

SAINT SILVANUS OF SCETIS

A native of Palestine who was a monk at [SCETIS](#) in the late fourth century (feast day: 1 Baramudah). He was looked upon as one of the old men and had twelve disciples, among whom, according to the APOPTHHEGMATA PATRUM (PG. 65, cols. 408-412; cf. col. 176), were Zeno (Zeno 1), Zacharias (Silvanus 1. 3. 8), Nitras, and Mark. The latter worked as a calligrapher and was particularly beloved by his master because of his obedience. Abba Moses doubtless was not one of his disciples but did interview him.

Silvanus left [Scetis](#) in all probability on the occasion of a [barbarian](#) raid and went into Sinai and then to Palestine, where “having built himself a cell near the river he spent the rest of his life in it, just as at Scetis.” This “monastery of the abba Silvanus” was located at Gerara, the modern Oum-Djerar (Vailhé, pp. 281-282).

Silvanus appears in the *Apophthegmata* as a great contemplative, the favored recipient of visions and ecstasies, but also as someone who did not always go about with his eyes shut and who worked to gain his daily bread. His mortification of the flesh was carried to great lengths, but he was also able to reconcile strict asceticism with the demands of charity. He is mentioned in the Copto-Arabic SYNAXANON as a disciple of [Saint MACARIUS THE EGYPTIAN](#), who was also at Scetis, but there is no reference to his departure for Sinai and Palestine.

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