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THE PRAYER OF LEVI

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The Prayer of Levi is found in two witnesses. The first is the Aramaic manuscript 4QTLevi^a, and the second is a translation following *Testament of Levi* (*TPL*) 3:2 in manuscript *e* of the Greek *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. For the Aramaic work we use the title *Aramaic Levi Document* (*ALD*) since there are no indications in it that it is a testament. Note that citations of *ALD* by column and line refer to the Qumran fragment, 4QTLevi^a, while references by verse number refer to the sections (§) to be found in the Greek text. In the English translation below, both systems of reference are presented.

The Greek manuscript is Athos, Monastery of Koutloumous, Cod. 39 (catalog no. 3108), of the eleventh century.¹ It contains three passages additional to the text of *TPL*. The first two are parallel to Aramaic Levi material known from the Geniza and from Qumran. The first of these is the Prayer of Levi, found inserted after *TPL* 2:3. The second deals with cultic matters and is inserted in the manuscript following *TPL* 18:2. The third interpolated passage, following *TPL* 7:2, apparently is of Christian origin and deals with various doctrinal and other matters.²

The Greek and Aramaic texts overlap for the most part, though a few fragmentary lines of Aramaic precede and follow the material parallel to that preserved in Greek. This overlap implies that the Greek text of the prayer found in the Koutloumous manuscript following *TPL* 3:2 is indeed a translation of part of *ALD*. Consequently, Charles erred in not including this Greek fragment among the witnesses of *Aramaic Levi Document*, which he printed in an appendix at the end of his edition of the Greek text of *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*.³ The Aramaic fragment from 4QTLevi^a was

¹ For further details, see M. de Jonge et al., *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (PVTG 1, 2; Leiden: Brill, 1978) xvii. Bibliography on the manuscript may be found there. M. E. Stone acknowledges the support of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture in the research for this article.

² See de Jonge et al., *Testaments*, xvii.

³ See R. H. Charles, *The Greek Versions of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908) 245-56. For fuller bibliography, history of the editions of the Geniza texts and corrections of their readings, see M. E. Stone and J. C. Greenfield, "Remarks on the Aramaic Testament of Levi," *RB* 86 (1979) 214-30.

first published by J. T. Milik.⁴ The present writers have now been charged with the final edition of it in *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*.

The text given in this article, then, is made up of a number of different parts. The first part is a few fragmentary lines from the beginning of 4QTL^{vi}a, column 1, to which there is no parallel in the Greek text. The second part is the rest of the surviving text of column 1 of 4QTL^{vi}a, which overlaps with Greek text preserved following Greek *TPL* 2:3 in the Athos MS. The third part of the present document is the Greek text without Aramaic parallel, which continues after the end of the surviving Aramaic text of column 1 of 4QTL^{vi}a and as far as the beginning of the surviving first part of the second column of that fragmentary Aramaic manuscript. The part of the second column of the Aramaic manuscript to which there is parallel text in Greek forms the fourth part of the document. Finally, this is followed by the rest of column 2 of 4QTL^{vi}a.

We have transcribed first the Aramaic text of both columns of the 4QTL^{vi}a fragment. In the course of this transcription, we have made only such reconstructions as we regard to be quite certain. Since a Greek text exists overlapping with part of the Aramaic, however, we have ventured to reconstruct a fuller Aramaic text for this section. This reconstruction, it should be stressed, is only tentative and we have printed it separately following the diplomatic transcription of the surviving fragments. After this, we have reproduced the Greek text drawn from de Jonge's edition. The English translation is based on both versions. Where the Aramaic is extant, the English words corresponding to it have been printed in bold type.⁵

I. Character of the Document

M. de Jonge demonstrated in detail what Milik had already concluded in 1955—that *TPL* used traditions preserved in *ALD*. Moreover, the present fragment is of importance since it contained part of *ALD* previously unknown in Aramaic and it enabled us to recognize that the Greek fragment following *TPL* 2:3 contained a Greek translation of part of *ALD*.⁶ In the context of the relationship of the two writings, de Jonge makes the following observations: (1) 4QTL^{vi}a preserves in Aramaic the continuation of the narrative following the text of the prayer. This is not available in the Greek translation. After his prayer, Levi goes to his father Jacob and then leaves Abel-Mayin and goes elsewhere. There he sees a vision of heaven and a mountain below him

⁴ J. T. Milik, "Le Testament de Lévi en araméen," *RB* 62 (1955) 398–408.

⁵ Milik fixed the number of lines per column at 18 ("Le Testament de Lévi," 399). He has numbered the lines in the fragment accordingly. Here we have preserved his line numbering, but will certainly reassess it in the final publication of the scroll.

⁶ M. de Jonge, "Notes on Testament of Levi II–VII," in *Travels in the World of the Old Testament* (Festschrift M. A. Beek; ed. M. S. H. G. Heerma van Voss et al.; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1974) 132–45.

reaching up to heaven. The gates of heaven are opened.⁷ At this point the text, which is in any case fragmentary, breaks off completely. This narrative differs from the order of events in *TPL*, which also omits most of the text of the prayer. All it preserves is *ἡὺξάμην Κυρίῳ ὅπως σωθῶ* (2:4), which at most is a passing allusion to the extensive prayer found in *ALD*⁸ (2) M. de Jonge considers, however, that there are definite points of contact between *ALD* col. 2:14–18 (the narrative following the prayer) and *TPL*. He points to 2:5 *τότε ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ’ ἐμέ ὕπνος* and *TPL* 5:1 *τὰς πύλας τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*. In full, *TPL* 5:1 reads: “The angel opened to me the gates of heaven, and I saw the holy temple and the Most High upon a throne of glory.” De Jonge points out that the words *τὰς πύλας τοῦ οὐρανοῦ* are “in any case awkward after the descriptions of several heavens in the previous chapters” of *TPL*, thus strengthening the argument for the dependence of *TPL* 5:1 on *ALD*⁹ De Jonge’s observation supports the view that *TPL* uses *ALD*, but it does not necessarily imply that in *ALD* the Prayer of Levi occurred at the point at which it does in *TPL*, that is, corresponding to 2:4. Neither, it may be noted by way of corollary, does the shared phrase “gates of heaven” show that the vision which follows the prayer directly in *ALD* was in fact the event alluded to in *TPL* 5:1. Notable is de Jonge’s conclusion that *ALD* “belongs to an earlier stage in the transmission of the document [i.e., than *TPL* (Stone and Greenfield)] to which also the fragments from the Cairo Geniza must have belonged.”¹⁰

The following further observations may be made about the fragment of 4QTL*evi*^a and its position within *ALD*.

1. As it stands, it is impossible to identify the broad context in which the prayer is offered since 1:5–7 have no parallel in Greek *TPL*. Presumably the very fragmentary lines 1:6–7 correspond to parts of §§1–2 in the Athos Greek translation of *ALD*. It does seem from §6, however, that Levi is surrounded by his children. This is reminiscent of an *Abschiedsrede* context, which might support the general position implied by the mention of the prayer in *TPL* 2:4.

2. Indeed, it is very possible that Greek §§1–2 are not an integral part of the incident related in §§3ff., but the end of a preceding event. Note that both §§1 and 3 start with *τότε* and nothing in the text indicates a necessary continuity between them. This likelihood is enhanced by the fact, pointed out below, that the laundering of garments and washing of the body, actions

⁷ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁸ M. E. Stone and J. C. Greenfield, “Two Notes on the Aramaic Levi Document,” in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism and Christian Origins* (ed. H. W. Attridge, J. J. Collins, and T. H. Tobin; College Theology Society Resources in Religion 5; Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990) 155. It was this phrase, of course, that provided the occasion for the scribe to introduce the prayer into the Koutloumous manuscript of *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 138. He argues, persuasively, that all these verses must be integral to *TPL* and that the dependence on *Aramaic Levi* is at the compositional level (p. 139).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 142.

typical of levitical purity (see Num 8:21), do not occur anywhere else preceding a prayer or an apocalyptic vision experience, but instead usually follow a cultic, priestly act (see §5). Two possibilities emerge. If the text refers to two different incidents, then this purification is the end of a ceremony. Alternatively, if the same incident is being described, then this passage shows the transfer of levitical purity to the context of prayer. We think that the former alternative is the more probable.

3. According to *ALD*, Levi concludes his prayer, goes to his father Jacob, and then leaves Abel-Mayin and goes somewhere else, where he sees a vision of heaven, a mountain below him reaching up to heaven and the opening of the gates of heaven. This order of events differs from that to be found in *TPL*. Moreover, *TPL* does not have the text of the prayer, simply saying *ἡὺξάμην κυρίῳ ὅπως σωθῶ* (2:4): see above.

4. The Prayer of Levi was interpolated into *TPL* preceding 2:4, which scholars have assumed to be a reflection of its original position in the full Greek translation of the *ALD*. In that case, it would have preceded the consecration of Levi as high priest in *ALD*. However, in view of the considerations adduced above, its interpolation at *TPL* 2:4 might be seen to be the result of the common element of the vision mentioned in *TPL* 2:5 and in *ALD* as well as of the latter part of *TPL* 2:4 “and I prayed to the Lord that I might be saved.” In that case, its position in the Greek manuscript teaches us nothing about its original position in *ALD*.

5. Furthermore, H. W. Hollander and de Jonge point out that the Prayer of Levi, or something very like it, is implied by *TPL* 4:2, which seems to respond to it.¹¹ That verse reads: *εἰσήκουσεν οὖν ὁ ὕψιστος τῆς προσευχῆς σου, τοῦ διελεῖν σε ἀπὸ τῆς ἀδικίας καὶ γενέσθαι αὐτῷ υἱὸν καὶ θεράποντα καὶ λειτουργὸν τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ*, “The Most High, therefore, has heard your prayer to separate you from unrighteousness and that you should become to him a son and a servant and a minister of his presence.” This verse claims that God has granted three petitions which were made by Levi in his prayer: (a) “to separate you from unrighteousness”; (b) “that you should become to him a son”; (c) “and a servant and minister to his presence.” Yet if the prayer itself is examined, only element *a* is to be found. Thus we read: “**Make far from me, O Lord, the unrighteous spirit, and evil thought and fornication, and turn pride away from me**” (§7 = 4QTL^a 1:13).¹² At first blush, the second and third elements of the prayer to which *TPL* 4:2 refers do not seem to occur in the Aramaic and Greek texts of the Prayer of Levi. While the third element, a reference to the levitical and priestly functions of Levi, seems to

¹¹ H. W. Hollander and M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (SVTP 8; Leiden: Brill, 1985) 134, 141–42. See in further detail Stone and Greenfield, “Two Notes,” 156–58.

¹² The translation of *TPL* is that of Hollander and de Jonge. The translation of *ALD* is that of Greenfield and Stone. Words in roman type occur only in the Greek text. Those in bold type occur also in the 4Q fragment.

be a commonplace, the same can scarcely be said of the second element, “that you should become to him a son.”

In fact, as we have suggested elsewhere, both the second and third elements in *TPL* 4:2 derive from *ALD*, but they reflect a misconstrual of its text. In col. 2:10 (§19) of *ALD* we read: לְבַר עֲבָדְךָ מִן קַרְנַיִךְ and the Greek text of *ALD* reads here: καὶ μὴ ἀποστήσῃς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ παιδός σου ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ αἰῶνος. The words מִן קַרְנַיִךְ = ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου of *ALD* are reflected by the words “of his presence” of *TPL* 4:2. Equally, the word עֲבָדְךָ (rendered in the Greek of *ALD* as τοῦ παιδός σου, a common enough translation) stands behind the words θεράποντα καὶ λειτουργόν, “servant and minister,” of *TPL* 4:2. It remains only to suggest that the reworker of the *ALD* materials in *TPL* misconstrued לְבַר as “for a son.” He might have read this word as if there were a final *kap* on it, “for your son,” or read the next word as if a *waw* preceded, “for a son and for.” It is not our claim, of course, that this understanding or interpretation of the Aramaic text is correct; to the contrary.¹³ It serves, however, to clarify how the text of *ALD* might have been utilized by the redactor of the materials in *TPL*.

This observation, of course, adds some support to Hollander and de Jonge’s view that the prayer found in *ALD* is that referred to by *TPL* 4:2. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the order of events in the two documents is the same. The evidence emerging to date is not in favor of *ALD* sharing the order of events in *TPL*. The arguments set forth above, concerning the events preceding the actual prayer, the farewell-address context assumed by the prayer, and the different sequence of events following it, show that the author of *TPL* has changed the original context and sequence of events of *ALD* rather radically.

6. If this hypothesis is correct, it might imply that Levi was already a priest at the time of the incident related in this fragment of *ALD*. In that case, the Prayer of Levi should follow his consecration, which is related in the Geniza fragments. In *TPL* we find the consecration of Levi after 2:3, the point at which the Athos manuscript interpolates the Prayer, and also after *TPL* 4:2, which Hollander and de Jonge claim is dependent on the Prayer. In that case, in *ALD* the material was in a rather different order from that presently found in *TPL*. This is, of course, quite possible.¹⁴

7. Levi then prepares himself psychologically as well for the prayer (v. 3) and takes a particular physical position. In it he stretches out his hands toward “the holy ones” (v. 4),¹⁵ thus taking an *orans* position, often represented

¹³ Compare *ALD* Greek §15: “And turn not your countenance aside from the son of your servant Jacob.”

¹⁴ Another interpretation of the first surviving lines of 4QTLevi^a, however, would make it clear that Levi washes himself and his garments before praying (see paragraph 2 above). This we have adjudged less probable.

¹⁵ See comments below concerning this expression.

in ancient art. The prayer itself follows. After a brief doxology, interrupted by the parenthetical v. 6, the body of the petition ensues. Levi prays in a contrastive style not unlike that of some Essene documents, to be separated from one series of features and to be made close to another (§§7–8).

Make far from me the unrighteous spirit and evil thought and fornication	Show me the holy spirit and counsel and wisdom and knowledge
and turn pride away from me	and grant me strength to do that which is pleasing before you

This is certainly one of the oldest passages in which two spirits are contrasted, and if the view of a third-century BCE date for *ALD* is accepted, then this concept, so characteristic of the Qumran texts, must be put back to that date. The terminology used here, however, is not typical of the sectarian writings from Qumran.¹⁶

8. Levi then proceeds to pray for divine support and protection so that he can minister to God. This protection involves a number of elements: (a) “Let not any Satan have power over me.” This implies a view that demons were a threat. The same view is also implied by §12, calling for the protection of Levi by the “wall of your peace” and his shelter by God’s power from every evil. Considering the early date of this document, this is a significant insight into Jewish demonological ideas.¹⁷ (b) Levi continues to pray for purification (§14) and divine favor (§15). He invokes the blessing of Abraham and Sarah, which probably draws on Gen 18:10 and in §16 refers to a blessing which appears to be that in Gen 22:17–18. (c) The point of the prayer is Levi’s desire to be a “participant in your words” and “to do true judgment for all time” (§18). This seems to be a reference to the Blessing of Moses, where it says of the sons of Levi: “They shall teach Jacob your ordinances and Israel your law” (Deut 33:10). This is a drawing together to Levi of a series of blessings of significant weight in the biblical narrative.

It has been pointed out before, based on other parts of *ALD*, that this document lays a particular emphasis on the sapiential characteristics of the priesthood.¹⁸ In addition to the instructional aspect of the priestly learning

¹⁶ There is an extensive article on the term $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ in all its ramifications in *TDNT* 6. 332–55. On the date of *ALD*, see M. E. Stone, *Essays on the Pseudepigrapha with Special Reference to the Armenian Tradition* (SVTP 9; Leiden: Brill, 1991) 247–48. On this passage, see the commentary below.

¹⁷ A further, detailed discussion of this idea is to be found in the commentary on §10 below.

¹⁸ M. E. Stone, “Ideal Figures and Social Context: Priest and Sage in the Early Second Temple Age,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Studies in Honor of F. M. Cross* (ed. P. D. Miller et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 575–86, esp. 578–81; reprinted in Stone, *Essays*, 258–70.

stressed there, here a participatory aspect of wisdom is prominent. Levi wishes to be protected, pure, and endowed with wisdom so as to be able to participate in divine words and do true judgment for all time. This aspect of the priestly function in the third century BCE has not previously been noted.

9. The continuation of the story has been dealt with above: it is very fragmentary because of the character of the manuscript, to which there is no Greek parallel here in the Athos manuscript.

Thus the Prayer of Levi serves to show that *TPL* is not simply excerpting *ALD* in this section but is reworking and summarizing it, not always smoothly in its own context. Moreover, aspects of the religious worldview are here illustrated that are significant, particularly in its understanding of the levitical line.

It was observed by the writers in 1979 that two peculiarities of *ALD* indicate that it attributes a particularly central status to the figure of Levi and the levitical line. The first of these features was the transferal of Judah's royal blessing to Kohath, the founder of the high priestly line, which is clearly implied in the name midrash connecting Kohath with Gen 49:10, a blessing pronounced upon Judah. The second of these features was the use of the Qumran calendar and the setting of the birth of Levi's children on days and hours of particular significance according to that calendar.¹⁹ In addition, the special tradition of wisdom attributed to Levi was observed (*ALD* 88) which is in accord with the particular teaching role attributed to the priest in *ALD* 83–95 from which *TPL* 13:1–5 was derived.²⁰ "The circles responsible for Aramaic Levi laid a very strong emphasis on the instructional function of the priesthood and this aspect of the priesthood attracted sapiential motifs. This process was fully developed by the third century B.C.E. at the latest. As a result of it the figure of the ideal priest became imbued with features of the sage."²¹

As well as being instructional in character (cf. Deut 33:10), priestly wisdom involved participation, in purity, in the divine words (*Prayer of Levi* 18). Hence we arrive at the idea, implied by the expression in Deuteronomy, that a major function of priestly wisdom is the ability to do true judgment for all time (cf. Solomon's prayer in 1 Kgs 3:7–9).

Certain other features of the levitical role as presented in *ALD* combine with these factors to enhance the importance of the levitical line, to stress its legitimacy, and to expand the areas of life and teaching over which Levi and the Levites have authority. In *ALD*, obviously, Levi is attributed a cultic

¹⁹ See Stone and Greenfield, "Remarks," 224–25; reprinted in Stone, *Essays*, 238–39. These two points were repeated in 1991, without attribution to the present writers, by E. Puech, "Le Testament de Qahat en araméen de la grotte 4 (*4QTQah*)," *RevQ* 57–58 (1991) 51–52.

²⁰ Stone and Greenfield, "Remarks," 226–27 (Stone, *Essays*, 240–41). The matter was discussed in greater detail by Stone, "Ideal Figures," 575–86 (Stone, *Essays*, 259–70). In particular note pp. 579–82.

²¹ Stone, *Essays*, 263–64.



4QPrayer of Levi
PAM photo no. 43.242
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role, yet the stress laid on the transmission of cultic teaching and lore from the antediluvian Book of Noah (*ALD* 57), to Abraham (*ALD* 13, 50, 57) and then to Levi, sets the levitical priesthood in the sacerdotal line reaching back to Adam.²² The issue of the antediluvian priesthood will be discussed elsewhere in detail;²³ it is of significance to our discussion that levitical cultic authority and teaching are anchored in prior tradition and recognition by the patriarchs, and neither in Levi's consecration to the priesthood, which plays such a dominant role in *TPL*, nor in the Mosaic revelation. This concentrates in the levitical line the antique traditions of priesthood.

Thus, this cluster of material picks up biblical themes about Levi and aggrandizes them. Levi is not just dedicated to the cult; his cultic knowledge is of age-old origin; he learns his priestly role from Abraham; and his priestly function is recognized by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is not just anointed to priesthood, but has royal characteristics: 1QTL^{Levi} frag. 1 reads, alas incompletely, that "[t]he kingdom of priesthood is greater than the kingdom[.]" The development of Levi's sapiential and even judicial role was expounded in the preceding paragraph. It may be summarized by saying that he does not just "teach Jacob Torah" but becomes a central sapiential figure, instructing, teaching, and participating in divine wisdom. This remarkable concentration of themes in Levi presumably relates to and perhaps reacts against other views of the priestly, royal, and sapiential roles and their players in Judaism of the third century BCE. We lack the information, however, to sketch the social contexts in which such varied views may have been cultivated.

II. The Aramaic Text of The Prayer of Levi

Note that "lines" refers to lines of the 4Q manuscript, while "verses" or "§§" refers to sections according to the Greek text.

The Text of The Prayer of Levi

4QPrayer Column 1		lines
דן[	]	5
אנה[	]	6
אתרחע[ת וכל	]	7
נמלת לשמיא[	]	8

²² This contrasts strikingly with the treatment of the levitical priesthood in Hebrews 7. There the disjunction of the teaching of the levitical and the pre-levitical (Melchizedekian) priesthoods is stressed.

²³ Some aspects of the heavenly or primordial origin of temple and cult are discussed in M. E. Stone, "Lists of Revealed Things in the Apocalyptic Literature," in *Magnalia Dei* (ed. W. Lemke, P. D. Miller, and F. M. Cross; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976) 444–46 (*Essays*, 409–11).

ואצבעת כפי וידי	]	9
אמרת מרי אנתה	]	10
אנתה בלחודיך ידע	]	11
ארחת קשט ארחק	]	12
באישאיונותא דחא	]	13
חכמה ומנדע וגבורה	]	14
לאשכחה רחמיך קדמיך	]	15
דשפיר ודטב קדמיך	]	16
ואל תשלט בי כל שטן	]	17
עלי מרי וקרבני למהוא לכה	]	18

Line 18: Note correction p.m. of the מ of למהוא.

Note that this fragment is made up of parts of two sheets joined by a sewing.

4QPrayer Column 2	lines
לע]	5
מרי בן] ומללת [	6
זרע רק]שט	7
צלות עב]דך למעבד]	8
דין קשט לבן]ל עלם	9
לבר עבדך מן ק]דמיך	10
באדין נגדת בן]	11
על אבי יעקוב וכד]י	12
מן אבל מין אדין]	13
שכבת ויתבת אנה ע]ל	14
אדין חזיון אחזית]	15
בחזית חזויא וחזית שמ]יא	16
תחזתי רם עד דבק לשמי]א	17
לי תרעי שמיא ומלאך חר]ן	18

Line 11: Marginal mark of new section precedes, and the first letter is indented.

Line 12: The ו of וכד]י is rubbed, but can clearly be read.

Line 16: Milik reads חזויא but חזויא seems clear.

Possible Reconstruction of the Prayer of Levi

In the reconstruction, which is in any case speculative, we have omitted the supra-literal markings indicated in the diplomatic edition above.

Column 1	<i>verses</i>
[אדין עיני ואנפין] נטלת לשמיא [ופומי פתחת ומללת],	3
ואצבעת כפי וידי [אושטת בקושטא קדם קדישיא וצלית ו] אמרת.	4
מרי אנתה [ידעת כל לכביא	5
וכל רעיוניא א]נתה בלחודיך [ידע:	
[ויבען בני קדמי	6
הב לי כל [ארחת קשט	
ארחק [מני מרי רוח עויה	7
ורעיוני ב]איש[ת]א וזנותא דחא [מני:	
אחויני מרי רוח קודשא עטה	8
ח]כמה ומנדע וגבורה [הב לי	
כה למעבד דשפיר קדמיך	9
[ולא]שכחה רחמו <ן > קדמיך	
[לשכחה מלליך עמי מרי]	
וטב קדמיך	
[. . .] דשפיר	
ו]אל תשלט בי כל שטן	10
[לאטעני מן ארחך]	
[ורחם ע]לי מרי וקרבני	11
למהוא לכה [עבד:	
Column 2	<i>verses</i>
[אל תפנה אנפיך	15
מן בר עבדך יעקב:	
אנתה] מרי ב]רכת לאברהם אבי ולשרה אמי	
ומללת דתיהב להן]	16
זרע דק]שט בריך לעלם:	
ואף שמע לקל] צלות עבדך לוי	17
למהוא קריב לך	
...	18
למעבד] דין קשט ל]כל עלם	
...	
ו]אל תעדי [לבר עבדך מן ק]דם אנפך כל ימי עלם.	19
וחשית בבעותי	

Greek Text

1. τότε ἐγὼ ἔπλυνα τὰ ἱμάτιά μου, καὶ καθάρισας αὐτὰ ἐν ὕδατι καθαρῷ
2. καὶ ὄλος ἐλουσάμην ἐν ὕδατι ζῶντι· καὶ πάσας τὰς ὁδοὺς μου ἐποίησα εὐθείας.
3. τότε τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου καὶ τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ἤρα πρὸς τὸν οὐρανόν, καὶ τὸ στόμα μου ἤνοιξα καὶ ἐλάλησα,
4. καὶ τοὺς δακτύλους τῶν χειρῶν μου καὶ τὰς χεῖράς μου ἀνεπέτασα εἰς ἀλήθειαν κατέναντι τῶν ἁγίων. καὶ ἠὲξάμην καὶ εἶπα·
5. Κύριε, γινώσκεις πάσας τὰς καρδίας, καὶ πάντα τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς ἐννοιῶν σὺ μόνος ἐπίστασαι.
6. καὶ νῦν τέχνα μου μετ' ἐμοῦ. καὶ δός μοι πάσας ὁδοὺς ἀληθείας·
7. μάκρυνον ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, κύριε, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄδικον καὶ διαλογισμὸν τὸν πονηρὸν (manuscript διαλογισμῶν τῶν πονηρῶν) καὶ πορνείαν, καὶ ὕβριν ἀπόστρεφον ἀπ' ἐμοῦ.
8. δειχθήτω μοι, δέσποτα, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, καὶ βουλήν καὶ σοφίαν καὶ γνῶσιν καὶ ἰσχὺν δός μοι.
9. ποιῆσαι τὰ (manuscript τό) ἀρέσκοντά σοι καὶ εὐρεῖν χάριν ἐνώπιόν σου καὶ αἰνεῖν τοὺς λόγους σου μετ' ἐμοῦ, κύριε·
10. καὶ μὴ κατασχύάτω με πᾶς σατανᾶς πλανῆσαί με ἀπὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ σου.
11. καὶ ἐλέησόν με καὶ προσάγαγέ με εἶναι σου δοῦλος καὶ λατρεῦσαί σοι καλῶς.
12. τεῖχος εἰρήνης σου γένεσθαι κύκλῳ μου, καὶ σκέπη σου τῆς δυναστείας σκεπασάτω με ἀπὸ παντὸς κακοῦ.
13. παραδοὺς διὸ δὴ καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν ἐξάλειψον ὑποκάτωθεν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ συντελέσαι τὴν ἀνομίαν ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς γῆς.
14. καθάρισον τὴν καρδίαν μου, δέσποτα, ἀπὸ πάσης ἀκαθαρσίας, καὶ προσάρωμαί πρὸς σε αὐτός.
15. καὶ μὴ ἀποστρέψῃς τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀπὸ τοῦ υἱοῦ παιδός σου Ἰακώβ. σύ, κύριε, εὐλόγησας τὸν Ἀβραάμ πατέρα μου καὶ Σάρραν μητέρα μου,
16. καὶ εἶπας δοῦναι αὐτοῖς σπέρμα δίκαιον εὐλογημένον εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.
17. εἰσάκουσον δὲ καὶ τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ παιδός σου Λευὶ γενέσθαι σοι ἐγγύς,
18. καὶ μέτοχον ποιήσον τοῖς λόγοις σου ποιεῖν κρίσιν ἀληθινὴν εἰς πάντα τὸν αἰῶνα, ἐμὲ καὶ τοὺς υἱούς μου εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεὰς τῶν αἰώνων·
19. καὶ μὴ ἀποστήσῃς τὸν υἶόν τοῦ παιδός σου ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ αἰῶνος. καὶ ἐσιώπα ἔτι δεόμενος.

Translation

lines

4QTLLevi^a Column 1

4

5

]this

6

]I

Greek and 4QTL^{vi}a4QTL^{vi}a Column 1

<i>verses</i>	<i>lines</i>
*1 Then I laundered my garments and having purified them with pure water,	6
*2 I also [washed] my whole self in living water, and I made all my paths upright.	7
*3 Then I lifted up my eyes and my countenance to heaven, and I opened my mouth and spoke.	8
*4 And I stretched out the fingers of my hands and my hands [] for truth over against (toward) the holy ones, And I prayed and said	9 10
*5 O Lord, you know all hearts, And you alone understand all the thoughts of minds.	11
*6 And now my children are with me, And grant me all the paths of truth.	12
*7 Make far from me, O Lord, the unrighteous spirit, and evil thought and fornication, and turn pride away from me.	13
*8 Let there be shown to me, O Lord, the holy spirit, and counsel, and wisdom and knowledge and grant me strength,	14
*9 in order to do that which is pleasing to you and find favor before you, and to praise your words with me, O Lord. . . . And that which is pleasant and good before you.	15 16
*10 And let not any satan have power over me, to make me stray from your path.	17
*11 And have mercy upon me and bring me forward, to be your servant and to minister well to you.	18
*12 so that wall of your peace is around me, and let the shelter of your power shelter me from every evil.	
*13. Wherefore, giving over even lawlessness, wipe it out from under the heaven, and end lawlessness from the face of the earth.	
*14 Purify my heart, Lord, from all impurity, and let me, myself, be raised to you.	

*15	And turn not your countenance aside from the son of your servant Jacob.	column 2
	[	5
	You, O Lord , blessed Abraham my father and Sarah my mother.	6
*16	And you said (that you would) give them a righteous seed blessed for ever.	7
*17	Hearken also to the voice of your servant Levi to be close to you,	8
*18	And make (me) a participant in your words, to do true judgment for all time , me and my children for all the generations of the ages.	9
*19	And do not remove the son of your servant from your countenance all the days of the world. And I became silent still continuing to pray.	10

4QTLLevi^a column 2 (continued)

lines

- 11 Then I continued on[
12 to my father Jacob and . . . [
13 from Abel-Mayin. Then[
14 I lay down and I remained[
14 Then I was shown visions[
16 In the vision of a vision and I saw the heaven[s
17 beneath me, high until it reached to the heaven[s
18 to me the gates of heaven, and an angel[

Commentary

Greek §2

Levi here washes his clothes ἐν ὕδατι καθαρῶ and himself ἐν ὕδατι ζῶντι. In *TPL* 8:5 he is washed ὕδατι καθαρῶ. Philo says that the high priest is washed ὕδατι πηγῆς καθαρωτάτω καὶ ζωτικωτάτω (*Vita Mosis* 2.143). The expression מים טהורים occurs only in Ezek 36:25, in a context that is not directly cultic.

Greek §3

The word ἐλάλησα, “and spoke,” seems superfluous in view of the phrase ηὐξάμην καὶ εἶπα, “I prayed and said,” at the end of §4.

4QTLLevi^a col. 1 line 9 (= §4)

כפתי. Aramaic, literally, “my palms.” There seems to be a doubling of the idea of lifting up the hands in prayer in the forms of text preserved in both

Aramaic and Greek. In the translation we show our assumption that, as is evident from the poetic structure, a verb has been lost from the first colon and the remaining words run together. In the LXX, Greek χεῖρ sometimes renders Hebrew כף, the cognate of the Aramaic here. In 11QPs^a 24:3–7 = Syriac Psalm 3:3–4 we read: למעון קדשכה פרשתי כפי, “I spread out my palms toward your holy dwelling.” This might be taken to imply that τῶν ἁγίων here derives from a Semitic like קדישין or קדשיין.²⁴ Nonetheless, the exact sense of “holy ones” or “holy things” remains enigmatic.

4QTL^{Levi}^a col. 1 line 10 (= §5 reconstruction)

רעיוניא. See the Theodotion text of Daniel 2:29, 30; 4:16 etc. However, the Greek here is ἐννοιῶν and the reconstruction of this word must be regarded as completely speculative.

4QTL^{Levi}^a col. 1 line 12 (= §6)

ארחא. It is not certain from the form whether this word is singular or plural. Note the use of “ways” or “paths,” which, combined with the two spirits ideas in this passage, might provide a background upon which the *duo viae* ideas developed. The terminology of “ways” recurs in §10.

4QTL^{Levi}^a col. 1 line 12 (= §7)

קדמי. The original here is doubtful. Observe that the Aramaic manuscript has nothing corresponding to Greek ὑβρις, “pride,” and we have omitted it in our reconstruction. Note somewhat similar phraseology in *Testament of Dan* 5:6.

4QTL^{Levi}^a col. 1 line 14 (= §8)

אחויני in the reconstruction seems plausible on the grounds of the Aramaic, even though the Greek has a third person singular passive imperative δευχθήτω, “let there be shown to me.”

חכמה ומנדע וגבורה. These terms are presumably derived from Isa 11:2, which reads “רוח ה' רוח חכמה וכינה רוח עצה וגבורה רוח דעת ויראת ה'.” The expression τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄγιον corresponds to “רוח ה'.” In Isa 11:2 all the positive terms found here are listed, and some further ones, and a similar accumulation of positive language may be observed in 1QS 4:3–4. The negative language here differs from that in 1QS and no clear instance showing this type of contrasting language was found elsewhere. Compare Dan 5:14 and P. A. Munch in *Or* 13 (1935) 234–53. This section, some aspects of which are discussed above in the introductory remarks, is composed in balanced prose like parts of 1QS, such as the Discourse on the Two Spirits (1QS 3:13–4:26).

4QTL^{Levi}^a col. 1 line 15 (= §9)

רחמי >ן. The text of the Qumran fragment, רחמיך here is emended according to the Greek.

²⁴ Note that the Syriac of this Psalm reads *lmedyārē dqudsāk*, “to your holy habitations,” which might point to a reading like קדשיין.

§9

The phrase *καὶ αἰνεῖν τοὺς λόγους σου μετ' ἔμοῦ, κύριε* is not preserved in Aramaic. It can be compared with 11QP^s_a Plea for Deliverance 19:16–17, where, following a passage on the two spirits, we read: *כי אתה ה' שכחי*. The expression *μετ' ἔμοῦ* is a little difficult here.

4QTLevi^a col. 1 line 16 (= §9)

Since the parallel material in §9 of the Greek shows nothing corresponding to the words *רשפיר ומב קדמיר*, it seems likely that a whole stich has fallen out by homoeoteleuton either at the level of the Aramaic *Vorlage* of the Greek or in the Greek itself (*קדמיר*—*קדמיר* or Greek *ἐνώπιόν σου*—*ἐνώπιόν σου*). Alternatively, considering the similarity of these two Aramaic phrases, a doublet may have arisen in the *Vorlage* of the Aramaic text preserved at Qumran.

4QTLevi^a col. 1 line 17 (= §10)

“let not any satan have power over me.” This implies the idea that demons were a threat. The same view is implied also, it seems, by §12, “let the wall of your peace be around me, and let the shelter of your power shelter me from every evil,” with which compare the prayer for protection in 11QP^s_a 24:12 (Syriac Psalm 3). There is a close parallel between the Aramaic expression in §10 and the Hebrew 11QP^s_a Plea for Deliverance, lines 15–16: *אל תשלט בי שטן*, “Let not Satan (a satan) have power over me.” Here, apparently, *שטן* is the name of a type or class of evil spirit, and not of Satan. While 11QP^s_a Plea of Deliverance might be taken to be ambiguous in this respect, *ALD* seems unambiguous.²⁵ The expression *כל שטן*, “any satan,” would be impossible if *שטן* were a proper noun. This view is strengthened by other similar expressions in Qumran texts such as IQH frag. 4: *תנער בכול שטן משחית*, “you will rebuke every destructive satan,” and IQH frag. 45: *כל שטן ומשחיתן*; “. . . every satan and destructive (i.e. spirit).”²⁶ It follows from the usage in IQH and in *ALD* that the use of “satan” with the distributive implies more than one, meaning that “satan” is a category of evil spirit and not a proper name.²⁷ The expression “wall of peace” in §12 should be compared with IQH

²⁵ The reverse of the concept in *ALD* may be observed in *TPDan* 5:6: “For I have read in the book of Enoch, the righteous one, that your prince is Satan and that all the spirits of impurity and arrogance will obey Levi to attend upon the sons of Levi to make them sin before the Lord.” Clearly the attitude to Levi is quite different in this document.

²⁶ It is likely that the same usage is to be found in the fragmentary text in IQSb line 8: *כל שטן*. D. Flusser suggests that this is based on Zech 3:2 (D. Flusser, “Qumrân and Jewish ‘Apotropaic’ Prayers,” *IEJ* 16.3 [1966], 194–205, esp. p. 197 [reprinted in his *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1988) 194–203]). The root *נער* seems to have a technical use in this context; cf. already Zech 3:2.

²⁷ In light of these considerations, the usage in 11QP^s_a Plea of Deliverance, which reads in full as follows, should be taken as referring to a satan as a class of evil spirit: *אל תשלט בי שטן ורוח*, “Let not a satan rule over me, nor an unclean spirit; neither let pain nor an evil inclination take possession of my bones.” Observe that J. A. Sanders translates

9:33 משמר שלומך, “your guarding of peace.” A similar combination of expressions occurs in the Jewish evening prayer השכיבנו, from which we cite a number of phrases: ופרש עלינו סכת שלומך, “and spread over us the tabernacle of your peace”; והגן בעדנו והסר מעלינו אויב . . . והסר שטן מלפנינו ומאחרינו, “and protect us and remove from us enemies . . . and remove satan from before us and from after us.”

The similarity between 11QPlea for Deliverance and *ALD* at this point was already pointed out by D. Flusser in 1966.²⁸ He regards both *ALD* and 11QPlea for Deliverance as reflecting a common interpretation of Ps 119:133b ואין תשלט בי כל און, “Let no iniquity rule over me” in which “satan” is substituted for “iniquity.” He notes similar expressions in the Jewish liturgy, ואל תשלט בנו יצר הרע, “let the evil inclination not rule over us” (morning service); וישלט בי יצר טוב ואל ישלט בי יצר הרע, “and let the good inclination rule over me, and let the evil inclination not rule over me” (prayer before retiring at night); . . . שתצילני מפגע רע מיצר רע ומשטן המשחית . . . from mishap and from the evil inclination and from the destructive Satan” (Rabbi Judah’s prayer). The similarity with the Qumran expressions is striking.

T. H. Gaster maintains that “the name [i.e., Satan] is applied in three [biblical] passages (all post-exilic) to a super-human being, but in each case it is simply an appellative, not a proper name—i.e. it merely defines the role which the being in question happens to play in a particular situation.”²⁹ The passages he refers to are Job 1–2; Zech 3:1–2; and 1 Chr 21:1. It is notable that while in Job and Zechariah reference is made to הַשָּׂטָן, “the accuser,” indicating that a role is implied, in 1 Chr 21:1, שָׂטָן without the definite article is to be found. This word corresponds to אָפֶרֶד in the parallel passage in 2 Sam 24:1 and, as Gaster remarks, the term “is simply a common noun (i.e., “a satan”) denoting a spirit . . . who happened on that particular occasion to act with untoward effect.”³⁰ The same usage of satan is to be observed in *1 Enoch* 65:6: “for they have learnt all the secrets of the angels, and all the wrongdoing of the satans, and all their secret power”³¹ and a similar usage is also to be observed in *1 Enoch* 40:7. The use of “satan” as a class of demon

“Satan” (*The Psalms Scroll of Qumrān Cave II* [DJD 4; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965] 78). For this verse, see J. C. Greenfield, “Two Notes on the Apocryphal Psalms,” in *Sha‘arei Talmon* Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon (ed. M. Fishbane et al.; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992) 309–14. The use of “satan” in the specific sense may be observed in *TPDan* 5:6, referring to Satan as the prince of the tribe of Dan; see n. 25 above.

²⁸ Flusser, “Qumrān and Jewish ‘Apotropaic’ Prayers,” 194–204. In addition to the point about the satans, made on pp. 196–99, he discusses the petition for the spirit, on pp. 195–96.

²⁹ T. H. Gaster, s.v. “Satan” in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville and New York: Abingdon, 1962) 4. 224.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 225.

³¹ Cited from M. A. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978) 2. 154.

is also to be observed on a Syriac magical bowl, published by S. Shaked and J. Naveh, which refers to “all the mighty Satans, all the mighty Liliths.”³²

It would seem, therefore, that this is the earliest occurrence of this meaning of the word “satan,” which is already foreshadowed in 2 Chr 21:1. Moreover, the formulas remarked upon here clearly stand toward the head of the line of development of Jewish apotropaic prayers.

4QTL^{Levi} col. 1 line 18 (= §11)

The word מרי is not found in Greek. The word לכה is a Hebraism.

Greek only §12

The lines in this verse seem excessively long in view of the parallel structure of the rest of this prayer.

Greek only §12

σαεπασάτω. This is perhaps a corruption in Semitic יסוככני/יסוככני.

Greek only §15

The expression perhaps comes from 2 Chr 30:19, יסיר פנים, which in Greek is almost identical with here και οὐκ ἀποστρέψει τὸν πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ.

4QTL^{Levi} col. 2 line 5 (= §15)

The surviving letters לע do not seem to correspond to anything in Greek. J. A. Fitzmyer reconstructs as לעיניך but the basis for this is unclear. The surviving Aramaic letters, although they cannot be translated, indicate that at least one hemistich was lost from the Greek text here.

4QTL^{Levi} col. 2 line 8 (= §17)

The Greek has here τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ παιδός σου, where the Aramaic has צלוח עבךך. Since φωνή does not usually translate צלוח on its own, perhaps we should reconstruct here קל צלוח in the original.

4QTL^{Levi} col. 2 line 9 (= §18)

The Greek εἰς πάντα τὸν αἰῶνα has been rendered by Aramaic לכל עלם, but that is an unusual expression.

Greek only §19

και ἐσιώπησα ἔτι δεόμενος. Compare with *Genesis Apocryphon* 20:16, where, of Abraham after prayer, it says, בכיה וחשיה. Presumably Levi continues in silent prayer: contrast Dan 9:20–21, where emphasis is put upon speech in prayer. A silent prayer is also described in 1 Sam 1:13. Our Aramaic reconstruction should be regarded as indicative only, attempting to capture the aspectual dimension of the Greek verbs.

³² We have followed their translation in capitalizing the word “Satans,” though clearly a small letter would be preferable. See J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magical Bowls* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1985) 125. In Syriac incantation texts *sātānē* (“satans”) is used together with other terms for various sorts of demons while in Mandaic texts *satania bišia* (“wicked satans”) is common.

4QTL^a col. 2 line 10 (= §19)

De Jonge points out that *TPL* 4:2 refers to prayer. See the full discussion of this in the introductory remarks above.

4QTL^a col. 2 line 11

From this point on, the text of the Qumran fragment has no parallel in Greek. There are no accepted verse numbers for this part of the prayer.

4QTL^a col. 2 line 13

In *TPL* 3:5 the place Abel Maul is mentioned, at which place Levi received a vision and offered a prayer. Abel Maul (i.e., אבל מחולה) is a known biblical site; see Judg 7:22; 1 Kgs 4:12; 19:16. It is in the mountains of Ephraim. Here Abel Mayin = Abel Mayim = Abel Beth Maacah is referred to; see 1 Kgs 15:26; 2 Chr 16:4.³³

4QTL^a col. 2 line 14

יָהָב. The sense could be “sat up,” that is, after vision, or alternatively “remained” or “settled.” Lacking context a determination is difficult.

4QTL^a col. 2 line 15

חזוי probably should be taken as a passive *'aphel* form of the root חזי.

4QTL^a col. 2 line 16

Milik reconstitutes lines 16–18 as:

... וחזית שמניא פתיחין וחזית טורא
 תחזיתי רם עד רכק לשמניא והיית בה ואתפתחו
 לי תרעי שמיא מלאך חד] אמר לי ...

This is of course highly speculative and is chiefly based on an extrapolation from the text of *TPL* 2:4–5. In Hollander and de Jonge’s translation that passage reads:

And I felt grief for the race of the sons of men
 and I prayed to the Lord that I might be saved.
 Then a sleep fell upon me
 and I beheld a high mountain
 (that was the mountain of the shield in Abelmaul).

The relationship between the texts seems to us to be too complex for an exact reconstruction to be ventured, although the general character of the contents is clear. It should be observed that, as far as can be discerned from the Aramaic fragments, the identification of the mountain as “Aspis” = “shield” (= “Sirion” by popular etymology) is missing. This reading is also missing from the so-called “non- α ” Greek manuscripts, which is taken by Milik as a sign of their priority in this respect.³⁴

³³ See G. W. E. Nickelsburg, “Enoch, Levi and Peter: Recipients of Revelation in Upper Galilee,” *JBL* 100 (1981) 575–600; de Jonge, *Studies*, 247–60; Milik, “Testament de Lévi,” 403–5; idem, *The Books of Enoch* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976) 196 in reconstructed text.

³⁴ Milik, “Testament de Levi,” 404. Compare the comments of de Jonge, “Notes,” 135–36.

4QTL^{evi}a col. 2 line 17

□ג. Is this a verb or an adjective?

4QTL^{evi}a col. 2 line 18

For the expression "gates of heavens," compare *TPL* 5:1.

The *Testament of Levi* has been a prime matter of scholarly interest to the writers for quite a few years. We have prepared an edition of the Aramaic texts from the Cairo Geniza and a study of its contents, but hesitated to publish it without having access to the Qumran texts. Now that we have been entrusted with the edition of the Qumran materials we will be able to complete our study of the Geniza material in the near future. The proposed book will appear in the series *Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha*. We hope to publish the Qumran fragments in a series of articles, to appear finally in the *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* series.