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## [The Sacred Tales - suite]

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me to wash in the river which flows through the city — but it was rising high from the rains — and he predicted that there would be three baths. When they learned of this command, the most serious of my friends assembled, both to escort me and through their concern about what would happen, and at the same time because they desired to see these events instead of hearing another's report. And the day was stormy. First it rained on us during the journey, and this was the first of the baths. And since we wished to find pure water and that which had not been contaminated by the city, we went up along the road to Hippon. When we were at the river bank, none of my friends had the heart to encourage me, although the temple warden himself was present and some of the philosophers, noble men. But nonetheless it was clear that they were all troubled and in anguish. I cast off my garments and having called upon the God, dove into the middle of the river. Within it rocks churned and timber was carried along, and waves rose as if from the winds. And none of the river bed was visible, but there was a loud roaring sound. Here rocks, instead of leaves, whirled about, but the water was calmer than any crystal stream, and I dallied for as long as possible. When I emerged on the bank, a warmth went through my whole body. And much steam rose up, and I was red all over, and we sang the Paeon. And when we went back, it rained again, and thus ended the third of the baths.

winter  
145/6 A.D. Moreover another thing happened in Elaea here. He sent me to wash in the sea, and he foretold that the ship Asclepius was lying at anchor in the mouth of the harbor, into which I had to throw myself, and some remarks of the sailors, and other things, all of which I do not remember in sequence, but which agreed with what happened in broad daylight. Therefore when we went down to Elaea, we were outside the city at the harbor, and immediately a ship was found with the name Asclepius, and the sailors immediately cried out to the God, when they saw what was taking place. The northwind was sharp, so that when I emerged, I needed covering. Again on the following night, he ordered me to use the sea in the same way, and when I emerged from the water, to stand before the wind and thus to cure my body.

And I know that such things have been prescribed for many people. But first of all, in itself, the action of the God is rather wonderful,

since he often and frequently revealed his power and providence, and next if someone would consider my general condition. And yet who could comprehend in what state we were then? Those, who were present at each event, know how I was both externally and internally, and besides for how many days and nights the flow from my head and the turmoil in my chest continued, and how my breath encountered the flow above and was caught in my throat and seared, and that my expectation of death was always so great that I did not even have the courage to call for a servant, but believed that I would call in vain, for it would all be over with first. In addition to this, there were various symptoms in my teeth and ears, and a general throbbing of my pulse, the inability to retain any nourishment, and the inability to vomit. For whatever small morsel would touch my throat or palate, closed the passage, and then I could not recover. There was the fiery pain, which penetrated to my brain, and all the attacks, and the impossibility of reclining at night, but I had to raise myself, and persevere bent forward, with my head on my knees. But with this and, I believe, countless other such things, there followed of necessity being wrapt in wool and other coverings, and being strictly confined, with everything shut up, so that day was equal to night, and the nights were sleepless instead of the days. "What mortal man might tell all these things?" (*Odyss.* 3. 113). "For neither five nor six years" are sufficient, but the narration perhaps needs no less time than that, in which the events took place. If someone should calculate these things and consider with how many and what sort of sufferings and with what necessary result for these, he bore me to the sea and rivers and wells, and commanded me to contend with the winter, he will say that all is truly beyond miracles, and he will see more clearly the power and the providence of the God, and will rejoice with me for the honor which I had, and would not be more grieved because of my sickness.

January  
144 A.D. Perhaps someone would desire to hear the origin of such great troubles. It is beyond or like the story told to Alcinous, but I shall try to speak cursorily. I set out for Rome in the middle of winter, though I was already sick at home from the rain and a cold. I paid no heed to my present ailments, but trusted to the training of my body and to my general good luck. When I had got as far as the Hellespont, my ears troubled



