ARMENIAN APOCRYPHA RELATING TO BIBLICAL HEROES

Michael E. Stone
1. **The Number and the Twelve Classes of Angels**

**Introductory Remarks**

This short piece occurs in M2245 on fols. 148r–148v. It has its own title and is clearly demarcated. This manuscript is a *Miscellany*, copied in 1689, perhaps in Adrianopolis (Edirne, Turkey).\(^1\) It contains a number of apocryphal works, and other writings included in it may well have apocryphal content. Known texts include: *Question concerning the Archangels*\(^2\) and *The Fall of the Angels*, fols. 114v–115r;\(^3\) *Third Story of Joseph*, 330r–349v;\(^4\) *Generations from Adam to Christ*, fols. 271r–272r.\(^5\) So far unpublished is *Questions of St. Gregory*, fols. 235r–238v, a text dealing with individual eschatology.\(^6\)

The intent of the text I am presenting here is unclear compared with the numerous lists of angelic ranks and classes that I have published previously.\(^7\) Thus, *Angels and Biblical Heroes* 3.1 *Angelology Text 2* and other texts as well are apotropaic and *Angels and Biblical Heroes* 3.5 *The Praise of the Angels* deals with the praises sung by the heavenly hierarchy. Other writings discuss the list of nine angelic classes as a type of the ranks of the church hierarchy,

\(^{1}\) General Catalogue 7, 619–28.


\(^{6}\) I am preparing an edition of this text, which is discussed in “The Questions of St. Gregory: The First Recension,” *Le Museon* 131 (2018): 141–71. Currently I am preparing a further study on this work.

and so forth. Such texts, composed with a distinct purpose, may be seen in the published collections of angelological material.  

The present text seems to know two traditions of angelic classes, one of nine classes and the other of twelve. In the manuscript, this text is followed by a short list of the four types of wood of which the cross was constructed. The two texts are not related.

This edition is a diplomatic copy of the manuscript, not normalizing the quite numerous spelling anomalies. However, when an abbreviation is resolved, I have used standard ancient Armenian spelling, it being impossible to determine which spelling the scribe might have used. I have not included detailed comments, since a number of very similar texts have been fully annotated in my Angels and Biblical Heroes.

TEXT

Title/ Հայկական Գրքահարություն պիհենի և համար Հնդկաստան. (12) տեղի. 10

1/ Ումե կերար գրքահարություն հերցու էակ և համար ռազմական ու հակվեցնած քար, դո. դրանք են տեղական ռազմական համար. (12) քարեր, որոնք գրքահարությունը սահմանափակված է։ և տարածքների հարաբերությունը համարական է, բառին բռնելու:

2/ Ումե պատրաստվելու մոտ, նրանք երկու պատրաստվելու պատմությունը են։ տվյալ / էջ. 148v / տարածքը է։ թվի պատմությունը սահմանափակված է։ տեղական պատմությունն է։ նրանք հաղթանջյուրում պատմություն։


9. The wood of the cross was the object of considerable speculations. In Armenian it is featured, among others, in the two texts called Adam Fragments and in Words of Adam to Seth. On both of these see Michael E. Stone, Armenian Apocrypha Relating to Patriarchs and Prophets (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences, 1982), 2–13. This topic is widespread and we cannot document it here. Among other works, see Esther C. Quinn, The Quest of Seth for the Oil of Life (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

10. This abbreviation could not be resolved satisfactorily.
Concerning the Number and the Twelve Classes of Angels

But we having come to an end of their classes and elevation and brightness. For their classes are nine and each class is composed of twelve groups, which are the highly ranked emissaries according to, "and each host of a thousand thousands, and myriads of myriads." And one class is more numerous than all mankind, and they are stronger than all men, just as the angels (are) than a man.

And descending from there they are: Thrones, Cherubs, Seraphs, Dominions, Powers, Rules, Chiefs, Archangels, Angels.

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11. This is the standard list of nine angelic classes, widespread in Armenian literature. See Stone, *Angels and Biblical Heroes*, 66.

12. Taking ուժերումբութեր adjectivally (A. Terian). ուժերումբ is plural and the verb ուժե is singular.