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THE EIGHTH MONTH

Miyazia 01

(April 09)

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**IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT,
ONE GOD. AMEN.**

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On this day the holy father Abba Sylvanus died. This blessed man became a monk in his youth under the direction of Saint Abba Macarius in the desert of Scete. He strove in every narrow path, and he fasted frequently for long periods, with prayer and many vigils, and humility and love. And he was a great father, and God revealed unto him divine visions and made him to know marvelous matters, as in the following case. One day his mind was carried away, and he fell on his face upon the ground, and remained there a long time. Then he lifted up his head, and the brethren who were there near him asked him to tell them what had come upon him; but he did not want to tell them, and he remained silent and wept bitterly. When they urged him, and entreated him, to make known to them what had happened to him, he said unto them, "They carried me off to the Garden of Delight, and I saw the habitations of the righteous and the places of torture, and I also saw monks, whom they were carrying to Gahanam, and I also saw many laymen whom they were carrying to the kingdom of heaven. Why then should I not weep for myself?" From that day he covered his face with his head-cloth, and said, "I do not want to see the light of this fleeting world, for after it they will take me into everlasting darkness." Now this holy man devoted himself to the works of the ascetic life; and he strove zealously in the works which appertained to the soul and the body; and he also commanded his disciples never to cease working with their hands, and to give away in charity what was left of the money whereon they lived. One day there came unto this holy elder a certain lazy monk, and when he saw this holy elder and his disciples working with their hands, he said unto the elder and his disciples, "Ye do then work for the food which is transitory? But ye should work for the food which abideth for the life everlasting. For it is written in the Holy Gospel 'Mary hath chosen for herself the good part which shall not be taken from her'" (Luke x, 42). When the elder Abba Sylvanus heard him speaking thus, he commanded his disciple, and said unto him, "Give this brother the Book to read, and take him into the guest chamber, and shut the door on him, and do not leave with him anything which he can eat"; and his disciple did as the elder commanded. When the ninth hour came the elder and his disciples prayed and ate their food, but did not summon that monk. And the time of supper having passed, that monk, with his eyes gazing towards the door, waited for them to summon him [to eat]. And being consumed with hunger, he came out from the cell, and went to Saint Abba Sylvanus, and he said unto him, "O my father, have the brethren eaten their meal this day?" And the elder answered and said unto him, "Yea, they have eaten." And the monk said unto him, "Why did ye not summon me?" And the holy elder answered and said unto him, "Thou art a spiritually-minded man, and hast no need of food for the body. Thou hast chosen the good part, but we are men of the body, and we require material food; for this reason we require the work of our hands." And the monk knew that he had transgressed with his words, and he bowed low before the holy elder, and he said unto him, "Forgive me, O my father, for I have transgressed." And the holy elder Sylvanus answered, and said unto him, "O my son, we have need of work, just as Martha worked, and through Martha, Mary was praised." Thus the monk was rebuked by the teaching of this father. And he worked with his hands continually, and he gave alms to the poor with what remained over. And this holy man wrote many discourses (or, homilies) and admonitions wherein was help to carry on the spiritual strife. Having finished his days and attained a good old age, God the Most High made him to know the time of his death. And he called the monks who were nigh unto him, and he was blessed by them, and he asked them to remember him at the time of their prayers; and they on their part asked him to make mention of them to God. And he embraced them and died in peace. Salutation to Sylvanus, the companion of the angels.

And on this day also the pagan Arabs of Upper Egypt rose up and attacked the monasteries in the desert of Scete, and the church of Saint Abba Macarius, and they carried off all the

goods which were in all the monasteries. And the monks gathered together, and prayed, and made intercession with the holy fathers, and our Lord Jesus Christ drove those pagans away, and they turned and fled, and there was none other than God our Lord Jesus Christ Who drove them away; and the monks gave thanks unto God, Who shows compassion unto them for ever and ever. Amen. Salutation unto each of you, O ye sons of Macarius.

And on this day also (according to what is written in an Egyptian book of the city of Alexandria, and in an Egyptian book of Upper Egypt) took place the festival in commemoration of the death of Aaron the priest, the brother of Moses the prophet, the son of 'Anbarim (Amram). What is written in the Book of the Law (i.e. Pentateuch) saith that he died on the third day of the second month of the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, which is to say on the eighth day of the month of Genbot. Now the Jewish months revolve, and that [second] month became this month in that year, on the first day of the month Miyazia. This righteous man was the brother of Moses the prophet, the son of 'Anbarim (Amram), the chief of the prophets, the teacher of the Law, and the brother of Mary (Miriam), the prophetess; and they were of the tribe of Levi. And God wrought by his hands many miracles in the land of Egypt. And God chose him, and his sons, and made them His priest, and gave unto them a title of all the goods, and the offerings of the children of Israel. When the sons of Korah rose up against him, God destroyed them, and He commanded the earth and it opened its mouth and swallowed them up. And having pleased God the Most High, and fought a good fight, and kept the Law, he departed to God. Salutation to Aaron.

And on this day also died Saint Matrona, and Saint Justus, and his wife, who became martyrs. [Omitted in the Bodleian MS.]

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