and they met and embraced each other and kissed each other with holy kisses, and each man told his fellow his name.

Then after these things the blessed man Paule made Mâr Anthony sit by his side, and he said unto him, "Why didst thou cast upon thyself all this tribulation, and the great labour of seeking to see an old man whose body is altogether withered and emaciated? After a short time thou wilt see that I have become dust; but love overcometh all things. Tell me now

what is the present condition of the race of the children of men, and whether they are still building houses in the ancient cities, and whether there are still kings in the world, and whether the governors of the world are still in subjection to the error of devils." And having said these things unto Anthony the two of them looked and they saw a raven sitting on the branch of a tree, and straightway it stood up with great quietness upon the branch, and it had in its beak a whole loaf of bread which it came and laid down between them, whilst both men were looking on; and when the bird had departed they both marvelled. And the blessed Paule said unto Mâr Anthony, "Truly our Lord is merciful and pitiful in that He sendeth us a meal [in this way]. For behold, for fully sixty years I have been in the habit of receiving from this bird half a loaf of bread [daily], but at thy coming, behold, our Lord hath sent unto us a double portion of food because we are His servants." Then having given thanks unto God, both men sat down at the table, and they disputed with each other who should first break the bread, and whilst they were thus disputing the night came on; thereupon the two men took the bread and spread out their hands, and brake the loaf in the Name of our Lord, and ate it, and having eaten they stood up the whole night in prayer.

Now when the morning had come Paule said unto Anthony, "Thou must know, O my brother Anthony, that I have been living in the desert for a long time past, and that it was our Lord Himself who revealed unto me what manner of man thou art; but, because the time of my rest hath come, and because that which I have been seeking, that is to say, that I should depart and be with our Lord, is about to overtake me [I could not go to see thee]. And now that my time hath come to an end, and, as I believe, a crown of righteousness hath been laid up for me, thou hast been sent by our Lord that thou mayest bury my body in the ground." Now whilst the blessed man Paule was saying these things Mâr Anthony was weeping with many tears and heaving sighs, and he made supplication unto him, and said, "O my beloved one, leave thou me not here, but take me with thee whither thou goest." And the blessed Paule answered and said unto him, "It is not meet that thou shouldst seek thine own [advantage], but that of thy neighbours, and therefore, O my beloved, I beseech thee, if it be not a thing which is too hard for thee, to go quickly to thy monastery, and to bring hither to me the cloak which Mâr Athanasius the Bishop gave thee." Now he did not speak thus because he had need of any apparel, but because he wished to depart from his body whilst Mâr Anthony was absent.

And when Anthony heard concerning the Bishop and concerning his cloak, he marvelled within himself, and having looked upon the blessed Paule in our Lord Jesus, and bowed down before him, he prayed and set forth to go on his journey, and he approached and kissed him on his eyes and on his hands, and he made haste and went forth to depart to his monastery. And having made the journey and arrived at this monastery, his two disciples, who had been seeking him for a long time, met him, and they said unto him, "O father, where hast thou been these days? And he answered and said unto them, "Woe be unto me! woe be unto me a sinner! For the name of 'Christian' which I bear is only a borrowed thing. This day have I seen Elijah and John in the desert, for verily I have seen Paule in Paradise, and he was holding converse with them"; and Mâr Anthony smote with his hand upon his

breast, and he took the cloak and went from his disciples, who besought him to reveal unto them the whole matter. And he said unto them, "There is a time to be silent, and a time to speak"; so he departed and went forth on his way without taking any provision whatsoever with him.

And he made haste to come to the place where the blessed man Paule was, for he desired earnestly to see him [again], and he was afraid lest whilst he was yet afar off Paule might deliver himself up unto our Lord. And he journeyed on his way the first day, but on the second day, at the time of the ninth hour, he saw along the road, in the air, a company of angels, and a multitude of the Prophets and of the Apostles, and Abbâ Paule, who was shining with light like the sun, was in their midst, and he went up with them into heaven. And immediately he saw them he fell upon his face on the ground, and he sighed and wept, and cried out, and said, "O fearer of God, why hast thou left me thus? And why didst thou not receive my salutation together with all [the toil of] this journey which I have made as swiftly as a bird?"

And Mâr Anthony went on his way and arrived at the cave, and he saw Abbâ Paule kneeling upon his knees, with his face gazing into heaven and his hands spread out; and seeing him thus Mâr Anthony thought within himself, and said, "Perhaps he is alive"; and he prayed fervently, and the blessed Paule also stood up and prayed with him. And when some time had elapsed, and he heard neither the sound[s] nor the sighs which are customary in prayer, he knew that it was only the body of Abbâ Paule which prayed; and he bowed down before God, in Whom everything liveth, and he placed the body in the middle of the cloak, and wrapped it in it, and he took it upon his shoulders; and though he sang Psalms, according to the custom of the monks, the blessed Anthony was greatly grieved because he had not remembered to bring with him a spade or some other instrument wherewith to dig a grave for the body. Then he meditated within himself and said, "What shall I do? If I go to my monastery and bring a spade I cannot possibly return here in less than four days"; and he said, "O Jesus Christ, let me also die with Thy beloved servant Paule."

Now as he was saying these things, behold, two lions came running along together, and when he saw them his whole body smoked with fear; and when he had lifted up his mind to God and had looked at them again, they appeared to be doves flying through the air. And the lions drew nigh and stood near the body of the blessed Paule, and they wagged their tails at the blessed Anthony, and they crouched down before him in perfect tameness, and they rubbed their teeth together and purred so loudly that the blessed man knew that they wished to be blessed, and to be helped, and that they desired [to know] concerning the departure of the blessed Paule. And after they had acted thus, the lions began to dig [a grave], and they threw up the earth with their paws, and they made the hole in the ground deep enough, and wide enough, and long enough, according to the measure of the body; and they lowered their ears and their tails, and bowed down their heads before Abbâ Anthony, and they licked his hands and his feet, and he knew that they wished to be blessed. Then he gave thanks for the glory of God because that even the wild and savage beasts knew how to

[help] the good and chosen men of God, and he spake thus:—"O Lord God, without Whose command not one 'leaf falleth to the ground, and against Whose Will not one bird droppeth into the snare, do Thou bless all of us.

And he brought his hand nigh unto the lions, and commanded them to depart; and when the two lions had gone away Anthony took the body and buried it in the customary way. Then, after one day, he took the tunic of Abbâ Paule, which was made of palm leaves sewn together, like a true inheritance and a thing which brought privilege, and departed to his monastery. And when he had arrived there he related unto the monks the whole matter in due order; and on the feast of unleavened bread and at Pentecost Saint Anthony used to put on the tunic of the blessed and holy man Paule, and he would pray with it upon him.

And I, Hieronymus the sinner, entreat all those who read this book to pray for me. [In the text here comes the following note by some editor of Palladius:] Concerning these histories of Paule, and of the company of Mark (?), and of Macarius, there are some who say that they were compiled by Hieronymus because his name occurs at the end of them.

Chapter 3. The Triumph of a young Man who was an Alexandrian

There was a certain young man in Alexandria, who, immediately the law of nature began to work in him, and to make him to possess the knowledge which distinguisheth good from evil, endeavoured by every means in his power to make himself wholly a stranger unto things which are evil, and to cleave unto those which are good. And having been trained for a long time, and having made himself proficient in the things which befit monks, even though he still lived and went about in the city, he at a certain time thought within himself, and said, "Since there is no good reason what-soever which compelleth me forcibly to remain in the city any longer it is not right that I should do so," and he was at all times reminding himself of the word which was spoken by our Lord to the rich man, "If thou wishest to be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast and give [it] to the poor, and take thy cross and come after Me" (St. Matthew xix, 21). And the young man said, "The word of our Lord is true, but it is impossible for a man to acquire that perfection of which He spake whilst he is living among men."

When then he had made himself ready to perform in very deed this great thought, he began to journey along the road which leadeth to one of the deserts of Alexandria, where large numbers of monks used to dwell, and he offered up prayer unto God that He would prepare a way for him, and would direct him unto a man who would be able to help him [to attain] his object, and would lead him to the end which he desired. And he decided within himself, and said, "This shall be unto me a sign that the Lord hath prepared His way before me:—The door whereat I shall knock, and wherefrom shall go forth one who liveth there, and shall receive me in peace, and shall urge me to go in to him, and shall receive me in the love which monks have for strangers, that shall be the place, and that shall be the man whom the Lord hath prepared for the fulfilment of my thoughts concerning spiritual excellence. And he said, "Unto the man who hath been prepared by the Lord it is meet for me to be in subjection as unto Christ, and I must hearken unto his command willingly and unhesitatingly as unto that of Christ. Now as he was praying with these words, and with others which were like unto them, and was thinking deeply, he arrived in the desert into which he had set his face to go.

And having gone in among the monasteries, he found himself by the dispensation of God before the door of a habitation wherein a certain old man dwelt; and when, according to his expectation, he had drawn nigh, and had knocked at the door which was in front of him, there came forth therefrom straightway the old man who dwelt inside, and opened the door to him; and when he saw the young man who was standing there he saluted him gladly, when as yet he had asked him nothing whatsoever, and entreated him urgently to come inside. And this actually took place.

Now after he had gone in and had, according to custom, prayed, and sat down, the young man compared the things which had taken place with those which he had written down in his mind, and he waited for a right issue to all [the rest]. Then, being full of gladness, the old man urged him repeatedly to partake of food, but the young man answered and said unto him, "My lord, I beseech thy holiness to permit me first of all to speak openly, and to make known to thy fatherly nature the reason of my coming, and if through the working of God thou wilt make thyself the perfecter of my desire, and of my thoughts, whatsoever thy holiness and thy meekness shall command me [to do] I will perform strenuously." Now when the old man had heard these things, he answered and said unto him, "Thou hast full power to say everything which thou wishest, joyfully and fearlessly, as unto thy father who, according to his power, in great love, is ready to fulfil thy desire by the help of God." Then, after these words, which the old man spake in simplicity (now none of the thoughts of the young man had entered into his mind), the young man made clearly manifest before the old man the matters which he had marked out and decided upon in his mind from the beginning of his actions in the city even until that very hour.

And when the old man had heard all these things he was greatly moved and disturbed, because he remembered his own former acts and life, and because he was held in contempt by his conscience by reason of the conditions and circumstances under which he was then living, and because that by reason of these he was unable to promise to fulfil the works of which he had [then] no knowledge whatsoever, [and he was afraid] and excused himself from the task. And when he considered his own feebleness, and the greatness of the matter concerned, and the strenuousness and readiness of the young man, and the many other reasons which he called to mind, he was ashamed to reveal to the young man the true reason for his refusal, yet nevertheless, because of it, he said that he was unable to act [for him]; but the young man dismissed his objections and made an end of them, and he shewed [him] that they all were insufficient to drive him away from the old man, and to do away the fervent desire and aim which were in his mind. Then the old man felt compelled to make plainly manifest before him the true reason for his refusal and to shew him that it was not a mere matter of a report of words, but one which could be seen by the actual sight of the eyes.

And wishing to fulfil his intention [of shewing] that the true reason was not a mere excuse, or one which was fabricated like those which he had previously given, and that it was indeed a true one, and one which would proclaim concerning itself openly, he took the young man

by the hand, and led him into a certain chamber wherein dwelt the wife of that old man with her two children, and he said unto him, "God hath sent thee hither" for my shame, and for the condemnation of mine old age. "Behold, this is my wife whom Satan and not God hath given" unto me, and behold, these are the children of shame whom "I have had by her, and they are the fruits of a contemptible" and damnable union."

Now when the young man saw and heard these things, because the foundation of his building was laid upon the rock of truth, he was neither moved nor disturbed, and he was not offended with the old man, and he did not hold him in any contempt whatsoever. And after these things the young man answered and said unto the old man, "My lord, I entreat thy holiness to confirm that" which I am about to say unto thee. Let me have with thee, even "as with a real father, a wholly perfect understanding, such as" it is right for children to have with their fathers and with their "brethren, which shall be free, by the help of God, from all" stumbling-blocks; and let me have the same understanding "with this woman, as with a real mother, and with thy children" as with beloved brethren." Thus the old man was overcome by means of all these words by a gracious defeat, and though he wished by the urging of his own mind to give the young man permission to live with him as a disciple, and to fulfil his desire according to the bent of his mind, he was driven thereto far more by the power of the excellence of the young man himself. And when these things had taken place they gave thanks to God, and then they occupied themselves, each one with the service and work which were requisite for their habitation, day by day with the help of God, and the young man excelled in works towards the old man, according to his promise, in humility, and in great obedience, and the spiritual excellence of his mind was greatly revealed.

One day the old man said unto the young man, "My son, knowest thou that thou and I are building this house with weariness" and abundant toil, and that we have not sufficient reeds [to" make] the roof, and that the winter hath drawn nigh? Now,"in order that our labour may not be in vain, behold, I see that"there are reeds in the habitation of the monk who is ourneighbour, and since he is not there that we may borrow from him,"and supply our need, do thou go down and take up from there"a bundle, and bring [it hither], so that we may finish the roof,"and may rejoice through his forethought. And when the brother heard this, he made ready quickly to fulfil the command of the old man, and having gone down and brought that which was necessary for them, they completed their work. Then the old man said unto that brother, "Tell me truly, O brother, what didst thou think in thy mind about that which I said unto thee, that is to say, that thou shouldst go down, and shouldst bring reeds as it were by theft, and without the knowledge and during the absence of their owner? And that brother said [unto him], "As I have already told thee, everything that thou shalt say unto me I shall receive as if it came from the mouth of Christ, and shall perform it in faith unhesitatingly.

I said within myself, 'Christ said unto me, Thou shalt not steal, but now it is He Who hath just said unto me, Steal; I have nothing to do with the matter, and it is Christ unto Whom I must render obedience.'" And when the old man had heard these words he marvelled at

the wisdom and at the integrity of his obedience; and wishing to make him to rejoice in his hope, he said unto him, "My son, thou must know that I had made up my mind that we must tell the owner of the reeds [what I had done], and must give him whatever price he might require, [when] I sent thee down to bring up that which belonged to him, and I did not do so with the abominable intention of stealing [from him]."

And after a certain time, during which the two men had lived together a correct life which was full of peace and profit, the old man thought within himself, saying, "It is a great iniquity on my part, and it meriteth a severe penalty, that I who have grown old in sins, and who am still in the mire of fornication, should dwell with this brother who is perfect in spiritual excellence; for it is not seemly that darkness should live with light. But I will leave this abode in his hands, and I will take away this stumbling-block which Satan hath set in my way, and these fruits of shame which have come to me from her, and I will go to the world and unto those whom I resemble, whose works are like unto mine own."

And when he had meditated with these and suchlike thoughts, and had made them known unto the woman who dwelt with him, he sent to the village which was nigh unto them, and brought from thence an animal to take away that which he needed from the monastery, so that he might lead away his wife and his children, and he might go and live in one of the villages round about them. And when the animal had come, and the old man had loaded him with whatsoever they needed, and he, and his wife, and his children began to go forth, he said unto that brother, "My son, we are not able to dwell in a monastery because our sins are many, and because we are not worthy so to do; for it is great wickedness for us to dwell under the cloak of falsehood among monks, whilst our deeds are more evil than those of the folk who are in the world. But do thou remain in this dwelling, O my son, and the God Whom thou hast loved, and Whom thou hast made plans to please in everything, shall be unto thee a father, and a fellow monk; and do thou pray on my behalf that the Lord may visit me." And when that brother had heard these words, he answered and said unto the old man with love and great humility, "O my father, I have made a covenant with the Lord that I will not be separated from thee except by death, and inasmuch as my dwelling with thee hath been unto me source of great benefit, there is nothing which can remove me and take me away from thee; but wheresoever thou goest I will go; and wheresoever thou dwellest I will dwell with thee."

Then after all these things the old man came to himself, and he sighed greatly, saying, "Verily, this is a matter which can only have come from God, the Merciful, Who desireth not the death of a sinner, but that he may turn to Him and live, and He it is Who hath remembered my former works, and hath not left me to perish utterly, but hath sent this young man unto me that He might again turn me unto Him. Then the old man found himself able by means of words, which were full of strong entreaty, to persuade the woman to take her daughter with her, and to go and dwell in one of the abodes of women which existed in the villages round about them. And this actually came to pass. And after the old man had remained there with his son, and with that excellent disciple, he began to remember

his former life, and to renew the habits thereof, and he excelled greatly in the cultivation of all kinds of spiritual excellences, and he gave thanks unto God unceasingly, that by means of the young man He had held him worthy of the end of peace. And he was always saying, "Truly obedience for the sake of God not only greatly helpeth those who possess it, but it greatly gratifieth God also, and it is found by others to be the cause of life, and it tormenteth Satan sorely; on the other hand, disobedience worketh that which is contrary to all these things.

So after a long time that old man died in peace, being worthy of the great measure [of reward] of his fathers, and he departed from the world, and left behind him as upright heirs of his spiritual excellences and of his monastery his spiritual son, and the son who was his according to the body and the spirit; may our Lord through their prayers make us worthy of their spiritual excellence and their inheritance! Amen and Amen.

Chapter 4. The Triumph of a certain Old Man who was in Scete

There was a certain old man who used to live in the desert which is called Scete, and he had a disciple who lived with him; now this [latter] brother was adorned with the spiritual excellences of every kind which befit those who are in subjection to old men, and he was exceedingly conspicuous for his obedience, which was the greatest of all his virtues. And he was sent to the village continually by the old man to sell their work, and to bring back whatsoever was needed for their habitation, and that brother, without any compulsion whatsoever, performed every command which the old man gave him with zeal and diligence. Now when the enemy of righteousness, the Foe of the human race, and especially of the orders of the monks, that is to say, Satan, the opponent of all virtues and the hater of the upright life of the children of men, saw that this brother was overcoming and bringing to naught all his crafty designs by the might of his simple obedience, which was full of discretion, he made a plan to lay two snares for him in the path of his spiritual excellence, even as it is said concerning him in the Psalm, as it were by the mouth of those who cultivate spiritual excellence, and who walk in the way of righteousness, "In the way of my steps have they hidden snares for me" (Psalm cxlii, 3).

Now the two snares were these:—The first consisted in making that brother to pursue fornication, and the second was in making him to fall into disobedience; and the Enemy, in his cunning, expected that the brother would not only be caught by one of these, and so become involved in both, but also that deliverance from the one would be found to be the occasion for his falling into the other, for he saw that he was being sent continually to Egypt by his master [on the business] of the work of their hands and of the matter of their need.

And one day, when that brother was carrying on his shoulders something which he wished to sell, and was going about in the market of the village according to his wont, it happened that owing to the sight of a woman, who was a virgin, and who was continually coming in his way, and who bought from him some of the wares which he carried, the war of fornication rose up against him suddenly by the operation of the Evil One. Now when this thing had thus come to pass the evil cunning of the Devil did not depart from that discreet brother, but he meditated within himself and said, "Both matters are exceedingly difficult for me.

Peradventure, if through some reason such as this which the Enemy hath prepared for me, I reject 209 the command of the old man, and do not go up [to him], I shall always be in the habit [of thinking] that I have treated the command of the old man with contempt; and if I do go up [to him] I shall be oppressed for a very long time with the war of fornication."

And when that brother had passed much time in tribulation, and in such thoughts as these, and in doubts of mind, and still did not know which course of action to choose and which to reject, he drew nigh unto a certain old man who dwelt close by them, and who was great and skilled in all [such matters], and made known his business unto him, and spake unto him thus: "Father, what shall I do, for the war of fornication hath risen up against me? My father sendeth me always to the village for that which we need, and every time I go to the village I am vexed with thoughts about fornication, through which I am thrown into a strife, and I know not what to do; if I obey my father, and go to the village, the war which is stirred up against me will become fiercer, and if I remain here and do not go I shall be a disobedient [disciple]. I beseech thee to give me the advice which shall be beneficial for me, and pray thou on my behalf, for I am greatly vexed. And when the old man had heard these words, he answered and said unto him, "My son, if I were thou, I should, with God's help, obey my father, [and should overcome the war of fornication]. Then that brother said unto him, "I beseech thee, O my lord, to perform an act of grace, and teach thou me the object of this conquest, and help me with thy prayers.

Then the old man said unto him, "Know, O my brother, that Satan is not so anxious to cast thee into fornication as he is to dismiss thee from obedience, and to make thee disobedient and rebellious, and he plotteth always with exceedingly great care to make thee thus; for Satan himself hath been acquainted with disobedience from the beginning, and he knoweth that it is the cause of every kind of condemnation and of wickedness to those who possess it. And, O my son, let it be certain to thee that, if he vanquish thee by means of it, thou wilt be, as it were, stripped henceforth of the help of the power of obedience, and of thy father's prayers, whensoever he casteth thee into the passion of fornication, and he will be able to drag thee down into passions of all kinds easily. But if thou dost vanquish him first of all in the matter of obedience, and dost thyself abide therein undoubtedly, and dost believe in the prayers of thy father, God will make thee to prosper in every strife with a crown of righteousness, and He will give thee victory in every war with the Calumniator. For he, who for the sake of God acteth in obedience to his father, also acteth obediently unto God ; now obedience unto God is the victory over all passions. Go therefore, O my son, and obey thy father faithfully and unhesitatingly, and when the war cometh upon thee say thus: O God of my father, help me!"

Now when the Adversary saw that that brother was armed with the wise and powerful words of the old man as with an impregnable coat of mail, and had prepared himself strenuously for the contest, he changed the method of attack which he had formerly employed, and instead of vexing that brother with thoughts about the woman as he had done at first, he left him, since he was prepared and was sufficiently strong to stand up against him, and went to the

feeble woman who lacked both discernment and help—for it hath been his custom always to run to the weak and sluggish side of disciples, and to overcome the strenuous by means of it—and as he overcame Adam by means of Eve, and as he overcame other [saints] by means of other things, even so did he act towards this marvellous brother who, through this cunning, gained condemnation and shame, even as did Job, and Joseph, and others.

Now therefore when this brother according to custom had taken his work, and had readily gone up to Egypt, and had arrived at the village wherein he was wont to sell it, Satan stirred up that woman to go forth to meet him as it were by chance, and having seen that brother and being inflamed through the operation of Satan with the fire of love for him, she drew nigh unto him by means of some crafty device, and took him and brought him into her house, with the excuse that she was going to buy something from him; and after they had gone in, and she had shut the door upon them, she began to throw herself upon him. Then that brother, with faith wherein there was no doubt, cried out with a loud voice and said, "O God of my father, help me!" And immediately, by the agency of God, he found himself upon the road to Scete, and by the Divine help the Calumniator was put to shame, and the war of fornication ceased from that brother. And when he had come to the old man with whom he lived, and he had narrated to him the whole matter and what had happened, they gave thanks to God and glorified Him Who had hearkened unto the voice of His servants and had redeemed them out of the hand of their enemies, and had saved them from the snares of the Calumniator. May our Lord hide us beneath the wings of His mercifulness and [save] us from all the evil workings of the Calumniator! Amen.

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Chapter 5. The Triumph of the Disciple of another Old Man who dwelt alone in a Cell

One of the aged men said: I have heard from certain holy men that there have been youths who have led and guided old men to life, and they told me the following story: There was a certain old man who used to plait mats of palm leaves by day and sell them in the village [in the night], and get drunk on the money which he received for the same. At length there came a certain brother who took up his abode with him, and he also worked at the plaiting of mats by day, and the old man took his work also and sold it, and got drunk with the money which he received for the work of both, and he would bring home at eventide a little bread for that brother; and though the old man did thus for a period of three years the brother said nothing to him about it. And after these things the brother said within himself, "Behold, I am naked, and I only eat my bread by forcing myself to do so; I will therefore arise and depart from this place. But again he thought within himself, saying, "Whither have I to go? I will stay here a little longer, for I can live unto God just as well as if I were in a monastery where many monks are. And straightway the angel of the Lord appeared and said unto him, "Depart thou not unto any [other] place, for to-morrow we are coming unto thee.

Then that brother made supplication unto the old man and entreated him, saying, "I beseech thee, O my father, not to go forth this day to any place whatsoever, for the angels are coming to receive my soul. When now the hour had arrived for the old man to go out and sell [the work] according to his wont, he said unto the brother, "My son, they will not come to-day, for they have delayed too long"; but the brother said, "Yea, my father, indeed they will come"; and whilst he was talking to the old man he died. And when the old man saw what had happened he wept and sighed deeply, and said, "Woe is me! Woe is me, O my son! I have lived in faith for many years, but thou hast gained life for thyself through a short period of patient endurance! and from that day forward the old man led a life of sobriety and became a chosen monk.

Chapter 6. The Triumph of the Disciple of an Old Man in the Desert

There was a certain desert monk who was very anxious to find a quiet place which would be suitable for him to dwell in; and there was there a certain old man who had a cell nigh unto him, and he entreated him, saying, Come, take up thine abode here until thou canst find a cell "[suitable for thee,]" and he went [there]. Now the brethren used to come unto him as unto a stranger, and they brought him food in order that they might be helped [by so doing], and he rejoiced in them and gave them relief. Then the old man began to envy him, and to heap abuse on him, saying, "Behold, how many are the years wherein I have lived here in the strictest abstinence, and yet no man came unto me; yet unto this deceiver who hath only passed a few days here many come!" And this old man said unto his disciple, "Go and say unto him, 'Depart from that place, for I have need both of the place and of the cell.'" And his disciple went and said unto him, "My father, speak some words and pray thou for me because I am greatly vexed by my stomach"; then he came to his master and said unto him, "He said unto me, 'I see a cell and I am going forth.'"

And after two days the old man sent his disciple unto him again, and he said unto him, "If thou hast not departed I will come myself and drive thee out with a stick. And the disciple came to the monk and said unto him, "My father hath heard that thou art sick and he is greatly grieved, and he hath sent me to visit thee"; and the monk said unto him, "Through thy prayers [all is] well. And the disciple came and said to his master, "I have spoken to him, and he said unto me, 'Wait until the first day of the week, and I will, by the Will of God, go forth.'" And when the first day of the week had come the monk had not departed, and the old man took a stick and was going forth to beat him, and to drive him out; but his disciple said unto him, "Let me go first, lest there be there some stranger who will be offended at thine act. And having gone before his master the disciple said unto the monk, "Behold, my father hath come to entreat thee [to leave] and to take thee to his cell"; and when the monk heard of the old man's love he made haste to go out to meet him, and he expressed his sorrow afar

off, and said, "Be not vexed, O my lord and father, for I was coming to thy holiness; forgive me for the sake of Jesus.

And God saw the work of that disciple, and He opened the mind of the old man, and he threw away his stick and ran to salute the monk; and having drawn nigh unto him he gave him the salutation of peace, and took him into his cell. Now the stranger had heard nothing whatsoever of the words which had been said by the old man. Then the old man said unto his disciple, "Peradventure thou didst say unto the monk that which I said unto thee? And the disciple said unto him, "Nay, father, I did not"; and the old man rejoiced greatly, and he brought him in to the stranger and treated him kindly. And the old man knew that what had taken place in him had been caused by the working of Satan, and he fell down before his disciple and said, "Henceforward thou shalt be my father, and I will be thy disciple, for through thy good works, after God, thou hast helped the souls of two [men]."

Chapter 7. The Triumph of Peter, the Disciple of one of the Old Men

There was a certain old man who had an excellent disciple, and on a certain occasion the old man by reason of his hasty temper drove him away, and turned him outside the door, and his apparel with him; and the brother sat down outside the door and waited patiently, and when the old man opened the door he found him sitting outside. Then the old man repented, saying, ”O Peter, the meekness of thy longsuffering nature hath vanquished my hasty temper; henceforward thou shalt be my old man and father, and I will be thy servant and disciple. By thy good work thou hast made (or fashioned) mine old age.”

Chapter 8. The Triumph of a Disciple of one of the Old Men

On a certain occasion the disciple of a great sage (i.e., old man) had a war of fornication, and when the old man saw that his brother was vexed and oppressed in his mind, he said to him, ”Dost thou wish me to entreat God to make the war less fierce?” And the brother said, ”Father, I perceive that, although I toil and am afflicted, I am yet able to see the fruit which I possess within my soul through this strife, [therefore pray not for this thing]; but entreat God especially in thy prayer to give me strength to endure.” His father said unto him, ”This day I know that thou hast surpassed me therein.”

Chapter 9. Of Aurelius [Adolius?]

I USED to know a man in Jerusalem whose name was Aurelius [Adolius?], and by race (or origin) he came from the city of Tarsus, and when this man arrived in Jerusalem, he walked wholly in the path wherein are no stumblings and wherein not many have walked. Now he laid down for himself ascetic rules of life of new kinds, and [these were so severe] that the devils were afraid of him, and they were unable to stand up before him, and by reason of the greatness of his toil he might have been thought to be a shadow, for he would pass the whole weeks of the Forty Days in fasting, and he would spend the other days in constant vigils. Now the greatest of all his acts of asceticism was this. Whilst the brethren were gathered together each evening in the house of prayer, he would go up to the highest peak of the Mount of Olives, to the place where our Lord was lifted up, and as he stood there upon his feet he would recite the whole Office, and whether rain, or snow, or sleet fell he would never leave his place; and when he had finished the Office according to [his] custom, he would take a hammer and beat [a board], and rouse up those that slept, and having gone round to the doors of all [the monks] he would gather them together to the places for prayer, and in each place he would recite the Office with them;

and he would also stand up in the midst of companies [of monks], and would recite the Office. In the daytime he would go to his cell, and in very truth on several occasions his brethren had to strip off [his clothes] from him because they were wet through, and to put others on him; and he would rest until the third hour of the day, and then he would come to the service [in the church and stay] until the evening. Such was the manner in which Aurelius lived, and in this way he brought his life to an end; and he was buried at Jerusalem.

Chapter 10. Of Abba Moses the Indian, [a Captain] of Thieves

Now there was a certain man whose name was Moses, who was by race an Indian (i.e., an Ethiopian), and his flesh (i.e., skin) was black, and he was the slave of a man in high authority, and because of his evil deeds and thefts his master drove him out of his house; now it is said that he even went so far as [to commit] murder. Now I am compelled to mention his wickedness in order that I may shew forth the beauty of his repentance, and people say concerning him that he was even the captain of a band of seventy thieves. And the following thing used to be related about him, and he is said to have committed it during the period wherein he passed his time in stealing.

He had as an enemy a certain shepherd, against whom he remembered certain evil things, and he went to steal [sheep] from his flock. And the shepherd was told by a certain man [who said], "Moses hath crossed the Nile by swimming, and he holdeth a sword in his hand, and his clothes are placed on his head; and he hath crossed the river by swimming"; and the shepherd covered himself over with sand, and hid from him. And when Moses had come and did not find the shepherd, he chose out two fine rams from among the sheep and slew them, and he tied them [together] with a rope, and swam across the river again [with them]; and having come to a small village he skinned the rams and ate the best portions of them, and he sold the remainder for wine, and drank, and after these things he went back to his companions. One day, whilst he was associated with them in doing hateful things, his senses came back to him in the morning season, and he repented of his evil acts, and he rose up and fled to a monastery, and from that time he drew nigh unto works of repentance so closely that the devil who had made him sin from his youth up, and [who would have continued] to make him sin, would stand before him in visible form and would look upon him. Thus he came to the knowledge of our Lord Christ.

And about him they tell the story that thieves once came unto him and went into his cell, because they did not know who he was, and he tied them all together with cords and lifted them up on his shoulders like a bag of chopped straw, and brought them to the church to the brethren, and said unto them, "Since I have not the power to do evil unto any man, what do ye command me to do to those who rose up against me to slay me?" Now at that time Moses

had been fasting for seven days, and he had eaten nothing. And after he had done this he informed the thieves, saying, "I indeed am Moses who was formerly the captain of [a band of] thieves"; and having heard [this] they praised and glorified God, and when they saw [the sincerity of] his repentance they also removed themselves from their evil deeds, and said within themselves, "Let us also draw nigh unto repentance, so that we may become worthy of the forgiveness of sins, even as he also is worthy."

And whilst fasting often, and during the time of prayer and silent contemplation, that devil of error, who bringeth back to the remembrance of the mind the wickedness of former habits, would come to him, and tempt him to such a degree that, even as he himself hath told us, it wanted exceedingly little to make him fall from his covenant. And having come to the old man Isidore the great, who had arrived from Scete, Moses told him concerning the war of his body; and the old man said unto him, "Be not distressed, for these are the beginning of the birth pangs, and they come upon thee seeking what they are accustomed [to receive], even as a dog which [cometh] continually to the cook, and if a man give him nothing he will not go there again. And thus also it is with thee, for if thou wilt continue in fasting, and in prayer, and in silent contemplation, the devil will straightway fall into despair and will flee from thee."

And from that time he was exceedingly constant in his work of spiritual excellence. He ate nothing whatsoever except ten ounces of dry bread [daily] when he was doing work, and he would recite from beginning to end fifty prayers during the day; but the more he dried up his body, the more he was vexed and consumed by dreams. And again he went to one of the old men, and said unto him, "What shall I do? For thoughts of 'lust which arise from [my] former habits attack me; and the old man said unto him, "These lead thee into error because thou hast not turned away thy heart from the similitudes of them, but give thy heart to watching and careful prayer, and thou wilt be free from them. Now when he had heard this direction he went to his cell, and made a covenant with God that he would neither sleep during the whole night nor bend his knees, and he dwelt in his cell for seven years, and remained standing the whole of each night with his eyes open, and he never closed his eyelids. And after this he set himself other ascetic labours, for he would go out during the nights and visit the cells of the old men, and take their water-skins and fill them with water, because they lived a long way from the water, that is to say, some two miles, some four miles, and others five miles.

One night he went to fill the [water skins with] water, according to his wont, and as soon as he had bent down over the spring, a devil smote him a blow across his loins as with a stick, and then departed leaving him half dead, and Moses understood who had done this thing to him. And on the following day one of the brethren came to fill [the water skins with] water, and he saw the blessed man lying there, and he drew nigh to him and asked him, "What hath happened unto thee? And when Moses had told him the story, the brother went and informed Rabbâ Isidore, the priest of the church of Scete, who sent brethren immediately and they took him up and brought him to the church; and he was ill for a long time, and he

never thoroughly recovered from his illness, and he never again enjoyed the health of body which he had possessed formerly.

And Abbâ Isidore said unto him, "Rest thyself, O Moses, 'and fret not thyself against the devils, and seek not to make attacks upon them; there is moderation in everything, even in the works of ascetic life." Then Moses said unto him, "I believe in God, in Whom I have placed my hope, that being armed against the devils I must not cease [to wage war with them] until they depart from me." And Abbâ Isidore said unto him, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, from this time forward the devils shall cease from thee. Draw nigh then, and participate in the Holy Mysteries, and thou shalt be free from all impurity both of the flesh and of the spirit, for thou must not boast within thyself, and say, 'I have overcome the devils,' for it was for thy benefit that they have waxed strong against thee." So Moses went back again to his cell. And after two months Abbâ Isidore came to him, and asked him [concerning himself], and Moses said unto him, "I never see now anything which is hateful to me." Now he was also held to be worthy of the gift of Divine Grace, and he could chase away the devils from many folk who were vexed therewith, and as flies take to flight before us so did the devils depart from before him. Such were the ascetic labours of the blessed man Moses, who was himself vexed with great matters. And he also became a priest, and he left behind him seventy disciples who were men of worth. When he was a thief he had [as followers] seventy men who were thieves, and these now became his disciples, and they were perfect in the fear of God.

Chapter 11. Of Abba Pior

And there was an Egyptian youth whose name was Pîôr, and he was a holy man; and when he departed from the house of his parents he made a covenant with God with the zeal of excellence that he would never see again any of his kinsfolk. And after fifty years had passed, the sister of this blessed man, who was very old and grey, heard that he was alive, and she greatly desired to see him; now she was unable to come to him to the desert, and she besought the Bishop, who was in that country, to write to the fathers who lived in the desert [telling] them to urge him, and to send him to see his sister. Then when the blessed man saw the pressure which came from them to make him go, he took with him certain of the brethren, and set out to go on the journey, and [having arrived] he sent and informed his sister's household, saying, "Behold, Pîôr thy brother hath come, and he standeth outside." Now when his sister heard his voice, she went forth in great haste, and when Pîôr heard the sound of the door, and knew that the aged woman his sister was coming forth to see him, he shut his eyes tightly, and said, "So and so, I am thy brother; look at me as far as thou canst do so"; and having seen him she was relieved (or gratified) in her mind, and gave thanks unto God, but she was unable to persuade him to enter into her house. And he made a prayer by the side of the door with his eyes closed tightly, and departed to the desert.

And he also wrought the following wonderful thing: In the place where he lived he dug a hole in the ground, and found water which was bitter [in taste], but until the day wherein he died he endured the bitter taste of the water, in order that he might make known that which he suffered patiently for the sake of God. Now after his death many of the monks wished to abide in that place, but they were not able to do so, even for one year, chiefly because of the terrible nature of the country and the barrenness thereof.

Chapter 12. Of Abba Moses the Libyan

There was also another old man whose name was Moses, who came from the country of the Libyans; he was exceedingly meek and compassionate, and through this was held to be worthy of the gift of healing. And this old man himself related unto us the following story, and said: When I was a young man and dwelt in the monastery, we dug out a large cistern which was twenty cubits wide, and eighty men were digging it out, and we set seventy men to build [walls round it]; and they dug down according to their knowledge, and they passed the place where they expected [to find water], and went down even one cubit more, but they did not find water, and being greatly distressed at this we wished to abandon the well and go away. But when Abbâ Piôr came from the desert at the season of noon, now he was an old man and was covered in his head-cloak, he saluted us, and said unto us, "Why hath your spirit lessened, O ye of little faith?" "For I observe that your spirit hath diminished since yesterday" "because ye have not found water." Then he went down by a ladder to the bottom of the well, and made a prayer with the men, and having prayed he took up an iron tool and drove it into the earth three times, saying, "O Lord God of the holy Fathers, make not the weariness [of these men] to be in vain, but send them water in abundance"; and straightway the waters sprang up in such quantity that they all were wetted, and having prayed a second time he went forth and departed. And when they urged him to remain with them and eat he would not be persuaded to do so, but said unto them, "The matter concerning which I was sent hath come to pass, and to eat I was not sent."

Chapter 13. Of a certain distinguished Wandering Monk

The copyist adds the note: ”We have found [the story of] this wandering monk and recluse following [that of] the recluse John of Lycus.” There was a certain distinguished wandering monk who (as have heard from the famous monks who dwelt by the side of the country of Antinoë) lived a life of great sanctity in the mountains, and many folks were helped by him both by word and deed. And the Enemy had envy of him, even as he hath of every [good] man, and he cast into his mind thoughts which appeared to be humble, saying, ”It is not seemly for thee to be ministered unto and treated with honour by others, for thou shouldst minister unto thyself. Go therefore to the city and sell thy plaited baskets thyself, and buy whatsoever thou hast need of, and lay no burden upon any man.” Now the crafty one counselled him in this wise because he was envious of the assistance which [he obtained from the silent contemplation and constant [prayer], and because he kept God in his mind, and he was laying nets for him, and was trying to snare him by every means in his power. And the monk, being convinced as it were by [a counsellor of] good, for he was not greatly skilled [in the knowledge] of the cunning and of the abundant wickedness of him that was lurking in ambush, went down from the mountain, and the brethren marvelled, because he was a wandering monk, who was well known and famous; and thus in a short time, through want of care and also through converse with women, he was caught in the toils and fell.

And he came to the river [Nile] in a desolate place (now there was with him the Enemy who had cast him down and who rejoiced because of his fall, and because many folk would be made to offend through hearing thereof); and because he had greatly grieved the Spirit of God, and the Angels, and the holy Fathers of the same class as himself, having become unlike any of those who in the cities and everywhere else had overcome [Satan]; and because he had forgotten that great might was nigh unto him [that fighteth] against the Enemy, and who truly hath his hope in the Lord, because, I say, he forgot that this help existed, he fell into error, and knew not how he was to be healed, and wished to throw himself into the river flood and die. And moreover, although his body was brought exceedingly low, through the suffering of his soul, it would have been in vain had not at length the mercy of God helped him not to die (which would have afforded perfect joy to the Enemy), [and it urged him] to depart again with weeping and bitter suffering of heart, and, as was meet, to make

supplication to the compassion of God. And thus, having returned to his place and blocked up the window of his cell, he wept, as was right, after the manner of one who weepeth in a suitable manner over a dead person, and he reduced his body to emaciation by means of his fasting, and vigil, and grief, for the expectation of his repentance had not as yet come to him.

And on several occasions, when the brethren came to comfort him, and knocked at his door, because he had no excuse to make he would say, "Pray ye for me, O my brethren, for I have made a covenant to live a life of silent contemplation all my days, having everything of which I have need. Then they would go away having no hope whatsoever for him; now he was a monk who was very precious in their sight. And from Pentecost, when the brethren were in the habit of relaxing their severe rules of life, and when they ate freely—now because of his fall that monk did not act thus—onwards, throughout the whole year until the feast of unleavened bread, he prayed with tears, and he vexed sorely the life of his flesh, and was crucified with Christ. But on the eve of the [day of] the Resurrection, at the rejoicing of the holy First Day of the week, he took a new lamp, and trimmed it ready for lighting, and he set it in a new vessel likewise, and covered it over, and being unable to stand up in prayer, he said, "O Thou Merciful One, Who desirest that the Barbarians and all the people who are without God should have knowledge of Thee, and should turn to Thee, and Who alone art the true Physician of souls, have mercy upon me, for I know that I have made Thee wroth not a little.

I have obeyed the Enemy even to my death and, behold, I am a dead man. O Thou Who didst teach the children of men who were not merciful to shew mercy to each other, O have mercy upon me! For unto Thee nothing is impossible, even though I be brought down as as low as the dust in Sheol. But Thou art the Lord of Thy hosts, and Thou art He Who is good unto those whom Thou hast fashioned, and Thou art He who shall raise up the dead bodies [of those who] have no being, and Who shall make them to have being in the Day of Resurrection; answer Thou me because my heart and my body are sick, for I am overcome by the fear of Thee and am ready to perish, and I cannot live any longer. And, because as yet I have no confidence in [my] repentance, a twofold destruction have I in my despair. Show compassion upon me, O Merciful One, and kindle this lamp by Thy light, so that I by means thereof may receive the encouragement of Thy mercy, and may pass the remainder of my life which Thou wilt bestow upon me in the way which shall please Thee, and may never again as long as I live be unmindful of the fear of Thy Commandments."

And he said these things with tears on his face, and he rose up to see if the lamp had been lighted, and he uncovered it, and saw that there was no light in it. Then he fell upon his face as he had done before, and he besought the Lord frequently, saying, "O Lord, Thou knowest that the strife hath taken place and that it is ended, and Thou wilt not require especially that I should be disgraced by crying out with the wicked, and that I should suffer torture for ever. Have mercy then upon me, and I will confess Thy goodness; I have been ashamed before the righteous angels, and if it were not that it would cause scandal, I would make

my confession to the children of men. Therefore have compassion upon me, for from this time forward I will teach others that their hearts must not be outside Thy fear, even for a moment; and now I make supplication unto Thy goodness, O make me to live, and I entreat Thee [so to do], for I am about to die. And the monk prayed in this manner three times, and then he was heard by God, for when he went back the fourth time [to see if the lamp had been lighted] he found it burning brightly;

and he was strengthened with hope, and rejoiced, and wept abundantly, and he marvelled at Divine Grace, and he made prayer to the Lord about this also, saying, "Thou didst shew compassion upon the life of this world of him that is unworthy, and especially by the great and new sign [which Thou hast given]; yea, Lord, Thou dost always shew Thy compassion upon the miserable soul, and dost spare it. And the monk continued [to give] simple thanks [until] the day dawned, and he rejoiced in the Lord, and forgot the food of the body; and he tended the light of the lamp every day, and poured oil therein, and he trimmed it from above, and kept it covered so that it should not be extinguished. And thus that man became like one who had risen in the resurrection of the righteous, and like the chaste man, and like the humble man in the Spirit of God [who obeyeth] readily, and [who giveth] gladly unto the Lord gratitude and thanks. And when he was about to yield up unto the Lord the soul which had been graciously given to him, he related the story gladly unto the brethren who happened to be there, that it might cause them fear, and he said, "Let that lamp be placed in [my] grave in commemoration of [my] repentance. And we, who heard concerning the grace of God, have written down these things in order that men may be watchful in the Lord.

Chapter 14. The History of the Blessed Evagrius, the Solitary and Strenuous Monk

It is not meet that we should veil the history of this holy man in silence, for we must set it down plainly in writing, both for the help and edification of those who shall come across it, and for the glory of that God Whose wont is to change bitterness to sweetness; we shall, therefore, make clear the history of the blessed man from the beginning, and tell how he journeyed step by step to the goal of spiritual excellence, and how he was carried onwards to the ascetic life, and how he arrived at purity of heart, and how he departed from this world at the age of fifty-four years.

Now this blessed man came from Pontus, where his family lived, and where his father held the office of visitor; and the blessed man Basil, Bishop of Caesarea, appointed him to be a reader. And after the death of the blessed man Basil, Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus, seeing his perspicacity, and his great skill in the Divine Books, and that he was free from passions, and was adorned with virtues, brought him nigh to the grade of the priesthood, and he went up to the synod which was held at Constantinople with the blessed man Gregory, who loved him greatly. And when the blessed man Nectarius, Bishop of Constantinople, met him, he was drawn to love him, because he saw that he was a man of strong character, and he attached him to himself. Now Evagrius was beloved by all men, and he was held in honour by all men, and for this reason Satan was envious of him, and he disturbed his understanding through the vision of his mind, which he set in a blaze through the love of a certain woman; and this woman was the wife of one of the noblemen of the city, according to what he himself related unto us. And when, by the will of God, he was set free from these thoughts, the woman herself began to love Evagrius; now she was a great lady of high degree.

Then Evagrius, setting before his eyes the reproach of fornication, prayed unto God with labour that, in His Grace, He might bring this matter to naught, and that he might extinguish the mad lust of that woman; to chide her himself the blessed man was not able, because he was bridled by the large numbers of gifts [which he had received] from her. And

his prayer having been heard, when as yet he had not had union with her sinfully, an angel appeared unto him in the form of a soldier of the prefect, who seized him, and cast him into prison, and who loaded his neck and his hands with chains, but who did not inform Evagrius for what reason he had to bear this ill-treatment; and the thought sprang up in his mind which said, "Perhaps that woman's husband has laid an accusation against me before the judge." Then Evagrius found himself in great agony of mind, because he saw that other men, who had been committed to prison for offences similar to his own, were condemned to judgement before his eyes, and the angel changed his form, and appeared unto him in the guise of one of his friends, and he began to say unto him, when he saw that he was loaded with chains and had been placed with the malefactors, "What is this which hath happened unto thee, O brother?"

And Evagrius made answer unto him, saying, "My brother, in truth I know not. I think that perhaps some prince of the city hath laid [an accusation] against me before the judge, because of some vain jealousy (or envy) which hath burst into flame in him, and I am afraid lest, through a gift of much money, the judge may issue a decree of death against me." And the angel said unto him, "If thou wilt receive the words of thy friend I counsel thee not to remain in this city"; and the blessed Evagrius said unto him, "Thinkest thou that thou wilt see me in this city if God will deliver me from this trial? Thou mightest as well think that I am enduring these evils righteously!" Then the angel said unto him, "Swear unto me that thou wilt depart [from the city], and wilt have a care for thy soul, and I will deliver thee from these trials"; and Evagrius took an oath unto him by the Book of the Gospel, [saying], "I will not tarry here more than the one day which will be necessary for me to put my things in the ship."

And when Evagrius woke up from his sleep, he thought within himself and said, "Although the words of the oaths have been uttered in a dream, it is right that I should fulfil that which I have promised"; so he put his things in a ship and departed to Jerusalem, where the blessed woman Melania received him gladly; now Melania had come from the city of Rome. And, because Satan had made the heart of Evagrius as hard as that of Pharaoh, he failed to call to mind that which he had promised to do, and he went back to his former habits and returned to his pride, and was arrayed in filthy garments. But God, because He is in the habit of bringing to naught on our behalf things of evil, kindled the fire of a great fever in Evagrius, and He cast him into a sickness which lasted for six months, and none of the physicians was able to bring healing unto him. Then the blessed woman Melania said unto him, "My son, thy long illness pleaseth me not; tell me, then, concerning it, for peradventure there is something hidden in thy mind; thy illness is not like unto that of every [other] man." Then Evagrius confessed unto her the whole matter. And Melania said unto him, "Promise me truthfully that from this time onward thou wilt take care of thyself in a habitation of monks, and that thou wilt work unto God; and however great a sinner I may be, I will pray for thee, and relief shall be given unto thy tribulation." Then he promised [to do] that which she required at his hands, and before a few days had passed by the blessed man was healed, and he rose up [from his bed], and from that day his whole mind was changed.

And he departed and went to the mountain which is in Egypt and which is called Nethrâ (i.e., Nitria), and dwelt there for two years, and in the third year he departed into the inner desert, and dwelt there fourteen years in the place which is called "The Cells"; and he lived upon one pound [of bread] a day, and a box of oil [every] three months. He had been a man great in pomp and he had made great his body, and had been ministered unto by slaves, yet he laid down a rule that he should pray in the course of [each] day one hundred prayers. He lived by the labour of his hands, and he only accepted the bare price of his daily food [for] all the work he did; and his work was to write books. Before, however, the fifteen years had passed by, he had cleansed his heart, and was held to be worthy of the grace of God, and wisdom and understanding were given to him, and he knew the power of spirits. He composed three volumes, and taught us [therein] the cunning of devils and the snares [laid by the] thoughts.

And the blessed man Evagrius himself related unto us that the devil of fornication [once] made an attack upon him, and that he stood up naked the whole night long in the desert (now it was the season of winter), until his flesh was quite shrivelled and dried up. And the devil of blasphemy [on another occasion] made an attack upon him, and according to what he told us, he passed forty days under the open sky in winter until his flesh became like that of the beasts of the desert. And he also told us that once three devils came to him in the daytime, in the form of three members of a religious body, and they began to discuss the faith with him; one of these declared himself to be an Arian, the second said that he was a Eunomian (i.e., a follower of Eunomius, Bishop of Cyzicus, A.D. 360-364), and the third confessed himself to be of the sect of Apollinarius (Bishop of Laodicea; he died about A.D. 390); but by the Divine Grace which was with him he drove them away, having put them to shame.

And again he told [us] that one day he lost the key of his cell, but he made the sign of the Cross over the door and then put in his hand and opened it, having called Christ to his help. He was beaten with innumerable stripes by the devils, and he learned by experience very much concerning their cunning. He made known unto one of his disciples by prophecy that which should happen unto him after [a period of] eighteen years, and what he said actually came to pass. And he said, "From the time when I entered the desert I have never washed, and I have never eaten any vegetable, or any fruit, or any grapes." At the end of his life, however, that is to say, in the sixteenth year wherein he departed from the world, he ate compulsorily food which was cooked by fire, and he was obliged to do this because of a weakness of the stomach which had overtaken him, and he was compelled to take food which had been cooked because of this.

Chapter 15. The History of Malchus the Solitary Monk

About three miles from Antioch in Syria there is a certain village which is called Mārōniā, and in this village was an old monk whose name was Malchus, and he was a wonderful and a holy man. Now at that time I had travelled far away from the house of my fathers, and I went to Evagrius the priest, where I heard concerning the holy man Malchus, and I desired greatly to see him and to be blessed by him; so I went to him, and he received me gladly, and began to tell me about the habits of life and the works of the monks, and how it is right to fear the Lord, and having rejoiced greatly in the pious words of his doctrine, I besought him to confirm me especially in such things. Then he said unto me, "My son, I will relate unto you concerning the temptations which, in proportion to my presumption and thoughtlessness, have come upon me, in order that they may help you, and also concerning the compassionate grace of the Lord God Who took me out of and redeemed me from them, and Who permitted them to come upon me for the correction of many who should learn of me, and should not become disobedient to the exhortation of their spiritual fathers, because disobedience is the cause of death."

Then having said these things he began to narrate to me his history, and he said:—I was born in the village which is called Nisibis, and I was the only child of my parents, who, because I was the only child they ever expected to have, were proud of me; and when I had arrived at manhood's estate they were anxious to marry me to a wife, but when I spake against their [wish], saying, "It is right for me to become a monk and to serve the Lord," and they heard of it, they were exceedingly wroth with me. Now my father urged me to marry and threatened me with penalties if I did not, and my mother was always inciting and counselling me to do so. And seeing that their minds were most firmly set upon this, which would become unto me an impediment to my confession of the faith before God, I forsook them, and treated with contempt all the riches of this world, and took with me only a very small sum of money, which was just sufficient for the expenses of my journey; now I wished to go to the monasteries of the East. And because at that time the Greeks had determined to make war upon the Persians, I changed my intention, and made up my mind to go to the west; and whilst I was pondering this matter I learned that between Keneshrin and Aleppo there was a monastery which was situated in a peaceful spot, so I gave up my

former intention, and went thither, and I asked them [to receive me], and I remained with them, and I wrestled with all their ascetic habits and rules of chastity according to their godly ways of life, and I made good progress therein in the Lord.

And having remained in that monastery for a certain number of years, and having lived blamelessly the life of spiritual excellence, all the brethren rejoiced at the growth of my asceticism; but because the Calumniator, that jealous and envious being, could not endure [this], he cast into my mind thoughts [which were apparently] correct ones, saying, "Since thy father is dead, return to thy house, and comfort thy mother so long as she is alive, and after her death sell thy possessions, and give some of the price thereof to the poor; and the remainder keep, and with it build a monastery, and thou thyself shalt become a father and governor of monks. And to tell the truth to thee, my son, the Calumniator cast within me the passion of avarice, saying, Keep some of the money for thine old age." And when the war which was caused by these thoughts had been [waged] against me daily for some time, I felt obliged to reveal this sickness of my soul to the spiritual father, who, when the holy father had heard thereof, said unto me, "My son, hearken not to thy feelings, for this is a snare of Satan who, by means of this cunning device, hath put many monks backward in their course, even as a dog goeth back to his vomit, and hath cast them down and hath made them lose their inheritance, and who, though continually setting before them the hope of that which is good, hath nevertheless brought them down into Sheol. For having raised Adam to a height of error which resembled this, he brought him down to the bottom of Sheol; and our Lord commandeth him that hath laid his hand upon the plough not to turn back."

Now when by means of such testimonies which he brought from the Holy Scriptures he was not able to persuade me [to stay], he thereupon fell down before me and wished to swear by the Lord that I would not forsake him. And whilst that merciful and pious father was saying these things for my deliverance, the Enemy was placing in my heart the words, "The father aeteth not thus because he would shew compassion on thee, but he wisheth that the whole community of the brethren may be glorified [by thy staying here]"; and by saying words of this kind to me, that evil adviser made me to gain a victory of wickedness, and he made me to come forth out of the monastery. And still clinging unto me, as unto one who was lost, the father said unto me, "My son, I see that thou art consumed by love of money; the sheep which goeth forth from his flock without his shepherd straightway becometh a prey unto wolves"; and when he had spoken these words unto me I left him.

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15a Then I went from Aleppo to Edessa by the king's highway, and being afraid of the soldiers (i.e., bands of marauding robbers), who had already taken up their abode in the countries round about, I remained in Edessa, hoping to find company for the journey, for so great as this was my watchful fear. And when we had gathered together a company of men and women, [whose] names were seventy in number, and had therefore set out on the road, suddenly a band of Arab soldiers swooped down upon us, and carried us all away; then I called to mind the exhortation of the holy father, and I said to myself, "O my soul, such

are 'the great riches which I went forth to inherit! O wretched man that I am, such are the promises of the Enemy, the deceiver and destroyer of souls! Inherit [thy wealth] then, O wretched one, and make thyself happy therewith.' And as I was saying these things to myself, one of the Arabs took me and a certain woman, and set the two of us on one camel, and having travelled a short distance in the desert, because we were afraid lest we should fall from the camel, we were compelled to hold tightly to each other; and not only did this shame come upon mine unconvinceable mind, but I was also obliged to eat with her.

And the Arab gave us milk and camel's flesh, and he carried us to his tent, and he commanded me to do homage to his wife and to bow down before her, and he said, 'This is thy mistress.' Now through these things I, the chaste man and monk, was becoming acquainted with the form of the nakedness of these people, according to the reward which my passion of avarice merited; and the Arab ordered me to gird myself about with woollen garments and to shepherd the sheep and this[occupation] became unto me a source of consolation for the tribulations which surrounded me, because after a few days I was released from the evil faces of my masters and companions. But this alone did not bring me consolation, for I remembered that Abel, and the Patriarch Jacob and his sons, and the holy man Moses, and king David were shepherds of sheep, and I rejoiced in the desert, and I pastured the sheep, and prayed, and sang the Psalms which I learned in the monastery. And I used to eat cheese made of goats' milk, and I drank milk, and I gave praise to God, that I had obtained such a [light] penalty for my disobedience; and remembering that the Apostle said, 'Servants, be submissive to your masters, not only to the good, but also to the wicked' (Colossians iii, 22; Ephesians vi, 5), I took care of my master's sheep with the utmost diligence.

Now in all these things I kept in mind always the envy of the Calumniator, which hateth that which is good.

And when my master saw that I was acting rightly towards him, he wished to reward me well therefore, and he wanted to marry me to that woman who had been taken captive with me; and when I spake against his proposal, saying, "I am a monk, and I cannot do this, besides this woman hath a husband who was taken captive with us, and who hath passed into other ownership," his wrath went up, and he drew his sword, and he set his gaze upon me, and would have killed me, had it not been that I ran and took hold of his wife's hand. And having married me to the woman, he brought me into a cave with her. When, therefore, I knew that this was indeed the captor of my soul, I cried aloud, and wept, and said, "Woe unto me the sinner! What hath happened unto me? For having grown old in the life of virginity, a terrible evil now cometh upon me, and I must, forsooth, become the husband of a wife! Where now is my mother? And where are the possessions and riches of my fathers? For because I was not persuaded to [perform] the obedience of the servants of God, and because I separated myself [therefrom], and because I forsook the Lord I must endure things of this kind! Now what wilt thou do, O my wretched soul? For if thou dost conquer by patient endurance, by the Grace of God thou wilt be held worthy of help, but if thou art lax severe punishment is laid up for thee. Fight then mightily against sin, and

turn the sword against thyself, that there may be kept for thee the testimony of chastity; hold in contempt the fire of time, that thou mayest flee from the fire of eternity, and conquer thou sin in the desert, that thou mayest be a persecuted and chosen witness."

Then I took the sword in my hands, and saluted that woman, saying, "Mayest thou remain in peace, O wretched woman, and acquire for thyself rather a martyr than a husband, for because I would not marry a wife I fled from and forsook my parents. Now when the woman saw the sword which was shining in the darkness, she fell down before my feet and said unto me, "I will make thee swear by Jesus Christ, the Lord of praise, that thou wilt not kill thyself for my sake; and if thou wishest to do this turn the sword against me. Why shouldst thou wish to kill thyself so that thou mayest not take me to wife? Knowest thou that I am far more anxious than thou art to preserve my chastity unto Christ, and must guard it not only against thee, but also against my lawful husband, for even if he were to come I would keep myself chaste. This is what this captivity wherein I am teacheth me, for this affliction should teach us to take refuge in the Lord. Take me then to thyself as a companion of thy chastity, and let us love each other in spiritual love, so that when our masters see us they may think that our intercourse is carnal. Now God, Who knoweth hearts, recognizeth spiritual brotherhood, and we can easily persuade these people when they see us together in this wise that we love each other.

Then whilst marvelling at the understanding of the woman, I received her good advice gladly in Christ, and henceforward I loved her as a spiritual helpmeet, and as a pure and chaste helper. I never saw her body naked, and I never approached her couch, for I was afraid lest, having been victorious in the time of war, I might receive a severe wound through the arrows of the Enemy in the time of peace. In this wise then our masters left us for a long time, and they were not afraid that we were preparing to run away from them, for it happened on several occasions, sometimes for a whole month together, that I was alone [with the woman] in the desert. And my master used to come, and when he saw that I was taking good care of his sheep, he would go back [to his place] rejoicing.

And it came to pass one day when, according to my custom, I was sitting in the desert, that I began to meditate upon the peaceful life of the brethren who were in the monastery, and I saw also the face of our holy father as if it had been an image; and I thought of his perfect and abundant love for me, and how anxious he was in every way that I should not be separated from him, and how I would not be persuaded [to stay with him] by the Divine revelation, and how he bore witness beforehand concerning the things which would happen to me—Whilst, then, I say, I was pondering upon these things in my mind, and was greatly afflicted thereby, I saw an ants' nest, and I saw multitudes of these insects working with the greatest diligence and care in their various ways, and I saw how they were all making their way into the nest through a narrow entrance, without impeding each other. Some of them were bringing seeds for their winter food; and others were bringing loads which were larger than their bodies; and others were carrying on their backs those which had been wounded; and others were expelling from the nest those which had settled themselves inside, and they

were cutting them up into small pieces, lest being drenched in the winter they should have to return to the grass, and should die of hunger and be destroyed;

and others were carrying dust, so that when the winter rains fell with violence they might be able to block up the entrance to their nest firmly. Now this sight was in my opinion worthy to wonder at, because everything which these small creatures did was done in perfect order, and I spent the whole of the day in watching them, and so enjoyed some relaxation from my afflictions, and I said, "Well did Solomon counsel us to be like these creatures, for he [wished to] stir up our lazy and slug-gish understandings in this wise [to perform] with a ready mind the things which befit our redemption."

Whilst then, I say, I was pondering upon these things in my mind, and was greatly afflicted thereby, I began to have sorrow concerning myself, because my lazy and sluggish mind lacked the great sense of order and arrangement which the ants possessed, and also the faculty of not being disturbed by thoughts of laziness, which the brethren possessed in common with the ants, and also because the Calumniator had hunted me down like a child, and had set me in captivity, and had hurled me into such [great] temptations. And I thought of those who were offering their souls with all their hearts to Christ, and who were being guided on their way in all the monasteries by submission and spiritual grace, through the righteous redemption of our Redeemer, and who were anxious to preserve their souls blameless, and who were labouring diligently and without any hindrance and with all their strength to do their work, and to minister unto one another; and who were not saying about any possession which was theirs, "It is mine," and who had everything in common; and who carried out perfectly the manner of life, which is described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts iv, 32), according to which no man said about any possession that it was his, and everything was in common; and who, though possessing nothing, yet possessed everything; and who enjoyed sufficiently that which they had for their [daily] needs, with all fear or with all praise, and glorified Him Who richly provided them with everything.

And having made my heart sad and low with such thoughts for many days, I went to that woman, who seeing how greatly my countenance was changed, entreated to be allowed to learn the cause thereof; and having confessed to her that it was because I had remembered the regular life of the brethren, and that I wished to escape and return to the monastery out of which the Enemy had made me to come, she advised me and besought me to take her [with me] and to place her also in a nunnery. And having together decided upon this plan, we wept and entreated our Lord to help us to carry out what we had determined and to deliver us from that wicked people. Now therefore, having firm hope in God's assistance, we took thought for our return, and I slew two large goats which I had with me, and made their skins into water bottles; and having loaded their flesh upon our shoulders, I took the woman, and we departed. And we travelled the whole night long, and came to an exceedingly great and wide river, and I blew up the water bottles, and I gave one to the woman and kept the other myself, and we laid hold upon them with our hands, and sitting astride of the skins we paddled with our feet, and crossed over the river. Then, seeing that we should

have to cross a desert wherein there was no water, we drank abundantly of the water of the river, and rose up from that place and went on our way quickly; and we were turning round continually [to look] behind us because of our horrible expectation that there would be men pursuing us, and that even if we could escape from them we should fall [into the hands of] wicked men like unto them.

Now because of our fear lest this should happen, and because of the heat of the sun, we were obliged to travel by night, and urged by this great fear, and also by our great anxiety, we were looking behind us ceaselessly. And after [travelling for] five days, we turned round suddenly, and saw our master and one of his companions, riding upon camels, and holding drawn swords in their hands, and pursuing after us; and by reason of our fear the sun appeared to us to become dark. And whilst we were in this terrible state of fright, and did not know where to escape, through the Providence of Christ, the Hope of the hopeless, and the Help of the helpless, we peered about in that place and found a frightful cave in the ground, wherein had gathered all the numerous kinds of snakes which are found in the desert, serpents, and asps, and vipers, and scorpions, which had gone therein because of the burning heat of the sun. Into this cave we tottered, and we hid ourselves in a corner, on the left hand side thereof, and we said, "If our Lord help us this cave shall be unto us a house of deliverance; but if He leave us to the sinners it will be our grave."

Now when our master and his companion following in our footprints had pursued us to the cave, they alighted from their camels, and stood by the mouth thereof, and when we saw our master, such great fear laid hold upon us that we were unable to move our tongue to utter a word; for owing to the greatness of our fear we were already [as] dead men, before the sword-stroke fell upon us. And when our master stood outside the cave and called to us, we were unable to speak to him because of our fear. And he took hold of the camels, and commanded his companion to go in and bring us out, whilst he stood [outside] waiting for us with his sword drawn, so that he might by means thereof quell his brutal madness. Now when the young man had gone into the cave for a distance of five paces he stood [still], and because he had come in from the outside, his eyes had become dazzled by the light of the sun, and he could not see. Now we being quite near him could see him standing [there], but because he was unable to see us he began to terrify us with [his] voice, saying, "Come out, O ye wicked slaves who deserve death, wherefore do ye delay? Behold, your master is outside expecting you.

And as he was saying these words, we saw a lioness rise up on the right hand side of the cave, and she sprang upon him, and whilst he was yet speaking, she seized him by the throat and strangled him forthwith, and then dragged him in and laid him on her lair, for she had a male cub; and when we saw our enemy lying [there] before our eyes, we glorified God with great joy. Now his master, not knowing what had happened, and thinking that the young man had been overcome by us, and being unable to contain himself for rage, ran forward, holding his drawn sword in his hand, and, standing at the mouth of the cave, cried out in his wrath to the young man, saying, "Quick, 'quick, bring forth these [slaves] to me that they

may die an evil death. And whilst he was speaking, the lioness sprang upon him suddenly, and ripped him up, and threw him headlong on the ground.

And we marvelled at all these unspeakable and inexplicable wonders of the Lord, and we gave thanks to Him, and we rejoiced in the glory of Him Who in this tribulation had risen up, and by Whose command the wild beast had destroyed our enemies. Now when the lioness turned back and passed from one side to the other of the cave where we were, we thought that she would destroy us, but, because of the wonderful thing which had been wrought, we [continued] to praise the Lord, and we said, "Since the Lord hath delivered us from those 'wicked men He can, if He willeth, hand us over to the lions; but nevertheless let us praise Him and give thanks unto Him." Now whilst we were thus thinking in our minds, the lioness took up the cub in her mouth, and departed from the cave, and left the place to us; but after she had gone, because of the state of fear in which we were, we remained the whole of that day in the cave.

And in the morning we went forth and found the camels that were still laden with provisions which our master had brought for himself and his slave; and we ate and drank therefrom, and for all these things we gave thanks unto the Lord, Who had delivered us from our enemies. And we rode upon the camels, and having crossed that desert in ten days, we arrived at a Greek camp, and we drew nigh to the Tribune who was in command of it, and related unto him everything which had happened unto us; then he sent us on to Sabinus, who was at that time Duke of Mesopotamia, and he likewise learned all our affairs and took the camels and gave us their price, and he dismissed us to depart to our country in peace. Now before our return it happened that my spiritual father fell asleep. And the woman who had been [my] helper, and who had given [me] excellent advice, and had counselled good actions, I placed in an abode of virgins, and I returned to my own monastery and to my spiritual brethren, where at the beginning the Lord directed me. And I related unto that blessed brotherhood the story of all the things which had happened to me, and I confessed that it was because I had not hearkened unto the admonition of that holy father that the Lord left me so that all these trials might come upon me; and He did this for the correction of many.

Now therefore, O my son, all these trials, which came upon me because of my disobedience, and which I have narrated before thee, are [intended] for the edification and the protection of thy soul; get thou possession of them, because, by the help of God, patient endurance and implicit obedience will deliver a man from all temptations. Obedience to the commandments of God is everlasting life, and the patient endurance which is perfect produceth everlasting life in us; for "he who endureth " unto the end shall live" (St. Matthew x, 22). These things did the old man Mark [Malchus] himself relate unto me whilst I was a young man, and on account of the law of brotherly love I have written them down because they befit the chaste life of holy old men, and tend to [their] edification and admonition; do ye then relate them unto those who are young, so that they may learn that those who have drawn nigh to the venerable estate of pure chastity, and who have preserved the same for Christ's sake

even unto the end, and who are protected by His power, shall overcome all the temptations of the Enemy. And neither captivity, nor the sword, nor any temptation, shall be able to overthrow those who have preserved in all purity and holiness the temple of Christ without spot and blemish, even unto death, and they shall become holy temples, and the Spirit of God shall dwell in them, and notwithstanding all the words of the Calumniator, He shall bestow victory upon them, for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 16. Of two of the Fathers who went naked

A Bbâ Macarius, the Egyptian, once came from Scete to the mountain of Nitria to the Offering of Abbâ Pambô, and the fathers said unto him, "Speak with the brethren, O father. And he said, "I am not yet a monk, but I have seen monks. For once when I was sitting in my cell at Scete my thoughts said unto me, 'Go forth, get thee gone into the desert, and consider intently what thou wilt see there'; and I remained five years in struggling with my thought, and trying it, lest it might be from Satan. And since the thought continued with me, I rose up and journeyed into the inner desert, and I found there a fountain of water with an island in the middle of it, and the beasts of the desert used to drink therefrom, and I saw in the midst of the beasts two naked men; then fear took up its abode in my limbs, and I thought that they were perhaps spirits. Now when they saw that I was afraid they spoke unto me and said, 'Fear not, we also are men.' And I said unto them, 'Whence are ye? And how have ye come to this desert?' And they said unto me, 'We were once in a large monastery, and the desire of both of us was the same, and we went forth and came here, where we have been for forty years.

One of us is an Egyptian and the other is a Libyan.' And they also questioned me, saying, 'What news is there in the world? Do the waters of the river come as usual? And is the world flourishing?' And I said unto them, 'Yes,' and I also asked them, 'How can I become a monk?' And they said, 'Except a man make himself to be remote from everything which is in this world he cannot be a monk.' And I said unto them, 'I am feeble and I am not able to do as ye do'; and they said unto me, 'If thou canst not [do as we do] sit in thy cell, and weep for thy sins.' And I asked them, 'When it is winter are ye not frozen? And in the season of the heat are not your bodies consumed?' And they answered me, saying, 'God in His Providence hath made us to be so that in the winter we do not freeze and in the summer we are not burnt up.' And it was because of this that I said, 'I am not yet a monk, but I have seen monks.' Permit me [to be silent]."

Chapter 17. Of a certain Old Man who went naked

And they used to speak of a certain solitary monk who went out unto the desert carrying his apparel on his shoulder, and having gone a journey of three days, he climbed a rock, and saw below him an old man who was grazing like the beasts, and he came down secretly and gave chase to him. And the old man was naked, and his soul had diminished to such a degree that he could not bear the smell of men, and he was able to remove himself from them and to make his escape by flight. And having taken to flight that brother pursued him, and he cried out to him and said, "I am following after thee; for God's sake wait for me." Then the old man answered and said unto him, "And I, for God's sake also, am fleeing from thee"; and finally, casting away from him the garment which was on his shoulder, he pursued him with all his might. Now as soon as the old man saw that he had cast away his garments he waited for him, and when the brother came up with him the old man said, "As thou didst cast away from thee the things of the world I waited for thee." Then that brother entreated him, saying, "Speak to me a word [of advice] that I may be redeemed thereby"; and the old man said unto him, "Flee from the children of men, and keep silence, and thou shalt live."

Chapter 18. Of a certain Naked Old Man who fed with the Beasts

And a certain brother came to the monks who lived in that spot wherein there were twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees, where Moses and the people [of Israel] encamped when they went forth from Egypt, and that brother told them the following story, saying:—I once had it in my mind to go into the inner desert and see if there was any man living therein, and I went a journey of four days and four nights, and found a certain cave; and having approached it I looked inside it and saw a man sitting therein, and I knocked at the door according to the custom of the monks, so that he might come out to me, and I might salute him, but he never moved, for he was dead. Now I did not hesitate or draw back, but I went in and laid my hand upon his shoulders, and he crumbled into dust and became nothing at all; and in wonderment I came out of that place and journeyed on again in the desert.

And I saw another cave by the side of which were traces of men, and I plucked up courage, and drew nigh to it, and though I knocked no man answered me; then I went inside and found no man, and I rose up [and came] outside, and said within myself, "The holy man will soon come here. Now when it was the season of evening, I saw a number of beasts, which are called "buffaloes," and the servant of God was in their midst, naked; and his hair had been made into a covering for his shame. And when he saw me he stood up in prayer, for he thought that I was a spirit, and he was greatly vexed by an evil spirit, as he subsequently told me; and I understood this matter, and said unto him, "I am a man, O holy one. Look at my footprints, and touch me, for I am flesh and blood. And after he had prayed, and I had answered "Amen," he looked at me and took heart, and brought me into his cave, and asked me, "Why didst thou come here? Then I said unto him, "That I might be blessed by the servants of God have I come into this desert, and He hath not deprived me of my desire"; and I also asked him, "How didst thou come here? and how dost thou live?

And he began to speak unto me thus:—I was once in a monastery, where my work was [to weave] linen, and the thought came to me that I would leave it and dwell by myself, and [my mind said], "Thou wilt be able to live in seclusion, and to entertain strangers with the results of thy labour, and thy wages will be more than enough for thee"; and I agreed with

my thoughts, and I carried them into effect. So I built me an habitation, and took up my abode therein, and men used to come to me and carry away my work. Now whilst I was doing thus, and was giving my work for the benefit of strangers and the poor, Satan, the Enemy, with his wonted envy cast his arrows at me, and instead of the reward of my labours wherewith I expected to be rewarded, he flattered me by causing a certain virgin to come to me, with the excuse that she wished to buy the labour of my hands, and I gave her that which she wanted. And he stirred her up, moreover, and with one excuse or the other she was always coming to me; and when she had been accustomed to come, and had acquired freedom of speech with me, she began to come near me, and she would take hold of my hands, and laugh, and she was so bold as to eat with me; and subsequently we conceived and brought forth iniquity.

And having lived with her in this fallen condition for six months I thought in my mind that whether it was to-day, or to-morrow, or at some future time, however far off that time might be, I should be delivered over to everlasting torment. The man who taketh out [of her house] the wife of another man, and seduceth her, is delivered over to the punishment of the Law; how much greater then will be the punishment of the man who hath seduced a woman who hath been betrothed to Christ? Then straightway I determined to come to this desert, and leaving everything I had behind me I went forth secretly, and I came and found this cave, and this fountain, and this palm which is in front of it, which produceth twelve clusters of dates each year, and thus yieldeth each month that which is sufficient for me for the whole month. Now after some time the hair of my body grew long, and my clothes wore out, and my hair covered my bodily shame; I have now been here for thirty years, and the air (or climate) always supplieth me in moderation with what is necessary.

And I questioned him further, saying, "Was thy mind disturbed about anything during the first years of thy life here?" And he said unto me, "I was greatly afflicted at first, and I used to throw myself upon the ground by reason of pain in my liver, and I could not stand up to say my prayers, but was obliged to make my supplications unto God lying on the ground. Now whilst I was in this tribulation I saw a man who came, and stood by my side, and said unto me, 'What is thy pain?' And at these words I gained a little strength, and I said unto him, 'My liver troubleth me and causeth me pain'; and he said to me, 'Shew me where the place is.' And having shewn him, he spread out his fingers and his hands, and slit up my body as with a sword and he took my liver and shewed me the sore on it; then he removed the pain, and having made the place whole again, he said unto me, 'Behold, thou art healed. Serve thou Christ, thy Lord, as is meet for Him'; and I have been healed since that, and have lived here without any pain. Then I entreated him to permit me to live in the first cave, wherein I had seen the dead monk, and he said unto me, 'Thou art not able to endure the attack of the devils'; and knowing that what he had said unto me was right, I entreated him to pray for me and to dismiss me." I have narrated this story unto you, O my brethren, so that we may be zealous in the spiritual life and its works of excellence, and may attain to everlasting life; may our Lord in His grace and goodness make us worthy to receive it!

Chapter 19. Of another Holy Man

A certain old man, who was held worthy to be the Bishop of a city in Egypt, told the following story (which he tried to make one think he had heard from another man, but he himself had actually done the things which he described), and he said:—Once there came to me the thought that I would go into the inner desert which is over against Usa (O ση), that I might see if I could find therein [any] holy men who worshipped Christ, and taking with me food and water for four days I set out on my journey; and after four days my food came to an end, and I wondered what I should do [for more], and I plucked up courage and committed myself to God. Then I went on for another four days, when I became so weak that I could not stand up any longer, because through hunger and exhaustion I had no strength in me; and I became sick in spirit and threw myself on the ground. And a certain man came and drew his finger across my lips, and forthwith I became so strong that I thought that neither fatigue nor hunger had ever drawn nigh me; and as soon as I perceived the strength which had come to me I rose up again and continued my journey for four days more.

Then once more I became weary, and stretched out my hands to heaven, and behold, that man who had given me strength before, drew nigh to my lips and made me strong, and I continued my journey in the desert after this for seven days more, when I found a booth, with a palm tree and water by the side of it; and there was standing [there] a man, the hair of whose head was quite white, and he had made clothing for himself, and his face was awesome [to look upon]. Now on seeing me he stood up in prayer, and when he had prayed and I had answered "Amen," he knew that I was a man. Then he took hold of my hands and questioned me, and said, "How didst thou come hither? Doth everything in the world still exist? Are the Christians being persecuted? And I said unto him, "By the help of your prayers, for in truth ye serve God, I have travelled and come into this desert; and, by the power of Christ, the persecution of the Christians is at an end. And in turn I said unto him, "Father, tell me how thou didst come hither. And with sighs and tears he began to say unto me: "I was a bishop, and during the period of the persecution many sufferings came upon me, but finally, because I could bear the tribulations no longer, I sacrificed [unto idols].

And having come to my senses I recognized the wickedness which I had committed, and I made myself come to this desert that I might die here. And I have passed forty-nine years here in making supplication to God for my folly, and in entreating Him to forgive me the

sin which I sinned; now God gave me life from this palm tree, but I did not receive any encouragement to hope for the forgiveness of my sins until the completion of forty-eight years."

And after he had said these things to me, he rose up suddenly and went outside the booth and stood up for many hours in prayer; and when he had finished his prayer he came to me, and as I looked upon his face fear and wonder fell upon me, for it was a face as of fire. And seeing that I was afraid he said unto me, "Fear not, for the Lord hath sent thee to me that thou mayest bury my body," and as soon as he had finished speaking, he stretched out his hands and his feet and died. Then I took the garment which I had on me [and tore it in two], and in one half of it I rolled him up and laid him in it in the earth, and the other half formed my apparel. Now as soon as I had buried him the palm tree dried up, and the booth fell down. Then I made many entreaties unto God, and I prayed unto Him to leave me the palm tree, so that I might pass the rest of my life there, but as this did not take place, I perceived that it was not the will of God that I should remain here; so I prayed, and returned to the habitation of the children of men. And behold, that man who had given me strength before came again to me and gave me courage, and thus I arrived and came to the brethren; and having related unto them these things I encouraged them not to be in despair about their souls, but [to feel] that in patient endurance they would find our Lord.

Chapter 20. Of a certain solitary Monk who used to feed on Grass by the Jordan

A certain monk was feeding on grass by the Jordan, and at noontide he went into a cave to rest, and he found there a lion which began to roar; and he said to the lion, "What vexeth thee? There is room enough here both for thee and for me, and if thou dost not wish [for a companion], get up and go out;" and because the lion could not bear [him], he rose up, and went out.

Chapter 21. Of a certain Holy Virgin

Once certain of the great sages of Scete were travelling along a road in the desert when they heard a sound, like the groan of a sick person, [rise up] from the ground; and they searched, and found a path which led into a cave, and when they had descended into it they discovered [there] a certain holy virgin. Then they said unto her, "O mother, when didst thou come here? And who ministereth unto thee?" For they saw nothing in the cave except the holy woman herself who was lying on the earth. And she said unto them, "Behold, I have passed eight and thirty years in this cave, and I have satisfied my wants with grass, for I labour for Christ. And I have never seen a man except this day, and God hath sent you to me this day to bury my body"; and having said these words, she died. And when the fathers saw [this], they glorified God, and they buried her body, and prayed, and departed from the place.

Chapter 22. Of the two Young Men who were with Macarius

Abbâ Bytinius said:—The disciple of Macarius once told me the following story, and said:—Abbâ Macarius once said to me whilst I was living in Scete:—Two young men, who are strangers, have gone down there, and one of them hath a few hairs as a beard, and the other hath the beginning of a beard. And these young men came and said unto me, "Where is the cell of Abbâ Macarius? And I said unto them, "What seek ye with him? And they said, "We have heard of his life and deeds, and we have come to see him. And I said unto them, "I am he"; and they offered me repentance, and said unto me, "We wish to abide here. Now, seeing that they were proud because of [their] riches, I said unto them, "Ye will not be able to dwell here"; and the elder of them said unto me, "If we are unable to dwell here, we will go to another place. Then I said to myself, "Why should I be an occasion of stumbling to them, for the labour itself will make them flee? And I said unto them, "Come, make ye a cell for yourselves if ye can"; and they replied to me, "Only shew us how to do it, and we will do it.

So I gave them an axe, and a tool for digging up the ground, and a sack of bread and salt, and I shewed them a rock wherefrom they might [hew] stone, and I said to them, "Hew your stone from here, and then bring wood from the forest and roof over [the place], and then take up your abode. Now I thought that they would straightway take to flight, but they said unto me, "What is your work here? And I said unto them, "The weaving of palm leaves," and I plucked some leaves from the palms in the grove, and shewed them how to begin to work to plait baskets, and I said unto them, "Give them to the guar-dians, and they will give you bread. And from that hour I left them, and everything which I had said unto them they performed with great persistence and diligence, and they remained there for three years and never came to me; and I continued to debate in my thoughts, saying, "What kind of work is theirs that they never come in to me to ask me for anything? The people that are afar off come to me, but these who are close by do not come to me, and they have gone nowhere else, except to the church to receive the Offering when they have leisure."

Then I prayed to God and fasted for a whole week that He might shew me their work, and straightway I rose up and went to them that I might see how they were; and when I had

knocked, they opened the door to me, and they saluted me, and then held their peace; and I prayed, and sat down. Then the elder of the men motioned to the younger, who went outside, and sat down, and he plaited ropes, and said nothing; and at the season of the ninth hour he knocked at the door, and the younger man came and made a sign to him, and he went forth and cooked a little food. And he made another sign to him, and he prepared a table with three bread cakes upon it, and then stood by in silence. Then I said, "Arise, let us eat"; and they drew nigh and we ate, and one of them brought an earthenware pitcher of water, and we drank. And when the evening had come, they spake to me, and said, "Art thou going away? and I said, "No, I am going to pass the night here. Then they laid down a palm-leaf mat for me on one side [of their cell], and they threw themselves down upon the bare earth on the other side of the cell by themselves.

And when I had prayed to God to inform me concerning their toil, the roof was opened, and the place became as light as it was in the daytime, but they did not see that light. Then, thinking that I was asleep, the elder man smote the younger, and they rose up, and girded up their loins, and spread out their hands to heaven; and I saw them, but they did not know that I could see them. And I saw the devils hovering about over the young man like flies, and some of them wished to settle on his eyes, and some on his mouth, and behold, the angel of the Lord was going round him, and was driving away from him the devils with a sword of fire; now the devils did not dare to

241 approach the elder man. And about the time of morning the two men threw themselves on the ground and I made myself to appear like one who had just woke up from sleep, and they likewise feigned to have only then become awake. And the elder man spake unto me these words only: "Dost thou wish us to 'recite twelve Psalms only?" And I said unto him, "Yes," and the younger man recited five Psalms out of [each of the] six Pethgâmâ, and one Hûlâlâ; and at every Pethgâmâ a lamp of fire came forth from his mouth, and went up into heaven; and similarly, when the elder man stood up and recited the Psalms there went forth from his mouth as it were a rope of fire, which ascended into heaven. Now I could only recite the Psalms little by little. And I came forth and said unto them, "Pray 'ye for me"; but they excused themselves, and were silent. And I learned that the elder man was perfect, but that the Enemy still waged war against the younger man. And after a few days the elder man died, and three days later the other man died also; and whensoever the fathers came to Abbâ Macarius he used to take them to the cell of those brethren, and say unto them, "Behold ye the martyrium of these little strangers."

Chapter 23. Of Abba Bessarion

The disciples of Abbâ Bessarion used to relate the story of his life and deeds in the following words:— The mode of life of the old man was that of the bird of the heavens, and of the things which are in the waters, and of the creeping things of the earth, and he passed the whole period of his life in peace, and in tranquillity; for no anxiety [as to the condition] of his cell was ever present with him; and his soul was never occupied with the desire to live in certain places; and he never ministered during the whole course of his career to the satisfying of himself with food; and he never gathered together or laid up for himself possessions in clothes or books; but he was free from care about everything which concerned the body, and he rejoiced in the hope of the good things which were to come; and he was firm and immovable in the foundation of his faith; and he followed the ascetic life strenuously. He wandered hither and thither like one possessed, in the season of frost [he went] naked, and he was consumed with heat under the fierce rays of the sun, and at one time he lived among the rocks and at another in the desert. And if it fell out and happened that he came to districts which were settled, or to a place where a congregation of monks passed their whole lives together in the fulfilment of the rules of monasticism, he would take his seat contentedly outside the door of the monastery.

Now on one occasion, having arrived at a certain monastery, he sat down outside the door, and he wept and wailed aloud after the manner of one who had been saved from a storm [at sea]; and when one of the brethren had gone forth, he found him [sitting there] like any ordinary poor man or beggar, and having drawn nigh unto him compassionately he said unto him, "Wherefore weepest thou, O man? If thou hast need of any of the necessaries of life, so far as in my power lieth, I will give it unto thee. Rise up, then, and get thee inside the monastery, and comfort thyself with the blessed companionship of the table with us. Then the blessed Bessarion made answer unto him, and said, "Until I find the possessions of my house which I have lost, and the numerous goods of the house of my fathers which I have lost in sundry and divers ways, I cannot live under a roof. For pirates fell upon me at sea, and a storm rose up against me, and I have been shorn of my riches, and from being a man of high degree I have become the object of contempt. Now that brother was astonished at these words, and was grieved thereat, and he went in and brought out some bread, and gave it unto him, saying, "Father, take this, and the other things which thou hast mentioned, that is to say, country, and family, and riches, God shall restore unto thee.

But Abbâ Bessarion cried out the more, and with louder cries, and lifted up his voice and said, "I know not if I shall be able to find that which I have lost, and that which I seek, for as far as I can see they will be removed from me still farther. And I am afflicted daily, and am brought nigh unto death by reason of the violent storm of wickednesses innumerable which surround me, and I endure them and [rest] upon hope that, peradventure, I may be worthy of mercy in the day of judgement."

Chapter 24. Of the wonderful things which Abba Bessarion wrought

Abbâ Shâôl (or Dulas), the disciple of Abbâ Bessarion, used to say :—We came once to the bank of a lake and I was athirst, and I said unto Abbâ Bessarion, "I am thirsty." And the old man prayed, and said unto me, "Take water from the lake, and drink," and I went, and drank, and I found the water to be sweet; and I drew therefrom and filled all the water vessels which I had with me, for I thought that peradventure I should be thirsty again when I continued my journey. Then the old man seeing me do this, said, "Why fillest thou [these vessels with] water?" And I said unto him, "Forgive me, father, but I did so lest, 243 16a peradventure, as we continue our journey, I may become "thirsty again"; and he said to me, "May God forgive thee, for here, and there, and everywhere, God directeth us."

And on another occasion he was travelling along a road, and he came to the river Chrysoroan, and there was nothing wherewith it might be crossed, and he stretched out his hands, and prayed, and crossed over to the other side. Now I was astonished, and I offered unto him repentance, and said, "Father, when thou wast passing over the river how far up thy legs didst thou feel the water?" And he said unto me, "As far as my ankles I felt the water, but all the rest of it was solid beneath my feet." And on another occasion we were journeying to a certain great sage, and the sun was nigh to set, and the old man prayed, and said, "I beseech Thee, O Lord, to let the sun abide in his place until I come to Thy servant"; and it was so.

And on another occasion I came to him in his cell that I might speak with him, and I found him standing up in prayer, with his hands stretched out to heaven, and he remained standing up in this position for four days and four nights; and afterwards he called me, and said unto me, "Come, my son," and we went forth and set out on the road. And being athirst I said unto him, "My Father, I am athirst." Then he removed himself from me about the distance of a stone's throw, and prayed and came to me, and he brought with him his garment filled with water from the air, and I drank, and we travelled on our road until we came to Lycus, to Abbâ John. And after each had saluted the other, he prayed, and sat down, and

he discoursed concerning the vision which he had seen, and Abbâ Bessarion said, "A decree of judgement hath gone forth from the Lord, that all the temples of the idols be blotted out"; and this actually came to pass, for at that time they were all uprooted.

And there was in Egypt a certain man who had a son that was a paralytic, and he took him on his shoulders, and brought him to Abbâ Bessarion and left him by the door of his cell weeping, and he departed and went to a place some distance off. Now the old man heard the sound of the weeping of the young man, and he looked out, and seeing him, said unto him, "Who art thou that art here?" And the young man said, "My father brought me here and then went away, and I weep." Then the old man said unto him, "Rise up, hasten after him, and overtake him"; and straightway the young man was made whole, and he went to his father, who took him and departed.

And on another occasion there came to the church a man who had a devil, and prayer was made on his behalf in the church, but the devil did not go forth, for he was difficult [to cast out]; and the clergy said, "What shall we do about this devil, for no man can cast him out except Abbâ Bessarion?" Let us entreat him concerning the man, and even though he "cometh not to the church, let us act thus. Behold, the old man cometh to the church early in the morning before every-one else. Let us make the sick man to occupy the seat wherein the old man sitteth usually, and when he cometh in, let us stand up in prayer, and say unto him, 'O father, make to rise up this man also'; and they did so. And when the old man came [into the church] in the morning, they rose up in prayer, and said unto him, Father, make to rise up that brother"; and Abbâ Bessarion went and struck him with his fist, and said, "Rise up and get thee forth"; and straightway that devil went forth from the man, and he was made whole immediately.

Chapter 25. The History of a Holy Man who [possessed] Nine Virtues

The fathers used to say concerning a certain brother who lived in a large monastery that, having contended mightily, and having been helped by God, he had made himself master of nine virtues, and that he was exceedingly desirous of making them ten, but that in spite of many contendings he was unable [to do so]. Then the Enemy, according to his custom, cast his arrows at him, and both by day and by night he vexed him and troubled him in order that he might depart from the monastery wherein he was, and he advised him, saying, "In another monastery thou wilt be able to complete the ten [virtues]. Now the brother, not understanding the cunning of the Evil One, was led by his thoughts, which seemed to incite him to [further] spiritual excellence, and he departed and went to another monastery with the expectation that he would find that which he sought. And having been received into the monastery to which he had gone, after a very short time, through the contending of the Calumniator, he lost one virtue. And once again the Calumniator cast into his mind the thought that he would depart from that monastery, although he remembered his promise, and said, "Thou hast not only not found that which thou didst seek, but thou hast also lost that which thou hadst.

Then the brother, being sad and sorry about that which had happened unto him, departed and went to another monastery, with the expectation that he would be able to acquire the virtue which he had lost, and also that he would be able to add another thereto. And whilst the brother was working and contending to acquire that virtue which he had lost and that which he had coveted, the Calumniator, through his wicked craftiness, made him lose another, and he did the same thing to him on several occasions; and he made him to go out from one monastery, and brought him into another so often that the brother at length lost four virtues.

And the brother wandered about hither and thither in a state of great agitation, and coming to a certain monastery he rested himself, and leaned against the door thereof, in dejection of spirit, and he cried over himself, and wept because of what had happened unto him. Then, having rested a little, he determined to go into that monastery in order to be received into it. And he told himself of all the things which had happened unto him, and all the trials

which had attacked him in the monasteries wherein he had been; and he passed judgement upon his soul and said, "Art thou able to bear all the [trials] which are in this monastery?" And his soul made answer, saying, "I place my trust in the mercy of our Lord that He will give strength to my weakness, and that I shall endure [them]." Then, having decided these things in his thoughts, the brother wrote them all down on a piece of paper, and placed them in his girdle, and he strengthened his thoughts to go into the monastery that he might be received therein.

Now after he had been received, and had lived in the monastery for a short time, he began to have freedom of speech with the brethren, and with the archimandrite, and temptations also began to assail him; then he took out the written paper which was placed in his girdle, and read it, and felt relieved, and this he continued to do whensoever temptation assailed him. And the brethren marvelled because he was not perturbed when they were, for on several occasions, when the brethren of that monastery were in a state of excitement, he had not permitted himself to be agitated with them in the smallest degree, and they wished to know the reason of this. And one day when the monks were agitated and disturbed by a quarrel which was so serious that the matter nearly came to murder, that brother took the paper, and looked at it, and as he was reading it one of the brethren watched him. And when the tumult was over, and the brethren saw that he was not agitated, they marvelled, and said, "What is the meaning of this thing? And why is not that brother as excited as we are?" Then the brother who had watched the monk [read his paper] revealed to them the matter, saying, "He hath something in his girdle, and on account of it he remaineth undisturbed"; and the brethren enquired into the matter, and they found that it was even as the brother had said.

Then they approached the archimandrite, and said unto him, If thou dost not expel this brother, we will not remain here, "and we will go forth, because he is a sorcerer, and behold, his sorceries are in his girdle"; and the archimandrite promised to expel him. Now the archimandrite delayed the expulsion of that brother, and one night, whilst he was asleep, the archimandrite went to him and took the paper from his girdle, and he read it and rejoiced with a great joy; and having read the paper he put it [back] into the girdle of the brother, who knew not what had been done, and no other man knew. And after a short time the brethren, through the agency of Satan, were greatly disturbed by a very serious quarrel, and that brother was in no wise agitated; and when they saw that he was not disturbed at all and that he was wholly tranquil, they rose up against the archimandrite, saying, "If thou dost not expel this brother we will all depart forthwith. Then the archimandrite called the brother and said unto him, "What is this that thy brethren are saying against thee? They are bringing an accusation against thee. And the brother expressed regret, saying, "Yes, father, all [their words] are true; but permit me to repent. And the archimandrite said unto him, "But they say that thou art a sorcerer"; and the brother said, "Yes, I am even as they say, but I beseech thy piety, O father, that thou wilt allow me to repent here.

Then the archimandrite said unto him, ”But they say that thy sorceries are in thy girdle. And the brother, being unwilling that his spiritual excellence should be revealed, fell upon his face before the archimandrite and took hold of his feet, and made supplication to him, and wept with groans and sighs, saying, ”Expose me not, O father, but forgive me for this once only, and I will repent with all my soul. Then the archimandrite, who knew that great advantage would accrue to the whole brotherhood, would not be persuaded by him, but he commanded that his girdle should be loosened, and he himself took it and brought out therefrom the paper; and he then ordered that all the brethren should be gathered together, and that the paper should be read in a prominent place, so that all of them might hear. And after the paper had been read the brethren repented, and fell upon their faces before that brother, and they entreated him, saying, ”Forgive us, father, for we have sinned against thee. Thus that brother benefited the whole brotherhood, and they regarded him as a father.

Chapter 26. Of the Blessed Woman Maria

There was a certain worldly man who wished to become a monk, and he had a little daughter who besought him to take her with him to the monastery; now she was a maiden, and he entreated her, saying, "If thou 'wishest to become a nun let me take thee to a house for virgins," but she said to him, "I cannot be separated from 'thee." And her father, being much distressed about her because she wept by night and by day and begged that she might not be separated from him, made up his mind to take her with him, and he changed her name that it might not be known that she was a maiden. Now her name had been "Mâriâ," but her father gave her the name of "Maryânâ" as if she had been a boy; then he committed the matter to God, and took her and went into a monastery without anyone perceiving that Maryânâ was a girl, and after several years Maryânâ's father died performing the excellent works of the monastic life. Now the archimandrite saw that Maryânâ was working [hard], and was excelling in spiritual excellence, and he rejoiced in him, not knowing that he was not a boy, and he commanded that he should not be sent out on the highways [to beg] because he was a child; and the brethren were envious against Maryânâ because he did not go out on the highways with them.

And when the archimandrite saw that the brethren were envious against Maryânâ because he did not go out on the highways as they did, he called to Maryânâ and said unto him, "Since the brethren are envious against thee because thou 'dost not perform the work on the high roads as do they, I command thee to do so"; then Maryânâ fell down before the archimandrite and said unto him, "Whatsoever thou commandest me to do I will do gladly, O father. Now the brethren of the monastery wherein lived Maryânâ, whensoever they went out on the high roads, visited a certain believer, in order to rest a little and to refresh themselves, and since Maryânâ was sent out, even according to what had been ordered by the archimandrite, the believing man whom the brethren visited saw him, (for he knew all the brethren of the monastery because he used to go to their monastery continually); and the believing man saw Maryânâ at the season of evening, and he took him and brought him to his house, so that he might rest there for the night. And the believing man had a daughter, and on the night wherein Maryânâ stayed with him a certain man seduced her,

and he who had fallen upon her and seduced her commanded her, saying, "If thy father saith unto thee, Who is he that hath seduced thee? say thou unto him, It was Maryânâ the monk.

And as soon as Maryânâ had departed from them, the father of the maiden knew that his daughter had been seduced, and he asked her, saying, "Who hath seduced thee? And she said unto him, "Maryânâ, the monk, is he who hath seduced me. Then the father of the maiden rose up straightway, and went to the monastery, and with tears he spake before the archimandrite and the whole brotherhood, and said, "What offence have I committed against you that ye should seduce my daughter? Now when the archimandrite heard this he was greatly moved, and he said to him, "What sayest thou? Who hath seduced thy daughter? Tell me who he is that I may expel him from the monastery forthwith"; and the man said unto him, "It is Maryânâ who hath seduced my daughter. Then the archimandrite commanded that Maryânâ should be called so that he might go forth from the monastery, but having been sought for throughout all the building Maryânâ could not be found, and then they knew that he was out on a journey for the monastery; and the archimandrite said unto the father of the maiden, "There is nothing further which I can do except this: when Maryânâ returneth from the highway I will not allow him to enter the monastery," and he gave orders to all the brethren of the monastery, saying, "When Maryânâ returns he is not to be allowed to enter the monastery."

And when Maryânâ came back from the road they would not allow him to enter the monastery, and he wept at the door thereof and said, "What is my offence that I am not permitted to enter the monastery?" Then the doorkeeper said to him, "[Thou art not permitted to enter] because thou hast seduced the daughter of the believing man whom the monks visit"; and Maryânâ entreated the doorkeeper, saying, "For the Lord's sake go in and persuade the archimandrite to permit me to enter the monastery, and whatsoever he ordereth me to do because of my fall I will do." So the doorkeeper went in and told the archimandrite everything which Maryânâ had said, and the archimandrite said to him, "Go and tell Maryânâ, [saying], 'Because thou hast done this thing thou shalt never see my face again; get thee gone to whatsoever place thou pleasest.'" When Maryânâ heard these things he was greatly afflicted, and he sat by the door of the monastery night and day, and wept because of what had happened to him; and he besought those who went in and those who came out to entreat the archimandrite on his behalf, and although very many folk did so, and begged him to let Maryânâ come into the monastery, the archimandrite would not be persuaded [to do so].

And after that maiden, through whom Maryānā had been trodden in the dust, had given birth to her child, her father took the boy to whom his daughter had given birth, and brought it to Maryānā, and said unto him, "Behold, here is thy son, take him and rear him"; and Maryānā took the child, saying, "Glory be to God Who can endure and bear with sinners like myself." And each day he took the child and went up the mountain to the goats of the monastery, and suckled him with goats' milk, and when the child was suckled Maryānā returned to the door of the monastery; now he never left the door of the monastery except

when he went to give the child milk, and he besought those who went in and those who came out, with tears, to unite with him in making supplication to God to forgive him his sin. And he sat by the door of the monastery for four years, and tears were never absent from his eyes, neither by night nor by day, and every one who heard the sound of his weeping was grieved for his sake. Now after Maryānā had suffered affliction by the door of the monastery for four years and had shewn the child to every man, saying, "Pray ye for me, for I fell into fornication, and this child is the result thereof," God moved the mind of the archimandrite to bring Maryānā into the monastery, for His mercy was revealed upon him, and He commanded the archimandrite to bring Maryānā in.

And as soon as Maryānā heard that they were going to bring him into the monastery from the man who told him about it beforehand, he rose up straightway, and fell down before the Lord, and said, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord, Who hath not been unmindful of such a [great] sinner as I am! I give thanks unto Thee for all the goodness which thou hast shewn unto me. What have I to give unto Thee in return therefor? For Thou hast brought me into the monastery, by the door of which I had decided in my mind that I must die." And as soon as those who had been sent to bring Maryānā into the monastery had done so, Maryānā fell down before the archimandrite, and before the whole brotherhood of the monastery, now he was carrying the child and was weeping, and sighing, and groaning, and he said unto them, "Forgive ye me, O masters and fathers, for I have angered God with [my] evil works, and you I have afflicted greatly; but pray for me, that God may forgive me the fall wherewith I fell."

And after many years Maryānā, having prevailed mightily in the great labours of spiritual excellence, delivered his soul to our Lord, and none of the brethren had ever seen him laugh or smile; on the contrary, he mourned all the days of his life. And when he was dead, the brethren drew nigh to anoint him with oil, according to the custom, and then they saw that Maryānā was a woman. Then the brethren ran quickly and called the man who had made the accusation against Maryānā, and when he had come and seen her, great wonder laid hold upon him, and he besought God to forgive him the great sin and wrong which he had done to Maryānā; and all those who heard and saw this glorified God that His saints fight so bravely for His Name's sake.

Chapter 27. The History of a certain Sage and of the watching of the Mind

There was a certain old man who lived in his cell and performed mighty ascetic works, and who, whensoever the brethren of the Cells were gathered together for the vigil of the First Day of the week, would come to the general assembly, and would act in such a way as to make the brethren despise him, and indeed they regarded him as a man who had gone out of his senses, although he did everything with discretion. Now God, the Good and Compassionate, did not wish the labours of the old man to be hidden, but He revealed and made known some of them for the benefit of the community, and He sent angels, who were in the forms of rich and honourable men, to the priest of the Cells, and they came and saluted him; and when the priest saw them, he ran forward to meet them, for he thought that they who appeared to him were great and wealthy men, and he rose up immediately and saluted them. And after they had sat down and had held some converse with the old man, they besought him, saying, "O father, we beg of thee to allow us to go round the Cells that we may be blessed by the Fathers"; and he accepted their petition, and permitted them to do whatsoever they wished, and they asked him to send to them one of the brethren.

Then the priest called one of the brethren, and commanded him to go with them, and beckoning him aside he said unto him secretly, "Take heed lest thou take them to the cell of that [mad] old man, for when they see that he hath lost his reason they will be sorry they have met him. And when they had come out to go to the Cells, the honourable men fell down before the priest of the Cells, and said unto him, "O Father, give our brother orders to take us to see all the fathers," and the priest said unto them, "I have commanded him to take you to them all. And having gone to the fathers of the Cells, and visited them, they returned to the priest in his cell, and he said unto them, "Are ye gratified now that ye have seen the fathers? And they said unto him, "O father, we are gratified, but we are sorry about one thing, that is to say, because thou didst command the brother who went with us that we should not see all the fathers. Then the priest called the brother who had gone with them, and said in their presence, "Did I not tell thee to take the brethren to all the cells? And the

brother said, "Yea, father, thou didst tell me to do so, and I took them to all the cells, and they have seen all the brethren.

Then the honourable men said to the priest, "Forgive us, father, but there are some of the fathers whom we have not seen, and we are greatly grieved thereat; but say a prayer on our behalf so that we may depart."

And after the priest had prayed over them, and they had departed from him, he called the brother who had gone with them, and said unto him, "How did these men know what I ordered thee [to do]? Didst thou, perchance, reveal it unto them? And the brother made repentance, and said, "Forgive me, father, but I did not reveal [thy orders] unto them. Then the priest knew that the matter was from God, and he rose up straightway and went to that old man whom he thought to be out of his mind, and he fell down on his face before him, and laid hold upon his feet, and besought him to reveal unto him his ascetic works and labours; and he swore to the old man that he would not rise up from the ground, and would not let go his hold upon him until he had done so, saying to the old man likewise, "That I should come to thee and that thou shouldst reveal thy labours unto me, are matters from God. Now the old man was unwilling to reveal his works, because he did not wish to be held in honour because of them, nevertheless he was compelled to do so because the priest had told him that the matter was from God, and he promised the priest to reveal unto him one thing;

and when the priest heard the promise of the old man, he rose up from the ground, and seeing the old man in a gentle and tranquil frame of mind, he marvelled, because he had never before seen him as he was at that moment. Then the old man said unto the priest, "Depart, O father, I did not know that I did even one good thing, but of such things which I have the following is one:—I have by my side two baskets, one on my right hand, and one on my left; for every good thought which springeth up in my mind I take a pebble and throw it into the basket which is on my right hand; and for every hateful thought which riseth in me, I also take a pebble and throw it into the basket which is on my left hand, and this I do every day. And when the time for the evening meal hath arrived, I take out the pebbles, and count them, and if the number of those which are in the basket of good thoughts on my right hand do not exceed those in the basket of evil thoughts on my left hand, I do not take any supper that evening; and if they do exceed, then I eat, and rejoice, for sometimes it happeneth that several days pass without my eating at all, because the pebbles of the good deeds do not exceed in number the pebbles of the bad ones.

And whensoever an abominable thought cometh to me, I pass judgement on myself, and say, "Take heed, for thou wilt not eat today!"" And having heard these things the priest praised God, the Lord of the universe, and he marvelled how the old man could perform such works of righteousness and yet keep them hidden from every man.

Chapter 28. Of two Brothers who dwelt in a Persian Monastery

A certain history, which is full of pain and profit, O my beloved, came to me by chance, that is to say, through conversation and speech with the brethren, and I have thought much about it, and have determined that it is right for me to narrate it, and to set it down in writing, so that many from the reading of the same may acquire spiritual profit, and may watch against enmity, and may not have bitter hatred of one another for any reason whatsoever, and that each [of us] may be at peace with the other, and so that each [of us] may forgive the other any cause for murmuring or anger, and may remember the words of our Lord, and God, and Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

There were two brethren who dwelt in one abode in a certain Persian monastery, and it happened that one of them had cause for dispute with the other, and they separated, each from the other, the one leaving the monastery altogether, and the other remaining in the abode wherein they had lived hitherto. And it came to pass that he who remained behind was seized, and bound, and shut up in prison, for [giving] testimony concerning our Lord, and he was brought before the judge, and was questioned by him once, twice, and a third time, and he bore severe stripes and did not deny Christ, and he was again fast bound in the prison house. Now when his companion heard [this] he repented in his soul, and he thought, "It is right that I should go and be reconciled with my brother, for perhaps through this testimony which he persisteth in giving, he may depart from the world and go away, each of us keeping wrath against the other, and through this we both shall suffer no small loss, and probably I more than he." And when the brother had meditated thus, he came to the prison and enquired for his companion who was imprisoned there, and he went into his presence and fell down at his feet, and besought and entreated him to be reconciled to him; but the brother who was in fetters would not be persuaded to do this, and continued in his wrathful condition, and when the brother saw this he left him and departed in sorrow.

And on the following day the judge commanded and they brought in before him the man who was bound and in prison, and he asked him if he would be persuaded to deny his God and to worship the sun, and he would not agree to do either; and the judge gave orders that he was to be laid out and beaten, and to be smitten with rods, and when they had laid him

out, and the strokes were being laid on by two [men] at a time, he denied Christ. Now when the judge saw this, he commanded the men to stop beating him, and he called him to him, and asked him, saying, "What aileth thee? I caused thee to bear 'severe stripes on three previous occasions, and thou wast neither overcome nor didst play the coward's part, and yet now, whilst they are coming near thee, thou dost deny '[thy God]. And the brother said, "I have acted thus because 'I have sinned and treated with contempt the commandments of the Lord my God, Who commanded us to forgive each his offences. I had once a brother in our Lord, and we lived together in one monastery, and it happened that some cause for anger rose up between us, and we separated from each other in enmity.

Yesterday he came to me in prison, and fell down before me and begged for peace from me, and I would not consent to be reconciled unto him, and therefore the goodness of God was cut off from me, and He did not help me this day as He hath always done before, and I denied [Him]. During the stripes which I received formerly I used to see Him spread out about a hand's breadth above me, and He did not permit me to suffer, but to-day He forsook me, and at a small amount of pain I was terrified and I denied [Him]. Now when the judge had heard these things from him, he commanded that his fetters should be loosed from off him, and that he should be dismissed; and the brother, feeling disgrace and shame at the fall which had come upon him, went forth from the presence of the judge, and directed his way straight to his companion, and he fell down on his face at his feet, and wept and cried out bitterly, and entreated for mercy and peace; and when his companion looked upon him, he also suffered great grief, and he received him, and they were reconciled, and he prayed for him, and though the thing was bitter to him, they separated one from the other.

Then the brother who had denied his God straightway returned to the door of the judge, and he began to cry out and to curse the king, so that they might again bring him before the judge for examination; but the judge did not wish to say anything to him. And when the brother saw this, he departed from thence, and through penitence and grief for what had happened to him, and also through the pain and anguish of his soul, he threw himself, body and soul, into a fire temple; and he began to cast dust and everything else which came to his hands on the fire; and he cursed the king mightily, saying, "God will receive those who have been tripped up and have fallen, if they repent and turn unto Him. And he departed from thence also, and he wandered about and went hither and thither, and he threw stones at every magian or pagan whom he met, and he never ceased from reviling the king; and he never ceased or kept silent concerning the compassion of our Lord, which is laid out for those who repent, and he cried out, saying, "Verily, there is no god except our Lord Jesus Christ, although I, through my sins, and my negligence of His mercy, have denied Him. Now when the judge heard these things, he feared lest he would suffer a penalty and be condemned to death as one who had heard the king reviled, and had been neglectful;

and straightway he sent forth a decree concerning him, and ordered that his head should be cut off quickly with the sword. And when they had seized the monk, and had taken him outside the city, he cried out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed art Thou, O our Lord

Jesus Christ, for ten thousand times ten thousand sins are too few for Thy mercy to forgive in one hour"; and having said this they made him kneel down, and he was smitten by the sword and received mercy. Glory be to the Power Who maketh strong His saints to do His Will, and may we have mercy shewn unto us through their prayers, for ever and ever. Amen.

Chapter 29. The History of a certain Virgin who grew old in the works of the Fear of God

It was related by a certain old man who said:—There was a virgin who was far advanced in years, and who had grown old in the fear of God, and having been asked by me to tell me the reason why she left the world, she began, with sighs, to speak to me as follows:—Great and marvellous things have happened unto me. When I was a young girl I had a father, who was a pleasant man, and who was modest in his disposition; now he was a delicate man in health, and he was always suffering from some kind of sickness, and he lived entirely to himself, and never interfered in the affairs of other people, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he could be induced to see the people of his village. When he was in good health he devoted his attention unceasingly to the care of his estate, and he occupied himself at all seasons with the cultivation of his fields; but finally he was obliged to pass many long days of his life laid out on a bed of sickness, and he was so quiet that those who were not acquainted with him would have thought that he was deaf. And I had a mother, who, in all her ways and manners, was the opposite of my father, and she used to do things which were beyond her capacity;

her words to every one were many, and she poured out her speech uselessly to every one, and she talked so much that every one imagined that her body was composed wholly of tongues. Moreover, she had quarrels with her neighbours continually, and she was always in a state of drunkenness, and she drank shamelessly at all times with wanton folk, and she managed the affairs of her house badly, after the manner of a harlot; and at length, though the house was well furnished with goods of every kind, it was with the greatest difficulty that the people could find enough to supply our wants. She was very lax in the care for the things which my father required in his illness, but she displayed the utmost attention in providing for her own body in a disgraceful manner, and the people of the village at length fled before her shameless appearance. No illness ever came upon her, and she had never been ill in the whole course of her life, from the day she was born, and she was healthy in body until her death.

CHAPTER 29. THE HISTORY OF A CERTAIN VIRGIN WHO GREW OLD IN THE WORKS OF THE

When therefore, I, a wretched girl, had lived for some time in such circumstances as these, it happened that, after struggling against a long illness, that is to say, my father was obliged to pass every day of his life in the infirmity of sickness, at length he departed from the world. Now at the very moment of his death the weather changed, and the rain poured down in torrents, and lightnings and thunders were tearing through the air, and disturbing it violently, and it was impossible to tell whether it was day or whether it was night; for this reason my father lay dead on his bier for three days, for the weather did not permit him to be buried. And, moreover, it made the people of the village to shake their heads, and they wondered, and said, "Perhaps great wickednesses were committed by this man secretly, and he may have been found to be such an enemy of God that even the earth will not permit his burial"; but, in order that his body might not go wholly to corruption, even though the weather was gloomy and threatening, and the rain had not ceased, by some means or other we carried him [to the grave], and laid him therein. Now my mother, as one who had found great relief, forthwith fulfilled unreproved her wanton lusts to the utmost, and she straightway turned my father's house into an abode of harlots, and she lived there in such a state of luxury and lascivious pleasure that soon of all the goods in it only a mere remnant was left, and that remnant she left to me when I was very young. Then with difficulty came death to my mother, and in my opinion, he was afraid to approach her, for great worms grew in her, and with much trouble she was buried, the weather by its serenity, and the sun by his splendour helping [in the work].

Now after the death of my mother, and whilst I was still a little girl, I left the world. During the period when I was a young woman the lusts of the body were stirred up within me, and they goaded me severely, and I used to rise up in the evening (or night) that I might lie down again and find a little relief from the disturbance of my mind. And a struggle went on in my thoughts, for I wondered what manner of life I should choose for myself, and how I should end the days of my life, and whether they would be passed in quietness and happiness, and fair chastity, even as they were during my father's lifetime. Then my thoughts spake unto me thus:— "Behold, in this world thy father did not enjoy any happiness whatsoever, but he passed all his life in sickness and wretchedness, and he departed from this world of trouble under the same circumstances, and even the earth was unwilling to receive his body; are [men] to receive such a life as this from (?) God, and why did my father deserve such treatment? On the other hand, supposing I chose to lead a life like that of my mother, will that be any better to deliver my body over to fornication, and lasciviousness, and the gratification of [my] lusts? For, behold, my mother left no kind of abominable wickedness which she did not commit, and she destroyed her whole life with her depravity, and yet she departed from this world having enjoyed health and prosperity every day [of her life]! What then? Is it not then right for me to live even as she lived? For it is better that I should believe with mine own eyes, and that they should see for themselves the variety and the ending of such matters, for there is nothing better than to understand thoroughly whatsoever we see openly before our eyes."

And I, the wretched girl, vainly imagined that such thoughts were the thoughts of truth, and for this reason I determined to prepare myself to live even as my mother had lived. Now when the night had overtaken me, and immediately sleep had fallen upon me after thinking thoughts of this kind, a certain man, of huge stature, stood up above me; and his appearance was frightful, and his form made me tremble and terrified me, and his face was hard, and in a stern voice he asked me, saying, "Tell me, so and so, what are these thoughts which are in thy heart?" And, because I was terrified by his appearance and form, I scarcely dared to look upon

257 him, and in a voice which was sterner than before, he commanded me to reveal to him the things which I had settled in my own mind to do. And being stupefied with fear I forgot all my thoughts and I said unto him, "My lord, I know not what thou sayest," and having thus denied that I knew, he reminded me of everything which I had thought out in my mind, one after the other. Therefore, having rebuked myself, I turned and begged and entreated him that I might be held worthy of forgiveness, and I related unto him the reason for such thoughts. Then he straightway said unto me, "I am about to shew thee both thy father and thy mother, and the [different] manner of life which they lead, and the things which each doeth, and thou shalt choose which life thou wilt lead." And he took me by my hands, and drew me away, and carried me to an exceedingly great plain, wherein there were many paradises, and thick trees heavily laden with fruits, which for appearance and beauty surpassed description. Now when I had entered into that plain, my father met me, and embraced me, and kissed me, and he held converse with me and called me "my daughter," and whilst I was in his embrace I besought him that I might remain with him, but he said unto me, "At present it is impossible, but if thou desirest to walk chastely in my footsteps thou shalt come hither after no great time."

And as I remained and was making my supplication unto him, he who had brought me to this place drew me on, and I was lifted up in his hands, and he said unto me, "Come and see thy mother also in the fire which is blazing fiercely, so that thou mayest know how to choose what is good, and towards which manner of life it will be useful and beneficial for thee to incline. Then he showed me a fiery furnace which was burning fiercely, and every kind of thing of cruel wrath surrounded the furnace, and I heard proceeding therefrom the sound of weeping and of gnashing of teeth. And having looked down into the furnace I saw my mother sunk in fire up to her neck, and she was weeping and gnashing her teeth, and she was being consumed in the fire, and she was being gnawed by a multitude of worms; and when she saw me she cried out with tears in a loud voice and, addressing me with the words, "My daughter," she said, "woe is me, O my daughter, for these things have come upon me because of my evil deeds, and because I held to be madness the things which were said unto me concerning chastity, and the punishments which were declared to fall upon those who committed fornication and adultery. And, behold, in return for my lascivious pleasure I have to suffer torture, because I did not think that vengeance was laid up therefor!

And, behold, in return for a little pleasure and the momentary gratification of my desire, what everlasting punishment I have to endure, and what penalty is there which I am not compelled to pay? And consider, moreover, that in return for the short-lived happiness which I, O wretched woman, enjoyed, I have to pay a prolonged penalty. And because I despised God what evil wages I have to receive! All these things have overtaken me because I behaved rebelliously, but, behold, now is the time for helping me, O my daughter. Remember now with what anxious care and attention thy bringing up was carried out, and the helpful things which I brought thee, and to speak briefly, all the good things which I did for thee. Have mercy upon the woman who burneth in the fire. Have mercy upon the woman who hath been cast into such tortures as these. Have pity upon me, O my daughter, and stretch out thy hand, and lift me up out of this place. Now I excused myself from doing this on account of him that stood by my side, and again she wept and cried out to me, saying, "O my daughter, help me. O my daughter, have pity upon me, and come to me. Neglect not thy mother who gnasheth her teeth [in pain], and treat not with indifference her who suffereth torment in Gehenna."

Now as, after the nature of a human being, I felt pain because of her tears and her mournful voice, I began to cry out loudly, and to sigh and moan bitterly, and then all those who were sleeping in our house awoke, and when they had risen up, they questioned me and I told them the reason of the outcry and disturbance, and I narrated unto them everything which had appeared unto me. These are the things through which, by the rich mercy of God, I chose to follow the life and works of my father, and I was persuaded to be governed, and through Divine Providence I am confirmed in my belief that such punishments are laid up for those who desire to live an evil life. Such are the things which we heard from the virgin who is worthy of blessing, and from them we may know what delights, according to the things which appeared unto her in the revelation, are laid up for those who wish to live in a state of spiritual excellence, and what punishments are prepared for those who choose to live a wicked and wanton life. And because of these things it is meet that we should strive to the utmost to live a life of virtue, and to excel therein, so that, by the help of God, we may through our life and deeds merit the happiness [of heaven]. Amen.

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Chapter 30. Of Stephana, a Man who fell into filthy Wantonness

There was a certain man in Scete whose name was Stephānā, who had dwelt in the desert for twenty-nine years; his apparel was made of palm leaves, and he lived in such a strict state of self-denial, and persisted to such a degree in ascetic abstinence that he never had the least inclination for the meats which are usually desired, and which are pleasant to the taste; and he greatly condemned those who, because of sickness, either ate cooked food or drank cream. Now the gift of healing had been given to him to such a degree that he could cast out devils by a word. And it came to pass that on one occasion a man in whom was an unclean spirit came to Scete, and he wished to be healed, and when the monk saw that he was vexed sorely by the devil he made a prayer and healed him. But at length this monk was rejected by Divine Providence because of his immeasurable arrogance and haughtiness, for he imagined himself to be more excellent in his life and works than the other fathers; first of all he separated himself from the brotherhood, and then he went and became archimandrite in one of the Alexandrian monasteries, "For," he said in his pride, "am I to be in subjection to Ma-carius? And are not my life and works better than his?

And this man arrived at such a state of madness that he went to Alexandria, and gave himself up to gluttony, and drunkenness, and to the eating of more flesh than rational beings are wont to eat, and finally he fell and settled down into the pit of the lust for women; and he was always going about in the houses of harlots, and in the taverns of ill-fame, and he hung closely to the whores, and gratified his lusts in a filthy manner without shame, and he became a laughing-stock to all who knew him. But the spirit went forth to those who knew him, saying, "The law was not made for the perfect," and he himself said, "I do not act [thus] because of passion and fornication, neither do I do anything which is abominable, for it is not a sin to go with women, for male and female were created by God."

And it fell out that one day I and the blessed man Evagrius went to Alexandria on some business which called us thither. And we had with us four brethren; and as we were passing through the city market that monk met us accidentally, and he was talking with a harlot about his filthy lust; and when the blessed Evagrius saw him, he wept, and fell down at his feet and made obeisance unto him, but the man did not incline his head in the smallest

degree, and with infinite arrogance and haughtiness he made answer to him, saying, "What do hypo-" "crites and deceivers seek here? Then the blessed Evagrius entreated him to go with us to the place where we were lodging, but he did not by any means wish to go; and when, with the greatest difficulty, he had been persuaded to go with us, so soon as we had entered in and prayed, the blessed Evagrius fell upon his neck and kissed him, and with tears said unto him, "Verily, O my beloved, from all that divine service of angels thou hast been brought down to this depth of wickedness; and thou hast turned thyself from converse with God to converse with harlots; and instead of the life and service of angels thou hast chosen the life of devils!

But I beseech and entreat thee not to cut off the hope of thy redemption, but arise, and come with us to the desert, for by my hands God the Merciful is able to restore thee to thy former grade. Now his understanding had been so blinded by Satan that he did not know how to listen to what was said unto him, nor did he know what he answered. And he said unto Evagrius, "Up to the present I have certainly been wandering about, but now I have found the path of truth," and he began to make a mock of the fathers, and to say, "Ye certainly wander about [i.e., err], and ye dwell in the desert under a false character, for the sake of men, and not for the sake of God, and ye are to the spectators as idols whom men decorate, and to whom they pay worship"; and thus, being full of the pride and boasting of Satan, he spurned the fathers and went forth and departed, and the blessed Evagrius and the brethren wept and groaned over him greatly.

Then that man carried off a certain virgin, who was an orphan and a nun living by herself, with a foul design to his monastery, and though he did this with the excuse that he was going to help her by means of alms of which she was in need, it was in reality that he might fulfil his wanton desire. And having lived with her in this degraded state for about two years, at length there came to him thieves by night, who first tied him with cords, and then smote him with hard and cruel blows, until he brought out whatsoever he had in his dwelling and laid it before them; and last of all they shut him up with the woman with whom he used to work out his wantonness in a house wherein there was straw, and, both of them being bound with cords, the thieves set fire to the house, and thus the two were consumed, and they died a bitter death. And in them was fulfilled that which was spoken by the teacher of the Gentiles, who said, "Because they did not decide within themselves to know God, God delivered them over to the knowledge of vanity, that they might disgrace their bodies therewith, and they received the reward which befitted their error in their own persons (Romans 1, 28); that is to say, the burning of the fire which is here is a pledge of that fire which tormenteth all the wicked." Now the things which happened to Stephānā took place because he separated himself from the brotherhood, and because he was [unduly] exalted in his mind, and because he imagined that he was perfect.

Chapter 31. Of Eucarpus

And there was also in the desert a certain man whose name was Eucarpus, who had passed eighteen years shut up in his cell; and the food which was necessary for his wants was brought by others. He had lived in seclusion for fifteen years, and he never spoke to any man [during that period] except when he was in need of something. He used to write upon paper [what he wished to say], and would give it to those who ministered unto him, and he also did thus when any man asked him a question or spoke to him; his food consisted of vegetables soaked in water, and pounded garden herbs, and he carried out his rule of life with infinite labour. Finally, however, the devils made him a laughing-stock also, because of the vain opinion which he had concerning himself. First of all he separated himself from mingling with the brethren and conversing with them, and next he ceased to meditate on the Holy Scriptures, and he did nothing except pray continually; for he was proud and haughty in his mind, and he thought that he was perfect, and that on account of the purity of his heart, forsooth, he was always seeing God in his mind, for he that tempteth tempted him also, even as he had tempted the blessed man Job. And one night Satan appeared unto him in the form of an angel of light, and said unto him, "I am Christ";

and when Eucarpus saw him, he thought that the appearance was a real person, and he fell down, and worshipped him, and said unto him, "Master, what commandest thou thy servant [to do]? And he who had appeared unto him said unto him, "Since thou hast excelled many in thy works, and hast kept all my commandments, I desire greatly to make my abode with thee; but since thou art perfect, it is not necessary for thee to shut thyself up, and it is no longer right that thou shouldst live in seclusion, but thou must teach all the brethren not to destroy their souls with the reading of the Scriptures and the reciting of the Psalms. And they must not labour in the toil of the body, and they must not vex their souls with fasting, and hunger, and thirst, but they must labour with the labour of the soul, for by these means they shall be able speedily to be lifted up to the highest grade, and they must always look at me with their minds, and I will shew them my glory. And as for thee, since thou hast raised thyself above all the monks by thy works, behold, I make thee this day a chief and a governor over all the monks who dwell in Scete. For Macarius is not of as much use as a governor as thou art.

Then Eucarpus was more lifted up in his mind than before, and he was far more proud, and he believed truly the error of the Crafty One, and his understanding was taken away from him, and he was smitten in his mind immediately he had worshipped the Calumniator.

Now on another day there was a congregation in the church, and Satan appeared unto Eucarpus a second time, and said unto him, "Go thou this day, for all the brethren are gathered together, and teach them everything which I commanded thee yesterday in the night season." Then Eucarpus opened the door of the house wherein he secluded himself, and departed to go to the church; and it happened that Abbâ John was sitting by the side of the church, and the brethren were round about him, and were asking him about their thoughts. And when Eucarpus came, and saw John with the brethren surrounding him, he was filled with envy of him, and he answered and said unto John with haughtiness and wicked wrath, "Why dost thou adorn thyself and dost sit down, like a whore, who wisheth to multiply her friends? Or, who commanded thee to be a corrector of others, seeing that it is I who am the governor of the monastery?" Now when the brethren heard [these words], they were greatly moved, and said unto him, "And who made thee a governor in Scete?" And Eucarpus said unto them, "Yesterday in the night I was made governor by Christ, therefore turn ye to me, and I will teach you the way, whereby ye shall easily ascend to the high grade of the vision of glory; and moreover, go not ye astray after the writings of Evagrius, neither hearken ye unto the words of John, for ye have wandered far enough into error already."

Then he began to revile the fathers, and he called Macarius a "painted idol" whom those who err worship, for he knoweth not how to lead the brethren on the path towards heavenly things; and Evagrius he called "a hewer of words" who hath led the brethren into error by following his writings, and hath made them to cease from spiritual service. And the devils made a mock of Eucarpus until they were able to lift him up and to dash him down upon the earth, but all these things which fell upon him took place because he condemned the brethren, and because through his pride and arrogance he held them in contempt, and because he did not desire to meditate upon the Holy Scriptures, and on the doctrine of the fathers. And finally, when the fathers saw that he was smitten in mind, they threw iron fetters on him and bound him therewith, and he lived with them upon him; and the holy fathers offered up prayer on his behalf for eleven whole months, and then his mind returned to him, and he was so thoroughly cured of his pride that he perceived his weakness, and recognized his disease whereby he had been made a mock of by the devils. And in him was fulfilled that which was said, "Old blains (or wounds) are 'cured by burnings,' and, 'Thou who didst exalt thyself to heaven shalt be brought down even unto Sheol' (Isaiah xiv, 13-15). Now Eucarpus lived after he had been cured of his arrogance one year and one month; and the fathers commanded that he should minister unto the sick, and that he should wash the feet of strangers, and thus he died.

Chapter 32. Of a certain famous Deacon who dwelt in a Coenobium in Egypt

A certain brother asked an old man and said unto him, "If it should happen that a man fell into temptation, by the permission of God, for the benefit of his soul, what is it right for those to do who are made to stumble by the same temptation?" The old man answered and said unto him, "If he repent in very truth, and with all his heart, and make confession unto God in his repentance, [saying,] 'I have been rightly humbled,' and shall say unto God, 'It is good for me that I have been humbled, so that I might learn Thy commandments,' God is able to heal the consciences of those who have already offended Him." And the old man spake and narrated the following:

There was a certain deacon in a coenobium in Egypt, and a rich man, who had been driven out and had departed from the presence of a governor who had dominion over him, came with his household to that coenobium; and the deacon stumbled and fell into adultery with the wife of one of those who were with him, and he became a laughing-stock unto every man. And he went to a certain man who was his friend, and revealed unto him the matter, and he said unto him, "Let no man know where I am"; for he hid himself in a secret part of the cell of him that loved him, and he said unto him, "Here bury thou me during my lifetime"; and having gone down into the darkness of that hidden place he repented unto God in very truth. And after a certain time, the river, which was nigh unto the place in the region wherein the deacon had hidden himself, did not rise according to its wont, and the people of the country having prayed and made supplication it was revealed unto one of the saints that, "Unless that deacon who is hidden among us come forth, the waters will not rise." So they went and brought him out from the place where he was hidden, and when he had come, and had made a prayer, straightway the river rose, and those who had been formerly offended by him were now edified the more, and they profited through him greatly and glorified God.

Chapter 33. Of a certain excellent Bishop who fell into fornication, and the People having walked upon him he was forgiven

There was a certain bishop in one of the cities, who through the working of the Calumniator fell into fornication; and one day when the congregation was in the church, although no one knew of the Bishop's sin, he voluntarily confessed it before all the assembly, and said, "I have fallen into fornication." Then he took off the vestments which were on him, and laid them upon the altar, and said, "I cannot, henceforward, be your Bishop." And all the people cried out with tears, saying, "Let this sin be upon us; only remain thou in thine episcopate." And he answered and said unto them, "If ye wish me to remain in my episcopate, do ye that which I shall say unto you"; and he commanded, and all the doors of the church were shut with the exception of one, and he threw himself down upon his face, and said, "The man who goeth out from the church without walking upon me shall have no portion with God"; and they did according to his word, and when the last man had gone out, a voice was heard which said, "Because of his great humility I have forgiven him his sin."

Chapter 34. Of a certain Brother who was a Neighbour of Abba Poemen

When Abbâ Poemen came into the countries of Egypt to dwell there, it happened that he took up his abode by the side of a brother who had a wife, and though the old man knew of this he did not rebuke him. And when the time had come for the woman to bring forth, and this was known to the old man, he cried out to a younger brother, and said unto him, "Arise, take this jar of wine and carry [it] to our neighbour, for he will have need thereof this day." Now the matter was not known to that brother, but he did as the old man commanded him. And the brother [who had a wife] groaned and repented in his mind, and after a few days he dismissed the woman, and gave her whatsoever he happened to have by him; then he came to Abbâ Poemen, and said unto him, "Behold from this day onwards I repent, O father, but I entreat thee to pray to God on my behalf so that He may receive my repentance." And Abbâ Poeman said unto him, "If thou repentest with all thy heart, I believe that God will bestow forgiveness upon thee; and do not despair of thy redemption." And the brother went and built for himself a place of retreat, and he made therein an entrance through which he used to come to visit the old man; and he would go to Abbâ Poemen thereby, and the old man would reveal unto him the way of God, and thus he profited spiritually. And the brother laboured in fasting, and in prayer, and he wept and sighed, and grieved sorely for his sin; and [at length] it was revealed unto the old man on behalf of the brother that God had accepted his repentance.

Chapter 35. Of a certain Brother who denied [Christ] because of the Daughter of a Heathen Priest

Once a certain brother was engaged in a war against fornication, and he happened to pass through a village in Egypt where he saw the daughter of a heathen priest, and he loved her, and he said to her father, "Give her to me to wife." And the priest answered and said unto him, "I cannot give her to thee before learning from the god [his will in the matter]"; and he went to his devil, and said unto him, "Behold, a certain monk wisheth to take my daughter to wife; shall I give her to him or not?" And the devil made him answer, saying, "Seek out and enquire if he will deny his God, and his baptism, and the vows which he made before entering the monastic life." And having gone to the brother the priest told him that he would accept him [as his daughter's husband] if he would deny both these things (sic), and the priest also said unto him, "Wilt thou deny the baptism wherewith thou wast baptized?" And the brother answered and said, "Yea, I will"; and straightway he saw the Spirit of God go forth from his mouth in the form of a dove, and ascend into heaven. Then the priest went to the devil and told him what the brother had said, "Behold, he hath promised to deny all three things"; and the devil answered and said unto him, "Thou shalt not give [him] thy daughter, for his God hath not departed from him, for He is still helping him, and will accept him if he repenteth." And the priest came and said to that brother, "I cannot give her to thee, for thy God is with thee, and He will not leave thee, but will help thee." Now when the brother heard this he said within himself, "So God keepeth such great grace as this for thee, and will still help thee!"

Then that brother, having come back to his senses, made strong his mind, and fortified his will, and went forth to a certain old man in the desert, and related the matter unto him. And the old man answered and said unto him, "Sit thou down here with me in [this] cave, and fast for three weeks, only eating once every two days, and I will make supplication on thy behalf unto God. And the old man laboured with the brother, and he made entreaty and supplication unto God, saying, "I beseech Thee, O Lord God, to grant me the soul of this brother, and to accept his repentance. And when the first week was fulfilled, the old man

came to the brother, and asked him, saying, "Hast thou seen anything? and the brother answered and said, "Yes, I have seen a dove flying about in the heights of heaven, and standing before my head," and the old man said unto him, "Take heed to thyself, and pray unto God with groans and sighs"; and the following week he came again to the brother, and asked him the same question, saying, "Hast thou seen anything? And the brother made answer, saying, "I saw a dove which came and drew near to my head," and the old man admonished him, saying, "Rouse up and pray unto God with abundant supplication. And when the third week was fulfilled the old man came to the brother and said unto him, "What hast thou seen?

And he answered and said unto him, "I saw a dove which came and stood upon my head, and I stretched out my hand and took hold of it, but it fled away and entered into my mouth. Then the old man gave thanks unto God, and said unto the brother, "God hath accepted thy repentance; henceforward watch thyself and take heed to thyself. And the brother answered and said, "Behold, from this day onwards I shall live with thee, O father, even to the day of my death."

Chapter 36. Of a certain Old Man in Scete

There was a certain old man in Scete who, having become very sick indeed, was ministered to by the brethren, and he thought in his mind that they were tired of him, and he said, "I will go to Egypt, so that the brethren may not have to labour on my account." And Abbâ Moses said unto him, "Thou shalt not go, for if thou goest, thou wilt fall into fornication"; and the old man was grieved and said, "My body hath long been dead, and sayest thou these things unto me?" So he went up to Egypt, and men heard about him, and they brought many offerings unto him, and a certain believing virgin came in faith to minister unto him. And after a time, when the old man had been healed, the young woman lay with him, and she conceived, and folk asked her, saying, "Whence hadst thou that which thou hast 'conceived?'" And she said unto them, "From the old man," and they believed her not. Now when the old man heard that they would not believe her, he said, "Yea, I have done this 'thing; but protect ye for me the child which shall be born.'" And when the child had been born and was weaned, there was a congregation in Scete, and the old man went down carrying the child on his shoulder, and he went into the church before all the people; and when they saw him they all wept. Then the old man said unto the brethren, "Observe ye, O my brethren, 'this is the child of disobedience; take heed, then, unto your-selves, for I have committed this act in my old age, and pray ye for me'; and the old man went to his cell, and dismissed the things wherewith he hath lived, and returned to his former deeds, and after a time he arrived [once more] at his old measure of ascetic excellence.

Chapter 37. Of the Harlot whom Serapion converted

Abba Serapion once came and passed through a certain village in Egypt, and he saw a harlot standing in his cell, and the old man said unto her, "Remain 'here until the evening, for I wish to come with thee, and to pass this night with thee'; and the harlot said, 'It is well, O father.' Then she made ready, and prepared her bed, and she awaited the old man with that which he required. Now when it was evening, Abba Serapion came, but he brought nothing with him, and he went into her cell, and said unto her, 'Is thy bed ready?' And she said unto him, 'Yea, father'; and they shut themselves in. Then the old man answered and said unto her, 'Wait a little, because I must perform a certain thing which is a law unto us.' And he began to recite the Book of the Psalms of David from the beginning, and with every Psalm he offered up a prayer on her behalf, and he made supplication before God that she might repent and live, and God hearkened unto him. And the harlot stood up in fear by the side of the old man and prayed also, and when Abba Serapion had finished all the Psalms she fell down upon the ground, and he began to repeat many verses from the [books of the] Apostles.

When he had finished his service, God having opened the heart of that woman, she knew that Abba Serapion had not come unto her for the purposes of sin, but that he might redeem her, and she fell on her face before him, and said unto him, 'Perform an act of grace for me, O father, and take me to any place whatsoever wherein I can please God. And he took her to an abode of nuns and placed her therein and he said to the mistress of the convent, "Take this sister, O mother, and lay not upon her the rules and the yoke like the [other] sisters, but whatsoever she requireth that give her; and in proportion as she findeth rest let her submit to be led. And when the woman had dwelt in the nunnery for a few days, she said, "I am a sinful woman, and I wish to eat only in the evening"; and after a few days more she said, "Many sins lie to my charge, and I therefore beg that I may eat once every four days," and she did so; and after a few days more she besought the mistress of the nunnery, saying, "Do an act of grace for me. Since I have made God exceedingly angry, take me into a cell and wall it up, and through a small opening therein give me a little bread and work for my hands [to do].

And the abbess of the nunnery hearkened unto her, and did thus, and in this wise that woman pleased God all the days of her life.

Chapter 38. Of the Harlot whom a Subdeacon drove out of the Church

A certain old man said: There was a harlot who was so beautiful and so rich that all princes flocked unto her. One day she went into the church and desired to pass inside the gates, but a subdeacon who was standing at the door would not allow her to do so, and he said, "Thou art not allowed to enter into the house of God, because thou art an unclean woman." Now whilst they were striving together, the Bishop heard the sound of the noise, and he went out to see [what was the matter]. And the harlot said unto him, "He would not permit me to go into the church," and the Bishop said to her, "Thou art not permitted [to do so] because thou art unclean." Then having repented within herself, she said, "I will never play the whore again." And the Bishop said unto her, "If thou wilt strip thyself of all thy possessions, I shall know of a certainty that thou dost repent"; then she brought her possessions, and the Bishop took them, and divided them in the fear of God among the needy. And the woman went into the church, and wept and said, "If it hath happened to me thus in this world, what would have happened to me in the next?" And she repented, and became a chosen vessel.

Chapter 39. Of Abba Apollo who was in Scete

They say concerning Abbâ Apollo, who lived in Scete, that he was originally a rude and brutish herdsman, and that he [once] saw in the fields a woman who was with child, and that, through the operation of the devil, he said, "I wish to know the condition of the child which is in 'the womb of this woman,' and that he ripped her open and saw the child in her belly; then straightway he repented, and he purged his heart, and having repented he went to Scete, and revealed unto the fathers what he had done. And when he heard them singing the Psalms, and saying, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten, and with difficulty '[we come] to fourscore years' (Psalm xc, 10), he said to the old men, 'I am forty years old this day, and I have never yet made a prayer; and now, if I live for forty years more, I will never rest, nor cease, nor refrain from praying to God continually that He may forgive me my sins.' And from that time onwards he did even as he had said, for he never toiled with the work of his hands, but he was always supplicating God, and saying, 'I, O my Lord, like a man, have sinned, and do Thou, like God, forgive me'; and he prayed this prayer both by night and by day instead of reciting Psalms.

And a certain brother who used to dwell with him once heard him say in his prayer, now as he spake he wept, and groaned from the bottom of his heart, and sighed in grief of heart, 'O my Lord, I have vexed Thee, have pity upon me, and forgive me so that I may enjoy a little rest.' Then a voice came to him, which said, "Thy sins have been forgiven thee, and also the murder of the woman; but the murder of the child is not yet forgiven thee.' And one of the old men said, "The murder of the child also was forgiven to him, but God left him to work because this would prove beneficial to his soul.'

Chapter 40. Of Cosmas who was in Mount Sinai

A certain brother asked an old man, and said unto him, 'How is it that Satan bringeth temptations upon holy men?' And the old man said, 'I have heard that there was a holy man whose name was Cosmas, who used to dwell in Mount Sinai. And behold, a certain man went to the tabernacle (or tent) of a husbandman, and finding his daughter by herself, he lay with her, and then said to her, When thy father cometh say unto him, Abbâ Cosmas, the monk, hath lain with me'; and when her father came, she told him [thus]. Then he took his sword, and came against the old man, and when he had knocked at the door, and the old man had gone forth, he lifted up his sword to slay him, but his hand withered straightway; and he went to the church and told the people there what the old man had done. And the fathers sent after him and brought him there, and having upbraided him, and beaten him with many stripes they wished to drive him out of the monastery; but he entreated them, saying, "Allow 'me [to stay] here that I may repent, for God's sake," and they separated him [from the brotherhood] for three years, and they laid down the command that no man was to go to him.

And he passed three years in coming [to the church] Sunday by Sunday, and in repenting, and he besought [the fathers] always to pray for him, and at length the devil entered into him that had committed the act of which the old man had been accused, and, being urged by him, he said, "I committed 'the act. Then all the people were gathered together, and they went to the old man and expressed their penitence, and said unto him, "Forgive us, O father"; and he said unto them, "I have indeed forgiven you, but it is impossible for me to remain with you henceforth, because I have not found in any 'one of you discretion sufficient to make him to sympathize with me. And so he departed from them. Behold, how temptations come upon holy men!

Chapter 41. Of Abba Macarius who was accused of committing fornication

Abba Macarius used to tell a story about himself, and to say that when he was a boy he dwelt in a certain cell in Egypt, and that the people came and made him the priest in the village, and that as he did not wish to receive [the office of priest] he fled to another place, and took up his abode in a cell which was not very far from the habitations of man. And a certain young man who feared God used to come and take away the work of the hands of the blessed man, and to minister unto him. And it came to pass that, as a result of temptation, a certain virgin in the village fell into iniquity (?), and conceived a child, and the folk said unto her, "By whom art thou with child?" And she said, "By that monk who liveth in the desert"; and they went out, and brought him into their village, and smote him sorely, and they hung round his neck black pots, and the ears (handles) of empty pans, and they made him to go round about through the markets of their village, and they mocked at him and buffeted him, and said, "This is the monk who hath seduced our 'daughter! Let him be hanged! Let him be hanged!" And they beat him [nearly] to death.

Then came one of the old men of the village and said [unto them], "How long will ye go on beating this monk who is a stranger?" and the man who ministered unto him came after him, and he was ashamed and pained because of his disgrace; and the people fastened their gaze upon him, and said, "Behold the monk concerning whom thou didst bear witness and say that he was a 'holy man.'" "Consider what he hath done," said the parents of the young woman, "and unless he giveth us a surety who will provide for her food we will not release him." Then he said unto the man who ministered unto him, "Give a pledge on my behalf, saying, 'I will provide for that'; and he gave a pledge for him, and then the monk went to his cell and gave him all the palm-leaf mats thereof, and said to him, Sell these and give [the money] to my wife that she may eat." For Macarius said in his mind, "Behold, thou hast found for thyself a wife, and it is necessary for thee to work little or much that thou mayest feed her"; so he worked by night and by day, and sent [the proceeds of his toil] to her.

And it came to pass that, when the time for the woman to bring forth her child arrived, she suffered very severely for many days, and [although] she was in great tribulation she did not give birth to the child; and when her parents saw this they said unto her, "What is this which hath happened unto thee? Then the woman, by reason of her pains and sufferings, said, "This has happened because I told a lie and falsely accused a monk who never touched me"; now it was such and such a youth who had done this thing to her. And when the man who ministered unto Macarius learned this, he came to him with gladness, and he rejoiced and said unto him, "The virgin was not able to bring forth until she confessed and said, 'The monk never touched me, and what I have said about him is a falsehood,' and behold, all the village is preparing to come to thee with repentance so that thou mayest forgive them. And Macarius, in order that he might not be troubled by them, rose up straightway, and fled, and departed to the place wherein he had his abode at that time, and this is the reason why he came to Scete; and he said, "I hate the love of praise of young men who toil, and who have no reward, because they expect the adulation of the children of men.

Then another well-known old man said unto him, "And it is not greatly acceptable unto me, but it is better that they should work for praise rather than they should despise [it], for it always constraineth those who love praise to lead lives of abstinence, and to keep vigil, and to live in nakedness for the sake of vainglory, and to bear afflictions for the sake of praise. Then after these things the Grace of God came to them and spake, saying, "Wherefore do ye not toil for My sake? And why do ye toil for the sake of children of men? And they were convinced that they must not expect the praise of men but that of God, and when the brethren heard [this] they said, "Verily the matter is indeed thus."

Chapter 42. Of a certain Old Man who in his simplicity said that Melchisedek was the Son of God

And Abbá Daniel told a story of another old man who used to live in the lower countries of Egypt, and who said in his simplicity that Melchisedek was the Son of God. Now, when this became known unto the blessed man Theophilus, the Archbishop of Alexandria, he sent a message that [the monks] should bring the old man to him, and when he saw him, he perceived that he was a seer of visions, and that everything which he had asked God for He gave him, and that he spake these words in his simplicity. And the Archbishop dealt with him wisely in the following manner, saying, "Father, entreat thou God [for me], because my thoughts tell me that Melchisedek was the Son of God." And he said to him likewise, "It cannot be thus, for the high priest of God was a man. And now, because I had doubts in my mind concerning this, I sent for thee that thou mightest make supplication unto God that He may reveal to thee the matter." Then, because the old man had confidence in his labours, he spake unto him boldly, saying, "Wait three days, and I will enquire of God, and then I shall be able to inform thee who Melchisedek was." So the old man departed, and came [again] after three days, and said unto the blessed Archbishop Theophilus, "Melchisedek was a man"; and the Archbishop said unto him, "How knowest thou, father?" And the old man said, "God showed me all the Patriarchs, one by one, and they passed before me one after the other, from Adam to Melchisedek, and an angel said to me, 'This is Melchisedek'; know then that of a truth the matter is as it hath appeared unto me." And the old man departed, and he himself proclaimed that Melchisedek was a man, and the blessed Theophilus rejoiced greatly.

Chapter 43. Of Abba Macarius the Egyptian, the Disciple of Mar Anthony

Abba Macarius used to dwell by himself in the desert, and there was below him another desert wherein many dwelt; and the old man was himself watching the road one day, and saw Satan travelling on it in the form of a man, 273 and he came along with the intention of passing him; and he was arrayed in a garment, which was full of holes, and various fruits were hanging about him. And the old man Macarius said unto him, "Whither goest thou?" And he said, "I am going to visit the brethren, and to make them mindful [of their work]." And the old man said to him, "For what purpose are the various fruits which are on thee required?" And Satan answered and said, "I am carrying them to the brethren for food." And the old man said, "All these?" And Satan said, "Yea. For it one pleaseth not a brother, I hand him over another; and if that pleaseth him not, I give him another, and one or other of these must certainly please him." And having said these things Satan went on his way.

Then the old man continued to watch the road until Satan came along to return, and when he saw him, he said unto him, "Hast thou been successful?" And Satan said, "Whence am I to obtain help?" And the old man said, "For what purpose?" Then Satan said, "They have all forsaken me, and have rebelled against me, and not one of them will allow himself to be overpersuaded by me." And the old man said, "Hast thou not then one friend left there?" And Satan said to him, "Yea, I have one brother, but one only who will be persuaded by me, although whensoever he seeth me he turneth away his face as from that of an adversary." The old man saith to him, "What is the name of this brother?" And Satan saith, "Theopemptus"; and having said these things he departed and went on his way.

Then Abbâ Macarius rose up and went down to the lower desert, and the brethren heard [of his coming], and they brought palm leaves, and went out to meet him, and every monk prepared and made ready his abode, thinking that he would come and dwell there; but the old man [only] asked for the brother whose name was Theopemptus, and he received him joyfully. Now when the brethren began to speak among themselves, the old man said unto him, "What hast thou to say, O my brother, and how are thine own affairs?" And Theopemp-

tus said to him, "At the present moment matters are well with me," for he was ashamed to speak. The old man said unto him, "Behold, I have now lived a life of stern asceticism for many years, and I am held in honour by every man, nevertheless, even though I am an old man, the spirit of fornication disturbeth me." And Theopemptus answered and said, "Believe me, father, [it disturbeth] me also"; and the old man, like one who was vexed by many thoughts, made a reason for talking, and at length he led the brother to confess the matter. And afterwards he said unto him, "How long dost thou fast?" And the brother said unto Macarius, "Until the ninth hour." And the old man saith, "Fast until the evening, and continue to do so, and thou shalt repeat passages from the Book of the Gospels, and from the other Scriptures. If a thought riseth in thy mind let not thy mind look downwards, but always upwards, and the Lord shall help thee." Thus having made the brother reveal his thoughts, and having given him encouragement, he departed to go to his own desert, and he travelled along the road and watched according to his custom.

And he saw the devil again, and said unto him, "Whither goest thou?" And he answered and said unto him, "I go to remind the brethren [of their work]." And having departed and come back again, the holy man said unto him, "How are the brethren?" and the devil said, "They are in evil case." And the old man said, "Why?" and the devil said, "Because they are all [like] savage animals, and they are rebellious. But the worst thing of all is that even the one brother who used to be obedient to me hath turned, through what cause I know not, and he will not be in any way persuaded by me, and he is the most savage of them all against me; I have on this account taken an oath that I will never again go to that place, at least, only after a very long time."

Now this Abbâ Macarius was marvellous in his life and deeds. Once as he was travelling along in the inner desert, he looked, and, behold, there was an old man coming towards him, and he was arrayed in apparel which was very old, and over his whole body there were hung very many things which were like unto pots, each one being provided with rings, and he was covering them over as it were with a covering. And he drove his staff into the ground, and though he was as timid and as terrified as a fugitive slave, he pretended to be bold, and stood up like a brave man, and spake to the blessed Macarius, face to face, saying, "What dost thou in this wilderness, and why art thou wandering hither and thither herein?" And the blessed Macarius answered and said unto him, "I wish to find God, for I am fleeing from error. But who art thou, O old man? Tell me, for I observe that thy raiment is very different from that of the children of men. Tell me, now, what are these things which thou hast upon thee?" Then the old man, though unwilling, confessed and said, "I am he whom thou callest by the name of 'Calumniator,' and these things which thou seest upon me are those wherewith I draw towards myself the children of men, and with each one of these, according as it befitteth and is suitable for a man, I take care to fulfil the work of error; and by means of their lusts, as with wings, I make to turn backwards those who are obedient unto

275 18a me, and I have great happiness in those who, through my crafts and wiles, stumble and fall."

And when the blessed Macarius had heard these things, he plucked up courage, and said unto Satan, "By Christ, Who caused thee to make a mockery of the holy angels, explain to me, one by one, each and all of the things which thou carriest, for by this thou shalt be revealed, so that a man may see the insidiousness of thy arts and wiles, and may learn thy hidden snares, and may recognize the multitude of the burning arrows of thine error, and may flee from the performance of thy will. Then the Calumniator answered and said, "I must reveal unto thee my craftiness, even though I be unwilling so to do, for it is impossible for me to hide from thee any of the things which thou seest; learn thou the use (or reason) of each pot. If I find a man who meditateth continually on the Law of God, I pour out upon him from the pot which is on my head dizziness and headache, and I restrain him [from this work] thereby. On the man who hath chosen to watch by means of [the recital of] prayers and psalms I pour out from the pot which is on my eyelids a disposition to sleep, and I lead and drive him along by main force into slumber. These which thou seest that I have on my ears are prepared for disobedience and the transgression of the Commandments, and by their means I trap those who wish to lead a good life to disobey the word of truth.

From those which hang from my nose I sprinkle on the young the sweet smell of happiness, and lead them into fornication. From those which are on my mouth I throw out flowers (?), and I incite the ascetic by means of blandishments, and I make to sin those who live a life of abstinence and self-denial by means of such dainty meats and foods according to my desire; and by means of those which are on my mouth I also draw many into the utterance of calumnies, and into filthy talk, and to speak briefly, in each one of these pots is the seed which is most useful for increasing the fruits which are worthy of me, and which may be gathered from the labours of the husbandmen who labour in my vineyard. And from the pots which are hung about my neck I pour out pride, and I enclose with my nets those who are haughty in their minds; and so by means of all these I possess in the world multitudes of subjects who love the things which are mine, that is to say, worldly praise and wealth, which are the things that, by those who are remote from God, are believed to be good things in the world.

"And the pots which thou seest hanging from my breasts are full of my imaginings, and with some of these I water the hearts of the children of men, and by means of the drunkenness of the passions I dissipate and destroy the mind which feareth God; and through my error I confound the memory of those men who wish to meditate upon and to think about the things which concern the world to come. And those which hang upon my body are full of want of feeling and perception, and by their means I prepare those who are without understanding to live in a savage and animal manner a life which is characterized by various kinds of brutish habits. And in the pots which I carry below my body will be found all things which are useful and suitable for union with women in fornication, and for filthy wantonness. Those which are on my hands are useful in the committal of murders, and by

their means, as by hands, is carried out and performed the work of those who are subject unto me voluntarily. And the pots which thou seest hanging from my neck and back have in them the thick darkness of my temptations, wherewith I am able to vanquish those who are so bold as to contend against me; and I lay ambushes behind me, and I rush out to overthrow those who depend upon and who boast in their own strength.

And the pots which thou seest hanging on my loins and thighs, and which are arranged downwards to my feet, are full of the snares and nets which I pour out, and with which I make crooked and confound the ways of those who wish to journey in the narrow path of the fear of God; and I impede thereby the goings of those who cultivate ascetic excellence, and I make them to journey on my way which is easy to travel. For I take my seat between the two ways of life and death, and whilst I confound and lead astray those who wish to journey in the way of life, I lead and help on their way those who are travelling on the road of death, and I strengthen them also, and I make them valiant so that they may go forward easily in my paths. And when they are bowed down and labour under my yoke I sow evil and abominable vices among them like thorns and brambles, and having gathered in from seed of this kind the fruit of such crops which they believe to be pleasant, they deny the way of truth, because evil men are taken in the snares of the filthiness of abominable things. But thou, O Macarius, hast never once inclined thyself to obey me, so that by thine obedience I might be able to find even a little consolation;

but thou burnest me up wholly by means of the mighty armour of the humility which thou bearest, and for this reason I haste to depart to mine own subjects. For thou possessest a good Lord, and thou hast mighty companions, who tranquilly and happily serve God, and who protect thee as a beloved son."

And when the chosen athlete had heard these things, he made the sign of the Cross over himself, and said, "Blessed be God, Who hath made those who have put their hopes in Him to make thee a mockery and a laughing-stock, and Who hath preserved me wholly and completely from thy error, so that whilst turning aside from the same I was able to advance in the good fight; and having fought and conquered I shall receive a crown from the good Lord Whom I possess. Flee then, and get thee afar off, O thou who art envious of the things which are good, for Christ will make an end of thee, so that thou mayest not dare to attack any of those who worship Him. For sufficient for thee are those whom thou hast drawn unto thyself by flattery, through thy evil wiles and their own sluggish will, and made to travel on the flat, wide road of destruction. Thou shalt not then dare to draw nigh unto those who of their own will have elected to travel in the narrow, and straight, and troubled, and vexatious way of life, but have fear, and depart from those who dwell in waste places and in deserts." Now when the blessed man had said these things, straightway the Calumniator disappeared, and the holy man Macarius bowed the knee, and prayed, saying, "Glory be unto Thee, O Christ, Thou Who art the Refuge of those who are overtaken by storms, Thou Who art the straight way of those who err, Thou who art the Redeemer of those who flee unto Thee for refuge, now, always, and for ever and ever! Amen."

Chapter 44. Of Abba Mark the Less, the Disciple of Abba Sylvanus

They used to say concerning Abbâ Sylvanus that he wished to depart to Syria, and his disciple Mark said unto him, "Not only do I not wish thee to depart from this place, O father, but I will not permit thee to go [now]; wait then here for three days more"; and on the third day Mark died in peace.

Chapter 45. Of Abba Paule the Simple, the Disciple of Mar Anthony

The blessed man, Paule the Simple, the disciple of the holy man Anthony, used to relate to the fathers the following matter:—I once went to a certain monastery that I might visit the brethren for profit spiritually, and after some conversation on the matter, and the customary talk, they went into the holy church that they might form a congregation as usual, and perform the service of the Holy Mysteries. And the blessed Paule looked at and scrutinized carefully each one of them, so that he might see in what frame of mind he was going, for he had the gift, which had been given unto him by God, of looking into the soul of every man, and of knowing what his soul was like, even as we have the power of looking upon the faces of each other. And he saw that every man was going in with a glorious aspect of soul, and with face full of light, and that the angel of each man was rejoicing in him, with the exception of one whose face was sick and afflicted, and whose whole body was in darkness, and devils had hold upon each of his hands, and they were lifting him up and dragging him towards them, and they had put a ring in his nose; and he saw also that the holy angel of this man was a long way from him, and that he followed after him sadly and sorrowfully.

And when the blessed Paule saw these things he wept, and smote himself upon the breast many times, and he sat down before the church, and he cried unceasingly for the man who had appeared unto him in this state. Now those who saw the old man became greatly astonished suddenly, and especially at his swift change [from happiness] to weeping and tears, and they asked him, and entreated him, and begged him to tell them what he had seen, for they thought that, though blaming them, he would do so, and they besought him also, with one voice, to go into the congregation with them. But Paule drove them away from him, and he would not let himself be persuaded to do this, so he sat down outside the church and held his peace, and he cried aloud and groaned loudly concerning that which had appeared to him.

And after a short time, when the service was ended, and all the fathers were coming out, Paule scrutinized carefully each one of them, so that he might see in what manner would

come out those whom he had seen go in, and whether it would be with the same countenance as that wherewith they had gone in, or otherwise. And he saw again that man whom he had seen go in, and whose body before he had entered into the church was in darkness, and behold, he came forth from the church with his face full of light, and his body was white, and the devils followed him at a great distance, and his guardian angel was quite close to him, and walked with him; and he was glad and rejoiced greatly over that man. Then the holy man Paule leaped up, and stood there glad and rejoicing, and he cried out and blessed God, saying, "Hail to the overflowing mercy of God! Hail to the immeasurable goodness! Hail to His rich treasuries! Hail to His pleasure, which is beyond measure! And he ran up and stood upon a lofty platform, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Come ye, and see how awful are the works of God, and how greatly they are worthy of admiration! Come ye, and see Him Who wisheth that all the children of men should live, and should turn to the knowledge of the truth!

Come, let us kneel and worship Him, and say, 'Thou art He Who alone is able to forgive sins.'" Therefore all the fathers ran diligently so that they might hear what he was saying. And when they had all gathered together, the holy man Paule related unto them the things which he had seen both when they went into the church, and when each one of them came out; and they entreated that brother [to tell them] what was the reason of that complete change, and of the gladness which God bestowed upon him [so] quickly.

And the man, being afraid lest he might be rebuked by the blessed Paule, related the following things concerning himself before them all, and without any concealment whatsoever, and said, "I am a sinful man, and for a long time past, even unto the present day, I lived in fornication. When I went into the church, I heard the [Book of] the Prophet Isaiah read, that is to say, I heard God speaking through him, and saying, Wash, and be clean, and remove your evil deeds from before Mine eyes. Hate the things which are evil, and learn to do good, seek out judgement, and pass [righteous] sentences upon those who are afflicted. And if your sins be red like crimson, they shall become white as snow. And if ye are willing to hearken unto Me, ye shall eat of the good things of the earth."

"Now when I had heard read [these] words from the Prophet, that is to say, had heard God Who was speaking by him, I forthwith repented in my soul sincerely, and sighing in my heart I said unto God, Thou art the God Who didst come into the world to make sinners to live, do Thou then make manifest in me the things which Thou hast promised in Thy Prophet, and fulfil them in me, even though I be unworthy of the same, for I am a sinner. For behold, I promise, and I enter into a covenant with Thee, and I will thrust this promise down into my soul, and will acknowledge [it], that from now and henceforth I will never commit such wickedness as this, but I will keep myself remote from all iniquity, and I will serve Thee from this day onwards with a clean conscience. Therefore, O Master, from this day, and from this hour, accept me, for I am penitent; and I will make supplication unto Thee, and will remove myself forthwith from all sin. Therefore with such promises and covenants as these I came forth from the church, and I determined in my soul that I would never again

do anything which would injure [my] fear of Him"; and when all the fathers heard [this], they all cried out with a loud voice, and said unto God, "O Lord, how great are Thy works! Thou hast created all of them in wisdom."

Now therefore, O Christians, since we know from the Holy Scriptures and from divine revelations how great is the grace which God dispenseth to those who truly run to Him for refuge, and who blot out their former sins by means of repentance, and also how, according to His promise, He rewardeth with good things, and doth neither take vengeance according to what is just, nor bring upon men a punishment for their former sins, let us not be in despair of our lives. For, even as He promised by the hand of Isaiah the Prophet, He will make clean those who have toiled in sin, and will make them bright and white like clean wool and snow, and will make them to be happy with the blessings of heaven. And moreover, God asserteth with oaths by the hand of the Prophet Ezekiel that He doth not desire their destruction, for He saith, "As I live, saith the Lord, I do not desire the death of a sinner, but that he should turn from his evil way and live" (Ezekiel xxxiii, 11).

The following table provides the information in a specific format:

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