CONTROLLING DEMONS
Magic and Rituals in the Jewish Tradition from the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Cairo Genizah
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Controlling Demons
Magic and Rituals in the Jewish Tradition from the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Cairo Genizah

This paper examines ritual texts of Jewish origin and antidemonic purpose, dating from the Hellenistic period to the Early Middle Ages. Distinctive features of exorcist prophylaxis are described, taking into account formulae belonging to different contexts: instructions included in the Greek Magical Papyri, apotropaic prayers from the Dead Sea Scrolls, and fragments from the Cairo Genizah. Thanks to the analysis of traditional material that was codified under Second Temple Judaism, it is possible to indicate some formal patterns of texts and practices of demon expulsion existing for many centuries in Judaism across a wide area of the eastern Mediterranean.

Contrôler les démons. Formules magiques et rituelles dans la tradition juive entre les sources qumrâniennes et la Genizah

Cet article examine des pratiques d’écriture rituelle d’origine juive destinées à des prophylaxies antidémoniaques et qui s’étendent de l’époque hellénistique au Moyen Âge. En comparant des formules provenant de sources diverses, notamment des instructions tirées de Papyrus Magiques Grecs, des prières apotropaiques qumrâniennes et des fragments de la Genizah du Caire, apparaissent des traits distinctifs de la procédure exorciste. À travers l’analyse d’un patrimoine traditionnel qui fut codifié dans le judaïsme du Second Temple, il est possible de décrire des schémas récurrents d’expulsion démoniaque qui traversent les siècles dans une zone assez vaste de la Méditerranée orientale.
This study aims to analyze various types of documents from Mediterranean and Eastern Jewish tradition, showing ritual writing practices intended to control invisible beings known as shedim (demons) and ruhot (spirits).

Writing appears as an extremely powerful and effective tool in exorcisms and exorcist prophylaxis. The documents studied include apotropaic prayers, spells, and instructive texts from domestic, didactic, or liturgical contexts. The features of such texts reflect the diversity of situations in which these practices were used from the Hellenistic period to the Middle Ages, although it is difficult to reach definitive conclusions, because of the fragmentation of the sources, and due to temporal and spatial unknowns. From their form and structure, it is clear that the sources belong to a multisecular traditional heritage, formed during Second Temple Judaism (from the sixth century BC to the first century AD), which remained stable and almost unchanged for centuries.

The aim here is to show both the differences and the continuities within this type of text. Firstly, this study will examine two cases of Judeo-Hellenistic instructions preserved in the Greek Magical Papyri (Papyri Graecae Magicae, hereafter PGM)\(^1\) (second century AD). These are the fullest sources which remain from late Antiquity.\(^2\) By examining them, it is possible to reconstitute the phases of exorcism rituals, and to describe the structure of antidemonic conjuring. After explaining these elements, we will compare them to less complete and more fragmentary sources from earlier Jewish tradition. We will also examine fragments from the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Qumran,\(^3\) which contain hymns and texts in Hebrew and Aramaic dating from the first century BC to the first century AD.

From the ancient to the medieval period, the presence of magical practices for controlling demons and spirits is above all evident in archaeological finds, such as tools for domestic protection, including the Babylonian magic bowls (fourth to seventh centuries), and (in indirect documentation) Judeo-Hellenistic, rabbinical, and mystical writings. Although we lack direct sources about exorcism rituals, there seems to be a direct line of continuity between medieval sources from the Cairo Genizah and the tradition from late Antiquity. I will conclude this paper by examining two unusual fragments (held at the Oxford Bodleian Library) of exorcism rituals from the Genizah magic manuscripts, which can be dated back to the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. These show both continuity and change in this genre, within the medieval Judeo-Egyptian context.

I will begin with an initial introduction to the nature of demons and to Jewish imagery about demons and magic.
DEMONS IN JEWISH IMAGERY AND THE MAGICAL TRADITION

Ancient and Medieval Jewish thought is highly ambivalent regarding the use of magic as a whole, and demonological rituals in particular, despite their appearing in the list of forbidden magical practices in Deuteronomy 18: 9-15, Leviticus 19: 26, and Numbers 23:23.

Classical, biblical, and Talmudic texts show the belief in spirits and demons. Shedim, ruhot, Lilith, ‘Aza’zel, and rebel angels are first seen in the Torah, the Prophets, and the Psalms.⁸

The belief in a hierarchical universe which works through the intervention of cosmic powers dependent upon the divine will came into Second Temple Judaism via Persian contamination.⁹ In this view, the world is seen as a complex inhabited by angelic, infernal, and demonic forces, which are responsible for its different processes. Demonology mostly developed during the Hellenistic period, during the transition of the Jewish magical texts from oral to written form. The authors of these texts, who mostly belonged to scribal or rabbinic tradition, claimed to be professionals in magic.¹⁰

The Writings, apocryphal literature, and the texts found at Qumran contain the first references to demonic figures, including the most known and feared among them, such as Satan, Belial, Asmodeus, Samael, and Mastema,¹¹ who compete, across various traditions, for the position oflords and sovereigns over the infernal legions. In addition to this, new categories emerge, such as the “bastard” spirits

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¹⁰. Bohak, Ancient Jewish Magic, 135-144.

of Qumranian sources, and evil spirits called *maziqin*, first seen in the Mishnah (Avot 5:6).

The beings which inhabit the upper and lower spheres of the divine realm are highly prevalent in various literary traditions, with progressive change in their profiles and roles: their power to interact with men and their autonomy from the divine being increase. The horde of angels watches over the astral bodies, meteorological conditions, natural order and well-being, and social change. The legions of demons and spirits influence the world of men and can take over the bodies of natural elements, animals, or plants, thus endangering their physical health, and even corrupting them. Together, these groups also include foreign divinities from polytheistic traditions, reclassified as demons or planetary spirits.

Despite the clear analogies with Neoplatonic representations, Jewish tradition reinterprets cosmology and the Hellenistic pantheons, dismissing their incompatible elements. The will of the only creator God is unquestioned, and the celestial or infernal beings, despite having supernatural powers and prerogatives resembling those of God, cannot be placed on the same level as the divine being.

Certain basic elements of this thought on demons appeared in apocryphal, apocalyptic, and Enochian texts, and remained constant in later tradition. A legend first appearing in the Book of the Watchers tells of the creation of demons and evil spirits, and their angelic origins (1 Enoch 6-8): demons parted from angels after rebelling against God and falling to Earth, then the *nephilim* (giants) were born of a union of the fallen angels with women. In particular, the story of the fallen angel ‘Aza’zel, chained up and imprisoned

15. Trachtenberg, Jewish Magic, 44-60; Bohak, Ancient Jewish Magic, 247-257.
in the infernal abyss by the angel Raphael, becomes a paradigm and (as we will see later in this paper) appears in antidemonic rites.\textsuperscript{18}

The human heroes described in these works are chosen people, who through secret practices manage to enter into contact with the angelic or demonic powers, for purposes ranging from the prophetic to the divinatory or the therapeutic.

A passage from Flavius Josephus, which lists the positive effects of these forms of knowledge on humans, encapsulates the benevolent attitude of Hellenized Judaism in the first century towards magical specialists:

\begin{quote}
God also enabled him [Solomon] to learn that skill which expels demons, which is a science useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations also by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return (\textit{Antiquities of the Jews} VIII, 45).\textsuperscript{19}
\end{quote}

Certain heroes from biblical tradition (for example, Noah, David, and Solomon) are said to have obtained esoteric knowledge during meetings with supernatural figures.\textsuperscript{20} The composition of the secret texts to which aspiring theurgists must have referred for magical practices is attributed to these heroes.\textsuperscript{21} From late Antiquity and in Hekhalot literature,\textsuperscript{22} they become associated with the main figures in rabbinic tradition, Rabbi ‘Aqivah and Rabbi Yishma’el, who lived between the first and second centuries.

Talmudic literature, particularly haggadic sources, is more precise concerning the nature of spirits and demons, while confirming

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} See 1 Enoch 10 (cf. Charlesworth, \textit{The Old Testament}, 17).
\item \textsuperscript{21} Theodore Schrire, \textit{Hebrew Amulets: Their Decipherment and Interpretation} (London: Routledge & K. Paul 1966), 110.
\end{itemize}
already-established categories and hierarchies. Spirits are seen as integral parts of divine creation: their numbers are constantly increasing, and they are even represented as more numerous than men. The best-known legend concerning their origins depicts them as beings created on the last day of Creation who were left evanescent and incomplete by God on the coming of the Sabbath. Evil spirits are generally seen as the souls of the godless dead. Along with the evil eye, they are depicted as the main causes of nightmares, illness, social disorder, and the disgraces that infect everyday communal life. Although they are invisible, they can be met or summoned. They may attack at certain times of day (dawn, sunset, or night), at times of crisis, at certain moments in life (birth, illness, or burial), or in certain places where they reside or gather (such as ruins, isolated places, wells, bodies of water, or streams).

In the Sanhedrin (Treatise X of the Talmud) demonological magic, forbidden to members of the community by the decree issued in Deuteronomy (18:10-12), does not simply refer to the most serious forms of witchcraft, punishable with death by stoning. The magical rites are not considered to be criminal actions in themselves, and the ban actually only condemns witches and those behaviors which are sullied by blasphemous or idolatrous behavior. It is not so much the essence of magic that matters, as the nature of the person performing it. Magic and exorcism are considered acceptable if they are carried

23. Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 6a.
26. Cf. Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 3a; Babylonian Talmud, Hulin 105a; Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 112a.
27. Mishnah, Sanhedrin 6:4 and 7; Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 17a, 65a, and 67b-68a.
out by worthy and respectable figures, who adhere to the commandments and the Law. Rabbinic sources recommend the writing and distribution of spells and amulets to ward off spirits, as long as they are composed and prepared by “experts.”

In such cases, they are not to be considered an expression of marginality or heterodoxy at variance with the dominant culture. The members of the rabbinic tribunal are allowed to study magic, so that they can distinguish between licit and illicit magical arts. Moreover, authoritative figures in the Talmudic tales (Hanina Ben Dosa, Shimon Ben Yokhai, and so forth) are personally involved in carrying out exorcisms and miracles.

The magical and therapeutic values of prayer, be it individual or collective, represent the community response to the risk of attacks by spirits, spells, and the evil eye. Knowledge of the Writings and the sacred language, combined with particular charisma, can exempt certain figures (just and wise men considered to be crowning achievements of divine creation) from prescriptions that apply to the majority. They are allowed to actively participate in maintaining the cosmic order and social peace.

Jewish magic in late Antiquity was consciously based on these premises: writing played a central role and had great power, and it drew on the performative and theurgical use of sacred names, biblical verses, and letters of the alphabet. In magical tradition, Bible stories are used like spells, verses are used in conjunction with powerful names, and magicians can in some cases consciously manipulate the sacred sources, to meet the needs of the rite.

The widespread nature of these practices is apparent from archaeological discoveries: dozens of Jewish amulets, ostraca, and lamellae, in Hebrew and Aramaic, dating back to a period from the third to the

31. Bloom, Jewish Mysticism, 36-37, 47-53, and 122-123.
seventh century, have been found in archaeological digs in Egyptian and Syro-Palestinian areas. Around a hundred magical bowls of Babylonian origin (terracotta bowls dating back to the fourth to seventh centuries) have been discovered during archaeological digs in Iraq and Persia. In particular, bowls and amulets have been found around houses and synagogues, showing the existence of widespread personal, domestic, or community protection methods. The amulets combine prayers, biblical verses, and magical names (of angels and God), engraved into different materials (copper, stone, and metal), for apotropaic and therapeutic purposes. The inscriptions inside the bowls include expulsion spells targeting groups of demons or a single spirit, invocations of divine and angelic names, and references in Hebrew and Aramaic to biblical and Talmudic passages.

The Genizah magical manuscripts (in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Judeo-Arabic) are part of this tradition. The abundance and variety of instructions for magic and rituals, found particularly among documents from the Ben Ezra medieval synagogue in Fustat (Old Cairo), show the central role of these practices in medieval Jewish culture.

The magical genres offer substantial documentation in the form of amulets and incantation formulae. Moreover, finds at the Cairo Genizah offered the first direct proof of angelological and demonological books and treatises. These were very widespread throughout the Middle Ages, and included Harba’ de-Moshe and Sefer ha-Razim, or the Shimmush Tehillim, on the magical use of the Psalms.

The most frequent written features of these formulae include powerful names and a magical use of the Bible. Some instructions only prescribe invocation in God’s name, or writing the names of supernatural creatures, thus entailing a graphic and phonetic ontology.38 “I conjure” (“ani mashbia” in Hebrew) is the most widespread performative (and, one might say, canonical) expression for conjuring and invoking the celestial powers.39 Knowing the names and the Writings guarantees the effectiveness of the magical procedure and the existing credentials of the magician, who is considered an intermediary and channel for the divine power. The main authors and writers of magical texts included scribes and wise men. Protective amulets and antidemonic spells for the sick, be they Jewish or not, were often written by rabbis of the synagogue themselves.40

The forms and textual elements of exorcism practices documented in the fragments from the Cairo Genizah, although transposed into a partly Arabized Jewish context, still reflect the Hellenistic and rabbinic mother culture in which the antidemonic literary tradition was formed.41

38. The names are composed of both indecipherable sequences of letters and alphabetical sequences; each letter can be considered a name in itself. The identification of the name, along with the essence and power of the being invoked is the condition for this conception of magic. Cf. Grözinger, “The Names of God and the Celestial Powers,” 53-69; David Frankfurter, “The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: the Power of the World in Egyptian and Greek Tradition,” Helios 21 (1994): 189-221; Vârtejanu-Joubert, “The Letter as Object.”

39. The spell aims to force the angels or demons, as well as the divinity, to do the sorcerers’ bidding.


Exorcisms in the Greek Magical Papyri

Descriptions of exorcism techniques based on the therapeutic use of the divine name and angels, can be found in Judeo-Hellenistic, evangelical, or late Antique sources. The popularity of Jewish magicians as healers was recognized in non-Jewish societies or “nations.” For example, the story of Flavius Josephus tells of the reputation of the Jew, Eleazar, who became famous for successfully performing an exorcism before the Emperor Vespasian (Antiquities of the Jews VIII, 247). Another example is the words of Origen, who in Contra Celsum (IV, 33), emphasizes the effectiveness of names of Hebraic origin in practices to banish demons.

In the Greek Magical Papyri, exorcism spells often use Jewish magical names. Two sets of instructions, recorded in PGM 4:1227-1264 and 4:3007-3086, refer to traditions which, although syncretic, are at least partly of Jewish origin. Both texts feature a conjuration in the name of the God of Israel, transcriptions of great names, and references to the Bible and Midrashic and Judeo-Hellenistic sources. In these documents, the name “Iesus” defined as “God of Jews” in PGM 4:3020, indicates diffusion within a polytheistic environment which did not distinguish between the Jewish and Christian religions.

The exorcism procedures in these sources contain several distinct phases. That in PGM 4:1227-1264 can be broken down into five parts:


1) Invocation by name: the invocation technique based on knowing the personal names of the divinity, giving the magician the power needed to conduct the ritual:

Hail God of Abraham; hail, God of Isaac; hail, God of Jacob; Jesus Chrestos, the Holy Spirit, the Son of the Father, who is above the Seven, who is within the Seven.46

2) Specification of the beneficiary: the name of the patient, not given here, because it is an instruction in which the ritual is merely described:47

may your power issue forth from him, NN,48

3) The purpose of the invocation: the powers invoked are called upon to directly expel the demon (the sorcerer is just an intermediary):

until you drive away this unclean demon Satan, who is in him.49

4) Conjuration in the first person: the magician, invested with the same powers as the god, can confront the demon in the first person, using the performative and compelling function of the verb “conjure.”50

I conjure you, daimon, whoever you are, by this God, SABARBARBATHIOITH SABARBARBATHIOUTH SABARBAR-BATHIONETH SABARBARBAPHAI.51

5) Driving away the demons: attempts to expel the demon are expressed as commands, via the repetition of the imperatives “come out” and “stay away.”

“Come out, daimon, since I bind you with unbreakable adamantine fetters, and I deliver you into the black chaos in perdition.”52

The binding of the demon is reminiscent of the imprisonment of ‘Aza’zel and the rebel angels in Hell, as described in the Book of the Watchers.53

47. For the use of the Hebrew expression for NN ([name], son of [name]) in the Genizah magical texts, see Abate, “Theory and Practice of Magic,” 368-397.
49. PGM 4:1237 (Betz, The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation).
50. On the correspondence between the Greek εξορκίζειν and the Hebrew verb וּמְרַע, see Kotansky, “Greek Exorcistic Amulets,” 251.
52. PGM 4:1245-1248 (Betz, The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation).
The structure of the second ritual (PGM 4:3007-3086) is similar. However, it is more elaborately formulated, with many references to history and biblical figures. It includes different conjurations to be made by the divine name, with hymn-like glorification of its attributes and miracles, and a celebration of its power to create, destroy, and control natural phenomena and the angelic forces. Again with clear echoes of the Legend of the Watchers, the divinity is called upon to send his angel to confront the demon, whose angelic origin is emphasized (PGM 4:3025-3028). The demon is urged to reveal its name, and ordered to obey and submit:

I conjure you, whatever demonic spirit you are, to tell me what type you are, because I conjure you with the help of God who brings the light, unfailing, who knows all things in the hearts of all living creatures.

These exorcisms begin and end with instructions on how to prepare them, describing the symbolic power of the tools and numbers which will help them to succeed. In the final part of the second ritual (PGM 4:3083-3086), abstinence from pork and preservation of purity is prescribed, based on a “Jewish tradition passed down by wise men.” There are also instructions on procedures for preparing amulets, engraved with a secret name (PGM 4:1254-1263 and 4:3014-3017). Amulets, considered indispensable for keeping away demons and spirits, continued to be essential in antidemonic rites until the early modern period. Once freed from the demon, the patient wore the amulet around their neck, to prevent the spirit from possessing their body again.

54. There are other references to the Enochian Book of the Watchers: “I conjure you thanks to He who reduced all the intractable giants to ashes, with a thunderbolt, He who the skies of the skies honor, who the wings of Cherubs adore,” cf. PGM 4:3058-3060 [Translator’s note: Quotation back-translated from the from French-language version of this article].
55. Translator’s note: Quotation back-translated from the French-language version of this article.
EXORCISMS IN ANCIENT JEWISH SOURCES

For the Second Temple period, despite rich Hellenistic literary documentation, there are very few direct sources in Hebrew about antidemonic practices, and those that exist are incomplete and difficult to interpret. Traces are found only in sources from caves in the Judean desert. In particular, hymn scrolls exhibiting the main characteristics of antidemonic and exorcism texts have been discovered in the Qumranian fragments.

In the community, apocalyptic, and eschatological context of life on the shores of the Dead Sea, antidemonic hymns were one of the most powerful self-defense tools for followers of the sect against attacks by enemy forces. The texts of 4Q510, 4Q511, and 4Q444 seem to have been written for this purpose, probably in order to be recited at liturgical events for the collective purification and liberation of members of the group from evil forces. Scrolls 4Q510 and 4Q511 contain hymns with characteristics linked to aspects of sect organization and religiosity, for example hymn introductions attributing them to the maskil, a charismatic figure at the head of the community. These two manuscripts contain fragments which (when reconstructed as far as possible) resemble songs of praise emphasizing the power and splendor of the divinity, his role as a creator, and the panic and terror inspired by his control over the world. These songs are accompanied by formulae addressed by name to the spirits and demons to be fought.


60. The first manuscript contains twelve fragments in a calligraphic script dating back to the Herodian period. The second contains over two hundred fragments, and is probably the end of the first, see Baillet, *DJD VII*, 215-262. The title of the composition in 4Q511, fr. 8, l. 4 (Baillet, *DJD VII*, 224) links the text to the preceding hymn: “Of the maskil, second hymn, to scare away those who frighten him.”
In 4Q510, fr. 1, ll. 4-5, the *maskil* uses the first-person expression “ani mashmia,” meaning “I proclaim.”

I, the *maskil*, proclaim your Splendor and your Majesty, so as to frighten and terrorize all the spirits, angels of destruction, bastard spirits, demons, lilith, howlers, and wild cats, and those who suddenly strike to lead spirits of understanding astray and bewilder their hearts and their souls.

This formula is addressed to the two divine attributes of “Splendor” (*tiferet*) and “Majesty” (*hod*), with the help of which the *maskil* hopes to free the community’s hearts and souls from invasion by demons. The fact that no particular individual is mentioned, and that the text generally applies to all those who have been attacked by demons, may indicate that it was used in a liturgical context. The demons and spirits are not directly addressed as they are in PGM 4:1227-1264 and 4:3007-3086, probably because their name is already known. A list of names of spirits and demons is given in the text of 4Q510; the use of such enumerations in a ritual is one of the most widespread characteristics in exorcism texts.

Some lines feature an antecedent of the antidemonic formulations of the PGMs, but it is not of the same order, and the beneficiary is collective rather than individual. Nevertheless, the main elements are present:

1) Conjuration in the first person;
2) Invocation using sacred names;
3) The purpose of the invocation;

61. Cf. Baillet, *DJD VII*, 216: 4Q510, fr. 1, l. 4. The reading “ani masha’ia,” “I conjure,” instead of “ani mashmia,” is also possible on a paleographical level. The use of the specialized verb for vows may fit the typology of antidemonic formulae drafted here. 4Q510, fr. 1, ll. 6-8, asks for the temporary, but not definitive, destruction of evil beings, in line with a particular view of time as composed of successive phases of clashes between “the sons of the Light” (the name for members of the sect) and the forces of evil.


63. Translator’s note: Quotation back-translated from the French-language version of this article.

64. In support of this hypothesis, see Baillet, *DJD VII*, 215-262: in 4Q511, l. 63 col. IV. The expression, “they will bless all your works, forever, be blessed for eternity, Amen, Amen,” can be seen as an antiphonal response from the congregation at the end of the hymn. [Translator’s note: Quotation back-translated from the French-language version of this article.]

4) The banishing of demons, whose names are known;
5) The specification of the beneficiary.

Scroll 4Q444\(^{66}\) belongs to the same set of texts, and contains fragments of an apotropaic hymn which corresponds to a sectarian context. Aside from the expressions of praise and the names of spirits to be conjured, there is also an exhortation in the second person, which appears as a generic instruction for members of the community:

Take strength, by respecting the divine laws and in order to fight the spirits of iniquity.\(^{67}\)

However, hymns do not seem to have been used for defensive purposes alone: they probably also constituted an “active” and “aggressive” antidemonic practice. If the formulae cursing the demons (preserved in the extremely fragmentary final part of the scroll) belong to a single text, they may confirm this interpretation. The structure of the hymn is similar to those of the later magic texts in which a single spell includes both liturgical formulae, and formulae to excommunicate and curse.\(^{68}\)

Finally, another text, scroll 11Q11,\(^ {69}\) contains a fragmentary collection of exorcisms for “those who have been struck by demons,”\(^ {70}\) which probably served as models for individual rituals of demonic expulsion following a procedure similar to PGM 4:1227-1264 and 4:3007-3086. It is likely, in fact, that this collection of texts circulated outside of the community context, because they contain no traces of sectarian elements. However,\(^ {71}\) there is distinct evidence of aspects common to the Judeo-Hellenistic magical tradition. One of the formulae, attributed to Solomon,\(^ {72}\) uses certain keywords that

\(^{66}\). From the Herodian period (first century), see Chazon et al., \textit{DJD XXIX}, 367-378.
\(^{67}\). Esther Chazon et al., \textit{DJD XXIX}, 367-378, fr. I-4 i. [Translator’s note: Quotation back-translated from the French-language version of this article.]
\(^{68}\). Kotansky, “Greek Exorcistic Amulets,” 262-272.
\(^{69}\). The text in formal Herodian script from the first century is composed of four fragments and six highly incomplete columns, partly reconstructed on paleographic and philological bases; see García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, \textit{DJD XXIII}, 181-205.
\(^{70}\). See García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, \textit{DJD XXIII}, 198: 11Q11, col. V, l. 2.
\(^{72}\). García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, \textit{DJD XXIII}, 189: 11Q11, col. II, l. 2-12.
can be connected to the legend according to which he held secret knowledge intended for therapeutic and apotropaic purposes and obtained from demons.\textsuperscript{73} A further formula is attributed to David,\textsuperscript{74} an important figure in magical literature, because of his exorcist powers in the biblical tale in which he frees Saul from the evil spirit that torments him.\textsuperscript{75} Here, the magical technique is referred to using the biblical term, \textit{lahash}. This word, which means “enchantment,” but also “whisper” and “breath,” may be a reference to the musical performance staged by David, based around the hypnotic sound of chanting and the \textit{kinnor}, to which the exorcist may have referred when performing the ritual.

The structure of the formulae is compatible with the schema described in the paragraph above. The conjurations rely on invoking the divine name (in this case, the tetragrammaton) and the exaltation of his power as creator.\textsuperscript{76} The hymn-like nature of the texts is another element common to the documents from the Qumran and the tradition of the Greek Magical Papyri.

In one of the best preserved sections of 11Q11, there is a direct address to the demon, who is asked his name, as in the text of PGM 4:3007-3064. The demon’s nature, semiangelic descent, and appearance are also described:

Who are you [born of] a man and of the race of the Saints? Your face is the face of wrongness, and your horns are of dreams and darkness, you are not born of light or justice.\textsuperscript{77}

Two of the conjurations invoke the intervention of an angel sent directly from above, with words which again reflect the Enochian tradition of ‘Azaz’el’s imprisonment.\textsuperscript{78}

[YHWH] in his furious wrath [will send] upon you a powerful angel, to carry out his orders without compassion for you, and who . . . will drag you far below, into the great abyss and into the deepest depths of Sheol.

\textsuperscript{73} Solomon’s knowledge of plants and remedies goes back to biblical tradition in 1R 5: 9-14.
\textsuperscript{74} García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, \textit{DJD XXIII}, 198: 11Q11, col. V, l. 4.
\textsuperscript{75} 1 Samuel 16: 14-23.
\textsuperscript{76} For the use of the form \textit{mashbi’a}, see García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, \textit{DJD XXIII}, 181-205, col. I, l. 6, col. III, l. 4.
\textsuperscript{77} García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, \textit{DJD XXIII}, 198: 11Q11, col. V, ll. 6-8. [Translator’s note: Quotation back-translated from the French-language version of this article.]
\textsuperscript{78} PGM 4:1245-1248 and 4:3025-3028.
The Prince of YHWH’s army will drag you into deepest Sheol and close the bronze doors behind him.79

The last column of the manuscript contains a version of Psalm 91, or shir shel pega’im in Hebrew tradition: a hymn for “those who have been attacked [by demons].”80 The text varies in some ways from the Masoretic Psalm tradition, in order to update and adapt its contents to ritual demands: yet another device of magic practices.81

CONCLUSIONS: ANTIDEMONIC FORMULAE FROM THE CAIRO GENIZAH

The above examples aim to demonstrate the distinctive characteristics of exorcism practices. These seem to follow a recurring model, which draws upon a codified, traditional, and formal heritage, and remained stable for many centuries. In quite a large area of the eastern Mediterranean, a variety of sources (from contexts as different as that of the Qumran and the Egyptian origin of the Greek Magical Papyri) preserve traditions which reflect a ritual procedure for expelling demons. This procedure is part of a cosmologically and conceptually coherent system for representing and controlling the invisible.

It is likely that the texts in 4Q510-511 and 4Q444, which are from the sectarian tradition, formed the basis for the maskil’s performances during ceremonies directly involving community members. The collection of exorcisms preserved in 11Q11 is closer to the magical tradition seen in the Greek Magical Papyri, and was probably for use in individual exorcisms.

It seems that Jewish exorcists-sorcerers played a determining role in the transfer of ideas, techniques, and operative formulae. They used part of the technological apparatus of Greco-Egyptian magical literature, and in turn helped to influence the evolution of the Hellenistic tradition,82 by enriching their own heritage of legends, characters, and archetypal figures (angels, demons, and divine

79. García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, DJD XXIII, 195 and 198: 11Q11, col. IV, ll. 5-8, col. V, ll. 8-9. [Translator’s note: Quotation back-translated from the French-language version of this article.]
80. Babylonian Talmud, Shevuot 15b, TY Shabbat 6.8b.
81. García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, DJD XXIII, 199: 11Q11, col. VI.
82. Bohak, Ancient Jewish Magic, 196-209.
names), via a selection of elements from Jewish and Hellenistic cultures which did not, however, lead to a fusion. Traits which were truly incompatible with Jewish religion at the time were omitted, changed, or adapted in the Qumranian sources, thus creating this specific form of an antidemonic ritual, with its own particular traits which reappear in later sources.

From further on in late Antiquity, there are almost no direct sources which identifiably served as frameworks for exorcism rituals. Nevertheless, there are many indirect literary sources and archaeological finds (covering a period from the second to the seventh century) showing the continuity of antidemonic practices of all kinds in both public life and the private sphere. The existence of Jewish amulets from the Syro-Palestinian area is proven, and magic bowls of Babylonian origin have been found buried in corners of the internal walls of homes, as traps for the demons that threatened them.83

Finally, I wish to describe two examples of Genizah fragments kept at the Bodleian Library in Oxford, which have not yet been subject to specific study. The first is the manuscript Heb. 61, ff. 40-41,84 which contains a long ritual to combat demons and evil spirits. However, its aim is not explicitly expressed: the fragment could just as easily be the introduction to a demonology tract as a text to instruct sorcerers or an introduction to help them acquire supernatural and exorcist powers.

The first lines begin with a reference to the celestial origins of the demons and the need to know their descent and personal names in order to control them:

If you wish to have power over shedim and ruhin bishin [evil spirits] and over the twelve families who came down from the heavens at the


84. The Hebrew manuscript, the final section of which is damaged, is written on paper in the informal script used in most of the private Genizah documents, which date back to the eleventh to twelfth centuries. There is a similar fragment in the Genizah collection at the Cambridge University Library, ms. TS. K 1.1. See also Filip Vukosavovic, ed., Angels and Demons: Jewish Magic Through the Ages (Jerusalem: Bible Lands Museum, 2010), 149.
time of Satan their father, you will learn this book in full, as well as their names and the names of all their families and kinds.

The ritual describes a complex process, accompanied by certain preliminary operations: the magician must go to an uninhabited place, “in the mountains, or a field, or an isolated house” (all the places that the Talmud indicates are most vulnerable to attack by demons)\(^{85}\) in order to prepare the space where the rite will be performed by purifying it for two consecutive days, using fumigations. It also instructs them to draw a circle with four openings in front of the door, allowing the “four spirits of the world” to enter, and to write a list of magic names inside a square (an illustration is provided in the manuscript). This passage contains instructions for creating a great talisman-amulet, in order to bring the sorcerer the powers and energies needed for the rite. A long conjuring spell is prescribed, which combines two literary sources: an adaptation of the text of Isaiah 40:12, and a liturgical hymn resembling those identified in the antidemonic texts analyzed above, singing praises in the “Name of God” and his immense powers to change the cosmic order, and natural, celestial, and infernal forces.

In the name of HW HW IH IH, rock of the worlds: the terror that he provokes spreads fear throughout the world and the fear that he creates has made the earth and its inhabitants quake, and the fear that he causes has made the desert and the dark depths of Abaddon quake.

The second document is the manuscript Heb. e. 44, ff. 78-79,\(^{86}\) which contains a long spell to banish demons. The text begins and ends with two lists of names and attributes, constituting a catalogue of evil spirits. The significance of the content only becomes clear at the end of the first recto, which bears the expression “ani mashbia.” The purpose of the spell appears shortly afterwards: to drive away spirits. A conjuration based on the divine name and on evoking the power of divine fire is used. It employs literary images, such as the self-fuelling fire which must descend from the divine throne and the whole angelic, celestial realm, in order to combat and drive away the evil spirit:

\(^{85}\) See § 3.
\(^{86}\) On paper, damaged at the beginning and end, in Hebrew, written in elegant and neat, oriental, semicursive script, which can be dated back to around the thirteenth century.
In the name of YHWH rock of worlds, whose name is of fire, and whose throne is of fire, and whose home is of fire, and whose explicit names are sealed in fire and before a circle of fire, and the angels, in their sight, blaze with fire, and before him is an angel of fire, and at his sides glimmers fire, and he is fire that devours fire, and the Lord is the creator of the fire of all firmaments and the firmament is filled with armies of fire: come out, fire and flame before the fire that devours fire, descend! And may you burn the destroyer, so that he cannot return in a thunderbolt!

Both the angelic and demonic armies are listed and catalogued, as if before an epic battle. This evocation creates a visionary representation of the celestial world of angels and the demonic world, which is reminiscent of passages from Hekhalot literature. In fact, in the Genizah finds, a different and older branch of early-medieval mystical tradition is seen. Its characteristics are not primarily literary, but seem more closely linked to ancient magical tradition. The visionary elements are related to practices for establishing direct contact with the celestial forces, in order to control their actions. It is likely that such texts from early Jewish mysticism refer to real practices by a small group of specialists: experts trained as scribes or rabbis who used knowledge acquired in the study of the magic arts (part of their curriculum) in order to carry out, where required, a community role comparable to that of the authors of antidemonic hymns in earlier periods.

The text described here could belong to this category of sources. In this case, the invocation of supernatural forces would have been used for a practice with concrete consequences. The names of angels and demons, and the divine fire, come down from the heavens. They are displaced to a terrestrial, liturgical context, partaking in a sort of angelomachy (battle of angels) provoked and orchestrated by the exorcist’s power. During the ritual, conjuration spells would have been recited, in order to free a person, a house, or even a whole community from a demon.

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