

An Ancient Jewish Prayer

1st Century BC
(1QH^a viii 16-26)

Be blessed, Lord, great in plans and mighty in acts,
everything is your work.

You have resolved, in fact, to take pity on your servant,
to show me favour by the spirit of your compassion
and by the . . . of your glory.

To you belongs the justice because you have done all this.

And since I know that you have recorded the spirit of the just man,
I have chosen to purify my hands in accordance with your will
and your servant's soul detests every work of iniquity.

I know that no-one besides you is just.

I have appeased your face by the spirit which you have placed in me,
to lavish your kindness on your servant for ever,
to purify me with your holy spirit,
to bring me near by your will
according to the extent of your kindnesses . . .

. . .

And I know that you are a lenient and compassionate God,
slow to anger, full of kindness and of truth,
who forgives offence . . .
and has pity on the evil of those who love you and keep your
precepts,
those who turn to you with trust and a whole heart . . .
to serve you and do what is good in your eyes . . .