

*Two types of anti-demonic prayer (or tactics) in early Judaism: **Exorcism** and **Apotropaism***

Qumran Anti-Demonic pleas/petitions

Prayer of Levi (4QAramaic Levi) and Plea for Deliverance (11Q5): “Let not (any) Satan rule over me.” Similar petitions appear in numerous passages from the *pseudepigrapha*, especially *Jubilees*.

Qumran Apotropaic Incantations

Songs of the Sage (4Q510-4Q511) contain formulaic, hymnic praises of God, possibly within a liturgical context, which are intended to ward off (“frighten”; “terrify”) demons.

The Damascus Document (CD-A) contains the line “on the day on which one has imposed upon himself to return to the Law of Moses, the angel Mastema will turn aside from following him...”

Qumran exorcism material

4Q560 (4QExorcism ar) direct address to an evil spirit(s) using an adjuration

11Q11: the name “Solomon” appears alongside an invocation; and preserves the expression “of David...an incantation in the name of YHWH...” 11Q11 contains numerous other exorcistic terms and preserves Psalm 91 in one of the columns. Most scholars explain that this is an apotropaic psalm used after or alongside the exorcistic hymns for protection from continuing or future demonic affliction. If this isn’t the case, it is certainly odd that Psalm 91 is included in a collection anti-demonic hymns.

In 1QGenesis Apocryphon an evil spirit is rebuked/driven out of Pharaoh by Abraham after Abe prays and lays his hands on Pharaoh. Scholar note that the laying on of hands (accompanied with prayer) is not found anywhere else in early Jewish material. However, this is interesting background to the many instances of Jesus’ laying on of hands in his ministry, particularly in Luke 4:40-41 where Jesus lays his hands upon the possessed and rebukes the demons...

Biblical Anti-Demonic Prayers

Psalm 91[Found in 11Q11 and early Christian amulets, used in Rite of Exorcism]

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, who abides in the shadow of the Almighty, ² will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.” ³ For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence; ⁴ he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. ⁵ You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, ⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday. ⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand; but it will not come near you. ⁸ You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. ⁹ Because you have made the LORD your refuge,^[a] the Most High your habitation, ¹⁰ no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent. ¹¹ For he will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways. ¹² On their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. ¹³ You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot. ¹⁴ Because he cleaves to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. ¹⁵ When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will rescue him and honor him. ¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

Matthew (6:9-13) [Found in early Christian amulets, use in Rite of Exorcism]

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.