The Departure Of The Great Saint Ava Antonious
The Lamp of Monasticism and Father of the Monks

The Twenty-Second Day of the Blessed Month of Tubah

In the year 355 AD, departed the star of the desert, the father of all monks, the great saint Ava Antonios.

This righteous man was born in the year 250 AD in the city of Keman from Christian parents who raised him in the fear of God. When he was 29 years old, his parents departed, so he had to take care of his sister.

One day he went to the church according to his custom, and he heard the saying of our Lord, *"If thou will be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shall have a treasure in Heaven, and come and follow Me." (Matt. 19:21)*
He went home and he considered that this saying was directed to him personally, so he decided to fulfill it. He sold all the good land his father had possessed and he gave the money to the poor and needy. Also, he entrusted his sister to a community of virgins.

The monastic life had not appeared in those days, and if any man desired solitary life, he would go a little way outside the city and dwell by himself, and that is what St. Antonios did. He devoted himself to solitary life and asceticism.

The devil fought with boredom, laziness and imagination of women, but he overcame all these things by the help of the Lord Christ. After that he went to a tomb and he dwelt therein and closed his door on himself and his friends used to visit him and bring him food. When the devils saw his asceticism and his intense worshipping, they were jealous of him and they attacked him and beat him severely and left him unconscious.

When his friends came to visit him, they found him lying on the ground like a dead man. They carried him to the church. When he woke up, he insisted to be taken back to the tomb. The devils came back to attack him in different forms, like the form of the wild beasts, lions, wolves, serpents, and scorpions; and each one of them would rear itself up against him to terrify him. But St. Antonios would laugh at them saying, *"If you have dominion over me, one of you would be enough to fight me."* Straight away, they would disappear before him like smoke. God gave him victory over the devils, and he used the sing the 68th psalm saying, *"Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered; let them also that hate Him, flee before Him."*

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