
Διαθήκη του Αδάμ • THE TESTAMENT OF ADAM

INTRODUCTION

The content here presented should be considered preliminary – the text is incomplete, lacking Ch. 4, and we lack critical notes for the Syriac text. Further work will be contributed as and when text for Ch. 4 can be found and/or when further Greek (or other) texts can be found.

The *Testament of Adam* is a short Christian, pseudepigraphal work from late antiquity; it was likely composed in Syriac, though it now survives in numerous languages and recensions.

The document is comprised of two main parts, usually called the *Horarium* and the *Prophecy* by modern scholars. It is conventionally divided into four chapters, with the *Horarium* comprising the first two chapters and the *Prophecy* as chapter three. What we often call the fourth chapter is an additional section, the *Hierarchy*, which only appears in one manuscript (*Vatican Syriac 164*, dated at 1072 CE) and was almost certainly not part of any original document.

The Syriac (*BM Add. 14,624*, early 9th Century CE) and Greek (*Paris Codex Greek 2419*, 15th/16th Century) texts here presented are from the [Online Critical Pseudepigrapha \(OCP\)](#). Note that the order of Chs 1 & 2 in both Greek texts here cited is inverted in respect of that of the Syriac text.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

There is no consensus about the dating of the *Testament of Adam*. The earliest known manuscript is from the 9th Century CE (Syriac, as presented here) and the combining of the *Horarium* and the *Prophecy* must have happened sometime before that. If the text of *Transitus Mariae* that Lewis edited is from the 5th Century, as she was led to believe, this might be the earliest witness, or at least to the *Prophecy*. In the Coptic *Apocalypse of Elijah* (3:1–8), a list of the antichrist's miracles is found that resembles the list of Jesus' miracles in 3:1. On this basis, some tentatively suggest that the *Prophecy* was composed in the 3rd Century CE and dates the *Horarium* no later than that, though possibly earlier. James Charlesworth believes that the work evidences many features that suggest a date of composition in the late 2nd Century CE but he only points specifically to the motif of Cain's jealousy over his sister (3:5) as a possible expression of early Syrian asceticism.

Διαθήκη Αδάμ 1

1 1 The first hour of the night is the praise of the demons; and at that hour they do not injure or harm any human being. 2 The second hour is the praise of the doves. 3 The third hour is the praise of the fish and of fire and of all the lower depths. 4 The fourth hour is the “holy, holy, holy” praise of the seraphim. And so, I used to hear, before I sinned, the sound of their wings in Paradise when the seraphim would beat them to the sound of their triple praise. But after I transgressed against the law, I no longer heard that sound. 5 The fifth hour is the praise of the waters that are above heaven. And so, I, together with the angels, used to hear the sound of mighty waves, a sign which would prompt them to lift a hymn of praise to the Creator. 6 The sixth hour is the construction of clouds and of the great fear the comes in

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- ¹ For this verse, the *Paris Codex* (wherein it is *Chapter 2*, v. 1) reads, “*The first hour ... in which the demons praise God, neither doing wrong nor tormented.*” (ὥρα α΄ ... ἐν ᾗ οἱ δαίμονες αἰνοῦντες τὸν θεὸν οὔτε ἀδικοῦσιν οὔτε κολάζουσιν.)
- ² Here, the *Paris Codex* seems to have a version of v. 3, “*The second hour ... in which is the fish praise God, and fire in the depths, and dragons and ... and fire.*” (ὥρα β΄ ... ἐν ᾗ ὑμνοῦσιν οἱ ἰχθύες τὸν θεόν, καὶ τὸ τοῦ πυρὸς βάθος· ἐν ᾗ ὀφείλει στοιχειοῦσθαι ἀποτελέσματα εἰς δράκοντας καὶ ... καὶ πῦρ.)
- ³ The text of the *Paris Codex* here is very different, “*The third hour ... in praise of snakes and dogs ... and fire.*” (ὥρα γ΄ ... ἐν ᾗ αἰνοῦσιν ὄφεις καὶ κύνεις καὶ πῦρ.)
- ⁴ The *Paris Codex* has, “*The fourth hour ... in the morning, the demons pass through tombs and he who goes there will be harmed, afraid, and terrified by the minds of demons; in the morning, one will be haunted by these things ... and by every magical thing.*” (ὥρα δ΄ ... ἐν ᾗ διέρχονται δαίμονες ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν, καὶ ἐρχόμενος ἐκεῖσε βλαβήσεται καὶ φόβον καὶ φρίκην ἐκ τῆς τῶν δαιμόνων λήψεται φαντασίας· ἐν ᾗ ὀφείλει στοιχειοῦσθαι ἀποτελέσματα ... καὶ παντὸς γοητικοῦ πράγματος.)
- ⁵ Here, the *Paris Codex* vaguely concurs with the Syriac text, reading, “*The fifth hour ... when the waters praise the God of heaven.*” (ὥρα ε΄ ... ἐν ᾗ αἰνοῦσιν τὰ ὕδατα τὸν θεὸν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.)
- ⁶ The *Paris Codex* reads, “*The sixth hour ... when one should be quiet and rest because one is afraid.*” (ὥρα ζ΄ ... ὅτε δέον ἡσυχάζειν καὶ ἀναπαῦσαι, διότι ἔχει φόβον.)

the middle of the night. ⁷ The seventh hour is the viewing of their powers while the waters are asleep. And at that hour the waters (can be) taken up and the priest of God mixes them with consecrated oil and anoints those who are afflicted and they rest. ⁸ The eighth hour is the sprouting up of the grass of the earth while the dew descends from heaven. ⁹ The ninth hour is the praise of the cherubim. ¹⁰ The tenth hour is the praise of human beings, and the gate of heaven is opened through which the prayers of all living things enter, and they worship and depart. And at that hour whatever a man will ask of God is given to him when the seraphim and the roosters beat their wings. ¹¹ The eleventh hour there is joy in all the earth when the sun rises from Paradise and shines forth upon creation. ¹² The twelfth hour is the waiting for incense, and silence is imposed on all the ranks of fire and wind until all the priests burn incense to his

¹² The Paris Codex has, “The twelfth hour ... the ranks of fire rest. These are the names of the hours; therefore, to those who have truly understood these things, nothing ... of such things will be hidden but all will be subject to them.” (ὥρα ἰβ’ ... ἐν ἣ ἀναπαύονται τὰ πύρινα τάγματα. αὐταὶ εἰσιν αἱ ὀνομασίαι τῶν ὥρῶν· τῷ οὖν καλῶς ταῦτα νοήσαντι οὐδὲν ... τοιούτων ἀποκρυβήσεται ἀλλὰ πάντα ὑποταγήσονται.)

divinity. And at that time all the heavenly powers are dismissed. The
End of the Hours of the Night.

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ἡ πρώτη ὥρα τῆς ἡμέρας ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκτίσις τῶν οὐρανίων. ἡ δεύτερη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ προσευχή τῶν ἀγγέλων. ἡ τρίτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαινήσις τῶν πτηνῶν. ἡ τέταρτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαινήσις τῶν κτηνῶν. ἡ πέμπτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαινήσις τῶν θηρίων. ἡ ἕκτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαινήσις τῶν ἀγγέλων, οἱ οὗτοι ἐπὶ τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ τῆς φύσεως τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. ἡ ἕβδομη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ εἰσὸς καὶ ἐξὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅταν αἱ προσευχαὶ πάντων τῶν ζώντων εἰσέλθωσι καὶ αὐτοὶ προσκυνήσωσι καὶ ἐξέλθωσι. ἡ ὀγδόη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαινήσις καὶ ἡ θυσία τῶν ἀγγέλων. ἡ ἐννάτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ λατρεία τῶν ἀνθρώπων. ἡ δεκάτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ τῶν ὑδάτων καὶ τῶν ἐπιγείων. ἡ ἑκάτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ τῶν ἀέρων καὶ τῶν οὐρανίων. ἡ ἑβδόμη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ τῶν ἐν τῇ γῇ. ἡ ὀγδόη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ τῶν ἐν τῇ θάλασσῃ. ἡ ἐννάτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ τῶν ἐν τῇ ἀέρι. ἡ δεκάτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ τῶν ἐν τῇ οὐρανίᾳ. ἡ ἑκάτη ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπισκοπὴ τῶν ἐν τῇ οὐρανίᾳ.

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¹ The first hour of the day is the petition of the heavenly ones. ² The second hour is the prayer of the angels. ³ The third hour is the praise of the birds. ⁴ The fourth hour is the praise of the beasts. ⁵ The fifth hour is the praise that is above heaven. ⁶ The sixth hour is the praise of the cherubim who plead against the sin of our human nature. ⁷ The seventh hour is the entry and exit from the presence of God, when the prayers of all living things enter and they worship and depart. ⁸ The eighth hour is the praise of fire and of the waters. ⁹ The ninth hour is the entreaty of those angels who stand before the throne of majesty. ¹⁰ The tenth hour is the visitation of the waters when the spirit descends and broods on the waters and on the fountains. And, if the spirit of the Lord did not descend and brood on the waters and on the fountains, human beings would be injured and everyone the demons saw they would injure. And at that hour the waters (are)

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- ¹ The Greek text for this verse, as quoted by Cedrenus, reads, "At the first hour of the day, the first prayer is said in heaven." (ὥρα πρώτη ἡμερινῇ πρώτη εὐχή ἐπιτελεῖται ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ.)
- ² Cedrenus has just, "The second is for the angels." (δευτέρᾳ εὐχῇ ἀγγέλων.)
- ³ Here, Cedrenus concurs with the Syriac text, reading, "The third is for the prayer of birds." (τρίτῃ εὐχῇ πτηνῶν.)
- ⁴ Cedrenus has, "The fourth is for the prayer of animals." (τετάρτῃ εὐχῇ κτηνῶν.)
- ⁵ Cedrenus appears to repeat v. 4 here, reading, "The fifth is for the prayer of beasts." (πεμπτῇ εὐχῇ θηρίων.) Cf. #4.
- ⁶ Cedrenus reads, "The sixth, the angels defend and judge all creation." (ἕκτῃ ἀγγέλων παράστασις καὶ διάκρισις πάσης κτίσεως.)
- ⁷ Cedrenus here reads, "The seventh, is the angels entry and exit from God." (ἑβδόμῃ ἀγγέλων εἰσοδος πρὸς θεὸν καὶ ἐξοδος ἀγγέλων.)
- ⁸ Cedrenus has, "The eighth is [for the] praise and sacrifice of the angels." (ὀγδόῃ αἵνεσις καὶ θυσία ἀγγέλων.)
- ⁹ Cedrenus has, "The ninth [is when] the worship of men is born." (ἐννάτῃ δέησις καὶ λατρεία ἀνθρώπου.)
- ¹⁰ For this verse, Cedrenus reads, "The tenth, bishops of the waters and prayers of heavenly and earthly beings." (δεκάτῃ ἐπισκοπαὶ ὑδάτων καὶ δεήσεις οὐρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων.)

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taken up and the priest of God mixes them with consecrated oil and
 anoints those who are afflicted and they are restored and healed.
¹¹ The eleventh hour is the exultation and joy of the righteous. ¹² The
 twelfth hour, the hour of the evening, is the entreaty of human
 beings, for the gracious will of God, the Lord of all.

¹¹ Cedrenus reads, “The eleventh, confession and joy of all.” (ένδεκάτη ἀνθομολόγησις καὶ ἀγαλλίασις πάντων.)

¹² Cedrenus ends his quotation here, with, “The twelfth, resistance[?] of people to good fortune.” (δωδεκάτη ἔντευξις ἀνθρώπων εἰς εὐδοκίας.)

[illegible]

5. **עֲבָדֶיךָ, יְיָ. וְיִשְׁכַּח אֶתְּמוֹל וְעַתָּה וְעָתִיד**
לְחַלּוֹת. כִּי יִזְכַּר חֶסֶד מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְיִזְכַּל לָנוּ
וְיִלְחַם אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיָמֵינוּ לְמַעַן אֱלֹהֵינוּ. כִּי, וְיִזְכַּר אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שֶׁאֵין אֱלֹהֵי אֲחֵרִים עִמָּנוּ. וְיִזְכַּר אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁאֵין אֱלֹהֵינוּ
לְעַמּוֹת וְלְחַלּוֹת. שֶׁאֵין אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְעַתָּה ❖ וְעָתִיד

[illegible]

⁴ Reeves has '*descendants*' in place of '*seed*'.

⁶ The '*Cave of Treasures*' is used as a title of a work that includes much of this document, along with many other texts.

Διαθήκη Αδάμ 4

TESTAMENT OF ADAM 4

We have yet to locate a source for the Syriac text of this chapter. However, for those interested, we do present an (unattributed) [English translation](#) in the usual format.