

Jacob, Bull of

→ God (Names and Epithets)

Jacob, Mighty One of

→ God (Names and Epithets)

Jacob, Prayer of

The *Prayer of Jacob* is a composition included in the Greek magical papyri that identifies itself as a “prayer” and opens with a pseudepigraphic attribution to Jacob. Invocations of God in both particularistic and universalistic terms alternate with petitions for protection, wisdom, and angelic exaltation. A reference to the petitioner as “from the nation of Israel” implies that its author was Jewish, though the appearance of formulations and ideas common in pagan magical texts, combined with the widespread belief in the power of the Israelite God, makes a non-Jewish provenance equally plausible. The text was composed as early as the 1st century CE, with the 4th century its *terminus ad quem*.

The prayer’s language and themes reflect an eclectic mix of influences, including the HB, Hellenistic Jewish literature, ancient Jewish prayers, and Greek magical papyri. Though the composition generally does not incorporate biblical language, several passages betray the impact of biblical and postbiblical traditions. The prayer refers to God as “the one enthroned upon holy Mount Sinai.” The attribution to Jacob of a prayer that seeks angelic exaltation may reflect a postbiblical tradition hinted at in Philo that Jacob was transformed into an angel (*Conf.* 146). Other allusions in the prayer to the HB, such as the reference to God as “the one [who] favored Abraam by [giving the] kingdom to him” (1.5) are unparalleled elsewhere.

Bibliography: ■ Charlesworth, J. H. (ed.), “Prayer of Jacob,” in *OTP* 2 (ed. id.; New York 1985) 715–25. ■ Merkelbach, R., “Gebot Jakobs,” in id., *Abrasax: Ausgewählte Papyri religiösen und magischen Inhalts*, vol. 4: *Exorzismen und jüdisch/christlich beeinflusste Texte* (PapyCol 17/4; Opladen 1996) 105–10. ■ Preisendanz, K./A. Henrichs, *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauber-Papyri*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart ²1973–74) 148–49. ■ Smith, M., “The Jewish Elements in the Magical Papyri,” in id., *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh*, vol. 1 (RGRW 130; Leiden 1996) 242–56. [Esp. 250] ■ Van der Horst, P. W./J. H. Newman, “Prayer of Jacob,” in id., *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek* (Berlin 2008) 217–46.

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Jacob, Testament of

The *Testament of Jacob* is often included together with the *Testament of Abraham* and the *Testament of Isaac*. Its author knew and was dependent on both. The *Testament of Jacob* imitates the *Testament of Isaac*, but it follows the Genesis narrative more closely

than the *Testaments* of either *Abraham* or *Isaac*. The text was preserved in Christian churches and is extant in Coptic (only in Bohairic), Ethiopic, and Arabic versions, although a Greek original seems possible. In its present form the *Testament* is Christian – see the references to the Trinity in 1:1, the close wording to Matt 8:12 in 5:9 and the reference to “our Lord and our God and our Master and our Savior, Jesus the Messiah” in 8:3 – and it was most likely composed in Egypt. Although no clear evidence of a Jewish original has survived, the questions of whether it is a Jewish or Christian composition and what its original language was must remain open. A date for the work is difficult to determine, but since it must postdate the *Testament of Abraham* (1st–2nd cent. CE) and the *Testament of Isaac* (3rd–4th cent. CE?), it likely was composed shortly after the latter work.

Unlike the *Testament of Abraham*, which does not take the form of a testament, but in the same manner as the *Testament of Isaac*, which does, the *Testament of Jacob* is represented as the patriarch’s testament to all of his children (5:1 in the translation of Stinespring). After an invocation in the name of the Trinity, the text celebrates the story of Jacob on the same day, the twenty-eighth of Misri, as the *Testament of Isaac* (cf. 1:2). Jacob has already been in Egypt for seventeen years, having gone there to be with Joseph (2:1; see Gen 46:1–7, 34). When it comes time for Jacob to die, God sends Michael to the patriarch, as he had to both Abraham and Isaac. When informed of the decree of death, Jacob accedes willingly, apparently since he had a special relationship with angels (1:7, 10). The angel who announces Jacob’s death also informs the patriarch that he has guarded Jacob from his infancy, giving a brief rehearsal of Jacob’s life, and blesses the patriarch in much the same manner as Isaac was blessed in the *Testament of Isaac*. Jacob’s family becomes distraught upon learning of his impending death, but Jacob comforts them (3:2–11). He subsequently makes Joseph promise to bury him in the same tomb as Abraham and Isaac, whereupon he blesses Joseph’s sons Manasseh and Ephraim in a scene reminiscent of the blessing of Jacob and Esau (4:6–16; cf. Gen 27). After an abbreviated testament scene in which Jacob is said to reveal to his sons what would happen to them, he is taken to see sinners who are tormented (5:7–9), and in the Bohairic, he then ascends to heaven, where he sees Abraham and Isaac and “all the resting places and all the good things prepared for the righteous” (9:7–8 in the translation of Kuhn). After Jacob’s death, Pharaoh mourns the patriarch and permits Joseph to take his body for burial. The narrative proper ends with Jacob’s interment and Joseph’s continued rule in Egypt.

Following the narrative, the author appends a section of *paranesis*, exhorting readers to “have zeal