



THE GREAT SAINT MOSES THE BLACK

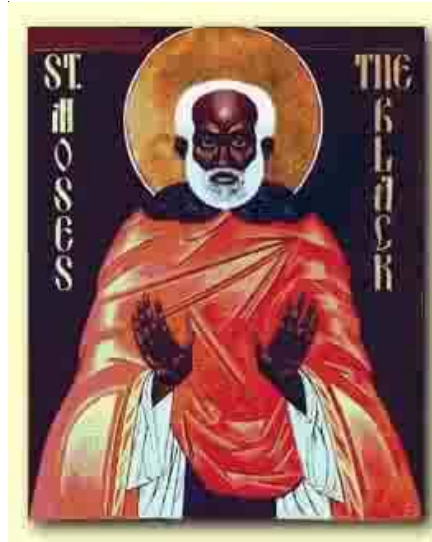
Simoun Khalil

St. Mary and Archangel Michael
Houston, TX

Contemplate on the power of repentance, and what it does. It transformed an infidel slave, who was a murderer, adulterer and robber into a great Father, teacher, comforter, and priest who wrote rules for the monks, and saint whose name is mentioned on the altar in our prayers.

This saint has a remarkable life story. This saint took the Kingdom of Heaven by force, exactly as our Lord Jesus Christ said: The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. (Matthew 11:12). St Moses was born at around the 4th century AD. He was an Abyssinian (Nubian) slave to people who worshiped the sun. He was a mighty man who loved to eat and drink excessively. He killed, robbed and committed all evil. Moses escaped from his slavery, and became the leader of a group of 75 robbers. He was a large and powerful man, who with his gang terrorized the entire region. No one could stand up before him, or challenge him.

He was not convinced of himself and was not satisfied with the things he was doing, so he began to search for the one eternal God of the Universe, On many occasions, he lifted up his eyes to look to the sun and to talk to it saying, O Sun!! if you are God, let me know it. Then he said, and you O God whom I do



not know, let me know you. And it came to pass; a Coptic farmer guided him to go to the Sheheet Wilderness where he would find monks to teach him about the living God. Instantly, he rose up, girded his sword and went to the wilderness of Sheheet and so our saint made his way through the wilderness. He met St. Esidorous (Isidore) the

priest, who was frightened when he saw him, because of his appearance. St. Moses comforted him by saying that he came to the monks so that they might let him know the real God. St. Esidorous took him to St. Macarius the Great, who preached to him, taught him the faith and baptized him. He immediately felt remorse for all his past sins, sincerely repented, and begged to remain at the monastery. He accepted St. Moses as a monk and taught him to live in the wilderness. Moses was tortured by his past and for years was tempted to return to his old ways. One day as he was confessing his sins to St. Macarius, an angel appeared with a tablet full of his sins. As he confessed, the angel began wiping the tablet clean. The more he confessed, the more the angel wiped, until by the end it was completely clean. St. Moses dashed in much worship, and fought a spiritual fight which was greater than that fought by many saints. However, the devil fought him intensively with his old habits of excessive eating, drinking, and fornication. He informed St. Esidorous about everything which came upon him in his fight with the Enemy. He comforted him and taught him how to overcome the snares of the devil. It was told about him, that when



the elders of the monastery slept, he used to go around to their cells take their water pots and fill them with water which he brought from a well at a far distance from the monastery. After many years in spiritual struggle, the devil envied him, and struck him with a sore on his foot which made him sick and bed-ridden. When he knew that this was from the devil, he increased in his asceticism and worship, until his body became as a burnt wood. God looked to his patience, healed his illness, and removed all his pains. The blessing of the Lord came upon him. After a while, he became the father and the spiritual guide of 500 brothers, who elected him to be ordained a priest. When he came before the Patriarch to be ordained, the Patriarch wanted to test him by asking the elders, who brought this black here? Cast him out. He obeyed, and left saying to himself, It is good what they have done to you, O black colored one. The Patriarch, however, called him back and ordained him a priest, and said to him, Moses, all of you now has become white.

One day, he went with some elders to St. Macarius the Great, who said to them, I see among you one to whom belong the crown of martyrdom. St. Moses answered him, probably it is me, for it is written: 'For all they that take with the sword, shall perish with the sword.' (Matt. 26:25) After they returned to the monastery, it did not take long until the Barbarians attacked the monastery. He told the brethren, whoever wants to escape, let him escape. They asked him, And you O father, why do you not also escape? He replied that he had waited for this day for long time. The Barbarians entered the monastery and killed him with seven other brothers. One of the brethren was hiding, and saw the angel of the Lord, with a crown in his hand standing by and waiting for him. He went out from his hiding place to the Barbarians and he was also martyred. His body is located now in the Monastery of El-Baramous.

May his prayers be with us, and glory be to God forever. Amen.

Q & A Question and Answer

Mighty Arrows Magazine received this question from Leteab Russom , Thanks to H.G. Bishop Youssef for precious time he gave to answer this questions...

In the Holy Book of Romans 8:34 it says that our Lord Jesus Christ is interceding/ intercession for us but as Orthodox Christians we believe that Christ is the One Who judges not Who intercedes. Could you please make that verse clear to me?

Our Lord Jesus Christ is God all-powerful and does not have just one role in our lives. He functions on our behalf and in God's behalf. Our Lord Jesus Christ is our Mediator Who made it possible for us to be reconciled with God by His death on the Cross for the forgiveness of man's sin. He is now sitting at the right hand of His Father interceding for us. He is able to save by His intercession all who come to God through Him Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Heb 7:25).

However, on Judgment Day when the time comes to give an account of our stewardship, when it is past the intercession time, it is our Lord Jesus Christ Who will judge us.