



# The Slavic Miracles of the Great Martyr Saint Menas by Timothy of Alexandria<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** The complete Slavic miracles of St Menas, consisting of a prologue and 13 miracles, is based on the edition of the *Great Reader Mineia* of the Moscow Metropolitan Makary. The text largely corresponds to the Greek version from Ivan Pomyalovsky's 1900 edition, making it a valuable resource for understanding the Greek tradition as well. The Slavic text has been compared with other manuscripts containing the full cycle of miracles and following the same translation (B).

**Keywords:** St Menas; Greek/Byzantine literary; Orthodox Slavdom; Hagiography; Church-Slavic literature

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The medieval Old Church Slavonic literary tradition contains one of the most complete (alongside the Coptic, Greek, Ethiopian, and Arabic) collections of the miracles of St Menas. The interest in the cult of the Egyptian martyr among the Orthodox Slavs must have been significant, as the first translations of this cycle appeared as early as the 10th century, in at least two independent translations. Slavic manuscripts attest to the presence of a third translation, which may also trace its roots to the early period of intense activity in Bulgarian translation centers from the time of the First Bulgarian Empire (9th to early 11th century). Undoubtedly, the sources for the Slavic texts were Greek (Byzantine) manuscripts containing partial and complete collections of miracles in two main Greek redactions –  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ . The Greek  $\beta$  redaction is of the greatest importance for the Slavic tradition, as it appears in translation (A), which includes a selection of miracles (usually six). This translation is known in separate textual transmissions, depending on the type of manuscript

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in which it appears – *cheti minei*, *synaxaria*, or hagiographical codices, known as *sborniki*. The complete cycle of 13 miracles, attributed to Timothy of Alexandria, appears in manuscripts in a distinct translation (B). This translation is also related to the Greek  $\beta$  source, although slightly different from the one used for translation A. Clear traces of the translation tradition of the Greek  $\alpha$  redaction are preserved in the manuscripts representative of the *Drag. 700* group. There are reasons to believe that they continue an early Slavic translation (A<sup>2</sup>) of a different Greek source than that used for translations A and B. It is speculated that the Slavic translation B was made using a source that was later (13th-14th century) used as the basis for the Middle Bulgarian variant of *Drag. 700*<sup>3</sup>.

The complete Slavic miracles of St Menas, consisting of a prologue and 13 miracles, published here, is based on the edition of the *Great Reader Mineia* of the Moscow Metropolitan Makary<sup>4</sup>. The text closely corresponds to the Greek in the Moscow manuscript *Mosqu. Synod. gr. 161* (Vlad. 379) from the late 10th or early 11th century, published by Ivan Pomyalovsky, and can thus also serve as an insight into the Greek tradition. The Slavic text has been compared with manuscripts on which the edition of the *Great Reader Mineia* of the Moscow Metropolitan Makary was based (primarily *PHF*  $\phi$ .728, *Co $\phi$ . № 1319*, 1529-1541), as well as with other manuscripts containing the full cycle of miracles and following the same translation (B). The verification primarily concerned unclear passages and the often distorted toponyms, ethnonyms, and names in the Slavic sources.

The choice of the *Great Reader Mineia* of the Moscow Metropolitan Makary variant in the Slavic translation B as the source for the English translation is mainly driven by the desire to present the content of all thirteen miracles based on one specific manuscript variant. Difficult-to-translate concepts and proper names are provided in the original with footnotes. Footnotes also include alternative translations and the literal wording of certain phrases that were difficult to render in English due to stylistic reasons or potential

<sup>3</sup> J. Stradomski, *Medieval Slavic Translations of the Miracles of Saint Menas: Sources and Textual Problems*, VoxP 94 (2025) p. 111-117.

<sup>4</sup> Patriarch Makary's Great Reader Menologion = Makarii, Metropolitan, *Velikie Minei Chet'i*, compiled by All-Russian Metropolitan Makarii. November: Days 1-12, Saint Petersburg, 1897, p. 447-477.

ambiguities. Additional clarifications and comments are provided in the footnotes to aid in understanding the original Slavic text<sup>5</sup>.

**On this day [November 11th], the composition<sup>6</sup> of Timothy,  
Archbishop of Alexandria, on the miracles of the great martyr  
of Christ, Saint Menas**

After the death of the contemptible and God-hating Emperor Diocletian, by the will of God, the honorable and God-loving Emperor Constantine assumed (power) in the empire. And when he embraced the true Christian faith, the pure radiance of God's grace which shone within him through Christ our God, enlightened him, and the almighty hand guided him from above<sup>7</sup>, for where there is a prudent soul, (there) the Holy Spirit descends immediately. This holy and God-loving emperor, who feared God and promptly obeyed all His commandments, led every person to the haven of salvation, remembering what was said: "You shall not do obeisance before the foreign god" (Ps 80:10), (and) "the Most High will repay (you) according to your deeds" (Ps 61:13). For the emperor ordered an edict to be written for the entire world, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, whom the ungodly and unrighteous Pagans<sup>8</sup> had blasphemed, should be preached in all lands, and that people should believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He also ordered the construction of churches in honor of the holy martyrs who had suffered worthily for Christ, our true God, and had confessed the true faith as they should, and he commanded that every day pure and bloodless offerings should be made to Christ, our God, for the atonement (of sins) and the turning of all believers to Christ, the true Lord and God. And when certain (people) set out from the city of Alexandria to obtain the relics of Christ's martyr Menas and to build a temple in his name, this<sup>9</sup> entire eparchy<sup>10</sup> gathered to swiftly complete the church of the saint.

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<sup>5</sup> I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Przemysław Piwowarczyk for his consultations and assistance in preparing the final version of the text in English.

<sup>6</sup> OCS: *spisanje*.

<sup>7</sup> I.e., 'from heaven'.

<sup>8</sup> Lit. 'Hellenes'. The term retains the same meaning throughout the text. In OCS, *illin* ('Hellen') refers to a polytheist of the Greco-Roman religion, while followers of traditional religions are called *jazyčnik*.

<sup>9</sup> It means, the diocese of Alexandria.

<sup>10</sup> In Orthodox Christianity, 'eparchy' means a church province under a given episcopal see, 'diocese'.

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**Miracle 1 [of Saint Menas]  
[About the man] who came to pray**

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When by God's grace and through the intercession of Saint Menas, the church of the holy martyr was swiftly completed, a wealthy man from the land of Isauria came to Alexandria to trade. He heard of all the miracles and healings performed by Saint Menas, and he said to himself: "I will also go to pray at the church of the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, and bow before his venerable relics, and I will make a small offering from my wealth there, for a blessing, so that God may support me and save me through the prayers of the saint". He rose immediately, took a bag of gold with him, and went to the sea lake<sup>11</sup>, where he found a ship; he boarded it and, after crossing, arrived at a place called Loskonita. He disembarked and sought shelter, for the day was drawing to an evening. He then found a house in that place and said to the master of the house: "Friend, do me this favor<sup>12</sup> and take me into your home, for the day is already fading into evening. I am afraid to travel alone, and I have no one with me (for company)". The master of the house said: "Come in, brother, and rest here until daybreak, and in the morning, you will rise and set on your journey with joy". So the foreigner entered and sat down, (and) the master of the house ordered a bed to be prepared for him, so he could rest there. When the host saw the man's bag, the devil, who is always envious of our lives, entered his heart and ensnared him before he fell asleep. (The host) got up, took a knife, and stabbed the foreigner to death. He took his bag of gold and said to himself: "What shall I do with this body? If someone finds out about the murder I have committed and reports it to the authorities? I will get up, dismember him, put him in a woven basket, and throw it into the sea". After planning this, he dismembered him, placed (him) in a basket, and hung it in his house from the ceiling, (waiting) for a quiet moment to throw it into the sea. As he pondered this all night, a bright day soon broke, and the man feared to dispose of [the body] in the sea during the day. He also took his head, intending to cut it as well and place it in the basket.

And behold, Saint Menas, the martyr of Christ, arrived riding on a horse, with many men, resembling a high-ranking official. He came to the door of that house. The man saw the saint approaching and was

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<sup>11</sup> A translation from Greek τὴν λίμνην τῆς παραθαλασσίας.

<sup>12</sup> Var. 'have pity on me'.

terrified, for the foreigner's head was still intact. In a hurry, the man took the head, placed it in the basket, and hung it in front of the door, not knowing what else to do out of fear. Saint Menas came and opened the door of the house<sup>13</sup>, dismounted from his horse, took the man, and said to him, "Tell me the truth, where is the man who stayed here last night?". The host replied to the saint, "There was no such man here as you speak of". Then Saint Menas said to him, "Was there (really) no such man? Be silent, unfortunate one, (for) I will find him myself!". (And) the saint entered the house, took the woven basket, and found the man's entered head along with the rest of his limbs. The saint then said to the host, "Did I not tell you that I would find him myself? What is it that you have done?".

Then the host saw this, along with the entire army that was with him (i.e., with Saint Menas), he was immediately seized by great fear, thinking that the king had learned of his murder and had sent to arrest him. Overcome with terror, he begged the saint, who appeared as a high-ranking official, saying to him,

Have mercy on me, my noble lord, for I have sinned, and I understand my sin, how great it is! If the king has sent you to me, a poor man, I confess to you that I have sinned before God and before you, for I see God's grace in you. When I saw that very large bag of gold, my heart was filled with hatred toward him, and I watched him until he fell asleep. When he slept, (I), miserable wretch, got up and stabbed him to death and took his bag of gold. Here it is, my lord, his bag, from which I have taken nothing, and I hand it over to your disposal<sup>14</sup>. From my own wealth, I will also give you a hundred gold coins, only save me from (the punishment for) this murder.

Saint Menas replied (to him) and said, "Repent for the wickedness you have committed, and I will forgive your sin" The man said, "My noble lord, I will do as you command! I will save myself at once, go to Saint Menas, repent, shave hair of my head, and become a monk". Seeing his repentance, Saint Menas said, "Bring here the woven basket in which the man's limbs are, so that God's glory may be revealed in His saints!".

And (the host) immediately brought the woven basket and placed it before Saint Menas, then left. Saint Menas knelt and prayed to God for many hours, asking that the dismembered man be restored: "So that,

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<sup>13</sup> That is, the gate of the outer fence, since the saint dismounts only later.

<sup>14</sup> Lit. 'your power'.

seeing this, the heretics may believe in You, the true God, and come to the holy martyr of Christ, Menas". After these (words), he spoke to the dismembered (man): "I say to you: in the name of my Lord, Jesus Christ, who has strengthened me on the rock of faith in Him, come out whole and perfect, with all your limbs intact, so that through you, the heretics and those Pagans may learn and glorify Christ, the true God. Believe also yourself, for I am the servant of Christ, Menas". And immediately, at that very hour, the man arose, whole and unharmed, just as he was before.

The man knelt before Saint Menas and the large army that was with him, saying: "I bless God and the Lord, who has shown me this grace through your arrival, man of God, for the Lord came with great power and awakened me from a deep sleep". And Saint Menas, the holy martyr of Christ, blessed him just as he did the murderer, and assured him that (he) would receive what had been promised if (he went) to the church of the saint. The martyr of Christ said these (words) and immediately departed from him. The host then took the hundred gold coins, and the foreigner took his bag of gold, and they both went to the church of the holy martyr Menas, and gave the gold that had been promised to the saint. The host confessed before all the people that he had been the perpetrator of the man's murder, and how Saint Menas, the holy martyr of Christ, had raised him (i.e., the foreigner) from the dead. Together, they glorified God, and all the people were filled with fear, for (the man) who had been stabbed had immediately risen from the dead. The host begged the igumen and the elder who were there to shave hair of his head, and they shaved him, and he spent seven years there, and passed on to God with absolution. The foreigner, on the other hand, returned to his land rejoicing and spreading the glory of God and the miracles of the holy and illustrious martyr of Christ, Menas, to everyone in Alexandria. From that day on, many Pagans and heretics believed in the Lord, marveling that God, through the prayers of the saint, saves every soul.

## **Miracle 2**

### **Of the Man Who Commissioned a Bowl**

I wish to tell of another miracle of the holy and generous martyr of Christ, Menas, which occurred in Alexandria. There was a man named Eutropius. An (idea) came to his mind, and he said to himself: "God has abundantly satisfied me with His gifts, so I will go to the goldsmith and have him make two silver bowls. I will offer one as a gift to the church

of Saint Menas, and the other I will keep for myself for my (own) needs; and after my death, I will also give that one to the saint for the remission of my sins”.

So, he sent (for) and called the craftsman to his house, and said to him: “Do me this favor, come and take from my old silver vessels, and, having melted them down, make for me two bowls. But you must not make one vessel larger or smaller, but make them both equal. And on one, write the name of Saint Menas, and on the other, write my name. And when you have made (them), bring them to me”.

The skillful goldsmith completed both bowls and inscribed the names on them, (yet) the bowl of the saint was more beautiful and better made. And he brought them to Eutropius. When he (i.e., Eutropius) saw that the saint’s bowl was more beautiful, he desired (to keep) it and said to himself: “When I go to the saint, I will give the bowl with my name on it and keep the saint’s bowl for my own needs. And after my death, I will also give it to the saint”.

And he boarded a ship, desiring to sail to the church of the saint. As they sailed, the lunch time quickly came, and his servant prepared him a table so that his master could eat lunch. The servant took the saint’s bowl and placed it before his master. After the meal was finished, his servant took the saint’s bowl and went to wash it in the sea. And behold, a great darkness fell, and the servant became frightened and dropped the bowl into the sea. The servant feared his master, thinking that he would scold and punish him physically, so having removed his clothes, he threw himself into the sea after the bowl.

It was reported to his master that his servant had drowned, and (the master) became greatly distressed. He tore his garments and struck his face, crying out:

Woe is me, for I have sinned greatly; I coveted the saint’s bowl, and because of this, I have lost my servant! I do not know what will I do now, since I have no one to serve me? Woe is me, for I will cover myself in shame if people see that I kept the saint’s bowl for myself, and how great (will be) the disgrace before others. If only I had known earlier, I would have given the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, (it means) his church, three bowls instead of just one – two silver and the third one gold. But now that this misfortune and shame before the people have befallen me, it would have been better for me to give both bowls to the saint than to bring ruin upon my servant through a miserable death. If only I were worthy to at least see his body, so that I could give it



a proper burial. And when I go to the church of the saint, I will give the saint the bowl, and instead of the second bowl that I lost, I will give its equivalent<sup>15</sup>, for I have sinned against the saint by my lack of wisdom, keeping the saint's bowl for my own needs"<sup>16</sup>.

As he pondered this, the ship arrived at the port. Eutropius gazed out at the edge of the sea, hoping that the waves might wash his (servant's) body ashore, and that (if) he found it, he would bury it. (However), the sailors told him, "It's (all) in vain; we've been sailing here for two days now, searching for your servant's body". Eutropius said, "I have expressed great sorrow over my servant, but I trust in the mercy of my Christ and in the prayers of the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, who once resurrected (a man) who had been dismembered. I likewise trust the saint, that before my own death, I may at least see my young boy's body and bury it because of the shame before people".

As he was saying this, behold, the young boy approached with the bowl, following behind the ship<sup>17</sup>. Eutropius saw the boy from afar, standing and holding the bowl, looking for his master. The sailors, seeing the servant, threw the ship's ropes to the shore. The young boy grabbed the rope and boarded the ship. When his master saw him, he kissed him with joy, saying, "Behold, my servant was dead and has come back to life!"<sup>18</sup>. Everyone was overwhelmed with tears at what had happened, and they were amazed, comforting him<sup>19</sup>.

Eutropius, with a deep sigh, said, "I rejoice and am glad today, for God has shown mercy on me through the prayers of the holy martyr and intercessor Menas. To whom shall I not proclaim your miracles and signs, O martyr of Christ, which you have shown upon me, a sinner? Only one thing I fear and worry about: that even if I bring my entire wealth to you, O saint, it will not suffice, for I have sinned before you, forgetting what was said, not to do harm to one's neighbor<sup>20</sup>. Yet I offended the saint by taking his bowl".

<sup>15</sup> Lit. 'its price'.

<sup>16</sup> Lit. 'to serve me'.

<sup>17</sup> Certainly, he walked along the wharf, not through the sea, as it is later stated that he was at the shore.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Luke 15:32.

<sup>19</sup> Or 'calming him down'.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Exod 20:15; Deut 5:19; Matt 19:18; Luke 10:27.



And he said to the young boy, "Tell me what happened to you in the sea and who saved you".

And the young boy replied,

My lord! When I went to wash the bowl in the sea, a great darkness fell, and the bowl slipped from my hands. And I said to myself, "What shall I do or what will I say to my master?". I was frightened and threw myself into the sea. And when I found myself in the sea, I saw a man, shining greatly, and two others standing with him. The shining man said to them, "Take him!". Since then, they have never left my side until I came here, with the bowl in my hands, which (they) themselves gave back to me.

Eutropius immediately understood how swift an intercessor the martyr of Christ, Menas, truly (was), and he praised God, who grants such power to His saints. After this, both of them went together and arrived at the church of Saint Menas. Eutropius then gave both bowls to the church of the saint, so that they might serve the holy place. And when Eutropius returned to his home, he praised and blessed God and the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, who had saved him (as an example) for all people.

### Miracle 3

#### Of the Woman Who Was Barren

There was a certain woman in the Phekozian land, and she was wealthy, adorned with gold and silver, (given to her) by her parents and her husband. The woman's name was Sophia, and her husband was a very noble man. When this woman heard about the blessed sufferer<sup>21</sup> of Christ, Menas, she said to herself, "I will also go to the church of the saint, and having bowed before the saint, I will weep for my sins, for I have no child to inherit my wealth. For it is written: '(Her) desire will come into the world, if she wills it'<sup>22</sup>. I will take all my wealth and give it to the church of Saint Menas, for the forgiveness of my sins – will I not, (in this way), gain eternal life?"

And rising, the woman took all her possessions and secretly went alone to the church of the saint, without telling any of her household, so they would not inform her husband, lest he stop her.

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<sup>21</sup> OCS: *stratotjerpec*.

<sup>22</sup> The exact biblical source of this quotation is uncertain, compare, however, Gen 25:21; Matt 7:7; Luke 7:13; John 15:7.

When she arrived alone in the wilderness, a thousand paces from the church of the holy first martyr Thecla, a man (appeared beside her), a certain soldier on horseback. When he saw the woman, the devil entered his heart, and he desired to commit adultery with her. It was about the sixth hour of the day, and he seized the woman and said to her, "Where are you going, woman?". She thought he would steal the valuables she carried with her as offerings<sup>23</sup> to the holy martyr Menas. And the woman said to him, "Behold, I am going to the church to pray to Saint Menas". But the soldier said to her, "This place is deserted, and no one can see us; come, let us lie together. And if you do not obey me, I will kill you with the weapon I have and take the valuables you are carrying with you". But she, with tears in her eyes, answered,

No, my lord! Do not commit this vile deed with me, for I left my home to go to the church of Saint Menas and to weep for my sins. I have never known any other (man) but my husband. Fear what is written: *Do not desire to harm your neighbor, do not covet anything that belongs to him*<sup>24</sup>. I beg you now, do not force me, a pilgrim, to commit this grievous sin! I implore you by God and Saint Menas the martyr, if you dishonor me, you will bring great shame upon me, and this sin will not be forgiven you, neither in this life nor the next. I beg you now, have regard for my tears and spare my sighs, and if you release me, I will give you two gold coins.

However, the soldier did not agree and held her tightly. The woman, sighing, said, "Misfortune befalls me from every side – either to sin, or to die". And having fallen to her knees, with tears and sobs, she cried out, "Jesus, You who know the secrets<sup>25</sup> of men, behold, against my will, I am about to commit this iniquity, but as You, Lord, see, let Your will be done!". The woman also said with a sigh, "Martyr of Christ, Menas, help me!". And when the wretched soldier bound her to disgrace her, he tied his horse's reins to his own leg. The holy martyr of Christ, Menas, who swiftly rescues those who call upon him from all misfortunes, came at that moment<sup>26</sup> on horseback and took the woman from the soldier's hands, carrying her away on his horse. Meanwhile, the soldier's horse, which had been tied to (his) leg, suddenly bolted into a fast run, and

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<sup>23</sup> Lit: 'to serve'.

<sup>24</sup> Inexact quotation of Deut 5:17-21.

<sup>25</sup> It mean, 'thoughts', 'intentions'.

<sup>26</sup> Lit. 'at that hour'.

dragged its master across the ground, fiercely enraged and neighing at its master, until it ran to the church of the holy martyr Menas.

Seeing this, all the people were struck with terror at the fury of the horse, for daily crowds of people gathered in the saint's church, and they seized the horse. And the soldier, seeing the glory of God and the holy martyr, told everyone present about the woman. And they praised God and the saint. The soldier took his horse and gave it to the church of the saint, and from that time on, he committed no sin until his death. Instead, he remained (there) in prayer and fasting, and with abundant tears, he prayed to the holy martyr of Christ, Menas. He stayed there<sup>27</sup> until his death, repenting for his sins, which were then forgiven.

### Miracle 4

#### About the Jew and the Christian

A certain Jew, (who was) a merchant in Alexandria, lived near a certain Christian. This Jew was very friendly with the Christian. One day, (when) the Jew was setting out on a trading journey, he left a sealed bag of gold with the Christian. When the Jew returned from his trading journey, he sent gifts to the Christian as thanks for the favor and for safeguarding his bag. After the Christian received the gifts from the Jew, he began to mock in his heart and said, "Indeed, I will accept the gifts, and if he asks for his property, he will get nothing".

For the Christian had conspired with his wife this way: "Oh, wife! If possible<sup>28</sup>, we will deny (this) Jew, and if he asks, we will swear to him that we took nothing. For a (false) oath does us no harm, because we are swearing to a Jew, not to a Christian".

So, in the morning, the Jew got up and went to the Christian to take his bag. The Christian, however, under the devil's influence, began to deny everything and said, "You never gave me anything, why are you bothering me?". They argued with each other, each trying to convince the other, so that people from all over the town gathered. Finally, the Jew thought (for a moment) and said to the Christian, "I have heard, my friend, about the famous martyr of Christ, Menas, and how great his renown is, for he shames those who swear against the truth. So, let us now get up and go there, and you will swear to me

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<sup>27</sup> MSS have 'here', but I change it in the translation due to logic of narration.

<sup>28</sup> Var. 'if we manage'.

in his church that you did not take anything from me. And if you swear this oath, go in peace”.

The Christian said to the Jew, “A Jew cannot enter a Christian church”. The Jew said to him, “Then I will stand outside the temple, and you can go inside and swear to me”. The Christian, disregarding the oath, said, “Saint Menas will not count this as a sin against me”.

One day, they both went to the church of Saint Menas to swear the oath. The Jew said to the Christian, “Oh, Christian friend, fear God, have mercy on your soul! Take as much gold as you want, but give me back the rest, just do not swear!”. However, the Christian did not want to listen to him. The Jew knelt down and said with tears, “God, make me worthy to enter the church of Saint Menas, the martyr! Be the judge between me and the Christian in this hour”. And crying out loudly, he said, “Saint Menas, though I am unworthy to call upon you, show your miracles today, so that I may praise you!”.

The Christian, on the other hand, with no fear of God in his heart, entered the church of Saint Menas and swore: “You never gave me anything!”. The Jew expected to see some sign over him (i.e. the Christian), but the saint showed him great patience.

When they had finished swearing the oath, they both returned to their homes. After they had moved<sup>29</sup> about three miles<sup>30</sup> away from the church, the Christian’s horse became startled and threw its master down to the ground. The key to his chest<sup>31</sup> fell out from his pocket<sup>32</sup>, and though he searched for it, he could not find it. The Christian was relieved that he had only fallen from his horse, believing that this was the punishment for his perjury.

Then he got up, mounted his horse, and they both traveled together. When they arrived at a place called Loxonit<sup>33</sup>, they entered the market to buy food for themselves; and they both sat down together and ate. The Jew grieved and said, “Why did I trust Saint Menas that I would see a miracle (like those) I had heard he performs, but I saw nothing miraculous? It would have been better if I had not taken the oath from him, but to have given some of my (wealth) to Saint Menas”.

<sup>29</sup> Lit. ‘had departed’.

<sup>30</sup> Lit. ‘thrice a mile’.

<sup>31</sup> Var. ‘locker’.

<sup>32</sup> OCS: *ot op'czaga jego*. The noun means ‘pocket’, ‘bag’, ‘fold of garment’. It represent unprecise Greek κόλπος.

<sup>33</sup> OCS: *na město rekomoe Loskonit’*.

And he cried out with tears, saying, “Oh, how unfortunate I am! I have lost everything I had, and I do not know what to do! I will give glory to God and to the holy martyr of Christ”, he said, “and I will place my suffering and hope in the Lord. Whatever God decides, so it shall be”.

And as they both sat, behold, the Christian’s servant approached, carrying the bag of gold. Seeing (him), both were astonished. The master of the servant became very frightened and asked his servant, saying, “Where did you come from, and what have you brought here?”.

The servant answered and said, “I came to you, sent by my lady, to carry out your command”.

His master said to him, “What command?”.

And the servant said,

My lord! Today, a famous warrior, riding a horse, came to your house, to my lady, holding the key to your chest. And he said to your wife, “Take this key, woman, do you recognize it?”. And my lady said, “Of course, my lord, I recognize it!”. And the soldier said, “Your husband asked me, because he knows me, and sent me to you, saying: Send the Jew’s bag with my servant, for I am very troubled here in the church of Saint Menas”. That is why I was sent, and I brought you this bag. And if you do not believe me, look (here) at the key to your chest, which the soldier gave to my lady.

The Jew then stood up, took his sealed bag, and joyfully exclaimed, “Great (is) God and His holy martyr, Menas, and wondrous is the Christian faith! No one who puts their hope in You, Lord, and seeks help from You and the power of Your saints, will ever be put to shame!<sup>34</sup> Behold, master, I too will become a Christian, thanks to the prayers of Saint Menas, the martyr!”.

After this, he took his bag and returned with great joy to the church of Saint Menas, the martyr, and gave a third of the gold – one thousand gold coins – saying, “Here, holy martyr of Christ, I told him in front of you: Take as much as you want, and give me back the rest! And he did not want, (so) let your holy church take this for (its) needs and its adornment”.

The Jew renounced his Jewish faith and was baptized along with his entire household, and together they learned the faith with devout Christians, praising God and Saint Menas, the holy martyr of Christ, that he

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<sup>34</sup> Ps 80:1

shames those who, against the truth<sup>35</sup>, hold in contempt<sup>36</sup> the name of God and Saint Menas, the martyr. From that day on, no one dared to swear either truthfully or against the truth in the church of Saint Menas, the holy martyr.

The Christian, on the other hand, returned home ashamed, sighing and trembling. He took half of his wealth and brought it to the saint, and weeping was repenting for his sins. He did not leave the church of Saint Menas until he died. Diligently confessing (his sins), he departed to the Lord, having received forgiveness for his sins through the intercession of Saint Menas, the martyr of Christ.

### **Miracle 5**

#### **About the Lame<sup>37</sup> Man and the Mute Woman**

There was a certain man who had been crippled since childhood. He could not walk on his legs at all, nor do anything with his hands, and he had received no help from physicians or from other people. Hearing from everyone about the miracles and healings of Saint Menas, the martyr, he persuaded some people to carry him to (the sanctuary of) Saint Menas. And they carried him to the church of Saint Menas. People from various places saw this and were amazed. There was also a mute woman there, who had been unable to speak since birth. Both the crippled man and the mute woman stayed in the church of the saint, praying for healing.

And here, for a long time, a crippled man stayed in the church, and he still did not receive healing. He grew angry and slandered the holy martyr, saying these (words): "As I see it, O martyr of Christ, everything that I have heard about you is at least a lie, and not the truth". That night, the holy martyr Menas appeared to him and said to the crippled man: "Why do you slander me, man, and what evil have I done to you, and why do you say that I cannot heal you? If you do not do what I tell you, you will never be healed"<sup>38</sup>. The crippled man said to him: "What must I do, my lord?". The saint said to him: "If you want to be healthy, listen to me: go, without telling anyone, until you reach the bed of a mute woman, and lie with her, and you will receive health". The crippled man woke up

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<sup>35</sup> Lit. 'without truth'.

<sup>36</sup> Lit. 'broke', 'transgress'.

<sup>37</sup> From the text, it is clear that the man was partially paralyzed, not just lame.

<sup>38</sup> Lit. 'you will not be healed forever'.

(from the dream) and was astonished, thinking that the saint was mocking him, or tempting him<sup>39</sup>. And he said:

What shall I do? It seemed to me that I came to ask for healing for my body, and here the saint appears to me and urges me to commit adultery, and that in his own church. And I fear that if I do this, something even worse might happen (to me).

The saint appeared to him again in a dream and said to him, saying the same thing. But he, with indignation, said to the saint: "Martyr of Christ! If you cannot heal me, then why do you push me into adultery? Are these the teachings of the saints? Or are you mocking me?" The saint appeared to him a third time in a dream and said to him: "What I have told you, obey (it). If you do this, you will soon return to health"<sup>40</sup>. The crippled man woke up and said: "Holy martyr Menas! Since you command it, I will do it, if God and your holiness and help permit me.

Then, when he noticed where the mute woman lay, he waited until all the people from (various) lands, who were in the church, fell asleep. And the crippled man immediately got up<sup>41</sup> and, crawling on his toes<sup>42</sup>, reached the bed of the mute woman, and grabbing her clothing, he uncovered her. She, waking up in fear, became agitated and began to speak: "Oh, a wicked man has come to me!". The crippled man, out of fear and shame, wanted to throw himself to the ground and flee, (but) at that very moment, he quickly jumped up onto his feet<sup>43</sup> and swiftly ran away.

The people quickly rose and seized him, and when they saw that the crippled man had been healed and that the mute woman had spoken, all the people were amazed at what had happened. And they praised God and the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, because of the miracle that the mute woman spoke and the crippled man recovered<sup>44</sup>. The crippled man also began to confess how the holy Menas had appeared to him in

<sup>39</sup> Var. 'leading him not temptation'.

<sup>40</sup> Lit. 'take health'.

<sup>41</sup> This means, 'rose from his bed'.

<sup>42</sup> In OCS the same word refers to both toes and fingers. It is likely that the Slavic author intended to mean both. In Greek, the participle *συρόμενος* does not explicitly suggest either fingers or toes.

<sup>43</sup> This means, 'stood straight on his legs'.

<sup>44</sup> OCS *cjel byst* literary means 'became whole' but in this context, it is used to mean 'he recovered'.



a dream and what he had commanded him to do. And so, both of them, healed, returned to their homes, praising God and the holy martyr Menas, who grants healing to all who come with faith.

## Miracle 6

### About the Samaritan Woman

There was a certain woman from Aphrakia<sup>45</sup>, which was [a land] of the Samaritans, (who) suffered from a constant headache, day and night. For three years, she suffered from this illness<sup>46</sup>, having given away all her wealth to physicians, yet she could not be cured. One day, she was accompanied by Christian women who comforted her. They remembered the miracles of Saint Menas and said to her: “Would you like to go with us to the church of Saint Menas? For many have gone there and received not only healing but also the forgiveness of sins”.

The Samaritan woman said to them, “I am afraid, for if my husband finds out [about this], he will kill me”.

And the Christian women said to her, “Rise now without fear and go with us, with happiness<sup>47</sup> and right<sup>48</sup> faith, and you will receive healing from the saint”.

And the Samaritan woman, rising from her bed without her husband’s knowledge, went with the two Christian women. Soon, night fell upon them in the middle of the road, and they turned aside to an inn near a lake. When they entered the inn to spend the night, the innkeeper, seeing the women, welcomed them. And he became inflamed with improper lust for the Samaritan woman – for she was very beautiful – and the innkeeper said to her, “Woman! I see that you are of noble birth and in very poor health. So rise, and I will take you to the inner part of my house, which is cleaner<sup>49</sup>, so that those who come here, who are even more sick than you, will not cause harm to your head”.

When the woman heard this, (and) not suspecting any evil from him, she said to him: “Brother, if you wish to do me such a kindness, as you will!”. The innkeeper said to her, “For what reason or looking for what,

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<sup>45</sup> In some other manuscripts, the name appears as Фракия, Фряческая земля, or Фраци, directly referring to Thrace, a region in the southeastern Balkans.

<sup>46</sup> Lit. ‘She was overcome by this illness’.

<sup>47</sup> I.e., ‘successfully’.

<sup>48</sup> I.e., ‘orthodox’.

<sup>49</sup> Also ‘more comfortable’, ‘more splendid’.

and where are you going?”. The Samaritan (woman) said, “I am going to Saint Menas, along with my traveling companions”. The innkeeper said to her, “What (more) do you want me to do for you?”. The woman said to him, “Nothing, brother, I only desire my health”. The innkeeper said to her: “Here, my lady, let the other women rest, but you should enter the inner house, where you will find better rest”. The woman said to him: “I have everything I need here, brother, because you have done me much good by bringing me to this place and not leaving me in the middle of the road”. The innkeeper said to her: “Soon, many (travelers) will come here as well”. And the Samaritan (woman) said to him, “Since you wish to ease my illness, if you will, then take me inside”. When the innkeeper heard that the woman believed his words – not understanding his deceit, as she did not want to defile herself with lust for a stranger – he led her into the inner chamber and locked the door with a key. The woman, overwhelmed by illness, lay down and fell asleep.

After she had fallen asleep, the innkeeper arose and said to her: “Woman, I will sleep with you!”. The woman said to him sighing: “Oh, brother, fear God! Do not commit this wicked act, for you are a Christian, and I am a Samaritan (woman)”. The innkeeper said: “If you do not let me be with you, I will kill you!”.

With tears, she said to him:

Is this how innkeepers should behave, committing shameless acts, or is this how one should welcome a traveler? Is this how you have learned to treat your traveling companions? Is this the reward you demand from the poor and travelers, (that) instead of food and drink, you seek to satisfy your passions, to commit adultery, and to murder? Is this the Christian law? For I have heard from my husband that Christians uphold the law with respect, yet you, being a Christian, want to kill me because I refuse to commit this wickedness with you? I cannot defile the bed of my husband.

Hearing this, the wretched man<sup>50</sup> drew a knife and swung at her, intending to kill her. Seeing this, the woman became frightened and said to him, “I beg you, by God, who created heaven and earth, (and) in whom you believe, leave me, a wretched and helpless woman, and I will say just one word to you”. The innkeeper said to her, “Speak, if you wish”.

The woman said to him,

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<sup>50</sup> Var. ‘deplorable’.

Fear your God. Though I do not know the books<sup>51</sup>, I have heard what the Scriptures say: “Do not desire to defile your neighbor’s bed, nor covet another’s possessions”<sup>52</sup>. Now I beg you, have mercy on me in my misfortune, and do not defile my honor. Oh, brother! How can you not fear God, who is the mediator<sup>53</sup> between me and you, when I am to go to the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, to receive healing for my grievous illness, for I have suffered from this disease for three years?

The innkeeper said to her, “Let me be with you first, and then you may go to the saint’s temple”.

The woman said to him, “I avoid, brother, entering the saint’s temple defiled, especially since I am a Samaritan (woman), lest the saint becomes angry with me and sends upon me an even greater illness”.

And the innkeeper said to her, “It will be bad<sup>54</sup> if I do not have you, and I swear to you, I will kill you!”.

The woman wept, saying,

Woe to me, a wretched soul! Woe to me, without help! I am oppressed from every side! Holy martyr of Christ, Menas, help me! For I will go to your church with eagerness, for I have heard of your miracles; I believe – and I, too, will become a Christian! Have you left me like this, holy one, to be dishonored by this innkeeper? I have heard that you saved a barren woman in the desert from the hand of a soldier, that you are a saint, a hope for the hopeless, a help for the helpless. And now, Saint Menas, have you left me to this lustful and wretched man (so that he might force me) into adultery? Martyr of Christ, help me, a foreigner! You know, holy one, that I am coming to you, asking for healing, and now I will suffer even greater harm from this vile man! It would have been better for me to remain afflicted by my illness than to defile the body of my husband<sup>55</sup>.

The woman said this with tears to the saint. Then, as if emboldened, she set (aside) all fear and said to the lustful innkeeper, “Since I have told you that I will not commit this wicked act of immorality with you, nor

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<sup>51</sup> Lit. ‘I cannot (read) books’.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Exod 20:17.

<sup>53</sup> OCS: *chodataj*.

<sup>54</sup> Lit. ‘It is bad’.

<sup>55</sup> Most probably an allusion to Gen 2:24 and/or Matt 19:5-6.

will I defile my bed, it is better for me to die than to live dishonored – do as you will!”.

The wretched innkeeper approached her violently and struck her on the head with his sword<sup>56</sup>. The woman cried out loudly, terrified by the blow of the sword, and called out, “Holy martyr of Christ, Menas, help me!”. Immediately, both of his hands withered (up) to the shoulders, and there he (stood), holding the sword in his hand, struggling greatly to release<sup>57</sup> sword from his hand, but he could not. Immediately, people heard (what had happened) and came, and they were unable to remove the sword from his hand, for it was as if numb.

And behold, Saint Menas, riding on a horse, knocked at the door of the inn, opened it, and entered where the woman was. He took her by the hand and said to her, “Woman, why do you tremble?”. He made the sign of the cross over her, and the great fear fell away from her. He said to her, “Rise, I will take you to another place where you will sleep without fear until morning”.

When they both left the inn, the woman said to him, “My lord, who are you, since you possess such great power?”. Saint Menas said to her, “I am the servant of Christ, Menas. I saw that you were coming to my church with faith, and I came quickly to help you. Now, sleep here without fear, and when you wake tomorrow, go to my church, and you will receive healing”. And (as) he said this, he departed from her.

When morning came, the Samaritan woman arose, called upon the other Christian women who were with her, and said to them, “Rise, let us go! God has shown me the way to salvation”. As they walked along the road, she told them both what had happened to her that night and how the saint had saved her. The women<sup>58</sup> were amazed, not understanding what had taken place. When they arrived at the church of the saint and prayed, the Samaritan woman implored the senior *ierey*<sup>59</sup>, saying, “Father, for the sake of the Lord, grant me this grace: baptize me and count me among the Christian women. For I have seen the glory of God and the help of the great sufferer of Christ, Saint Menas,

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<sup>56</sup> The perfective verb indicates a completed action, but the subsequent narration does not suggest that the woman was injured.

<sup>57</sup> Lit. “threw out”.

<sup>58</sup> Christian women are meant.

<sup>59</sup> A monk who was an elder presbyter.

and how he saved me from vile destruction<sup>60</sup> and from the treacherous innkeeper”.

The priest, having instructed her (in the faith), baptized her with holy baptism. She also shaved the hair from her head, becoming a nun, and served in the temple of Saint Menas for (the rest of) her life, in great humility and faith.

After (these events), the innkeeper who had sought vile destruction rode on horseback here and there, held by both (hands)<sup>61</sup>, like a lifeless piece of wood. So, he was strapped to the horse, holding the sword with which he had intended to kill the woman. He lamented and said, “Martyr of Christ, Saint Menas, help me and forgive me, for I have greatly sinned!”. They took him off the horse and brought him into the church of the saint. He spent seven days in the church, weeping, repenting, and praying for healing. The saint took pity on him and appeared to him in a dream, saying, “I warned you not to commit this vile sin. If I forgive you, will you avoid such things?”.

The innkeeper said to him, “Oh, my lord, I call upon my God as my witness<sup>62</sup> that I will not leave your holy church until my last breath!”. Saint Menas said to him, “Rise in the morning and do whatever the steward instructs you to do”.

When morning came, after *otrust*<sup>63</sup> in the *sobor*<sup>64</sup>, the steward said to him, “Descend with those entering where the saint’s tomb is”. And when (he) entered, the ierey took holy oil from the oil lamp and anointed his shoulders, and immediately the man was healed. He brought all his possessions to the church of the saint and remained there, working, and alongside the Samaritan woman, with whom he had once intended to commit a sin, they both repented, confessing their sins with tears.

Both of them died on the same day, having received forgiveness (of their sins), praising God and the holy martyr Menas. The steward received a revelation from the saint in a dream that both had been granted the grace of the heavenly kingdom.

<sup>60</sup> It refers to irrevocable bodily defilement resulting from the sin of adultery.

<sup>61</sup> Lit. ‘by two’; In the translation, ‘by both hands’ is a logical conjecture.

<sup>62</sup> Var. ‘guarantor’.

<sup>63</sup> The morning service in the Orthodox liturgy.

<sup>64</sup> CSC *sobor* refers to the principal church within a monastic complex and is not necessarily associated with an episcopal see.

## Miracle 7

### About the Three Brothers

When the numerous miracles and signs of Saint Menas became famous throughout all the lands, three brothers in that province, from the city of Alexandria set out, having been enlightened<sup>65</sup>, so that each of them would take a portion (of his wealth) as a gift and go to the church of Saint Menas to pray. Each of them brought with him a year-old sheep. As they journeyed together, they reached a lake, and after sitting down, they had lunch. After eating, each of them took his sheep to go the lake and water them.

And suddenly, one of the year-old sheep broke free from one of the brothers' hands and ran off. He chased after it, but suddenly, a crocodile appeared and seized the sheep. When the owner<sup>66</sup> saw the sheep, he ran and grabbed it by the legs, but the beast began dragging the sheep into the lake, pulling the man along with it into the lake. The man started shouting loudly. When the crocodile heard the man's cry, it let go of<sup>67</sup> the sheep and grabbed the man's leg instead, severely injuring it, and dragged him into the depths of the lake, intending to swallow him without hindrance. As the beast was pulling the man into the depths, the man cried out with a great voice: "Holy martyr of Christ, Menas, help me and save me from this beast!".

The swift intercessor and helper of those in distress arrived on horseback in the middle of the lake, and when the crocodile saw the saint, it released<sup>68</sup> the man and fled. The saint pulled the man out of the lake, placed (his) hand on the man's wound, on his leg and stomach, healed him, and restored him to his former condition.

Sleep overtook the man. The holy martyr of Christ, Menas, placed him on his horse and brought him to his church, as if (the man were) asleep, (and) concealed (him) from all the people who were in his church and laid him down near his tomb, then departed. When the man awoke from his sleep, he was astonished, for he thought he was still in the lake. He did not know how the saint had saved him from the beast and (drawn him) out of the lake. He said, "Where am I? And how did I end up in this church?".

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<sup>65</sup> It means those who learned about the miracles.

<sup>66</sup> Lit. 'master'.

<sup>67</sup> Var. 'left'.

<sup>68</sup> Var. 'left'.

The church warden entered the church, and seeing him, cried out in a loud voice, saying to those with him, "Oh, brothers! Come quickly, for there is a thief<sup>69</sup> here in the church who is trying to steal the saint's sarcophagus!"<sup>70</sup>.

The people who were there quickly rushed into the church, seized him, bound him, and led him out of the sanctuary. The man, being unaware (of what had happened), was bewildered<sup>71</sup> and could not find an answer<sup>72</sup> to give them all as they questioned him. The man said to them, "I implore you, O men, in the name of my God and in the name of this saint's church, tell me exactly<sup>73</sup> what this church is and what its name is". And they replied, "This is the church<sup>74</sup> of the holy martyr of Christ, Menas".

The man recounted to them everything that had happened to him with the crocodile in the lake and how he found himself here without knowing (how it happened). Upon hearing this, the people praised God, understanding that a miracle of the saint had taken place.

The holy martyr of Christ, Menas, returned to the place where the two (remaining) men were sitting by the lake, weeping over their (inability to) bury their third brother. The saint appeared to them, riding a horse and resembling a warrior. He said to them, "Why are you weeping, brothers?". The two (men)<sup>75</sup> told him what had happened to their brother, how the beast had dragged him into the lake. "Here we have his sheep, and we intend to go to the church of Saint Menas with (this) sorrow, for we do not know what misfortune<sup>76</sup> has befallen our brother".

The saint said to them, "Have hope in my God that it has not happened to him. He has not been devoured by the beast. But rise quickly and go in peace to the church of the saint without thinking about<sup>77</sup> this. I know that God has saved him from death through the holy martyr Menas. In the church of the saint, you will see the glory of God. Tomorrow morning, at the sixth hour, you will see your brother whole and unharmed, without any injury". And after saying this, the saint departed from them.

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<sup>69</sup> Var. 'burglar'.

<sup>70</sup> OCS: *raka*. The word can specifically refer to a reliquary as well.

<sup>71</sup> Lit. 'was amazed'.

<sup>72</sup> Var. 'did not know the answer'.

<sup>73</sup> Lit. 'successfully'.

<sup>74</sup> Var. 'This church belongs to'.

<sup>75</sup> OCS has dualis here.

<sup>76</sup> Var. 'oppression', 'abuse'.

<sup>77</sup> Var. 'pondering over'.



Understanding that it was Saint Menas, both men cried out together, saying: “We believe, O Christ’s martyr Menas, with all (our) soul and mind, that even if the crocodile had killed our brother, you could bring him back (to life)”. After saying this, they rose and walked joyfully, leading the third sheep with them.

When they arrived at the temple of the saint and saw their brother alive and well, they bowed in worship to Christ God and to the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, who delivers those in distress who pray to him with faith. They also brought the sheep and offered them to the church of the saint. The (two)<sup>78</sup> returned home with joy, praising God and the holy martyr Menas.

## Miracle 8

### About the Rich Man and the Widow

There was a certain man from a land called Constancia, under the rule of Marmarica. He was very wealthy (and) of the pagan<sup>79</sup> faith. He had living with him an elderly widow, very poor, who had nothing except one sheep. (The sheep) nourished her and (the widow) made clothing for her body from its wool. And this rich man desired the poor widow’s sheep.

When the commemoration of the holy martyr Menas approached, seeing all those who were going (to the church) for the occasion of the saint’s commemoration, the rich man said to his wife, “Do you want us both to go to Saint Menas to pray that he may forgive us our sins?”.

His wife said to him, “Oh, husband! (A man) of your faith<sup>80</sup> cannot go to the saint, but if you listen to me and do what I tell you, if you get baptized, I will go with you. But if you do not do this, I will not be able to follow you”. And the husband said to her, “I will do what you have told me”.

The woman was pleased and praised God and the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, for directing his heart toward the Christian faith. His wife said to him, “Let us send, my lord, our servant to the flock to bring a fattened sheep, and we will prepare it properly for the journey. Tomorrow morning, after rising early, we will set out on the road, for the church of the saint is far away”.

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<sup>78</sup> OCS uses the dual form here, which suggests that the third, rescued brother remained at the church.

<sup>79</sup> Lt. “Hellenic”.

<sup>80</sup> Lit.: ‘of your service’. Here, ‘service’ refers to ‘confession’ or ‘rite’.

The devil, however, entered the heart of the rich man, and he desired the widow's sheep. During the night, he went into the widow's hut<sup>81</sup> with his servant and stole her sheep. He commanded his servant, (saying), "Tell no one of this, and if you are asked by your lady, say that you brought it from the flock". They (then) slaughtered it and cooked (it).

When the widow rose in the morning, she wanted to feed her sheep, but she could not find it. She cried out in distress, lamenting, "Woe to me, a poor widow! Woe to me, a stranger! Who has stolen the garment of my nakedness?! I have no other possession, only this one sheep. I do not know what to do!"

Hearing this, the wife of the rich man, who was a very devout woman, went with one servant to the widow's hut and asked her, saying, "Oh, mother! What has happened to you that you suffer so? Tell me, and I will grieve too because of that, for you are poor". The widow replied to her, saying, "Oh, wretched me! My lady, have mercy on me, a miserable one without hope! I had no other comfort on this earth – neither gold nor silver – God is my witness, I do not have even single *cat*!<sup>82</sup> I had, oh Christ-loving lady, (only) one sheep, and I do not know who stole it. The accursed one did not fear God, nor did he regard my widowhood".

The devout woman replied to her, saying, "Be patient, oh mother, I will give you enough clothing until your last breath, for I am astonished that someone entered your hut and stole your sheep. Tomorrow, however, we shall go to Saint Menas. Go, and call your neighbors to Saint Menas, and let them swear (that they did not steal it). I hope that the thief will be revealed, for God will cause all his limbs to wither".

The widow did not want to do this, but she placed her hope in God and in the holy martyr Menas, and she said to her, "Do not despise me, a stranger<sup>83</sup>, Lord, and do not deprive me of (the power of) the saint's prayers". The rich man's wife then entered her home, and, taking the young servant (aside), questioned him privately with great care and kindness. And she promised him gifts, saying, "Where did you bring this sheep from? Tell me, was it not the sheep stolen from the widow? It seems to me that no one else could have stolen it but you".

The young man, fearful of his master, said nothing at all. However, the neighbors said to the widow, "The servant of the rich pagan stole your sheep. We saw it, but he did it on his master's orders". The widow

<sup>81</sup> Var. 'household'.

<sup>82</sup> A type of a small coin.

<sup>83</sup> Var. 'foreigner'.

remained silent until the time came for them to go to pray to Saint Menas. The rich man's wife sent a message to the widow, saying, "If you go with me to the church of the saint, I will be the first to swear an oath, and after me, the others will swear as well".

The next morning, the widow got up and went with them to the saint. When they came close to the sanctuary of the saint, the widow said to the rich man's wife, "Behold, my lady, I ask you to tell your husband that his servant stole my sheep on his orders. Many people saw the sheep being dragged by your husband. Tell him, my lady, that I do not want him to swear, so that nothing bad happens to him because of me".

The rich man's wife replied, saying, "I hope that God will reveal the truth<sup>84</sup> to me, and He will not ignore<sup>85</sup> our prayers because of the saint. If I learn this from my husband, I will give you two sheep for the one. But be a little more patient. I will ask him whether he will swear or not".

After this, the wife said to her husband, "My lord! The widow claims that your servant, on your orders, stole her sheep. Many saw you yourself dragging her sheep. Now go with your servant to the church of the saint and swear an oath to her". The rich man then became angry (and) said, "Let the old woman go to the church, and I will swear an oath to her". For he thought (to himself), "If I confess (what I did) before receiving baptism, then if I swear an oath to her before God and the saint [Menas], nothing will happen to me because I am not yet a Christian".

He said to his wife, "How could I have stolen that widow's sheep when I have a thousand sheep of my own? But if it pleases you, I will swear an oath myself to this wicked widow who slanders me". His wife replied to him,

If you wish, my lord, then swear the oath, but I do not want you to swear, lest something bad happen to you. But what is your decision, my lord – will you return (her sheep) or not? For the power of the holy martyr Menas is great, as you have heard (before). However, if neither you nor your servant have taken it, you can be confident that you are free of this sin. (So,) rise, go and swear the oath to her, and she will go to her home. But if it is otherwise, it is right to repay her twofold, rather than swearing.

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<sup>84</sup> Var. 'what has happened'.

<sup>85</sup> Lit. 'hide'.

Then (that) cursed man, inflamed with anger by the devil, rose and went to the temple of the saint with his servant, cursing the old woman.

He shamelessly approached the altar, drew near to the tomb of the saint, and swore an oath to hwer, saying, “By the holy martyr Menas and his venerable relics, (I swear that) I did not steal this widow’s sheep, neither I nor my servant”. After swearing the oath, he stepped away from the tomb and (moved) to the center of the church. Immediately and unexpectedly, his hands and legs withered, and it happened just as his wife had foretold. Then the wretched rich man cried out in a loud voice, saying,

Oh, holy martyr of Christ, Menas, I have sinned! I will give this widow four sheep for the one! I have commanded my servant to steal this widow’s sheep, but forgive me, Saint Menas, and help me, a sinner! Behold, the stolen sheep is here, and I have brought it, cooked, intending to eat it. But if you wish, holy one, I will give all my sheep, as many as I have, to your holy church for my perjury.

The people standing (there) were greatly terrified, and the senior *ie-rey*<sup>86</sup>, along with all the people, trembled with fear, (and) many hours they cried out, “Lord, have mercy!”. Suddenly, a voice was heard from the heights of the church, saying, “Shut your mouth, cursed one!”. Despite this, the man continued to cry out, but he was soon carried away and tied to a column near the tomb of the saint. His wife cared for him until he died, weeping and asking for forgiveness for her sins and for (her husband’s) perjury.

After he died, his wife returned to her home, and taking her husband’s wealth – his gold, silver, and all his possessions – she brought them to the church of Saint Menas. Every year, this woman would come and bring gifts to the saint, giving thanks to God and praising the name of the holy martyr of Christ, Menas. And so, she departed to the Lord with forgiveness [of sins].

## Miracle 9

### About She-Camel

I want to tell you, brothers, about another miracle that occurred after the martyrdom of the holy martyr of Christ and ever-victorious warrior, Menas. There was a certain man from the city of Paniphaiata – this city

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<sup>86</sup> Var. ‘priest’.

was also the birthplace of the holy martyr Menas – and this man’s name was Porphyrius. The venerable martyr Menas had previously been friends with him, as both of them were once engaged in trade in this city. And when, by the grace of God, Saint Menas was being martyred, Porphyrius served the saint. After the death of the holy martyr, Porphyrius also passed away, leaving behind his son.

Then his father said to him (before his death): “Child, do not forsake the help<sup>87</sup> of the holy martyr Menas!”. Afterward, the son of Porphyrius had a barren she-camel, and he said: “My God! Through the prayers<sup>88</sup> of the holy martyr Menas, let my she-camel give birth to her first (foal), and when it is born, I will give (it) to the holy martyr of Christ, Menas”.

In a short time, his she-camel gave birth to a foal, (but) Satan prevented him from giving this foal to the saint. Another was born, and he did not give that one to the saint (either). After this, the she-camel gave birth to a third foal, and with hostile malice, he kept this one too, not offering (it) to the saint’s church. Saint Menas then appeared, riding a horse, to the place where the she-camel and her foals were roaming<sup>89</sup>. And behold, a great cloud that reached the ground followed the saint, and suddenly, by the will of the martyr of Christ, three camel foals, along with their mother, entered the cloud and went to the saint’s church. Their master came to check on<sup>90</sup> them, but could not find them. He began to despair and said, “I promised to give one foal to the saint, but I deceived him, and for that, I have lost all my camels”.

Saint Menas appeared to him in a dream (and) said to him,

Since, my friend, with your own mouth you had promised to give one camel (foal) to my church, and you lied, forgetting our friendship I once had with your father, I do not wish to make you unhappy, nor do I desire to bring misfortune upon you. Therefore, I came myself without delay, and behold, in exchange for one camel (foal), I took all four camels, which you did not want to give as alms and send my offerings to my church. You could not find a person through whom to send what was promised me, so I came myself and took them. Now, I have come to return to you the blessing that was taken (from you), so that you may not continue to suffer. If you do not believe me,

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<sup>87</sup> Vat. ‘do not remain without intercession’.

<sup>88</sup> Vat. ‘thanks to prayers’.

<sup>89</sup> I.e., ‘were pasturing’.

<sup>90</sup> Lit. ‘look at’.

when you rise, go to my church, and there you will find them, so that you may believe. O man! Do not do so that you promise something to someone<sup>91</sup> and then lie, lest evil<sup>92</sup> befall you.

Upon waking from the dream, the man quickly ran to the church of Saint Menas, and there he saw his camels. (And) he was astonished and said, "I will not leave the church of the saint until my dying breath". The man fell to his knees in the church of the saint and fell asleep, and once again, Saint Menas appeared to him in a dream and said to him,

Since, my child, you had promised to give me the first, second, and third (foal), and then you regretted it, I desired to direct my wrath upon you, but I relented, for your father did much good for me in Paniphaiata, so I will not bring<sup>93</sup> evil upon you. But, O child, take care of your soul's salvation and the day of your death, because it is necessary for me to [care] greatly for you and the salvation of your soul.

Waking up from the dream, the man rose, trembling, seized with fear and trembling. He returned to his home, took his possession, and gave it to the church of the saint, as he had promised. The steward then said to him, "Brother, since the saint desired your salvation, he commanded me that you should serve in the saint's church". The man said, "What you command me, Father, I will do". And so, he was made overseer of all the camels, to care for them. And so, he served the saint with praise and patience, asking for the forgiveness of his sins, (and) he departed to the Lord in peace. As the saint had commanded the steward in a dream, he was buried near the column close to the grave of the saint. And all gave glory to God and to the holy martyr Menas, (who), in this way, guided a human soul to repentance.

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<sup>91</sup> Lit. 'the other'.

<sup>92</sup> Var. 'unfortune'.

<sup>93</sup> Var. 'let'.

## Miracle 10

### About the Rich Pagan<sup>94</sup>

I want to tell you (pl.) another miracle. There was a certain man, a Pagan, named Prinos<sup>95</sup>, who lived near a lake in the eparchy of the city of Alexandria. On his land, there was a large pagan temple<sup>96</sup>, and in that temple, there was a great idol, (to which) gifts and sacrifices were brought every year. This wealthy (man) had a barren mare, which looked magnificent. Because of her beauty and speed, the rich man liked her very much and prayed to his idol, asking that his mare give birth, but she could not conceive.

One day, when he was told about the miracles of the holy martyr Menas, the Pagan, upon hearing this, said, “If my mare gives birth with the blessing of the holy martyr Menas, I will offer three legs [of the foal] to Saint Menas and one to the idol”. Then, his mare gave birth to a three-legged foal, and the pagan was greatly astonished.

And behold, Saint Menas appeared to him in a dream and said,

I am Menas, the servant of Christ. I have come to ask you why you are surprised by what has happened. You had made me a promise, so I allowed your mare to give birth to a foal with three legs. Now, let your idol, whom you worship, show his power regarding what you promised him, and let him give your foal a fourth.

When the Pagan awoke from his dream, he quickly rose, renounced the idol, and dedicated himself to Christ and to the holy martyr of Christ, Menas. He was baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and he was joined to the Orthodox Christians. He also gave his mare to the church of the saint and divided his wealth, giving half of it to the saint’s church, praising God for being enlightened through holy baptism. He also made all those in his household Christians, and many, seeing (what had happened), renounced Pagan<sup>97</sup> religion and became Christians, believing in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. leg.

<sup>94</sup> Lit. ‘Hellen’.

<sup>95</sup> The protagonist of the miracle in Greek bears the same name. In OCS, however, there is an additional wordplay, as *prinos* means ‘gain’ or ‘profit’.

<sup>96</sup> OSC: *chram idolskij velik*’.

<sup>97</sup> Lit. ‘Hellenic’.



## Miracle 11

### About (the Man) Sorting Wood

There was a man named Theophilus. He wanted to go to the church of the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, to pray, and he promised to give wood (as an offering). When he brought it, the steward ordered the wood to be dragged from the shore to the church. A soldier who was passing by said, "Give me a tenth of the wood". But he replied to him, "The wood belongs to the temple of Saint Menas". The soldier said to him, "I do not listen to<sup>98</sup> what you say, for I want to take a tenth of it". They were stopped by him, and he did not allow them to drag (the wood) any further, and he also beat them. So, they gave him two silver coins, saying with tears, "We place our hope in God's church and in the holy martyr Menas, and in his power, that the tenth part will be taken from you".

They spoke these words with tears, while being beaten, when suddenly and unexpectedly, the soldier was seized and hung by his hair in the air. He did not know where he was going until he reached the temple of Saint Menas. When he arrived at the church and was still hanging, the people who were in the church were struck with fear and cried out, "Lord, have mercy on us!". Then the soldier cried out in a loud voice and said, "I have sinned, martyr of Christ, I have sinned! I confess my wrongdoing, but grant me your mercy, for you are greatly patient". When he said this, the saint released him from the air without harm or injury. Then he promised the saint 12 gold coins. And all the people, seeing this, praised God and the holy martyr of Christ, Menas, who had shown him mercy. And when the soldier went to his home, he brought 12 gold coins and many other gifts to the church, praising God, and returned to his home rejoicing and glad.

## Miracle 12

### About the Man Possessed (by a Demon)

A certain (man) in Alexandria had been tormented by a demon<sup>99</sup> from his youth, foaming (at the mouth) and gnashing his teeth. The demon threw him into the sea like many others. When his parents witnessed this, they brought him, bound, to the church of Saint Menas, as they could not leave him because he was injuring people. When they arrived with him at

<sup>98</sup> Lit. 'I cannot see'; Var. 'I do not listen to'. This variant was used in the translation.

<sup>99</sup> Var. 'evil spirit'.

the saint's church, his parents fell to their knees on the ground and prayed with these (words): "Holy martyr of Christ, Menas, who has performed many miracles, accept our prayer, grant healing to our child, so that we may pray your holy name with all (people)". They sought understanding and lingered, but they left with nothing. Meanwhile, the demon tormented the young man even more.

As they were walking along the road, Saint Menas appeared to them in the form of a man and said to them, "Where is the possessed one?". They said, "Here, my lord! We were at the church of the holy martyr Menas and prayed for him, but due to our sins, the saint did not heal him". The saint then said to them, "Return to the church of the saint". They said to him, "We cannot, my lord, for he will kill us, (even) if we bind him, but we are unable to do so. Perhaps you, my lord, can bind him? For we see, my lord, your fame and might, and that you are young in body, and (in return), we will give you an alms"<sup>100</sup>. They did not know that it was the saint himself.

Saint Menas said to them, "I take nothing, but if you wish to give something, offer it to the church of Saint Menas". After this, he stretched out his holy hand, grasped the head of the possessed one, being invisible to him, and carried him to his church. (The young man) hung in the air in the middle of the church, and the demon cried out loudly, "What do you want from me, martyr of Christ? Leave me, so I may live in him, for I have been with him for seven years now. I beg you, saint, leave me, for I have been commanded to destroy him".

Suddenly, the possessed young man fell from the height to the ground and appeared as if dead. All the people rose and cried out, "Lord, have mercy!". They placed him next to the saint's tomb, and the steward took (some) oil from the lamp over the saint's tomb and anointed him with the sign of the cross, saying, "Come out of God's creation, unclean spirit, for the saint could have tormented you on the road, but to shame you, he will torment you here before these people!". Hearing this, the demon came out of the young man's mouth like fire, and the man was healed.

His parents then took from their wealth his (i.e. young man's) entire part and offered (it) to the church of the saint, and they (had) him tonsured in the monastic way there. He remained there until the end of his life, and shortly thereafter, he passed away peacefully to the Lord, glorifying Christ our God and the holy martyr Menas.

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<sup>100</sup> OCS: *mzdu*.

### Miracle 13

#### [About the Man] Who Stole a Pig

There was a certain man named Pastamon who always entered the holy flock and stole the finest pigs from it. He was a Pagan<sup>101</sup> and a miserable pauper. And he said to himself, "I am a wretch, the saint does not care about me". The saint appeared to him and said, "Man, enough already!". But he paid no heed to what the saint had said to him. For many others also wanted to take from the saint's flock, but they did not dare, as they were afraid of the saint. This Pagan pauper again entered the flock and chose the finest pigs, stole them, and slaughtered them. When he cut them into two parts because he wanted to salt them, suddenly the parts of the pig's body became like stones. This accursed thief did not believe the saint's words and was astonished at what he saw, so he said in his anger, "Saint Menas, either I am stealing, or you are taking revenge. Let's see<sup>102</sup> if you can help your flock: I will now enter your flock and kill the largest pigs, and see if you can also turn these into stones". And he said this in his anger, and he fell asleep. Saint Menas appeared to him in his dream and said to him, "Curse and suffering, and the loss of your life! How long will you do evil and not amend your ways? Believe me: you should repent, as you will not gain any benefit. Try, however, if you wish, and go into the flock, and you will see that everything I told you will come to pass". And waking from his sleep, this accursed man, filled<sup>103</sup> with diabolical rage, said, "I will go there now and see what you will do to me". So the next morning he got up and reached the pen's fence, jumped straight into the flock, and withered from head to toe, becoming like a tree, lifeless and motionless. The shepherds who came found him standing in the middle of the pen, as if dead. They questioned him about what had happened, but he made no sound. The shepherds carried him to the temple of Saint Menas, and then before everyone, he confessed how he had done much evil. And he remained in the temple of Saint Menas until his death, then he died, having done penance and confession with a pure heart, praising God and Saint Menas, the martyr of Christ. Glory to our God forever and ever, amen.

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<sup>101</sup> Lit. 'Hellens'.

<sup>102</sup> I.e., 'let's check'.

<sup>103</sup> Lit. 'being satiated'.