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THE PENITENCE OF ADAM

TRANSLATED

BY

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INTRODUCTION

THE ADAMIC LITERATURE

The *Penitence of Adam* is an Armenian version of a work preserved in numerous languages. Before examining its particular character, the other versions should be mentioned.¹ They are in Greek (entitled *Apocalypse of Moses*);² Latin (entitled *Vita Adae et Evae*);³ Slavonic (entitled *Life of Adam and Eve*)⁴ and Georgian (entitled *Life of Adam*).⁵ The Latin, Greek and Slavonic versions have been translated into European languages, notably English and German.⁶ The Georgian version has never been translated.

Each of these five writings, in Latin, Greek, Slavonic, Georgian and Armenian, is a different recension of the Adam book. Each of them contains unique materials, distinctive structural elements and its own particular terminology. Yet they also share much text and many traditions. The relationships between them, then, are complex and are not decisively clarified by the publication of the Armenian *Penitence of Adam*. Still, observations on certain particular points relevant to this problem will be made below.⁷ Wells who edited the Greek, Latin and Slavonic versions in R.H. Charles' *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the*

¹ For bibliographical and introductory information, see the following works: A.M. DENIS, *Introduction aux pseudépigraphes grecs d'Ancien Testament* (SVTP 1; Leiden: Brill, 1970), 3-14; J.H. CHARLESWORTH, *The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research* (SCS 7; Missoula: Scholars, 1976), 72-75; H. ANASYAN, *Armenian Bibliology I* (Erevan: Academy, 1959), 236-250 (Armenian); M.E. STONE, "Report on Seth Traditions in the Armenian Adam Books," *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, ed. B. Layton, II (SHR 41; Leiden: Brill, 1980), 460-464 (forthcoming).

² C. VON TISCHENDORF, *Apocalypses Apocryphae* (repr. Leipzig: 1966), 1-23; additional collations in M. NAGEL, *La vie grecque d'Adam et d'Ève* (dissertation, Strassburg: 1972), Part 2: "L'édition des textes".

³ W. MEYER, *Vita Adae et Evae* (München: K. Adademie, 1897).

⁴ V. JAGIČ, "Slavische Beiträge zu dem biblischen Apokryphen, I, Die altkirchenslavischen Texte des Adamsbuches," *Denkschr. K. Akad. Wiss. philos.-hist. Classe 42* (Vienna: 1893).

⁵ Ts. K'URTSIK'IDZE, in *Philological Studies I* (Tiflis: Academy, 1964), 97-136 (Georgian).

⁶ See standard editions of the Pseudepigrapha. Jagič (note 4, above) includes a German translation with his edition.

⁷ The chief aim of Nagel's thesis (note 2, above) is to clarify this relationship.

Old Testament regarded the Greek *Apocalypse of Moses* as the chief story line to which certain additions were made in the Latin and Slavonic versions.⁸

In addition to the five versions, three further sources for the text of the Adam book survive. The first is the Armenian translation of the *Apocalypse of Moses*. It was published by Yovsēp'ianc' and translated into English by Issaverdens.⁹ Yovsēp'ianc' did not use all the manuscripts of this book and some of the others were listed by Anasyan.¹⁰ It is entitled *Book of Adam* and is a direct textual witness of the *Apocalypse of Moses*. It was compared with the *Penitence of Adam* and no relationship was found between the two writings at the Armenian level. The second source is the *Gospel of Nicodemus* (the *Acts of Pilate*) which contains a substantial section of the text. The third source is a Greek fragment containing the story of the repentance of Adam and Eve, an incident not found in the *Apocalypse of Moses*.¹¹

Here a few observations are added on the Georgian *Life of Adam*, the least known of the versions. These are drawn from the introductory comments by K'urtsik'idze. He uses five manuscripts, two of the seventeenth century and three of the nineteenth century. A supposed tenth-century testimony to the Georgian *Life of Adam* is a reference by Euthymius of Athos to a book of this name.¹² It is by no means certain, however, that Euthymius is referring to the same work. K'urtsik'idze also suggests that the *Life of Adam* may have been included in one of the recensions of the *Primary History of Georgia*.¹³ Kekelidze is of the view that the work was translated into Georgian from Armenian prior to the tenth century.¹⁴ The Georgian *Life of Adam* appears, from what is known of it, to be close to the Armenian *Penitence of Adam*. Our examination of a small sample of text suggests, however, that the extant Armenian work is not the direct source of the Georgian writing. Clearly,

⁸ Vol. 2 (Oxford: 1913), 128-129.

⁹ S. YOVSEPIANC', *Uncanonical Books of the Old Testament* (Venice: Mechitarist, 1896), 1-23 (Armenian); J. ISSAVERDENS, *Uncanonical Writings of the Old Testament* (2 edn; Venice: Mechitarist, 1934), 23-42.

¹⁰ Anasyan (note 1, above), 238 lists five copies in Erevan. Note also Jerusalem, Armenian Patriarchate nos. 256, 1278, and apparently 1729, 2043. Other copies doubtless exist.

¹¹ Vat. Gr. no. 1192, 13r-14v, cf. Denis (note 1, above), 4; Nagel (note 2, above), 175 ff. This has been utilized in our own transcription.

¹² K'urtsik'idze (note 5, above), 97.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 99-100.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 103-108.

now that the Armenian *Penitence of Adam* has become known, a detailed study of the relationship between the two texts is desirable.¹⁵

Distinct from the above writings are the numerous Adamic tales found in many languages. These include writings in Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic, Georgian and Slavonic, as well as in Armenian. These works often contain developments of themes, ideas and incidents found in the Adam book. Many of these Adamic writings have been consulted in the course of preparation of the annotations to the translation of the *Penitence of Adam*. None of them, even those in Armenian, has a special literary or other relationship with the *Penitence of Adam*, although frequently parallels or similarities in one or another specific detail are noted.¹⁶

The Armenian Adamic writings also bear upon the *Penitence of Adam* in another way. The most recent list enumerates thirteen Armenian Adamic writings, not counting the *Penitence of Adam* itself, and more of them will probably be discovered.¹⁷ There are also numerous poetic, liturgical and homiletic writings in Armenian devoted to Adam and his deeds.¹⁸ This extensive literature provides a context within which the *Penitence of Adam* was preserved and transmitted. The Armenians cherished and developed, embellished and passed on legends and tales about biblical characters, and Adam, the protoplast, was particularly dear to them. The spelling out of the implications of this for the history of Armenian thought must await the full publication and study of the Armenian Adamic writings.

The close relationship between the *Penitence of Adam* and the Georgian *Life of Adam* was noted above. Lüdtke has described the contents and character of a number of other Georgian Adamic works which seem to be very similar to certain Armenian Adamic writings. The whole subject is hardly investigated, but a clarification of this relation-

¹⁵ The Georgian *Life of Adam* was apparently not known to W. LÜDTKE, "Georgische Adam-Bücher," *ZAW* 38 (1919), 155-168.

¹⁶ Much information on the various Adamic writings is to be found in the works cited in note 1, above and in Lüdtke's article cited in note 15, above. We have distinguished versions of the (putative) Adam book from other Adamic writings, even though some of them may also derive in one respect or another from the same "Adam book". In certain cases the distinction is more one of the degree of departure from the putative source document than one of kind. The five versions are much closer to one another than any of them is to works like the *Cave of Treasures* or the *Ethiopic Book of Adam and Eve*.

¹⁷ Stone (note 1, above), 460-464

¹⁸ Anasyan (note 1, above), 245-248 lists twenty six such compositions.

ship might well illuminate that between the Georgian *Life of Adam* and the Armenian *Penitence of Adam*.¹⁹

GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The work opens in a fashion similar to the *Latin Vita Adae et Evae* giving the story of Adam and Eve's repentance after their expulsion from the Garden of Eden, of their standing in the Jordan and Tigris Rivers, and of Satan's renewed enticement of Eve. It follows the general story line of the *Latin Vita Adae et Evae*, and is to a very considerable extent similar to it, up to the point where the *Apocalypse of Moses* commences.

From the point where the *Apocalypse of Moses* commences, the *Penitence of Adam* can be compared with the Greek and Armenian versions of that work as well as with the *Latin Vita Adae et Evae*. This comparison shows that while the *Penitence of Adam* bears a clear overall resemblance to the *Apocalypse of Moses*, it also has very numerous points of agreement with the *Vita Adae et Evae*. Such agreements include phrases, verses and even more extended passages or traditions. In addition to material which the *Penitence of Adam* has in common with *Apocalypse of Moses* and the *Latin Vita Adae et Evae*, it has a good deal of material peculiar to itself. This is usually included in the formulation of verses which from a structural view point are parallel to material to be found in the Greek and Latin works, but are, in form, content or emphasis, quite different. The occurrence of additional, rather than substitute material, is less frequent.

The *Penitence of Adam* does not contain two of the blocs of special material which occur in the *Latin Vita Adae et Evae*, but not in the *Apocalypse of Moses*, viz. the Vision of Adam (*Vita Adae et Evae* 25-29) and Eve's directives as to the memorials of her life (*Vita Adae et Evae* 49-50). It does contain the major account of Eve's fall which is found in the *Apocalypse of Moses* 15-34, but which is absent from the *Vita Adae et Evae*.

THE TITLE

The title *Penitence of Adam* is attested in ancient sources and confusion has surrounded the identification of the works it denotes. The *Decretum Gelasianum* (line 296) records as *Liber Apocryphus* a certain

¹⁹ Lüdtké (note 15, above), 155-160.

Liber qui appellatur Paenitentia Adae. It seems unlikely, however, that this refers to our *Penitence of Adam*; more probably it means the *Vita Adae et Evae*. The *Vita Adae et Evae* deals at length with the repentance of Adam and Eve and it was known in Latin, the language of the Gelasian decree, which does not refer to it by any other title. Moreover, the *Vita Adae et Evae* occurs under the titles *De Penitentia Adam* and *Penitentia Adam et Eva* in some manuscripts.

In the *Chronographies* of George Cedrenus and George the Syncellus there is a quotation from an Adamic work. It opens with the words Ἀδάμ τῆ ἑξακοσιόστῳ ἔτει μετανοήσας ἔγνω δι' ἀποκαλύψεως. In them, both E. Renan and M.R. James saw a possible reference to the title of the chronographers' source, the *Penitence of Adam*. It is, of course, possible that their source was called *Penitence of Adam*, but that is far from being the necessary implication of their words. Indeed, the Syriac versions of the work they cite call it the *Testament of Adam*.²⁰

The 12th century Armenian historian, Samuel of Ani in his *Chronography* for the year 590 deals with books introduced into Armenia by Nestorian missionaries. The first in his list is Ադամայ Կտակն "Testament of Adam"; so Erevan manuscript 1869 (1585-1589 C.E.) and Zarbhanalian, while the Vałaşapat edition of 1893 reads Ադամայ Ապաշխարութիւն "Penitence of Adam".²¹ The latter reading is probably secondary, but it witnesses to the knowledge of a *Penitence of Adam* in Armenian. Otherwise, the change from *Testament* cannot be explained; no *Testament of Adam* is known in Armenian.²²

Yovsēp'ianc' published in 1896 an Armenian work titled Պատմութիւն Ապաշխարութեան Ադամայ և Եւայի նախաստեղծի թէ որպէս արարին : *The History of the Repentance of Adam and Eve the Protoplasts and What They did*.²³ At points this work is clearly dependent on the Armenian

²⁰ E. RENAN, *Fragments du livre gnostique intitulé: Apocalypse d'Adam ou Pénitence d'Adam ou Testament d'Adam*, extrait du JA 17 (1853), separatim 4 f.; M.R. JAMES, *Apocrypha Anecdota* (TS 2.3; Cambridge: 1893), 139. See also IDEM., *The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament* (London: SPCK, 1920), 1-3.

²¹ The witness of the oldest MS, Jerusalem 1801, written in 1187, i.e. within a decade of Samuel's death, must await the facsimile edition being prepared in Erevan for his 900th anniversary.

²² The text of Samuel's list is edited by Anasyan (note 1, above), I, XXXIX. Line 8 of the text is զիսթեկն i.e. διαθήκη. This does not necessarily refer to a *Testament of Adam*; thus we differ from the views of Zahn, James and Russell, see D.S. RUSSELL, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), 394-395, and references there. These scholars, of course, only knew the 1893 edition of the *Chronography*.

²³ Yovsēp'ianc' (note 9, above), 325-330; English by Issaverdens (note 9, above);

Book of Adam and it is impossible to know whether it or the *Penitence of Adam* is intended by the variant reading of the Vałaršapat edition of Samuel of Ani.

From the above it appears that the ancient evidence for the existence of a work entitled *Penitence of Adam* is not strong. Evidence within the Armenian tradition is ambiguous, and cannot aid in the identification or dating of the work published here.

EVALUATION OF THE "PENITENCE OF ADAM"

The *Penitence of Adam* is not an Armenian version of the *Apocalypse of Moses* nor of the *Vita Adae et Evae*.²⁴ This follows from its incorporation of material unique of each of those two versions. There is, moreover, no evidence for the existence of an Armenian version of the *Vita Adae et Evae*, while the Armenian version of the *Apocalypse of Moses* has had no influence on the *Penitence of Adam*. Therefore the *Penitence of Adam* is another version of the Adam book, most probably translated into Armenian from Greek,²⁵ and it must take its place alongside the Greek and Latin versions as a major witness to the Adam book. Unfortunately nothing enables us to establish the date of the translation or the history of its transmission and use in the Armenian church.²⁶

It is not possible here to give a full commentary on the *Penitence of Adam*. Nonetheless some of its readings are discussed. These show that in a number of places the *Penitence of Adam* preserves readings preferable to those of the *Apocalypse of Moses* or the *Vita Adae et Evae*. In other instances its unique readings are corroborated or supported by sources outside the Adam books. A full comparative study of the versions would, undoubtedly uncover more instances like those cited. They confirm the position of the *Penitence of Adam* as one of the primary versions of the Adam book. The *Penitence of Adam* follows a basic story line similar to

German by E. PREUSCHEN, *Die Apokryphen Gnostischen Adamschriften* (Giessen: Ricker, 1900), 41-46. The work was copied by Conybeare from a manuscript in Etchmiadzin in 1893 and he made it available to Yovsēp'ianc'. Anasyan (note 1, above), 242 identifies the manuscript as Erevan 1521 (*olim* Etchmiadzin 914) of the year 1404 C.E.

²⁴ Its relationship to the Slavonic *Life of Adam and Eve* and the Georgian *Life of Adam* is not discussed here. It is further from the Slavonic than it is from the Greek and Latin versions. It is probably closer to the Georgian version (see above, pp. VI-VIII).

²⁵ See p. XIII, below.

²⁶ See Introduction to text volume, pp. XIII-XIV.

the *Apocalypse of Moses* but has the story of the repentance at the beginning. It is not unlikely that in this it preserves a primitive form of the material. However, a definite conclusion on this point should probably only be drawn after a careful study of the Georgian version in particular. The story of the repentance is certainly an integral part of the present book.

EXAMPLES OF THE TEXT

Chapter 3 Eve said to Adam, "I am dying of this hunger. It would be better if I were dead, my lord; perhaps (then) they would bring you into the Garden, for because of me God is angry."

Adam said, "Great wrath has come upon us. I know not whether because of you or because of me."

Eve said to <him>, "Kill me if you wish, so that the wrath and anger may abate from before you — for this has come about because of me — and they will bring you into the Garden."

Et dixit Eva ad Adam, domine mi, putas fac me utinam morior. et forte introducat te dominus deus denuo in paradisum, quoniam propter me iratus est tibi dominus deus. vis interficere me, ut moriar? et forte introducet te dominus deus in paradisum, quia propter meam causam expulsus es inde.

Commenting on this passage of the Latin text, Wells observes, "MSS. have a doublet quoniam ... inde" (*in loc.*) and he omits this supposed doublet. See further discussion, pp. xvi-xvii below.

Chap. 6 For Adam said, "I shall be (in penitence) for forty days, six more than you, because you were created on the sixth day (of those upon which) he accepted his works."

The Armenian text is not altogether clear, but it does say that Adam is to fast for forty days and Eve for thirty-four (so also Latin MSS 3, 5, and 9). The Armenian text also offers a rationale for these figures, that Eve was created on the sixth day, apparently of the week following creation (here the corruption has intervened). This refers to the tradition known to Jubilees (3:4-6) and the *Life of Adam* quoted by George the Syncellus (ed. Dindorf, p. 6) that Eve was created on the sixth day of the second

week. The Syncellus reads: τῆ ἕκτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς δευτέρας ἑβδομάδος ... λαβὼν ὁ Θεὸς μέρος τι τῆς πλευρᾶς τοῦ Ἀδάμ ἐπλασε τὴν γυναῖκα. This point lacks altogether in the Latin *Vita Adae et Evae*. *Chap. 7* And the hair of his head was uncovered.

The Armenian text may be compared with Slav. 36 “even up to the hair of his head.” It is moreover closer to Vat. Gr. 1182, 13v καὶ ἡ θριξ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ ἠπλούτου (sic) τῷ εἰχουμένῳ ἐν τῇ ὕδατι. Latin *Vita Adae et Evae* lacks all mention of the hair.

Chap. 22 (1) Ap’ at whom the nurse named and called Abel.

The Armenian *Book of Adam* translating the *Apocalypse of Moses* has the name *բարեխորհ*.²⁷ The Latin *Vita Adae et Evae* and the Georgian *Life of Adam* have no names of this type. The *Apocalypse of Moses* relates the birth of both brothers at this point and it gives them two names each. The Latin *Vita Adae et Evae*, the Georgian *Life of Adam*, and the *Penitence of Adam* relate the birth of Cain in chap. 21 and the birth of Abel here. In the *Penitence of Adam* Abel has two names, but Cain does not. Some scholars have seen a relationship between Cain’s colour in the Latin and Armenian versions (chap. 21 *lucidus* or “colour of the stars”) and the name Ἀδιάφωτος given him by Greek *Apocalypse of Moses* 1. The midwife referred to here may be compared with the angelic midwife attending the birth of Cain in chap. 21 of the Armenian *Penitence of Adam*. Georgian refers to the midwife as “the power of God”, cf. “two powers” in Armenian *Penitence of Adam* 21. Latin has no reference to a midwife here.

Chap. 44 (16) Armenian Greek

“Why do you worship Adam every morning? You came into being before him. Why is it that you, who are the former one, worship the latter? Why do you worship (Adam) or (why) are you fed by Adam and are not fed by the fruit of Eden?”

Why dost thou eat of Adam’s tares and not of Paradise?

The narrative from which this excerpt is drawn is not extant in Latin *Vita Adae et Evae*. Nearly all Greek MSS have an additional phrase preceding the sentence quoted here, viz. ὁμῶς προσκυνεῖς τὸν

²⁷ On this point see M.E. STONE, “Apocryphal Notes and Readings,” *Israel Oriental Studies* 1(1971), 126.

ἐλαχίστερον; The phrase is the same found in the Armenian *Penitence of Adam* “worship the latter”. Greek seems to have lost the preceding material by corruption. Wells’ comment that the Greek words are a gloss from chap. 14 of the *Vita Adae et Evae* is superfluous. Instead, the parallel with chap. 14 of the Latin and Armenian is very revelant. There Satan explains that he rebelled against God’s command to bow down to Adam because he was former. Here, in the Armenian *Penitence of Adam*, Satan uses exactly the same argument to incite the serpent to rebellion. So Armenian clearly preserves the text lying behind the Greek phrase. Furthermore, its full implication is only clear in the forms of the book which include the repentance story, such as the Latin *Vita Adae et Evae* and the Armenian *Penitence of Adam* itself.

Chap. [44] (20) and I stood by the tree.

Greek reads καὶ ἔστιν παρ’ αὐτῶν τῶν φυτῶν.

Arm obviously reflects ἔστην. This is a clear indication that it had a Greek *Vorlage*. Arm is also probably original; it makes better sense and avoids the awkwardness of the Greek.

The Search for Food

Chaps 1-9 contain a recurrent theme of Adam and Eve’s search for food such as they had eaten in the Garden. Their original food is contrasted with “the food of grass” which was appointed for the animals (cf. Gen. 1:29-30 and 3:18). This theme is mentioned in the *Vita Adae et Evae*, but it is far more explicit in the *Penitence of Adam*. Thus it occurs in it in chaps 4, 6 and 8, in which it does not occur in the *Vita Adae et Evae*. Chap. 8 may serve as an example. Adam calls on the fish of the Jordan to mourn with him and observes:

Latin

non se plangent sed me, *quia ipsi*
non peccaverunt sed ego,

Armenian

and bewail me, not for their own
sakes, but for mine. *Because God*
did not withhold their food from them
which God appointed from the be-
ginning, but I have been withheld
from my food and from life.

In the *Penitence of Adam* the intimate connection between the search for paradisaical food and repentance is clear. The expulsion from the Garden meant a separation from their food. Only the protoplasts’ repentance or God’s mercy might perhaps bring about its restoration. In

fact, this does not happen for the food represents the pristine state which was lost.

After Eve was deceived she left the river, while Adam remained in it (chaps. 9-11, 17). Eve was pregnant with Cain and when the time of his birth approached, she called Adam who heard the sound of her weeping from the Jordan river, where he stood (chaps. 18-19). In chap 20, the *Penitence of Adam* reads "When God hearkened to the sound of Adam's penitence, he taught him sowing and reaping and that which was to come upon him and his seed." In this is to be found the resolution of the search for food: Adam does not receive *esca angelorum* but he does not eat grass. His repentance bore fruit and God taught him agriculture. In the Latin *Vita Adae et Evae* Adam learns agriculture from God only in chap. 2 and this is unrelated to the theme of repentance. For further parallels, see chap. 20 note 2.

With these ideas too the singular material concerning the birth of Cain may be connected. According to the *Penitence of Adam*, on his birth Cain jumped from the hands of the angelic midwives and plucked up the grass around his mother's hut, and caused "numerous infertilities" in that place. A remnant of this tradition can be found in the *Vita Adae et Evae* which relates that Cain, on his birth, plucked a leaf of grass and presented it to his mother. In the *Vita Adae et Evae* this incident has no apparent explanation. In the *Penitence of Adam*, however, it may be that Cain, "the lawless one", who is cursed by the angels on his birth, attacks precisely that agricultural fertility the secret of which was revealed to Adam as a result of his repentance. A similar story is also to be found in the Georgian *Life of Adam*.

The Oil of Life

When Adam falls ill Seth suggests that he and Eve proceed to the Garden of Eden and beseech God to grant him of the oil of the tree of mercy with which to anoint Adam and relieve him of his mortal pains. Seth and Eve reach the Garden and pray for oil. The archangel Michael responds to their prayer uttered outside the gates of the Garden. This response is extant in the *Apocalypse of Moses* 13. Meyer observed that the original portion of the *Vita Adae et Evae* dealing with this event is missing and that the present text is drawn from the Latin version of the *Gospel of Nicodemus* which relates the same incident. The *Apocalypse of Moses* is much shorter and summarizes the latter part of the passage, the eschatological prophecy.

In the *Penitence of Adam* the text of the first part of the prophecy, down to “you shall not have it”, is substantially the same as that of the *Apocalypse of Moses*. The eschatological prophecy, on the other hand, although in general resembling the text of the *Gospel of Nicodemus* and the *Vita Adae et Evae*, shows a series of very significant departures from it.

According to the Latin, Christ, son of God, will come upon the earth to resurrect the body of Adam and with him, the bodies of the dead. Christ will be baptized in the Jordan — it is not stated by whom — and will anoint all who believe in him with the oil of his mercy. This will become the eternal oil of mercy for all who will be reborn of water and of the holy spirit to eternal life. Then Christ, son of God, having descended on earth, will lead your father into paradise, to the tree of mercy.

According to Armenian, beloved Christ — not the son of God which expression is not found in the Armenian — will descend on earth to resurrect Adam. On account of his sins, Adam will be baptized by Christ in the Jordan. On his coming forth from the water, Michael will anoint the new Adam — apparently Adam after baptism — with the oil of joy. Subsequently Michael will anoint all living beings — “beasts” is apparently a mistranslation — who will be resurrected and worthy of entering the Garden.

Now the differences between this text and the Latin version are highly significant. The Latin version is tied to the New Testament story, referring to Christ’s baptism in the Jordan; it uses terminology like *filius dei*; it speaks of salvation through water and the holy spirit. Moreover Christ’s activity is the instrumentality of salvation; he will anoint those who believe in him, he will lead Adam into Paradise. In Armenian, in the place of all these features are concepts not significantly liked to the New Testament or to orthodox Christian theology. The passage, as we would expect in context, deals with Adam’s being anointed with oil. Christ’s function is the resurrection of Adam’s body and his baptism. Michael, not Christ, does the anointing, and the baptized Adam is called “the new Adam” (not “the last Adam”). Now, this point of view is highly unusual. It does not seem reasonable to see it as a reworking of the *Gospel of Nicodemus* text, a process precluded in any case by the fact that the first part of the passage shows a text like that of the *Apocalypse of Moses*. The text stems apparently from circles holding a baptizing, but not a strongly Christological viewpoint, and for whom Adam played a special eschatological role. The views expressed in this passage stand in contradic-

tion to orthodox Christology in the very role attributed to Christ. The view is of Adam's resurrection, his purification from his sins by a ritual bath in the Jordan, and subsequent anointing; Adam, the first man, is the first man thus redeemed, and his salvation is the prelude to the salvation of all men, who are to be anointed (but not, or at least we are not told about it, baptized).

A literary consideration also bears on the comparison of these two passages. The speech of the angel comes in response to Seth's request for the oil. In the Latin text, the anointing of Adam is not mentioned explicitly and the last phrase, stating that he will be brought to the tree of mercy, although perhaps implying anointing, is almost by way of an afterthought. In the Armenian text, however, Adam's future anointing at the hands of Michael forms the central point of the passage. Michael, who refuses Seth the oil in the present, promises himself to anoint Adam in the future. This makes the Armenian text far more responsive to the demands of the broader literary context.

Thus, this passage seems to be more primitive than the extant texts of the *Vita Adae et Evae* and of the *Apocalypse of Moses*. Moreover the unusual ideas in it seem to stem from Christian sectarian circles. Yet this is not the only case in which the *Penitence of Adam* seems to be more primitive than either the Latin *Vitae Adae et Evae* or the Greek *Apocalypse of Moses*, and some other examples have been given in the preceding pages. Now, those works are commonly supposed by scholars to be Jewish and, if that is so, we are forced to say that the passage under discussion is a retouched form of an older Jewish formulation of these ideas. Alternatively, it may be the case that in light of passages like this one the presumed Jewish character of the Adam books must be reconsidered and the possibility of a Christian sectarian origin entertained. Even then, the *Penitence of Adam* may be the repository of ancient Jewish traditions, a Jewish Adam book in Christian garb.

The Exculpation of Adam

Often, when the Latin text refers to Adam's sin, the Armenian text speaks of the loss of the paradisaical food. This may be attempt to lighten the weight of Adam's sin, while highlighting Eve's role in it. This is clear in the example above drawn from chap. 3. At this point the Latin text is oddly repetitive and redundant, with Eve's saying the same thing twice, almost in the same words. The *Penitence of Adam*, however, is longer and

much clearer. It expresses two ideas. The first is Eve's reaction of despair at their inability to find food. She states that she would prefer to die of hunger and anyway this might relieve Adam of his punishment, since she has been the cause of all the trouble. Adam denies, or at least raises a modicum of doubt about Eve's imputation of sin to herself. This does not daunt her and she then implores Adam to kill her, thus removing the source of the trouble. This time Adam does not challenge her imputation of sin to herself, but expresses his unwillingness to commit this great sin. Structurally the Armenian text appears to be much clearer than the Latin. Its climactic construction makes the point of Eve's sin inescapable and indeed the progression of her thought as outlined in this passage is itself obviously sinful and she has to be reproached by Adam.

In chap. 7 of the Latin *Vita Adae et Evae*, Adam stands up to his neck in water. This action, in fact, appertains to Eve and is part of Adam's instructions to her in chap. 6. In the Armenian *Penitence of Adam*, Adam goes to the river Jordan and the hair of his head was uncovered (see example from chap. 7, above). He then invokes the waters of the Jordan to gather all living things and let them stand around him (chap. 8). They gathered and were, according only to Armenian "like a wall". This obvious evocation of Exod. 14:22,29 (cf. Jos 3:13-17) implies that Adam in fact stood dry in the midst of the Jordan. This should be contrasted with what is said a little further on about Eve that her skin is wrinkled as a result of prolonged immersion in the water (thus the Armenian — Latin has: *de frigore aquae*) and she is so weakened by her acts of penitence that (again according only to the Armenian) she fell onto the ground in a faint for three days (chap. 10). Of Adam nothing similar is said. To the contrary the waters of the Jordan stand still, the living things form a wall around him and pray on his behalf. Again, the special status of Adam and the minimization of his culpability and therefore of his expiatory suffering are to be observed. It is intriguing to speculate about the relationship of these views to that of Adam's eschatological baptism in the Jordan.

These examples suffice to indicate the importance of the Armenian *Penitence of Adam* for the study of the versions of the Adam book. Indeed they indicate that the Armenian work may prove of crucial importance for recovery of certain structural, textual, literary and cultural aspects of that writing. The views highlighted here will prove of importance for the characterization of circles in which the Adam book was transmitted or composed.

THE TRANSLATION

The translation is generally literal, subject always to the strictures of English style. The readings marked "lege" in the apparatus to the text are always included in the translation. Where, as often happens, the object which is a personal pronoun is not expressed by the Armenian text but is required in the translation by English usage, it is supplied with no further notation. All other supplements are marked by parentheses. The biblicizing (? Semiticizing) style of this writing leads it to start nearly every sentence with the word "and". This is mostly omitted in the translation. Otiose *kam* in double questions is also omitted with no notation. Participles of the Armenian are often rendered as finite verbs in English.

Pointed brackets enclose readings which have been accepted into the text from manuscripts other than MS A. Parentheses enclose words or phrases added by the editor for stylistic reasons and which do not reflect anything found in either the text or the apparatus.

NOTES ON THE TRANSLATION

The notes cite parallels drawn from a broad range of biblical and extra-biblical writings. They make no claim to be exhaustive. In particular, much information may be found in L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 5.63-131. Only a selection from this rich treasure is cited.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES
ON THE TRANSLATION

Abod Zar	Tractate Aboda Zara, Babylonian Talmud.
Adam Fg. I, II	Adam Fragments, see M.E. Stone, <i>Armenian Apocrypha relating to Patriarchs and Prophets</i> , Jerusalem: Israel Academy, 1981.
Apoc Paul	Apocalypse of Paul
Arm 4 Ezra	M.E. Stone, <i>Armenian Version of IV Ezra</i> (University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies 1) Missoula: Scholars, 1979.
ARN	Abot de Rabbi Nathan, ed. S. Schechter, New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1967.
Aso Isa	Ascension of Isaiah.
Ber	Tractate Berakot, Babylonian Talmud.
Bib Ant	Pseudo-Philo, Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum.
Book Adam	The Book of Adam, Issaverdens pp. 23-24.
Budge <i>Alexander</i>	E.A.W. Budge, <i>The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great</i> , London: Clay, 1896.
Cain Abel	The History of Cain and Abel, Sons of Adam, Issaverdens pp. 53-58.
Conflict Christ Devil	See Vassiliev.
Creat Adam	History of the Creation and Transgression of Adam, Issaverdens pp. 43-48.
Death Adam	M.E. Stone, "The Death of Adam; An Armenian Adam Book", <i>HTR</i> 59 (1966), 283-291.
Deut R	Midrash Deuteronomy Rabba.
Expuls Adam	History of the Expulsion of Adam from the Garden, Issaverdens pp. 49-51.
Fuchs	C. Fuchs, "Das Leben Adam und Evas" <i>Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments</i> ed. E. Kautzsch, repr; Darmstat: 1962, 2.506-528.
Gen R.	<i>Bereschit Rabba</i> , ed. J. Theodor, Jerusalem: Wahrmann, 1965.
Georg	W. Lüdtke, "Georgische Adam-Bücher", <i>ZAW</i> 38 (1919-20), 155-168.
Ginzberg <i>Legends</i>	L. Ginzberg, <i>Legends of the Jews</i> , Philadelphia; JPS, 1909-38, Vols. 1-7.
Good Tidings Seth	Concerning the Good Tidings of Seth, Issaverdens pp. 59-64.
Gosp Bartholemew	The Gospel of Bartholemew.
Gr.	Greek; The Apocalypse of Moses.
Hag	Tractate Haggiga, Babylonian Talmud.
Jos Ant	Josephus, <i>Antiquities of the Jews</i>

Jub	The Book of Jubilees.
Lat	Latin; the <i>Vita Adae et Evae</i> .
Lat MS	Latin Manuscript.
Lat I, II, III	Recensions of the Latin version.
Levene	Al Levene, <i>The Early Syriac Fathers on Genesis</i> , London: Taylors, 1951.
Malan	S.C. Malan, <i>The Book of Adam and Eve</i> , London: Williams & Northgate, 1882.
Matenadaran	Erevan, Matenadaran, Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, MS no...
Palaea	see Vassiliev.
Paralip Jer	The Paralipomena of Jeremiah.
Pes R	Midrash Pesiqta Rabbati.
Pseudo-Epiphanius <i>Hexameron</i>	E. Trumpp, <i>Das Hexaëmeron des Pseudo-Epiphanius</i> (Abh. kön. bayer. Akad. Wiss. Philos.-Philol. Class, 16.2) Munich: 1882.
Repent Adam	History of the Repentance of Adam and Eve, Issaverdens pp. 65-71.
Sanh	Tractate Sanhedrin, Babylonian Talmud.
Schatzhöhle	C. Bezold, <i>Die Schatzhöhle, 1, Übersetzung</i> , Leipzig: Hinrich, 1883.
Shab	Tractate Shabbat, Babylonian Talmud.
Slav	Slavonic; The Slavonic Life of Adam and Eve.
Tanh	Midrash Tanhuma.
Tanh Buber	<i>Midrash Tanhuma</i> , ed. S. Buber.
Te'ezaza Sanbat	W. Leslau, <i>A Falasha Anthology</i> , New York: Schocken, 1969, 1-39.
Test Abraham	Testament of Abraham.
Test Adam	Testament of Adam.
Vaillant	A. Vaillant, <i>Le Livre des Secrets d'Hénoch</i> , Paris: Institut des Études Slaves, 1952.
Vassiliev	A. Vassiliev, <i>Anecdota Graeco-Byzantina</i> , Moscow: Imperial University, 1893.
Words Adam	Adam's Words to Seth, Issaverdens pp. 73-74.