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THE BOOK OF JUBILEES AS PARATEXTUAL LITERATURE

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I. Introduction

The phenomenon of certain texts resonating in, interplaying with, and permeating each other has come to the centre of attention both in literary theory and exegesis. In fact, it reflects an old phenomenon, with this aspect of the interpretation of texts being as old as interpretation itself. Ever since classical antiquity there has been an awareness of verbal and thematic resemblances between texts. Classical rhetoricians felt it important to imitate authoritative texts to the best of their ability, with as little personal contribution as possible. Originality was esteemed less highly than copying, repeating and discovering how others thought. Ultimately, this provided the incentive for one's own thinking. In classical philology the imitation of earlier texts was a form of self-enrichment through the ideas and formulations of one's predecessors.¹

The literature of the early Jewish and Christian traditions pre-eminently offers an example of the ongoing repetition of texts. The phenomenon of the inclusion of older texts within newer ones can be seen in the Hebrew Bible,² as well as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. In

¹ Much has been written on this subject. See, for example, John W. H. Atkins, *Literary Criticism in Antiquity: A Sketch of Its Development* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934); Arno Reiff, *Interpretatio, Imitatio, Aemulatio: Begriff und Vorstellung literarischer Abhängigkeit bei den Römern* (Würzburg: Triltsch, 1959); Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik: Ein Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft* (3d ed.; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990); Felix Claus, *Imitatio in de Latijnse letterkunde* (Amfitheater; Kapellen: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1977).

² See, for example, Renée Bloch, "Midrash," columns 1263–81 in vol. 5 of *DBSup*. Edited by L. Pirot and A. Robert. 14 vols. Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1928–; Michael A. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (Contraversions: Jews and Other Differences; Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998); Johannes C. De Moor, ed., *Intertextuality in Ugarit and Israel: Papers Read at*

both the New Testament and rabbinic literature, there are many examples of the insertion of texts from the Old Testament, which find new applications in new situations.³ For this kind of literature the editors of this volume use the descriptive designation *paratextual* and define this term as follows: “On the basis of authoritative texts or themes, the authors of paratextual literature employed exegetical techniques to provide answers to questions of their own time, phrased, for example, as answers by God through Moses or the prophets. The result of their exegetical effort is communicated in the form of a new book.”⁴ Different genres can be used—for example, rewritten Bible, or new stories or novellas created on the basis of biblical events or topics.

This definition of paratextual literature was developed from the term *parabiblical* literature, introduced by Ginsberg,⁵ who used it to refer to a distinct literary genre which covers works such as the *Genesis Apocryphon*, the *Book of Jubilees* and Pseudo-Philo, which paraphrase and/or supplement the canonical Scriptures.⁶ He excludes works involving explicit interpretation from this category. In the series *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (DJD), Tov used the term parabiblical to refer to literature “closely related to texts or themes of the Hebrew Bible. Some of these compositions present a reworking, rewriting, or paraphrase of biblical books.”⁷ In his translation of the Dead Sea Scrolls, García Martínez also used the term “parabiblical literature.” According to him, it is literature “that begins with the Bible, which retells the biblical text in its own way, intermingling it and expanding it with other, quite different traditions.”⁸ He differentiates the material in terms of the degree of

the Joint Meeting at the Society for Old Testament Study and Het Oudtestamentisch Werkgezelschap in Nederland en België Held at Oxford (OtSt 40; Leiden: Brill, 1998).

³ For a collection of many early Jewish and early Christian texts and traditions connected with the pericopes of the Pentateuch, see James L. Kugel, *The Bible as It Was* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

⁴ See the introduction to this volume.

⁵ Harold L. Ginsberg, review J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave I: A Commentary*, *TS* 28 (1967): 574–77.

⁶ This is roughly the same group of texts Vermes described as the rewritten Bible. See Daniel K. Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts: Strategies for Extending the Scriptures in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (The Library of the Second Temple Studies 63 = Companion to the Qumran Scrolls 8; London: T&T Clark, 2007), 4.

⁷ Emanuel Tov, “Foreword,” in *Qumran Cave 4. VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 1* (ed. H. Attridge et al.; DJD XIII; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), ix.

⁸ Florentino García Martínez, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 218.

fidelity to the original biblical text. Some texts follow the biblical text more or less closely (for example, *Genesis Apocryphon*, *Jubilees*), while others start with a biblical text but result in an independent composition. Lange and Mittmann present an annotated list classifying the Dead Sea Scrolls, and offer some methodological reflections on parabiblical literature.⁹ Parabiblical literature differs from exegetical texts in that no explicit exegesis of the biblical texts is given. Parabiblical compositions may employ exegetical techniques but this is always done implicitly in the context of the creation of a new literary text.

The use of the term “paratextual literature” in this volume is an extension of the use of the term “parabiblical literature.” It attempts to include comparable textual strategies used in different times, cultures and literary corpora. It should be noted, however, that use of the term “paratextuality,” differs from Gérard Genette’s definition which refers to devices that mediate the reception of a book to the reader, such as the title, subtitle, preface, foreword, dedication, epigraphs, intertitles, notes, epilogue, afterword or book cover, and many other kinds of secondary signals, whether allographic or autographic.¹⁰ The way the term paratextuality is used in the present volume concurs with Genette’s use of the term *hypertextuality*, which refers to “any relationship uniting a text B (the hypertext) to an earlier text A (the hypotext) upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of a commentary.” In my view, the way the term paratextuality is used in this volume also relates to the term *intertextuality*, which focuses on the actual presence of an earlier text (the architext) within a later text (the phenotext).

II. “*Transtextuality*” in the Hebrew Bible and Early Jewish Literature

An important aspect of any kind of “*transtextuality*” is the notion that texts are not created in a vacuum, but arise from other texts. The earlier texts are repeated and at the same time responded to. A more

⁹ Armin Lange and Ulrike Mittmann-Richert, “Annotated List of the Texts from the Judaean Desert Classified by Content and Genre,” in *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and an Introduction to the “Discoveries in the Judaean Desert” Series* (ed. E. Tov; DJD XXXIX; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 115–64, esp. 117–18.

¹⁰ Richard Macksey, foreword to *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, by Gérard Genette (trans. J. E. Levin; Literature, Culture, Theory 20; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xviii.

recent text (text B) is seen to repeat an older text (text A), as well as other older texts. Text B is in itself a significant whole but it gains an extra dimension through the reader's recognition of its relationship with text A. It is the reader's task to trace and identify the elements of the architext present in the phenotext. The reader addresses the information within the phenotext but sometimes this information is limited, which makes the recognition, identification and interpretation of earlier elements more difficult. The resources offered by a text to assist in the recognition of an earlier element are called indicators. In modern literature, there are many kinds of indicators such as the use of quotation marks, italic font, unusual or different language, and the citing of sources or authors.

Often within the Hebrew Bible and early Jewish literature, a new work only adapts small parts of an older work. Sometimes the link with the older text is made explicitly, such as in cases where quotations mention a source. For example, some post-exilic texts explain a certain religious practice that it is conducted "as is written in the law of Moses" (see *inter alia*, Ezra 3:2; 2 Chr 23:18; and cf. 1 Kgs 2:3). In such cases, it is not always clear exactly what the author is referring to. Often the expression "the law of Moses" seems to suggest a book that must have been similar to the Pentateuch. Sometimes this expression refers to the book of Deuteronomy and it is even possible to identify a specific text, as is the case with 2 Kgs 14:6, where the author points us to Deut 24:16. Most references to earlier works in the Hebrew Bible and early Jewish literature are, however, merely implicit. In such cases, it is only on the basis of the author's choice of words, or sometimes on the basis of subject matter or structure of a text, that it is possible to determine whether a certain architext is present in the phenotext or not. Here the intertext, that element which the architext and the phenotext have in common, itself functions as an indicator. Examples are Mal 1:6–2:9 and Psalm 4, where without the source being mentioned, there is an elaborate use of the priestly blessing (Num 6:23–27). It is clear that in the case of implicit references, a literate reader plays a key role in recognizing the intertextual relationship.

Sometimes a new work takes over an older work entirely. In such instances the new text does not point to one or more scattered texts but incorporates large parts of an older work. In the Hebrew Bible, the Book of Chronicles is the best example of this phenomenon as it often more or less literally repeats large parts of the Books Samuel and Kings. We could call this form of implicit referencing "inclusion" or

“enclosure.”¹¹ It is important to stress that these authors were not writing an interpretive commentary on the earlier texts, but were rewriting these older authoritative texts in order to adapt them to a different context. The result of this textual strategy was a new composition. One can find the same phenomenon in early Jewish literature, in works such as *Jubilees*, the *Genesis Apocryphon* and the *Temple Scroll*, as well as the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* of Pseudo-Philo.

III. *The Rewritten Bible*

The works that entirely adopt an older work are often classified as belonging to a literary genre, namely the “rewritten Bible.”¹² This term was coined by Geza Vermes who defined it as a midrashic insertion of haggadic development into the biblical narrative designed to anticipate questions and solve problems in advance.¹³ The “rewritten Bible” is not an explicit commentary on the earlier text but follows the Scriptures, although it includes a considerable number of additions and interpretative developments.¹⁴ According to George W. Nickelsburg, the “rewritten Bible” is “very closely related to the biblical texts, expanding and paraphrasing them and implicitly commenting on them.”¹⁵ It has a sequential, chronological order. Although it makes use of biblical words and phrases, these are not set apart by way of quotation or lemma, but are integrated into a seamless retelling of the biblical

¹¹ Sommer, *Prophet Reads Scripture*, 26.

¹² For some recent studies on the rewritten Bible, see Anders K. Petersen, “Rewritten Bible as a Borderline Phenomenon—Genre, Textual Strategy, or Canonical Anachronism?,” in *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino Garzía Martínez* (ed. A. Hilhorst, É. Puech, and E. Tigchelaar; JSJSup 122; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 285–306; Erkki Koskenniemi and Pekka Lindqvist, “Rewritten Bible, Rewritten Stories: Methodological Aspects,” in *Rewritten Bible Reconsidered: Proceedings of the Conference in Karkku, Finland, August 24–26, 2006* (ed. A. Laato and J. van Ruiten; SRB 1; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 11–39. See also Falk, *Parabiblical Texts*, 9–17.

¹³ Geza Vermes, “The Life of Abraham,” *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* (ed. G. Vermes; 2d. ed.; StPB 4; Leiden: Brill 1973), 95. Cf. also Charles Perrot and Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, *Pseudo-Philon: Les Antiqués Bibliques* (2 vols.; SC 230; Paris: Cerf, 1976), 2:22–28.

¹⁴ Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–135 A.D.)* (ed. G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Goodman; 4 vols.; rev. ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 3/1:326.

¹⁵ George W. Nickelsburg, “The Bible Rewritten and Expanded,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. M. E. Stone; CRINT 2/2; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1984), 89.

story.¹⁶ Other scholars do not use the term “rewritten Bible” to refer to a distinctive genre. In their view, it describes a literary strategy that is expressed in various genres within a broad range of interpretative writings.¹⁷ In this sense the term does not differ greatly from what is termed parabiblical literature.¹⁸

The works of the rewritten Bible indicate the emergence of an authoritative body of Jewish literature after the exile.¹⁹ In theory one should be able to distinguish between a pre-existing biblical text and one which has been interpreted implicitly in creating a new work.²⁰ In practice, however, it is very difficult to distinguish between biblical and rewritten biblical works.²¹ In early Judaism, before the first century of the Common Era, there was no single list of books regarded as authoritative—as the actual word of God—by all Jewish people.²² The Bible as the canon of sacred scriptures did not yet exist. There is enough evidence to suggest, however, that in the last centuries before the common era, there would have been several books that were considered by Jewish groups as divinely inspired, that is, as the word of God, and prescriptive for religious life. There is even evidence that there were already collections of these sorts of books in an early form.

¹⁶ Philip S. Alexander, “Retelling the Old Testament,” in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars* (ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 116–17.

¹⁷ See, for example, Daniel J. Harrington, “Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical Narratives and Prophecies: 1 The Bible Rewritten (Narratives),” in *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters* (ed. R. A. Kraft and G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *The Bible and Its Modern Interpreters* 2; Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress Press, 1986) 239–47, 253–355; Betsy Halpern-Amaru, *Rewriting the Bible: Land and Covenant in post-Biblical Jewish Literature* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1994).

¹⁸ Falk, *Parabiblical Texts*, 11.

¹⁹ George J. Brooke, “The Rewritten Law, Prophets and Psalms: Issues for the Understanding the Text of the Bible,” in *The Bible as a Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (ed. E. D. Herbert and E. Tov; London: The British Library, 2002), 31.

²⁰ Falk, *Parabiblical Texts*, 13.

²¹ Michael Segal, “Between Bible and Rewritten Bible,” in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. M. Henze; *Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature*; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 10–28; Moshe J. Bernstein, “‘Rewritten Bible’: A Category which has Outlived its Usefulness?,” *Textus* 22 (2005): 169–96; Brooke, “Rewritten Law,” 31–40.

²² James C. VanderKam, “Revealed Literature in Second Temple Period,” in *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (ed. J. C. VanderKam; *JSJSup* 62; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 1–30; idem, “The Wording of Biblical Citations in some Rewritten Scriptures,” in *The Bible as a Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (ed. E. D. Herbert and E. Tov; London: The British Library, 2002) 241–56.

However, the exact content of these collections is less clear. It is generally assumed that many of the books that were later incorporated into the canon of the Hebrew Bible were regarded as authoritative at an early stage, but this cannot be said of all of the books collected. Moreover, there is evidence that there were books which were regarded as authoritative by certain groups, but which were not later incorporated into the Hebrew Bible.

There is also evidence that not only the extent of the collection, but also the content of the books themselves was not completely determined. There may have been different texts taken from the same book, or an adaptation of the original composition. There was apparently a great deal of freedom in the transmission of sacred texts, something also reflected, for example, in the redaction history of the biblical books. A well-known example is the Book of Jeremiah, a book which has been preserved from antiquity in two different editions.²³ A short edition is attested to in the Greek text (the Septuagint), whereas a longer edition can be found in the Hebrew text (the masoretic text). Fragments of both editions were found in Qumran. This means that at least until the second century B.C.E., there was no uniform text of the Book of Jeremiah. The Greek edition is not only about one-seventh shorter than the Hebrew, but also has a different arrangement of chapters. In the Greek text the so-called "oracles against the nations" are placed in the middle of the book, whereas in the Hebrew text they are found at the end. Moreover, the internal structure of these oracles is different in each edition. Finally, for the book as a whole it can be said that the Septuagint is less inclined to include repetitions than the masoretic text.

For ancient readers, both versions seem to have the same composition, containing the prophecies and stories related to Jeremiah. The two editions were later included in two different collections of biblical books, but we see that these two different editions and their textual forms were both recognized as authoritative by the same group of people. As copies of both editions were found in Qumran, it should be possible to accept the possibility that when different commentators refer to a particular title, they might nevertheless mean a book with a different contents.

²³ For the following see, for example, Segal, "Bible and Rewritten Bible," 10–28.

During the centuries before the Common Era there was “canonical and textual fluidity.” What is clear, however, is that at least some books were regarded as authoritative and as setting the standards for religious life. What is also clear is that these books, especially the five books of Moses, with an emphasis on Genesis, were the object of interpretation. The inspired immutable word of God needed explanation. The authoritative texts seemed to contain ambiguities and were open to more than one interpretation. When one realizes that language and culture involve processes of constant change, this is understandable. At the very least, it has provoked a long and rich history of biblical interpretation in ancient Judaism.²⁴

IV. *The Book of Jubilees*

I will now confine myself to one example of early Jewish “paratextual literature” in the sense that this notion is used in this volume—namely the *Book of Jubilees*. The *Book of Jubilees* was written somewhere in the second century B.C.E., possibly preceding the foundation of the community of Qumran.²⁵ *Jubilees*, which is presented as a revelation received by Moses on Mount Sinai, actually consists of a rewriting and interpretation of the biblical narrative moving from the creation (Gen 1) to the arrival of the children of Israel at Mount Sinai (Ex 19). *Jubilees* is closely related to the biblical material which it represents. It incorporates nearly all the biblical material in one way or another,

²⁴ Kugel, *Bible as It Was*, 1–49.

²⁵ Fourteen Hebrew copies of the *Book of Jubilees* were found in Qumran. The oldest fragment (4Q216) may be dated to 125–100 B.C.E. Some scholars opt for a pre-Hasmonean time, since the book does not mention the persecution and decrees of Antiochus IV. See, e.g., George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (2d ed.; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2005), 73–74; Michael A. Knibb, *Jubilees and the Origins of the Qumran Community: An Inaugural Lecture in the Department of Bible Studies delivered on Tuesday 17 January 1989* (London: King’s College, 1989). A few others argue for a date late in the second century because of the similarities with the Qumran texts. See, e.g., Cana Werman, “The Book of Jubilees and the Qumran Community: The Relationship between the Two,” *Megilot 2* (2004): 37–55 [Hebrew]; Martha Himmelfarb, *A Kingdom of Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism* (Jewish Culture and Contexts; Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 80–83. According to VanderKam, *Jubilees* antedates the founding of the Qumran community, and exercised strong influence on it. See James C. VanderKam, “Recent Scholarship on the Book of Jubilees,” *CurrentBiblicRes* 6/3 (2008): 405–31.

but sometimes the author feels free to deviate considerably from his chosen exemplar.

In the first chapter of the book, Moses is on Mount Sinai.²⁶ The author makes use of a great variety of Scriptural passages. In direct speech, God predicts to Moses that the people of Israel will forget His commandments after they enter the Promised Land. He says they will turn to foreign gods and as a consequence of this they will be sent into exile. After this, however, the people will return to God and a period of restoration and renewed divine mercy will follow. A consequence of this is the second creation, which is the real end of the exile for Israel and is dependent on Israel's conversion. For the author of *Jubilees*, this is still in the future. The rest of the book (*Jubilees* 2–50) contains the extensive revelation to Moses, which is intermediated by the angel of the presence.²⁷ This angel recounts to Moses the most important events of the *primaeval* history (*Jubilees* 2–10),²⁸ the history of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (*Jubilees* 11–45),²⁹ the people's exile in Egypt, the exodus and the first part of their wandering in the desert, including their arrival at Mount Sinai (*Jubilees* 46–50). This account corresponds largely to Genesis and the first part of Exodus. The most important earlier material that is incorporated into the *Book of Jubilees* is therefore material which can be found in the biblical text (Gen 1 to Ex 19). The material is mostly presented in the same sequential order, and nearly all pericopes can be discerned in the new composition.

²⁶ On the first chapter of *Jubilees*, see Davenport, *Eschatology*, 19–31; Betsy Halpern-Amaru, "Exile and Return in Jubilees," in *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Conceptions* (ed. J. M. Scott; JSJSup 56; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 127–44; Knibb, *Jubilees and the Origins of the Qumran Community*; Ben Z. Wacholder, "Jubilees as the Super Canon: Torah-Admonition versus Torah-Commandment," in "Legal Texts and Legal Issues": *Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Cambridge 1995. Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten* (ed. M. Bernstein, F. García Martínez, and J. Kampen; STDJ 23; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 195–211; James C. VanderKam, "The Scriptural Setting of the Book of Jubilees," *DSD* 13 (2006): 61–72.

²⁷ On the angel of the presence, see James C. VanderKam, "The Angel of the Presence in the Book of Jubilees," *DSD* 7 (2000): 378–93.

²⁸ For a comparison of Genesis 1–11 and *Jubilees* 2–10, see Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1–11 in the Book of Jubilees* (JSJSup 66; Leiden: Brill, 2000).

²⁹ For a comparison of the Jacob story in Genesis and *Jubilees*, see John C. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (CBQMS 18; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987).

Nevertheless, even a superficial reading of the *Book of Jubilees* is sufficient to show that there are many differences between the older scriptural text and the version incorporated into the new composition. There are passages that run almost completely parallel in both editions; however, most of these parallel passages in *Jubilees* are not verbatim quotations from Genesis. There are not only changes in the sequence of events and other variations within the pericopes, but also additions and omissions.

It should be acknowledged that other sources and traditions are also incorporated into the book. Firstly, one can point to the addition of material originating from the Enochic corpus (*Jub.* 4:15–26; 5:1–12; 7:20–39; 10:1–17).³⁰ Some scholars opt for a common source for *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees* and some of the Qumran texts (the so-called *Book of Noah*).³¹ Others even consider *Jubilees* to be an Enochic document in which the so-called Zadokite Torah (that is, Genesis and Exodus) was incorporated into and digested by the Enochic revelation.³² However, most scholars do not go that far, but instead speak about the incorporation of other traditions within the rendering and explanation of the biblical text, or about a fusing together and reconciliation of different Jewish streams in the second century B.C.E. Secondly, one can also point to the influence of other works. It is likely that the author of *Jubilees* also knew and used the traditions upon which the *Aramaic*

³⁰ See especially James C. VanderKam, “Enoch Traditions in Jubilees and Other Second-Century Sources,” *SBLSP* 1 (1978): 229–51; repr. in idem, *From Revelation to Canon*, 305–31. This work influenced his *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (CBQMS 16; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1984), 179–88, and formed the basis of a chapter in James C. VanderKam, *Enoch: A Man for All Generations* (Studies on the Personalities of the Old Testament; Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 110–21. See also some of his predecessors: Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, xliv, 36–39, 43–44; Pierre Grelot, “La légende d’Enoch dans les apocryphes et dans la Bible: Origine et signification,” *RSR* 46 (1958): 5–26; 181–210; Józef T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976). VanderKam is followed by, for example, George W. E. Nickelsburg, *A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36; 81–108* (vol. 1 of *1 Enoch*; Hermeneia; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2001), 71–76.

³¹ See, for example, Florentino García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic: Studies on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran* (STDJ 9; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 1–44; Michael E. Stone, “The Book(s) Attributed to Noah,” *DSD* 13 (2006): 4–23.

³² See Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 86–98. See also Paola Sacchi, “Libro dei Giubilei,” in *Apocrifi dell’Antico Testamento* (ed. P. Sacchi; 5 vols., *Classici delle religioni. Second Series: La religione ebraica*; Turin: Unione Tipografico. Editrice Torinese, 1981–2000), 1:179–411.

Levi Document is based (see, for example, *Jubilees* 31–32).³³ One can also point to the influence of *4QVisions of Amram* (see *Jubilees* 46).³⁴

V. Jubilees 15 as Paratext of Genesis 17

In the following I will concentrate on a single chapter of the *Book of Jubilees*, Chapter 15. The text of *Jubilees* 15 is a very close rendering of Gen 17. There are only a few additions, omissions and variations in *Jub.* 15:3–23, whereas more substantial additions precede (*Jub.* 15:1–2)

³³ Grelot and others see a dependency of *Jubilees* on the *Testament of Levi*. See Pierre Grelot, “Le coutumier sacerdotal ancien dans le Testament araméen de Lévi,” *RevQ* 15 (1991): 253–63, esp. 255; Pierre Grelot, “Le Livre des jubilees et le testament de Lévi,” in “*Mélanges Dominiques Barthélemy*: Études bibliques offertes à l’occasion de son 60e anniversaire (ed. P. Casetti, O. Keel, and A. Schenker; OBO 38; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 109–31. See also, for example, Michael E. Stone, “Ideal Figures and Social Context: Priest and Sage in the Early Second Temple Age,” in “*Ancient Israelite religion*: Essays in Honour of Frank Moore Cross (ed. P. D. Miller et al.; Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress Press, 1987), 575–86. See also Pierre Grelot, “Quatre Cents Trente ans (Ex 12:40): Notes sur les Testaments de Lévi et d’Amram,” in “*Homenaje a Juan Prado*: Miscellanea de Estudios Biblicos y Hebraicos (ed. L. Álvarez Verdes and E. Alonso Hernández; Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1975), 559–70; Émile Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.XXII: Textes araméens, 1: 4Q529–549* (DJD XXXI; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 285–286; Henryk Drawnel, *An Aramaic Wisdom Text from Qumran: A New Interpretation of the Levi Document* (JSJSup 86; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 63–75; Jonas C. Greenfield, Michael E. Stone, and Esther Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document: Edition, Translation, Commentary* (SVTP 19; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 19–22; Marius De Jonge, “The Testament of Levi and ‘Aramaic Levi,’” *RevQ* 13 (1988): 367–85, esp. 373–76 (reprinted in *Jewish Eschatology, Early Christian Christology and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Collected Essays of Marius De Jonge* [NovTSup 63; Leiden: Brill, 1991], 244–62). According to Kugler, a so-called “Levi-apocryphon” was the source for both the *Aramaic Levi Document* and *Jubilees*; cf. Robert A. Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest: The Levi-Priestly Tradition from Aramaic Levi to Testament of Levi* (SBLEJL 9; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholar Press, 1996), 138. According to Becker both the *Aramaic Levi Document* and *Jubilees* go back to common oral traditions; cf. Jürgen Becker, *Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte der zwölf Patriarchen* (AGJU 8; Leiden: Brill, 1970), 86.

³⁴ Cf. Józef T. Milik, “4Q Visions de Amram et une citation d’Origén,” *RB* 79 (1972): 97; Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4.22*, 285–86, 322–24; Betsy Halpern-Amaru, “Burying the Fathers: Exegetical Strategies and Source Traditions in Jubilees 46,” in *Reworking the Bible: Apocryphal and Related Texts at Qumran. Proceedings of a Joint Symposium by the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature and the Hebrew University Institute for Advanced Studies Research Group on Qumran, 15–17 January 2002* (ed. E. G. Chazon, D. Dimant, and R. A. Clements; STDJ 58, Leiden: Brill, 2005), 146–52; Jacques T. A. G. M. Van Ruiten, “Between Jacob’s Death and Moses’ Birth: The Intertextual Relationship between Genesis 50:15, Exodus 1:14 and Jubilees 46:1–6,” in “*Flores Florentino*: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies in Honour of Florentino Garzía Martínez (ed. A. Hilhorst, E. Puech, and E. J. C. Tigchelaar; JSJSup 122; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 467–89.

and follow (*Jub.* 15:25–34) the rendering of Genesis 17. These additions have no counterpart in the text of Genesis, as can be seen in the following overall comparison of these texts:

Genesis 17:1–27		<i>Jubilees</i> 15:1–34	
		15:1–2	Abraham celebrates the festival of the first fruits
17:1–22	Appearance of God	15:3–22	Appearance of God
17:23–27	Abraham executes the divine commandment of circumcision	15:23–24	Abraham executes the divine commandment of circumcision
		15:25–34	Halakic addition with regard to circumcision

VI. *The Chronological System*

The most striking transformation that is introduced by the author of *Jubilees* with regard to Genesis and Exodus is the dating of events. The author attaches great significance to a chronological order within which he frames his rewriting.³⁵ He puts the biblical narratives in a continuous chronological system, from the creation of the world to the entrance into the Promised Land, which took place 2,450 years after the creation. This system is characterized by its heptadic arrangement: years, weeks of years, and jubilees of years. Overall, the history is divided into periods of jubilees, with each jubilee consisting of seven weeks of years, that is, seven times seven years.

The concept of the jubilee is peculiar, and most probably borrowed from Lev 25, but the author of *Jubilees* interprets the concept differently.³⁶ In Leviticus, the “jubilee” is the fiftieth year, one in which individual Hebrews could be liberated from slavery and permitted to return to their own property. For the author of *Jubilees*, the “jubilee” is a period of 49 years. The total chronology of 2,450 years is divided into 50 of these periods of 49 years. The fiftieth jubilee is the climax of the chronology because the Israelites were liberated from Egyptian slavery, after which they could enter the land of their ancestors, which had been their land since the division of the earth following the Flood.

³⁵ Cf. James VanderKam, “Studies in the Chronology,” in idem, *From Revelation to Canon*, 522–44.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 540–44.

What is applied to each individual in Leviticus is, in the *Book of Jubilees*, applied to the whole people in the fiftieth jubilee.³⁷

Although it is not expressed in *Jubilees* 15, it is important to mention that the author of *Jubilees* defends a solar calendar, which is connected to his chronological system. This calendar consists of 364 days rather than 365 days. In this calendar, all festivals fall on the same day each year, because 364 is divisible by seven. In the lunar calendar, which was normative in Judaism, festivals did not have a fixed place in the week and sometimes took place on the Sabbath. However, in the calendar of *Jubilees* the festivals always took place on the same day of the week, and thereby there could be no conflict between the Sabbath and the festival. In several places in the book, the author stresses the importance of following the right calendar. In the first chapter, not following the right calendar is the reason for the exile: “They will forget all my law, all my commandments, and all my verdicts. They will err regarding the beginning of the month, the Sabbath, the festival, the jubilee, and the decree” (*Jub.* 1:14). In the rewriting of the first account of the creation, it is said that it is not the sun and the moon which rule over day and night (see Gen 1:16–18), but only the sun: “The Lord appointed the sun as a great sign above the earth for days, Sabbaths, months, festivals, years, Sabbaths of years, jubilees, and all times of the years” (*Jub.* 2:9). In connection with God’s covenant

³⁷ Scott has put forward a far-reaching interpretation of the chronological system of the book of *Jubilees*. Cf. James M. Scott, *On Earth as in Heaven: The Restoration of Sacred Time and Sacred Space in the Book of Jubilees* (JSJSup 91; Leiden: Brill, 2005). He suggests that the chronological system is not restricted to the first 50 jubilees but extends over the whole history, from the creation until the new creation. Scott assumes a *tripartite* division of world history and argues that the principle of compensatory symmetry is at work. The period of time between the destruction of the first temple and the new creation is more or less the mirror image of the period from the creation to the destruction of the first temple. This means that the destruction of the temple is situated at the exact centre of the history of the world (2940 A.M., which is 60 jubilees after the creation of the world). According to Scott, the author of *Jubilees* considers the whole history of the world as a period of 5880 years (= 840 weeks of years = 120 jubilees). Because the interval of time between the creation and the first entrance into the Land of Israel is 50 jubilees, the interval of time between the second entrance and the culmination in the new creation must also be 50 jubilees. From this it follows that the interval between the first and second entrance is exactly 20 jubilees. This is 490 years (= 10 jubilees) for the exilic period and 490 years for the post-exilic period. See Scott, *On Earth as in Heaven*, 73–158. Although it is true that in chapter 1 and 23 *Jubilees* speaks about a future that extends far beyond the entrance into the Promised Land, the representations of the author about this future are not clear. Apart from the mention of a final judgment and some rather vague representations of the eschaton in these chapters, one cannot read very much about it.

with Noah, the calendar is written on the heavenly tablets “lest they forget the covenantal festivals and walk in the festivals of the nations” (*Jub.* 6:35). God foresees that Israel will disturb the calendar by taking observations of the moon into consideration: “There will be people who carefully observe the moon with lunar observations because it is corrupt (with respect to) the seasons and is early from year to year by ten days. Therefore years will come about for them when they will disturb (the year) and make a day of testimony something worthless and a profane day a festival. Everyone will join together both holy days with the profane and the profane day with the holy day, for they will err regarding the months, the Sabbaths, the festivals, and the jubilee” (*Jub.* 6:36–37).

In *Jub.* 15:1a, the appearance of the Lord and the establishing of the covenant is dated in 1986 A.M. (“During the fifth year of the fourth week of this jubilee”). This date is related to the announcement in Gen 17:1a that Abram was 99-years old, but it is put into the absolute dating system of the world history in years, weeks and jubilees. In Gen 17:24, it is also mentioned that Abram was ninety-nine years old, but this text is not used in *Jubilees*. In *Jub.* 15:17d, 21a, the author calculates an age of ninety-nine as it is stated that Abraham will be one hundred years old in exactly one year.

The mention of Abram’s age in *Jubilees*, taken from the text of Genesis, is not in line, however, with the data of the absolute dating system. Since Abram’s birth is put in the seventh year of the second week of the thirty-ninth jubilee, which is 1876 A.M. (*Jub.* 11:15), Abraham would have been hundred and ten years old at the concluding of the covenant in 1986, and not just ninety-nine years old. In *Jub.* 14:24 the mention of Abram’s age at Ishmael’s birth and naming is taken from Genesis (“That year was the eighty-sixth in Abram’s life”). This is consistent with the mention of Ishmael’s age in Gen 17:25 (“And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised”), which is not taken up by *Jubilees*, but which can be deduced from Abram’s age of ninety-nine years. However, in the absolute dating system Ishmael’s birth and naming is put in the fifth year of the first week of the forty-first jubilee, which is 1965 A.M. On the basis of Abram’s birth in (1876 A.M.), he would have been eighty-nine years at that moment and not only eighty-six years! While there is consistency in the explicit mention of Abraham’s age (eighty-six years in *Jub.* 14:24, and ninety-nine years in *Jub.* 15:1), this does not match the data of the absolute dating system, since in this system the covenant of circumcision takes

place twenty-one years after Ishmael's birth, rather than thirteen. This means that the absolute dating system gives an age eight years greater than the explicit data given in Genesis and taken over by *Jubilees*. This inconsistency is possibly due to text-critical reasons.³⁸

VII. *The Renewing of the Covenant*

The concept of the making of the covenant between God and Abraham is changed in *Jubilees* 15 into a renewing of the covenant. It is in fact a renewing of the covenant which God had made with Noah, a topic already introduced in the preceding chapter (*Jub.* 14:20). It is celebrated on the same date of the year, and at the same festival, and there is also an offering that precedes the concluding of the covenant.³⁹ The conception of the covenant itself, however, does not deviate greatly from Genesis.⁴⁰ The promises that are connected to the covenant

³⁸ Charles notes that the text should read "third week" instead of "fourth week." See Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 105–06. This emendation also necessitates a change in *Jub.* 16:15 and 17:1. This would give 1979 A.M. as the date of the covenant, and Abraham's age as 103 years. See VanderKam, "Studies in the Chronology," 538–39. VanderKam has suggested that the reading "the fifth year" in 15:1 is possibly influenced by the date in the preceding verse (14:24: "in the fifth year of this week"), whereas the reading of "the fourth week" instead of "the third week" could have originated from a confusion of the forms τρίτος and τέταρτος in the Greek transmission. If each of these numbers is reduced by one, it is possible to obtain "in the fourth year of the third week," which would mean 1978 A.M., and which would be consistent with *Jub.* 14:24.

³⁹ The renewing of the covenant, which is dated to the middle of the third month and connected to the celebration of the festival of the first fruits, refers back to *Jub.* 6:17–31. It is also referred to in *Jub.* 14:17–20; 16:13; 22:1–9; 29:7; 44:1–5.

⁴⁰ As in Gen 17, "covenant" is also a keyword in *Jubilees* 15. In *Jub.* 15:1–24, an equivalent of the word ברית can be found twelve times, of which eight times *kidān* and four times *šar'at*. At one point the word has no equivalent (Gen 17:10a), probably due to *homoioteleuton*. It occurs nine times with a possessive suffix ("my covenant"), seven times as *kidānya* (*Jub.* 15:4a, 9a, 11b, 13c, 14b, 19d, 21a), once as *šar'atya* (*Jub.* 15:6a), and once in the construction "my eternal covenant" (*šar'atya zala'ām*: *Jub.* 15:11e). The equivalent of the construction ברית עולם ("eternal covenant") is *šar'at zala'ām* ("eternal covenant": *Jub.* 15:9a, 13c), *šar'atya zala'ām* ("my eternal covenant": *Jub.* 15:11e), and *kidāna zala'ām* ("eternal covenant": *Jub.* 15:19d). There seems to be no difference in meaning between *kidān* and *šar'at*. Both seem to be a translation of the original Hebrew ברית. See William K. Gilders, "The Concept of Covenant in Jubilees," in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: the Evidence of Jubilees* (ed. G. Boccaccini and G. Ibba; Grand Rapids, Mich., Eerdmans, forthcoming). It is worth noting that the Hebrew ברית in Gen 17:1–27 is consistently translated with the term διαθήκη in the Septuagint. See also Jacques T. A. G. M. Van Ruiten, "The Covenant of Noah in Jubilees 6:1–38," in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period* (ed. S. E. Porter and J. C. R. de Roo; JSJSup 71; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 168–70. In the addition

are formulated in the same way: a) the promise of fruitfulness which YHWH made to Abraham (*Jub.* 15:4b, 8a; cf. 15:16b, 19b), and which has as its goal Abraham becoming the father of many nations and kings (15:6b, 8bc; cf. 15:16de); b) the promise that God will be the only God for Abraham and his descendants (15:9a, 10b); and c) the promise of the gift of the land (15:10a). The response to the covenant, circumcision (15:11–14), is also adopted.

What is different, however, is the fact that the giving of the covenant is preceded by an offering (15:2) and fixed on a specific day of the year, the middle of the third month, on which the Festival of the First Fruits is celebrated. A further deviation in *Jubilees* 15 is the addition at the end (15:25–34) which contains an interpretation of the narrative, especially with regard to the nature of circumcision and the relationship between God and the descendants of Abraham.

In Gen 17 it is God who takes the initiative in establishing the covenant. In *Jubilees* Abraham acts on his own initiative. Here he is portrayed as a person who fulfils the stipulation of the renewed commandment that he has inherited from Noah. He celebrates the festival of the renewing of God's covenant on the date specified, and thereby undertakes that which was neglected by Noah's descendants. An important element of Abraham's initiative is the bringing of offerings. The Festival of Weeks, which is the festival of the renewing of the covenant, has the character of a harvest festival to which offerings are brought. In *Jub.* 14, the ambiguous procedure of Gen 15 is made abundantly clear in an offering. In *Jub.* 15:1–2, the bringing of the offering is added to the text of Genesis. In *Jub.* 15:2 Abraham's sacrifice during this festival is described as "a bull, a ram, and a sheep." This is not in complete agreement with the biblical prescriptions. In

Jub. 15:25–34, the term *kidān* occurs four times (*Jub.* 15:26d, 28a, 29a, 34b) and *śar'at* five times (*Jub.* 15:25c, 26a, 28a, 33a, 34e). Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 105–13; Orval S. Wintermute, "Jubilees," in *Expansions of the "Old Testament" and legends wisdom and philosophical literature, papers, psalms and odes, fragments of lost Judeo-Hellenistic works* (vol. 2 of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*; ed. J. H. Charlesworth; New York, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1985), 85–87; and James C. VanderKam ed., *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text* (CSCO 510 = *Scriptores Aethiopici* 87; Leuven: Peeters, 1989), 87–94, all translate *kidān* consistently with the terms "covenant" (Berger: "Bund"). Charles, Wintermute and VanderKam translate *śar'at* four times with the term "ordinance" (*Jub.* 15:25c, 28a, 34e); Charles and Wintermute translate it once using the term "covenant" (*Jub.* 15:26a) and VanderKam once with "pact" (*Jub.* 15:26a). Berger, *Buch der Jubiläen*, 404–09, translates *kidān* consistently with the term "Bund" and *śar'at* with the term "Ordnung."

Lev 23:15–22, the following offerings are mentioned: two loaves of bread, seven unblemished year-old lambs, one young bull, and two rams. Num 28:26–31 mentions two young bulls, one ram and seven unblemished year-old male lambs (with one male goat for a sin offering), while Deut 16:10 speaks of a freewill offering.

VIII. *The Appearance of God (Gen 17:1–22; Jub. 15:3–22)*

Only after Abraham has brought an offer, does God appear and speak to him. *Jub.* 15:3–22 follows the text of Gen 17:1b–22 quite closely. There are some small differences of a grammatical or syntactical nature, such as the use of a personal pronoun, or another form of the verb. Most small deviations in *Jub.* 15:3–22 from the Masoretic Text of Gen 17:1–22, however, are due to the fact that the author of *Jubilees* uses a biblical text that is different from the Masoretic. In these cases, deviations in *Jubilees* vis-à-vis the Masoretic Text can also be found in the biblical texts of, for example, the Septuagint or the Samaritan Pentateuch. We cannot consider these deviations as variations of the biblical text. However, VanderKam has suggested that another biblical text of Genesis-Exodus existed in Palestine which agreed more often with the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch than with the Masoretic Text, but which was nevertheless an independent witness.⁴¹ This is considered generally to concern small variations which I will not deal with here.⁴²

A striking phenomenon in this chapter of *Jubilees* is the occurrence of a few omissions in the text. In two places, the difference between the Masoretic Text of Genesis and *Jubilees* is possibly due to text-critical reasons. Either the author of *Jubilees* made a mistake when he copied his *Vorlage*, or the mistake occurred later in the textual tradition. I am referring here to the two possible cases of *homoioteleuton* (words or phrases with the same ending) in *Jub.* 15:10–11. In such cases, one cannot speak of a *Vorlage* of Genesis that deviates from the Masoretic Text nor of a certain interpretation by the author of *Jubilees*. The first

⁴¹ See, for example, James C. VanderKam, "Jubilees and the Hebrew Texts of Genesis-Exodus," *Textus* 14 (1988): 71–85; repr. in idem, *From Revelation to Canon*, 448–61, esp. 460.

⁴² See the notes in VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 87–91. See also VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977), 142–98.

case (Gen 17:8a; *Jub.* 15:10a) is mentioned by nearly all translators, and the missing words are reconstructed.⁴³ Gen 17:7 ends with ולזרעך אחריך (“to your seed after you”), while Gen 17:8 begins with the same words: ונתתי לך ולזרעך אחריך (“And I will give to you, and to your seed after you”).

A second case of *homoioteleuton* might be present in *Jub.* 15:11b (cf. Gen 17:9b–10a), though none of the translations mention this. The first part of Gen 17:9b reads: “As for you, keep my covenant, you and your seed after you” (ולזרעך אחריך). These words are taken over precisely in *Jub.* 15:11b. The passage following is omitted (the second part of Gen 17:9b, and the entire sentence in Gen 17:10a). The last words of Gen 17:10a read: “your seed after you” (לזרעך אחריך). Moreover, the lost part has several words in common with the first part of Gen 17:9b (שמר; ברית). I would suggest that it is quite possible that a part of the text has been lost in *Jubilees*. It is not necessary to assume intervention by the author.⁴⁴

There might be a third case of *homoioteleuton* in this chapter, namely the omission of the last words of Gen 17:23b and the entirety of Gen 17:24–25. Gen 17:23b ends with the words “that very day” (בעצם היום הזה), the same phrase with which Gen 17:26a begins. It might be suspected that the eye of one of the copyists in the tradition of *Jubilees* leapt from the one בעצם היום הזה to the other. However, the issue might be more complicated, as part of the text between the two occurrences of the phrase is used by the author by way of permutation and variation: כאשר דבר אתו אלהים (“as God had told him”) occurs in *Jub.* 15:23a as “Abraham did as the Lord told him.” This borrowing makes it more difficult to speak of a *homoioteleuton*, as it is not clear why the author of *Jubilees* would copy one part of the text found in between the phrases and neglect the rest.⁴⁵

⁴³ Robert H. Charles, “*Mashafa kufale or the Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees*” (Anecdota Oxoniensia; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), 51 no. 31; Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 108; Enno Littmann, “Das Buch der Jubiläen,” in: *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments* (ed. E. Kautzsch; vol. 2 of *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigrapha des Alten Testaments*; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1900), 31–119; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975), 66 no. h; VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 88; Berger, *Buch der Jubiläen*, 406, note, finds a restoration unnecessary, but his reading is unconvincing.

⁴⁴ It is of course not possible to attain absolute certainty here. It is also possible that the author felt somewhat uncomfortable with the duplication in the biblical text.

⁴⁵ Theoretically it is possible that we are here dealing with a phased *homoioteleuton* within the text of *Jubilees*. The author adopted the whole text, with the exception of

If we make the assumption that there is no text-critical reason for the omission, what would then be the reason for the author of *Jubilees* skipping this section of the text? Perhaps the conflict in dating the events is at stake, as referred to above. Ishmael was born when Abraham was eighty-six years old according to Gen 16:16, a fact that is taken over literally in *Jub.* 14:24, even though this does not concur with the absolute dating system of *Jubilees*. In 1876 A.M., the year of Ishmael's birth, Abraham would have been eighty-nine and not eighty-six. According to Genesis, the circumcision of Ishmael would have occurred thirteen years later. This corresponds with the age of Abraham mentioned in Genesis, namely ninety-nine years. *Jubilees* 15 does not adopt the age of Abraham according to Genesis, but dates the circumcision according to the absolute system, which is 1986 A.M.. This is, however, twenty-one years later. It is possible that the author of *Jubilees* 15 omitted mention of Ishmael in order to avoid disagreement between the biblical data and the internal dating system of *Jubilees*. After all, the mention of Abraham's age in this part of the text is also omitted.

By omitting the first appearance of "that very day" (Gen 17:23b), a slightly different structure is created in *Jubilees*. This also creates a difference between *Jub.* 15:23 and *Jub.* 15:24 as regards to content.⁴⁶ First it is said that Abraham fulfilled his duty to circumcise everybody in his house (*Jub.* 15:23), without any specification of the day. Subsequently, it is said that on the very day that the command was issued, Abraham was circumcised and all the men in his house with him, but Ishmael is not mentioned by name (*Jub.* 15:24). This means that the author of *Jubilees* might make a distinction between the circumcision of Abraham and the men of his house, and the circumcision of Ishmael. The first takes place on the day the command was issued, the other possibly on another day.

One might argue that the suggestion, according to *Jubilees*, that Ishmael was circumcised on a day other than that on which the command was issued, receives support from a certain tension within the text of Gen 17. The original command with regard to the circumcision (Gen 17:1–14, see especially verse 11–14) requires that all descendants of

Gen 17:23c, which he transposed to *Jub.* 15:23a. It might also be that a transcriber made the mistake of *homoioteleuton*.

⁴⁶ Michael Segal, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology* (JSJSup 117; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 229–32, 241–43.

Abraham are to be circumcised. Moreover, those who are circumcised belong to the covenant (Gen 17:11, 13). In the execution of the command (Gen 17:23–27), all the men in Abraham’s house are circumcised, including Ishmael, on the same day as Abraham. However, the text found between (Gen 17:15–22) creates a problem. The covenant, of which the circumcision is the sign, is restricted to Isaac, in other words, it excludes Ishmael. While the latter will receive some of the blessing connected to the covenant (Gen 17:20), it is written that “my covenant I will establish with Isaac...” (Gen 17:21). Here, circumcision as such is not a sign of membership of the covenant, since Ishmael is being circumcised, but a sign that he will be excluded from the covenant. *Jubilees* tries to harmonize this tension found within the text of Genesis, and this is in line with a general tendency of *Jubilees*. The author tries to explain difficult passages in the text of Genesis and Exodus in order to harmonize contradictory assertions and to solve associated problems, a characteristic shared with many ancient treatments of Genesis.

One can raise some objections to this line of argument. Firstly, the halakic addition in *Jub.* 15:25–34 does not deal with the circumcision on that very day, but with the circumcision “on the eighth day.” Since the circumcision on the eighth day is not at stake in *Jub.* 15:23–24, the halakic addition does not comment on these verses. The addition refers to the general command to circumcise on the eighth day (*Jub.* 15:11–14; Gen 17:9–14) and not to the circumcision “on that very day” of the circumcision of Abraham and those of his house. Secondly, this argument does not explain why Ishmael is omitted from *Jub.* 15:24, while the other males of Abraham’s house are mentioned. If all the men were circumcised immediately after the command was issued, why would the covenant then be restricted to Isaac?

It is perhaps more plausible to suggest that the author of *Jubilees* does not want to overly stress the circumcision of Ishmael, who does not hold a privileged position. Even though he is Abraham’s eldest son, he is not the one with whom God is intending to make his covenant. That will be Isaac, the son of Sarah, as is made abundantly clear in *Jub.* 15:15–22 (cf. Gen 17:15–22). Gen 17:23–27 mentions three times that Ishmael was circumcised: in Gen 17:23a Ishmael is said to be circumcised together with all the slaves in the house; in Gen 17:25 Ishmael is mentioned separately, and it is said that he was circumcised when he was thirteen; while in Gen 17:26 it is said that Ishmael was circumcised together with Abraham. This all points to the very specific position of

Ishmael, which is in conflict with the preceding passage. This might be the reason that *Jubilees* mentions Ishmael only once (*Jub.* 15:23b) as one of the males who was in Abraham's house. He is mentioned by name and therefore distinct from the other slaves in the house because he is also Abraham's son. However, he is not privileged as much as the text of Genesis suggests.

IX. *Halakic Addition regarding Circumcision (Jub. 15:25–34)*

The narrative part of this chapter (*Jub.* 15:1–24) is followed by a halakic addition (*Jub.* 15:25–34). It questions the status of Israel, which is connected to the commandment of circumcision. The addition as such has no counterpart in the text of Genesis, but one should be aware of the fact that it is closely related to the narrative preceding it.

The addition has a tripartite structure: I. 15:25–27; II. 15:28–32; III. 15:33–34.⁴⁷ In the second and third part, Moses is addressed directly (“you”). In 15:28a he is ordered to command the Israelites to keep the sign of the covenant forever (“Now *you* command the Israelites etc.”), and in 15:33a the angel (“I”) addresses Moses, predicting the failure of Israel to fulfil the law (“I am now telling *you* that the Israelites etc.”). In contrast, in the first part (15:25–27) there is no direct form of address. Moreover, in this first part, the law and the covenant are mentioned with regard to an individual (15:26: “*Anyone who is born... there is no sign on him that he belongs to the Lord... he has violated...*”), whereas in the second and third parts Israel is referred to by the plural forms (for example, 15:28: “...throughout *their* history... so that *they* may not be uprooted... so that *they* should keep it...”).

The words used point to a comparable subdivision within the three parts. Subunit A (15:25–26; 15:28–29; 15:33–34) contains halakic words such as “law” (*ḥəgg*; cf. 15:25a, 33b), “ordinance” (*šər'at*; cf. 15:25c, 28a, 33a, 34e; see also 15:29a), “command” (*tə'əzāz*; cf. 15:29a; see also 15:28a) and “covenant” (*kidān*; cf. 15:26d, 28a, 29a, 34b; *šər'at*; 15:25c, 26a, 28a, 33a, 34e). In addition, the word “sign” (*tə'amart*) occurs in this subunit (15:26b, 28a, 34e), as does mention of circumcision (15:25b, 26a, 33b–d) and the sanction against violation of the law, which have

⁴⁷ The conjunction *'asma* (“because, for”), which occurs quite often (15:25c, 26d, 27a, 29a, 30a, 30c, 32a, 33c, 34b, 34f), seems not to play a role in the macrostructure of this text.

as a common factor “being uprooted from the land” (15:26c, 28b, 34f). In subunit B (15:27; 15:30–32), the above-mentioned words do not occur. In this subunit, the author speaks about the election and sanctification of Israel. Moreover, heavenly angels play a role (for example, “angels”: 15:27, 32). The structure can be summarized as follows:

- I. A *Jub.* 15:25–26 An eternal commandment
 - I. B *Jub.* 15:27 The Lord sanctifies Israel
- II. A *Jub.* 15:28–29 Keep the sign as an eternal ordinance
 - II. B *Jub.* 15:30–32 The Lord sanctifies Israel
- III. A *Jub.* 15:33–34 Israel neglects the covenant

The whole addition elaborates the status of Israel, which is connected to obeying the eternal commandment to keep the covenant of circumcision and to the election of Israel. It can be linked with the preceding narrative, especially to the part commanding circumcision (*Jub.* 15:11–14; cf. Gen 17:9–14), with particular regard to the time of circumcision and the sanction for not following the command. Meanwhile, the preference for Isaac over Ishmael (*Jub.* 15:15–22; cf. Gen 17:15–22) also plays a part in the addition, while the promissory aspects of the covenant of land and fruitfulness do not seem to play an important role. However, the relationship between God and the descendants of Abraham (cf. *Jub.* 15:9b, 10b; cf. Gen 17:7, 8b) does play an important role in the addition.

X. *Circumcision on the Right Day*

The first part of the examined text (*Jub.* 15:25–26) identifies the covenant with the law and stresses the eternity of the law using the reference to the heavenly tables (15:25a, d).⁴⁸ The eternity of the covenant is also brought up in the preceding narrative (Gen 17:7a, 13b, 19d; cf. *Jub.* 15:9a, 13b, 19d). This possibly indicates an uncertainty with regard to the precise dating.⁴⁹ One could, for example, ask whether the law is concerned only with circumcision, or with circumcision at the proper moment, namely on the eighth day. In *Jub.* 15:26a one can read: “Anyone who is born, the flesh of whose private parts has not

⁴⁸ See, for example, Florentino García Martínez, “The Heavenly Tablets in the Book of Jubilees,” in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (ed. M. Albani, J. Frey, and A. Lange; TSAJ 65; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 243–60.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 256.

been circumcised *by the eighth day*.⁵⁰ In *Jub.* 15:25c it is stated that “there is no *ta’adwa* of one day from the eight days.” The meaning of *ta’adwa* is “to go beyond, step over, pass over, pass by, surpass, transgress, deviate.” The Latin text of *Jub.* 15:25c reads *praeterire*, which means “to go past, to go by, to skip over, to pass over.” That means that one cannot omit any day from the counting of the eight days. The omission of one of these days would delay the circumcision until the ninth, tenth or eleventh day.⁵¹ This would affirm the narrative of Gen 17:1–27, which refers to the proper moment in Gen 17:12 (“A child of eight days”), and this is rendered in *Jub.* 15:12a as “A child on the eighth day.” It is significant that the reading of Gen 17:14 is rendered in *Jub.* 15:14 according to the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch both of which include circumcision “on the eighth day,” whereas the Masoretic Text omits any specification of the eighth day.

The meaning of *Jub.* 15:25b (“there is no circumcising of days”) is difficult to interpret. Rabin proposed to read: “and there can be no reduction in the number of days.”⁵² VanderKam says it is a “metaphor for shortening the number of days”, and Wintermute’s interpretation is more or less the same.⁵³ In this interpretation, not only is it not

⁵⁰ The Ethiopic reads “*aska* the eighth day,” which means “until, till as far as.” VanderKam translates it as “by the eighth day,” as does Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, 230. Berger reads “bis zum achten Tag.” Littmann points to the Latin text that has “usque in,” which shows that the Greek text should have had this reading. Charles and Wintermute read “on.” Probably, the Hebrew text of *Jubilees* read “on the eighth day.” According to Charles לט was misread as טע.

⁵¹ Also Bernhard Beer, *Das Buch der Jubiläen und sein Verhältnis zu den Midraschim: Ein Beitrag zur orientalischen Sagen- und Alterthumskunde* (Leipzig: W. Gerhard, 1856), 45: “(Und man darf die Tage nicht ändern), noch einen von den 8 Tagen übergehen”; Berger, *Buch der Jubiläen*, 408: “und es gibt kein Überschreiten eines (einzigen) Tages von den acht Tagen”; Wintermute, “Jubilees,” 87: “there is no *passing* a single day beyond eight days”; Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, 232–33: “and no *passing* of one day from the eight days.” In contrast, in his translation, Charles reads (*Book of Jubilees*, 110): “and [there is] no *omission* of one day out of the eight days,” and he explains that in no case is the circumcision to be performed *before* the eighth day. See also Paul Riessler, *Altjüdisches Schrifttum außerhalb der Bibel* (4th ed.; Freiburg: Kerle, 1979): “noch eine Weglassung eines Tages von den acht Tagen”; Chaim Rabin, “Jubilees,” in *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (ed. H. F. D. Sparks; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 55: “nor *omitting* of even a single day out of eight.” Also VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees* translates: “nor *omitting* any day of the eight days,” but he notes that the text literally says that there is no “passing over” any day of the eight days. Finally, Littmann, “Buch der Jubiläen,” translates: “es gibt keine *Übertretung* eines Tags von den acht Tagen.”

⁵² Rabin, “Jubilees,” 55.

⁵³ Wintermute, “Jubilees,” 87, n. g explains that with the expression of the circumcising of days the writer suggests “that no day should be cut off to shorten the total number of days.”

permitted to wait until after the eighth day, it is also not allowed to circumcise before the eighth day. This would mean that circumcision of the male child should take place on precisely the eighth day. In his text edition of 1895, Charles has included the reading *katrata* (= *qatrata*), a reading that occurs in eight Ethiopic manuscripts. It means “a closing.” Although in his 1902 translation Charles writes, “and there is no circumcision of days,” Berger follows Charles’s original reading with “Und es gibt kein Abschliessen der Tage,” and he explains that one may not wait longer than eight days.⁵⁴ This alternative reading of *Jub.* 15:25bc has it consisting of two parallel sentences (25b: “There is no circumcising of days”; 25c: “nor omitting any day of the eight days”), and both speak about the law by which the circumcision should take place no later than the eighth day. Charles also reads the two parallel sentences as meaning that the circumcision may not be performed before the eighth day. Most other interpretations read an antithetical parallelism, such that 15:25b says that no circumcision is allowed before the eighth day, and 15:25c that it is not allowed later than the eighth day.⁵⁵

With the addition related to exegetical problems in Gen 17, the author of *Jubilees* seems to provide answers to questions originating

⁵⁴ VanderKam rejects the reading of Berger. In his text-critical edition, VanderKam accepted *kāsbata* (“circumcision”) because of the paronomasia. VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 91.

⁵⁵ Segal has put forward an alternative reading of *Jub.* 15:25b. Usually one reads a balance between 15:25a (“This law is [valid] for all history forever”) and 15:25d (“because it is an eternal ordinance ordained and written on the heavenly tablets.”), and combines 15:25b with 15:25c. However, Segal states that there is a balance between 15:25a and 15:25b (“There is no circumcising of days”). The circumcising of days is connected in this view with the period during which this law of circumcision is valid, and that is forever. He refers to similar expressions in 33:16–17 (“and as an eternal law for the history of eternity. And there is no completion of days for this law”). Instead of “circumcision,” the word “completion” is used. The Hebrew word for “completion” is מלא, and in Qumran orthography the infinitive form of מלא is sometimes written as מולאת (cf. 1QS VI, 17–21), even once as מולות (4Q511). When one realizes that the form מולאת or מולות is very close to מולת (“circumcision”; cf. Exod 4:26), the suggestion of an exchange of both is easily made. Segal therefore opts for an original reading of מלא (“completion”) in 15:25b, and combines 15:25b with 15:25a (“This law is [valid] for all history forever, and there is no completion of days”). The law is expressed clearly in 15:25c and can in Segal’s eyes only mean that the circumcision should take place no later than the eighth day. See Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, 232–36. Segal’s suggestion is very sophisticated. It also does justice to the fact that the collocation “circumcision of days” cannot be found elsewhere in early Jewish literature. Nevertheless this proposal disturbs the chiasmically ordered structure of the sentences in 15:25, in which 15:25a is balanced by 15:25d and 15:25b by 15:25c.

in his own time. In any case, the discussion of circumcision seems to fit well within the circumstances of the Hellenistic era (cf. 1 Macc 1:15, 48, 60; 2:46; *As. Mos.* 8:3; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.241).⁵⁶ However, the law of *Jubilees* 15 seems not to be directed against those who refrain from circumcising, but against those who delay its performance. The implication of *Jub.* 15:25–26 seems to be that children who are circumcised after the eighth day are considered uncircumcised halakically.⁵⁷ Although there are no contemporary documents reflecting this problem, in rabbinic Judaism there is a tradition that allows, in certain circumstances, the delay of circumcision until the twelfth day (see *m. Shabbat* 19:5).⁵⁸ According to Segal, the viewpoint of *Jub.* 15:25–26 might reflect a polemic against a similar moderate halakic position in earlier times, namely in the second century B.C.E.⁵⁹

The command to circumcise on the right day requires human action. The neglect of this command will result in the loss of the covenantal relationship: those who have not been circumcised in the proper way do not belong to the people of the covenant (*Jub.* 15:26a). The circumcision seems then not to function as a sign (*Jub.* 15:26b). They will become like the rest of the peoples, damned to be alienated from God forever, utterly destroyed and uprooted from the land (*Jub.* 15:26a, c; cf. also 15:28b, 34f). This aspect refers back to the preceding narrative where it is said that the circumcision shall be a sign of the eternal pact between God and Israel (*Jub.* 15:11e). This covenant will be in the flesh as an eternal covenant (*Jub.* 15:13c). Finally, “the male who has not been circumcised—who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin on the eighth day—that person will be uprooted from his people” (*Jub.* 15:14a). In the halakic addition, this sanction (“that person will be uprooted *from his people*”) is formulated much more rigorously. This person “does not belong to the people of the pact which the Lord

⁵⁶ See, for example, Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 108–109; García Martínez, “Heavenly Tablets,” 256.

⁵⁷ See Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, 236 n. 22.

⁵⁸ See Beer, *Buch der Jubiläen*, 45; Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, 108–109; Louis Finkelstein, “The Book of Jubilees and the Rabbinic Halaka,” *HTR* 16 (1923), 59; García Martínez, “Heavenly Tablets,” 256. In contrast, the Samaritans have held fast to the severer regulation to the present day. The harsher form of the halaka probably also existed in the 2nd century C.E. (See: Justin, *Dial.* 27).

⁵⁹ Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, 236–37 n. 22, and 242. According to Segal, the legal passage of *Jubilees* 15 provides evidence of a split in the nation over halakic issues at an early stage. It justifies separation from the rest of the people. See Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, 245.

made with Abraham but to the people (meant for) destruction” (*Jub.* 15:26a). He is meant “for destruction, for being destroyed from the land, and for being uprooted from the land” (*Jub.* 15:25c; cf. 15:28b).

XI. *Israel and the Angels*

The election of Israel is expressed as a dichotomy between those who belong to the covenant of the Lord, and those who are meant for destruction from the land.⁶⁰ This division exists from the creation onwards. For, as *Jub.* 15:27 says, circumcision, as a sign of the election of Israel, is connected to the nature of the angels of the presence and of holiness, the two highest classes of angels. The command of circumcision thus exists from the beginning of time onwards. God had chosen these kinds of angels to become members of the covenant already on the first day of creation, which is, according to *Jubilees*, the day of the creation of the spirits (*Jub.* 2:2). These angels were apparently created with male genital organs and circumcised.⁶¹

The comparison with the angels in *Jub.* 15:27 not only underlines the importance of the command of circumcision, it also expresses the status of Israel with regard to God. Just as the two leading classes of angels are the closest to God, so is Israel.⁶² Moreover, with the act of circumcision Israel becomes like these angels.⁶³ If the sign of circumcision is the expression of God’s choice for Israel but dependent on human action, then it is clear that the consequence of ignoring the command of circumcision is that Israel does not become angelic, and thus it is no different from the rest of the world, alienated from God and destined to be destroyed.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 237.

⁶¹ Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, “Angels and Demons in the Book of Jubilees,” in *Angels: The Concept of Celestial Beings—Origins, Development and Reception* (ed. F. V. Reiterer, T. Nicklas, and K. Schöpflin; DCLY 2007; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 585–609.

⁶² According to Segal, *Jub.* 15:27 might express a vision of the world that presupposes a dualism in heaven that is similar to the dualism between Israel and the peoples. Does the author presuppose here a separation between the two leading classes of angels and the other angelic beings in heaven? See Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, 237.

⁶³ Gilders even states that the act of circumcision changes the human body into an angelic body, which means an ontological change in the body. See Gilders, “Concept of Covenant,” in *Enoch* (ed. G. Boccaccini and G. Ibba; forthcoming).

The angels are also involved in other activities. In heaven, the angels are not only circumcised but also observe the Sabbath and celebrate the Festival of Weeks. By keeping these commandments, the angels observe the laws that are related to the covenant between Israel and God. In *Jubilees*, there is a correlation between cultic practice in heaven and on earth.⁶⁴ The observance of the Sabbath is of crucial importance for *Jubilees*, and it is referred to at the beginning and the end of the book (*Jub.* 1:14; 2:17–33; 50:6–13). The practice of keeping the Sabbath is not only an *imitatio dei* (cf. *Jub.* 2:1: “And he [= the Lord God] kept Sabbath on the seventh day, and sanctified it for all ages”), but also an *imitatio angelorum*: “He gave us the Sabbath day as a great sign so that we should perform work for six days and that we should keep Sabbath from all work on the seventh day. He told us—all the angels of the presence and all the angels of holiness (these two great kinds)—to keep sabbath with him in heaven and on earth” (*Jub.* 2:17–18). Later in *Jubilees* 2 it is stated that just as the angels keep the Sabbath with God, so Israel keeps the Sabbath with the angels. Israel is the only nation permitted to do so (*Jub.* 2:31), and as such it is said that they will be holy and blessed throughout all times, as are the angels (*Jub.* 2:28).

Immediately after the flood, the rainbow in the clouds was the sign of the covenant. The covenant, however, is eternal, because it also applies to later generations. Therefore, the Israelites have to renew the covenant each year at the Festival of Weeks (*Jub.* 6:17). In this way, the Festival of Weeks in fact becomes the sign of the covenant. It is fascinating to read that the festival had already been celebrated *in heaven* from the time of creation: “For this reason it has been ordained and written on the heavenly tablets that they should celebrate the festival of weeks during this month—once a year—to renew the covenant each and every year. This entire festival had been celebrated in heaven from the time of creation until the lifetime of Noah—for 26 jubilees and five weeks of years. Then Noah and his sons kept it for seven jubilees and one week of years until Noah’s death” (*Jub.* 6:17–18).

Circumcision is also initiated in the same sequence as the Sabbath and the Festival of Weeks: first the angels, then Israel. It is also a sign

⁶⁴ For the synchronization of cultic practices on earth as in heaven, see Scott, *On Earth*, 1–15. See also Beate Ego, “Heilige Zeit—heiliger Raum—heiliger Mensch: Beobachtungen zur Struktur des Gesetzesbegründung in der Schöpfungs- und Paradiesgeschichte des Jubiläenbuches,” in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (ed. M. Albani, J. Frey, and A. Lange; TSAJ 65; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 207–19.

of Israel's election. The Sabbath is given to the angels in the first week of creation, the circumcision is given to the angels at the beginning of the creation, with their very creation, and the Festival of Weeks is celebrated from the creation onwards. Israel is chosen from amongst all peoples to celebrate the Sabbath with the Lord. The Festival of Weeks is the time that the covenant between the Lord and Israel is commemorated and renewed. So, too, the Israelites are chosen from all peoples to keep the commandment of circumcision.

XII. *The Election of Israel*

The specific relationship between YHWH and Israel is expressed most clearly in *Jub.* 15:30–32. In this passage, the author opposes the treatment of Israel as distinct from the other nations. The election of Israel means that the Lord has adopted Israel for Himself. The other nations belong to God indeed (*Jub.* 15:31cd: “For there are many nations and many peoples and all belong to him”), but they do not have the same direct relationship with Him as has Israel. The Lord makes spirits rule over the nations and they try to “lead them astray from following him” (*Jub.* 15:31e). He Himself rules over Israel, and this relationship is the basis for the covenant.

The vision that is expressed here comes close to the vision in the song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32:8–9.⁶⁵ In this song, the author refers to an assembly of gods.⁶⁶ According to the reading of 4QDeut,^j the Most High (Elyon) fixed the boundaries of the peoples “according to the number of the sons of God (El)” (Deut 32:8). In this context, every nation is in the hands of God's sons, whereas YHWH keeps Israel for Himself (Deut 32:9: “For YHWH's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage”). There are a few Greek manuscripts of the text of Deut 32:8 that also read “God's sons” (υἱῶν θεοῦ), whereas most Greek manuscripts read “the angels of God” (ἀγγέλων θεοῦ). The Masoretic Text reads “Israel's sons” (בני ישראל) rather than “God's sons” (בני אל). The reading “God's sons” is considered as the most original reading.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Cf. Sirach 17:17.

⁶⁶ Cf., for example, Psalm 82.

⁶⁷ Rudolf Meyer, “Die Bedeutung von Deuteronomium 32,8f.43 (4Q) für die Auslegung des Moseliedes,” in “*Verbannung und Heimkehr: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Theologie Israels im 6. und 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*”: Wilhelm Rudolph zum 70. Geburtstag

In the masoretic tradition this polytheistic reading was rejected by way of a small modification of the text.⁶⁸

In *Jub.* 15:30–32 the nations are put into the hands of an angel or a spirit (demon), and not into the hands of God's sons. However, elsewhere in Deuteronomy 32, demons are related to foreign gods (Deut 32:16–17: "They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominable practices they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons which were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come in of late, whom your fathers had never dreaded"). In Psalms 106:34–39 a connection is also made between the nations and the demons, see especially Psalms 106:36–37 in which the idols of the people are mentioned alongside the demons: "They served their idols, which became a snare to them. They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons." *Jubilees* also introduces these aspects specifically in relation to demons.

The election of Israel, the separation from the other peoples, is the central issue in *Jub.* 15:30–32. This unique relationship between God and Israel precedes the covenant,⁶⁹ forming the basis of it. In the retelling of the story of the creation it is made clear that the offspring of Jacob has the status of God's first-born son. The election is, as it were, incorporated into the order of creation. The covenant is the expression of this relationship in time and provides the means to sanctify Israel. The ritual is a visible sign of God's choice.

stag dargebracht von seinen Freunden und Schülern (ed. A. Kuschke; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1961), 197–209; Oswald Loretz, "Die Vorgeschichte von Deuteronomium 32,8f.43," *UF* 9 (1977): 355–57; Carmel McCarthy, *The Tiqqune Sopherim and Other Theological Corrections in the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament* (OBO 36; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 211–14; Arie van der Kooij, "The Ending of the Song of Moses: On the pre-Masoretic Version of Deut 32:43," in "Studies in Deuteronomy": *In Honour of C. J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (ed. F. García Martínez et al.: VTSup 53; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 93–94; Paul Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32* (*OtSt* 37; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 24–25; 156–58.

⁶⁸ VanderKam points to the possibility that Deut 32:8–9 refers back to the process of the separation of the people described in Genesis 10 (cf. 10: 5, 10–12, 19–20, 30–31, 32). James C. VanderKam, "The Demons in the Book of Jubilees," in *Demons: The Demonology of Israelite-Jewish and Early Christian literature in Context of their Environment* (ed. A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger, and K. F. Diethart Römheld; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 351–54.

⁶⁹ See Gilders, "Concept of Covenant," in *Enoch* (ed. G. Boccaccini and G. Ibba; forthcoming).

XIII. *Conclusion*

The present paper has looked into the way an authoritative text (Gen 17) was rewritten in *Jubilees* 15. Interestingly enough, the source text is almost completely rewritten. By way of omissions, variations and additions, the author of the paratext modifies the older text. He interprets the making of the covenant between God and Abraham as a renewing of the covenant, where Abraham acts on his own initiative to fulfil the stipulation of the renewed covenant that he has inherited from Noah. Moreover, the author tries to diminish the tension within the text of Genesis 17 between the requirement that all descendants of Abraham are to be circumcised as sign of the covenant, and the covenant being restricted to Isaac.

The addition at the end is related to some exegetical problems in the text of Gen 17, especially to the exact date of the circumcision and the curse related to it (cf. Gen 17:14). It reveals several central concerns of the book—*Jubilees* stresses that the moment of circumcision (“on the eighth day”) is of the utmost importance. Those who are not circumcised on the eighth day are considered to have not been circumcised. This concern probably reflects an issue prevailing during the author’s time.

The exclusive covenantal relationship between God and Israel involves a mutual commitment. This means that there is a sharp division between those elected and the impure gentiles. Both groups have to be kept separate from each other. Those elected were descended from Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Shem and Noah, and Adam. Everyone outside this pure lineage did not belong to the elected people, even if they were closely related, such as Ishmael and Esau. In this way, the author clearly advocates separatism. For him, the circumcision reflected the special position of Israel which had angelic status, belonging to the Lord and not to the spirits who reign over the other nations. Those who were not circumcised, or not circumcised at the right moment, could not participate in the covenantal relationship. However, there is not only a dividing line between Israel and the nations, but also within Israel, between those who are circumcised at the right moment and those who are not. The latter do not participate in the covenant.

The special relationship between God and Israel is stressed throughout the book, but is especially relevant here because of the theme of the covenant and the specific choice of Isaac rather than Ishmael in Gen 17. The reference to the angels and their day of creation also underlines that the election of Israel in fact precedes the making of

the covenant. Because the covenant between God and Israel is built into the order of creation, Ishmael cannot participate in this relationship despite the fact that he is circumcised. The law and the covenant are thus presented as eternal, dating back to the time of the creation and the earliest patriarchs, which is in line with many other halakic additions in the book, for example, the halaka concerning women giving birth (*Jub.* 3:8–14), the prohibition against consuming blood (*Jub.* 6:11–14; 7:29), the keeping of the Sabbath (*Jub.* 2:17–33; 50) and several festivals, for example, the Festival of Weeks (6:17–22), the Festival of the First Fruits (*Jub.* 15:1–2), and Pesach (*Jub.* 49).

By reworking and expanding older traditions through interpretation, a new text claims for itself the authority already attached to those traditions. Moreover, the new text ascribes to itself the status of the older work, the Torah. It portrays itself as having a heavenly origin and, moreover, as being an authentic expression of the Torah of Moses. It associates the production of the new work with the setting of the old one (Sinai) and with the same author, Moses. The new composition provides the context for the interpretation of the older traditions, and at the same time it gains its authority through its interweaving of authoritative texts.

Jubilees constantly quotes and rewrites the older text of Genesis and Exodus. This is enough evidence to prove the thesis that the text is not intended to replace the earlier text. Moreover, the new composition refers explicitly to the older composition a number of times, for example, *Jub.* 6:22: “For I have written this in the book of the first law”; *Jub.* 30:12: “For this reason I have written for you in the words of the law.” Thus it can be argued that *Jubilees* rewrote the biblical text both in order to interpret this text with regard to apparent inconsistencies, but also to demonstrate the authority of this biblical text. Moreover, we have seen that the author of *Jubilees* wove elements into the main story line that were not present in Genesis and Exodus but which have often been derived from other Jewish texts and traditions, such as interpretations of law, temple ritual, the calendrical system and the covenant. Despite the high claims for authority, I believe that the author of *Jubilees* primarily presents the scriptural text in what he considers to be its essence.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Cf. also Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple* (JSJSup 77; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 46.

In the Second Degree

Paratextual Literature in Ancient Near Eastern
and Ancient Mediterranean Culture and
Its Reflections in Medieval Literature

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