

## ***SAINT [SEVERIAN](#) OF JABALAH or Severianus***

One of the great orators of the fourth century (feast day: 7 Tut). Known for numerous homilies, he died after 408.

[Severian](#) had been invited to court at Constantinople, where he must have known Saint JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, with whom he did not sympathize. Indeed, the bishop of Jabalah was among Chrysostom's opponents in the long affair of his lawsuit and exile. Ironically, many of Severian's homilies later passed under the name of Chrysostom: about thirty out of thirty-five [Greek](#) texts counted in *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* (1974, pp. 468-482, nos. 4185-4272).

By identifying quotations in the CATENAE, and by comparisons with the five undoubted works, J. Zellinger (1974) was able to rediscover several of Severian's works. The use of Armenian versions has also been of great help. Almost all of Severian's sermons speak of the Trinity. Many turns of phrase in [Greek](#) are peculiarly his own.

### **Coptic Tradition**

In Coptic, there remains a eulogy of Saint Michael in Sahidic ([Pierpont Morgan](#) codex 602, preceding fol. 198), part of which is a fragment of another manuscript published by J. Leipoldt in 1904. Specialists do not acknowledge its authenticity (see *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4278). There is a homily on Matthew 25:13 (fols. 14-30), of which a Bohairic fragment was published by H. [O. Burmester](#) in 1932, according to fragments of homilies used for Holy Week (*Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4279). Another homily, on Matthew 25:31, immediately follows (*Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4280) in the same Hamuli codex, dating from the ninth century (fols. 31-52).

Besides these three texts, another codex from the [Pierpont Morgan](#) collection (M 606, pp. 1-56) has preserved a homily on the twelve

apostles. Fifth, there is a homily on the Nativity, which exists in fragmentary form under the name of Proclus of Constantinople (Saint PROCLUS) in the [Turin](#) collection of papyri. The Paris fragments of this homily were identified and published by E. Lucchesi (1979). They correspond to those analyzed in 1933 by E. Porcher (1933; *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4282). Sixth, there is a homily on penitence, expressly attributed to [Severian](#) but found among the pseudo-Chrysostomica (PG 60, pp. 765-68). H. G. Evelyn-White (1926, pp. 178-180) found fragments from the same codex, Vatican Coptic 68, in Cairo, giving other passages from the homily.

Finally, in the theological texts on papyrus published by W. E. CRUM in 1913, G. Mercati (1916-1917) identified a passage from the same homily. But here again, the specialists in the style of [Severian](#) deny him the authorship of the pseudo-Chrysostomicum to which J. A. de Aldama (1965) gave the number 462. The seventh and only work that all regard as being authentic in both Coptic and [Greek](#) is the set of sermons on Genesis (*Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4194). A series of Coptic fragments from these sermons, obtained from (DAYR ANBA SHINUDAH), Suhaj, is in Paris (MS [Copte](#) 129.13, fols. 96-103, and 131.6, fol. 46). Finally, there is an extract in the Coptic catena of Saint Matthew, published by P. de Lagarde (1886). This extract explains the meaning of the expression "Son of Man," but it is not possible to state its origin precisely (*Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4295).

## Arabic Tradition

Few works of [Severian](#) of Jabalah have come down to us in Arabic. The main details have been given by G. Graf (1944). There are, first, the homilies on Genesis (*Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4194), which, in [Paris Arabe](#) 68 (1339), fols. 36-67, include one homily more than in the [Greek](#) version, although this homily, number 7, dealing with Adam's expulsion from Paradise, exists in part in Greek (*Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4217).

Second, there is a homily on the Annunciation preserved in the manuscript Sinai 423 (1626), fols. 353-58, and in Beirut manuscript 510, pp. 500-509. This homily corresponds with neither *Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4204, although the [Greek](#) incipit appears at first sight to be somewhat similar, nor the Syriac homily on the Nativity published by C. Moss (1947-1948) (*Clavis Patrum Graecorum* 4260). According to the title, it was translated from Syriac into Arabic by Gregory of the Black Mountain. Its style corresponds perfectly with the rather prolix manner of Severian.

Third, there is a homily on the twelve apostles, preserved in the fifteenth-century manuscript Vatican Arabic 536, fols. 1-32, and Cairo, Graf 717, fols. 115-30 (1358).

Fourth, an Arabic translation of the extract from a homily already in existence in Coptic as a lectionary for Holy Week is preserved in Borgia Arabic 57, fols. 135-36; Cairo, Graf 170 fols., 53-54 (fifteenth century).

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