

Covenantal Election in 4Q252 and *Jubilees*' Heavenly Tablets

Shani Tzoref
s.tzoref@gmail.com

Abstract

This study builds upon earlier attempts in scholarship to (1) identify the common element(s) among the thirty or so passages attributed to the Heavenly Tablets in *Jubilees*, and (2) to determine the unifying factor(s) underlying 4Q252 (4QCommentary on Genesis A). I demonstrate that the close affinity between the list of passages from the book of Genesis that are featured in 4Q252 and those represented in *Jubilees*' Heavenly Tablets points to a shared exegetical tradition pertaining to Elect and accursed figures in Genesis. I further argue that the differences between these lists, and between their respective treatments of some of the accursed figures, indicate distinctive recastings of this shared tradition.

Keywords

Jubilees; 4Q252; Covenant; Qumran; Election

1. Introduction

In the book of *Jubilees*, the re-telling of the Genesis narrative is frequently punctuated by quotations from a source termed the “Heavenly Tablets.” The nature of these purported citations varies considerably, and scholars have sought to identify the common element or elements among these 30 or so passages attributed to the Heavenly Tablets.¹ Similarly, the eclectic

¹ James Kugel has recently argued for the textual unity of the Heavenly Tablets passages in *Jubilees*, in his “On the Interpolations in the Book of Jubilees” *RevQ* 24/94 (2009): 215–72. For earlier discussions, see Florentino García Martínez, “The Heavenly Tablets in the Book of Jubilees,” in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (ed. Matthias Albani, Jörg Frey, and Armin Lange; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck,

nature of the selected scriptural passages represented in 4Q252 (4QCommentary on Genesis A) has made it difficult to answer the question—why has the author, or compiler, selected these particular texts for his purpose?² In this study, I aim to identify and explore a shared exegetical tradition underlying both 4Q252 and the group of passages attributed to the Heavenly Tablets in *Jubilees*.³

1997), 243–60; Liora Ravid, “The Special Terminology of the Heavenly Tablets in the Book of *Jubilees*,” *Tarbiz* 68/4 (1999): 463–71 [Hebrew]; Cana Werman, “The ‘Torah’ and the ‘Te’udah’ Engraved on the Tablets,” *DSD* 9 (2002): 75–103.

² See Shani Tzoref, “4Q252: Listenwissenschaft and Covenantal Patriarchal Blessings,” in “*Go Out and Study the Land*” (*Judges* 18:2). *Archaeological, Historical and Textual Studies in Honor of Hanan Eshel* (ed. Aren Maeir, Jodi Magness, and Lawrence H. Schiffman; Leiden: Brill, forthcoming). Cf. George J. Brooke, “4Q252: 4QCommentary on Genesis A,” in *Qumran Cave 4. XVII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 3* (DJD 22; ed. G. J. Brooke et al.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 185–207 at 187; Juhana M. Saukkonen, *The Story Behind the Text: Scriptural Interpretation in 4Q252* (Ph.D. diss., University of Helsinki, 2005). Moshe Bernstein has argued against attempts to impose a theme on the composition, in “4Q252: From Re-Written Bible to Biblical Commentary,” *JJS* 45 (1994): 1–27; and idem, “4Q252: Method and Context, Genre and Sources. A Response to George J. Brooke,” *JQR* 85/1–2 (1994): 61–79. For the description of 4Q252 as a composite of multiple sources, see Brooke, DJD 22:187.

³ In this, I differ from Kugel (“On the Interpolations”) who views the passages citing the Heavenly Tablets as the product of a creative “Interpolator” who interacted systematically with the book of *Jubilees*. Kugel’s Interpolator inserts his own original exegetical remarks in response to the existing text in order to produce an edited version that Kugel dubs “*The Book of Jubilees-Plus-Some-Legal Addenda*.” My alternative proposal, that an interpolator was working with an inherited tradition or collection of traditions, accounts equally well for the contradictions between the interpolated passages and the main text, and better for the parallels with contemporary sources. My working hypothesis is that the material attributed to the Heavenly Tablets originated in a source distinct from the rest of the material in *Jubilees*. I distinguish this source from the main body of the work, and I use the term interpolator to refer to the scribe who incorporated pre-existing Heavenly Tablets material into the book of *Jubilees*. At this point, I do not have a clear position on the relationship between the interpolator and the other scribes who were involved in composing and redacting the book in order to bring it to the form in which we know it. Ongoing research into the textual development of the book of *Jubilees* will enable more precise hypotheses about the stage of authorship or redaction during which this set of interpolations was incorporated.

As a group, the citations of the Heavenly Tablets in *Jubilees* reflect a dualistic determinism, such that humanity is divided into Good and Evil, and the Elect are destined to eternal reward whereas Evil Ones are subject to judgment. In a recent article, I have argued that the selection of passages in the main body of 4Q252 reflects interest in first person divine blessing to Abraham and his offspring.⁴ Here, I develop this idea further, proposing that 4Q252 and the group of passages in *Jubilees* that ascribe events to the Heavenly Tablets represent two different re-workings of a shared tradition of a compilation of excerpts from Genesis.⁵

2. Shared Traditions: “Te‘udah” in *Jubilees*’ Heavenly Tablets and 4Q252

Following Liora Ravid and Cana Werman, I find it effective to divide the citations attributed to the heavenly tablets in *Jubilees* into two basic categories, “Laws” and “Testimonies.”⁶ Werman’s use of the term תעודה for the non-legal passages attributed to the Heavenly Tablets is rooted in her understanding of the expression תורה ותעודה.⁷ Although Werman’s proposal of terminological specificity has been challenged, and further philological analysis of these terms in the book of *Jubilees* is required, the taxonomic division between legal and non-legal items attributed to the Heavenly Tablets remains valid and useful.⁸ An additional problem related

⁴ Tzoref, “Listenwissenschaft.”

⁵ In a future study, I intend to further explore the underlying tradition concerning Genesis, the periodization of history, and revelation, by examining the relationship between the texts discussed here and contemporary compositions in the Qumran corpus, especially 4Q180 (*Pesher on the Periods*) and the Admonition sections of CD.

⁶ See Tzoref, “Listenwissenschaft.”

⁷ Werman, “The ‘Torah’ and the ‘Te‘udah’” esp. 478–80; Ravid uses the term עדות in eadem, “The Special Terminology.”

⁸ Menahem Kister has shown that תעודה is used in *Jubilees* to designate laws, even in the passages that cite the Heavenly Tablets; see his “Two Formulae in the Book of *Jubilees*,” *Tarbiz* 70 (2001): 289–300 at 295; 298 n. 49 [Hebrew]. Michael Segal (*The Book of Jubilees*, 282–316) argued that תעודה in *Jubilees* denotes covenantal law and is equivalent to the term תורה. Kugel agrees with Segal in viewing the expression תורה ותעודה as a hendiadys (cf. Kugel, “On the Interpolations,” 261 n. 69; Segal *The Book of Jubilees*, 288), but he has helpfully isolated a consis-

to the issue of the terminology of תורה and תעודה is the seeming inconsistency in the nature of the material attributed to the Heavenly Tablets. Kister points out that some passages reflect a belief that the Heavenly Tablets contain material that pre-existed the creation of the world, while others view the Heavenly Tablets as recording events as they occur in real time.⁹ The distinction between laws and testimonies/events enables a generally consistent model, in which the items ascribed to the Heavenly Tablets consist of laws that pre-existed creation but were revealed to human beings over time, and records of human actions that were inscribed before creation but unfold in time. The “laws” attributed to the heavenly tablets are regulations that are designated as חוקים in the Pentateuch, usually with the specific expression חוקת עולם, eternal engraving.¹⁰ But what common feature(s) bind the items in the list of “testimonies”, which I use here to refer to records?¹¹ Table 1 supports my hypothesis of a broad underlying

tent and distinctive technical usage of the term תעודה in the specific passages ascribed to the Heavenly Tablets, to denote an item attributed to the Heavenly Tablets (*ibid.*, 257–61).

⁹ As Shalom Paul has demonstrated, both conceptions of the contents of heavenly tablets are found in the earliest attested references to such records in Ancient Near Eastern literature. See Shalom M. Paul, “Heavenly Tablets and the Book of Life,” in *Divrei Shalom; Collected Studies of Shalom M. Paul on the Bible and the Ancient Near East, 1967–2005* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 59–70; (repr. from *The Gaster Festschrift* [ed. David Marcus; New York: ANE Society, 1974], 345–53). Kister takes the discrepancy as evidence of multiple sources underlying the different passages. (“Two Formulae,” esp. 291). He rejects an alternative explanation, which I find satisfactory, that the disparity is a product of the inevitable paradox arising in any belief system that posits predestination along with free will and reward and punishment. For an insightful recent examination of fate and free will in ancient Judaism, see Jonathan Klawans, “Josephus on Fate, Free Will and Ancient Jewish Types of Compatibilism,” *Numen* 56 (2009): 44–90.

¹⁰ I presented the evidence for this observation in “Priestly Pseudepigrapha,” an as yet unpublished paper delivered at the Annual SBL Meeting, San Antonio, Tex.; November, 2004. This is echoed in the “signature phrases” employed in the passages ascribed to the Heavenly Tablets, e.g., “has no temporal limits,” “for eternal generations.” See Ravid, “The Special Terminology”; Kugel, “On the Interpolations,” 216–17.

¹¹ This latter category, our interest here, incorporates two of the five categories identified by García Martínez, “The Heavenly Tablets”: the “register of good and evil” and “the book of destiny.”

tradition in which the data included in 4Q252 and *Jubilees'* Heavenly Tablets were viewed as a group, as key points in a pre-determined and dualistic history of humanity. These events correspond to blessings and curses recorded in the book of Genesis—blessings bestowed by God upon Elect patriarchs and their progeny, and pronouncements by those patriarchs upon their offspring. The table demonstrates the alignment between the figures and events represented in 4Q252 and those that appear in the non-legal “citations” of the heavenly tablets in *Jubilees*.

Table 1

| 4Q252 ¹³ | <i>Jubilees</i> : “Testimonies” attributed to Heavenly Tablets ¹² |
|---|--|
| I 3 – II 8 Flood; Sons of Noah (Gen 9: divine blessing of Noah’s sons) | HT <i>Jub.</i> 5:13–19 judgment of humanity each generation, in context of flood; Noah saved, and Noah’s sons, for his sake |
| II 8–10 Abraham is <u>God’s friend</u> ; (Gen 12: divine command to Abram to go to Israel; assurance of blessing) | |
| II 11–13 Abraham promised a covenant with son... Isaac (Gen 15 covenant of the pieces, 17 divine blessing, prediction of Isaac’s birth) | HT <i>Jub.</i> 16:3 predicted birth and naming of Isaac, in context of revelation to Abram and Sara; |
| III 1–2 Ishmael’s 12 princes (Gen 17 divine blessing of Abraham’s offspring) | See also HT <i>Jub.</i> 15:30 rejection of Ishmael (<i>within passage on law of circumcision</i>) HT <i>Jub.</i> 16:16–18 fulfillment of prediction of Sarah’s pregnancy; blessing of Abraham’s offspring, but true Election of just one of Isaac’s sons (<i>associated with the law of the Feast of Tabernacles</i>) |
| III 2–6 Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18) | HT <i>Jub.</i> 16:9 eradication of Lot’s descendants like Sodom |

¹² For the text of *Jubilees*, I have relied upon James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (CSCO 511; Leuven: Peeters, 1989). All translations are from this edition, unless otherwise stated.

¹³ The portion of the table containing the events in 4Q252 is based upon Brooke, DJD 22:188.

Table 1 (*cont.*)

| 4Q252 | <i>Jubilees</i> : “Testimonies” attributed to Heavenly Tablets |
|--|--|
| III 6–10 Binding of Isaac (Gen 22 divine blessing of Abraham in reward for binding of Isaac) | HT <i>Jub.</i> 18:18–19 Binding of Isaac (<i>associated with the law of the Feast of Passover</i>) HT <i>Jub.</i> 19:8–9 Abraham recorded as <u>God’s friend</u> |
| [Blessing of Isaac?] (Gen 26) | HT <i>Jub.</i> 23:32 reward of penitent righteous at end of days; general statement |
| III 11–14 Blessing of Jacob (Gen 28:3–4 Isaac’s blessing of Jacob; Gen 35:9–12, divine blessing of Jacob). | HT <i>Jub.</i> 24:33 uprooting of the Philistines (in context of <u>Isaac’s curse</u> , not in MT) |
| IV 1–3 Eradication of Amalek (probably a reflection of Gen 27, Isaac’s pronouncements to his sons) | |
| IV 3–VI 3 “ <u>Blessings of Jacob</u> ” by Jacob, (for end of days, each son “according to his blessing” Gen 49, Jacob’s pronouncements to his sons) | <i>Jub.</i> 30: (5), 17, 23 <u>Simeon and Levi</u> recorded for righteousness in a “book of heaven”; written down “for a blessing” HT <i>Jub.</i> 30:19 election of <u>Levi</u> |
| <u>Reuben</u> rebuked | HT <i>Jub.</i> 30:20–22 general statement—men inscribed as enemy or friend, judgment for him and his descendants |
| Messianic interpretation of <u>Judah’s</u> blessing | HT <i>Jub.</i> 31:31–32 election of <u>Levi and Judah</u> “just as Isaac blessed them” |
| Blessings of Asher and Naphtali | HT <i>Jub.</i> 33:12 in reference to <u>Reuben</u> : “Let the one who lies with his father’s wife be cursed.” (<i>technically a law, but also pertains to Reuben’s loss of status</i>) ¹⁴ <i>Jub.</i> 32:16–29 Bethel revelation; Jacob reads seven <u>Heavenly Tablets</u> (in the context of the Feast of Atzeret) |

¹⁴ See Shani Tzoref, “The ‘Hidden’ and the ‘Revealed’: Progressive Revelation of Law and Esoterica,” *Meghillot—Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls* 7 (2009): 157–90, esp. 175–80 [Hebrew].

Three main sections can be discerned in the table: Noah, Abraham, and Jacob.¹⁵ In each section, both compositions are primarily concerned with the blessing of these Elect figures and with the status of their offspring as blessed or accursed. Both 4Q252 and the sequential passages in *Jubilees* feature episodes pertaining to patriarchal blessings that appear in Gen 9, 12, 15, 17, 18, 22, and 49.¹⁶ In both compositions, the central figures are presented as having been privileged to receive revelation about the righteous and wicked in future times; they are given knowledge pertaining to eternal periods of humankind. Thus, in the first line of the table, note that both 4Q252 and *Jubilees*' record of the Heavenly Tablets state that Noah is informed about the Flood. In 4Q252, he also foresees the status of his descendants, as blessed (Shem) and accursed (Canaan).¹⁷ Abraham and Sarah are told of Isaac's birth, which will occur at an appointed time, and of the future of his descendants; Abraham is also given advanced notice concerning the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the paradigmatic example of punishment of the wicked. Revelation concerning appointed times and fates is especially marked in the case of Jacob. In 4Q252, the section containing Jacob's parting words to his sons is given the heading "Blessings of Jacob." In the corresponding passages in *Jubilees*, Jacob comments upon the election of Levi and Judah as fulfillment of his father's blessing, and in accord with the records of the Heavenly Tablets. By reading seven heavenly tablets, he acquires knowledge of "what would happen to him and his sons throughout all ages" (*Jub.* 32:21).

¹⁵ It is reasonable to expect that the lacuna at 4Q252 III 10–11 contained a reference to God's blessing of Isaac in Gen 26:3–4 and/or Gen 26:24. (See Tzoref, "Listenwissenschaft"). This blessing is not featured in the extant collection of Heavenly Tablets citations in *Jubilees*.

¹⁶ There are some differences in the presentation of the events in each of our comparanda. For example, 4Q252 features introductory glosses at the beginning of new sections, in describing Abraham as a friend of God, in declaring Jacob's blessed status (III 11–14), and in providing the heading "Blessings of Jacob" in col. IV. In *Jubilees*, the application of the epithet "friend" to Abraham appears at the end of the Abraham material, and the description of the divine blessing of Jacob, and the elaboration of Jacob's knowledge of his sons' future, appear towards the end of the list of passages that cite the Heavenly Tablets.

¹⁷ The blessing and cursing of Noah's sons are developed at length in chapters 7–10 of *Jubilees*. The Heavenly Tablets are not specifically cited in these contexts, but the testaments of the patriarchs in the book have strong affinities with the Heavenly Tablets material.

3. The Doomed Non-Elect

The references to Elect patriarchs and their blessed offspring are fairly straightforward in both of the compositions we are considering, as is their derivation from scriptural blessings in the book of Genesis. The references to the rejected genealogical lines of these Elect, especially Ham, Ishmael, and Esau, involve greater exegetical ingenuity and audacity.

Both 4Q252 and *Jubilees* incorporate a blessing of Ishmael, on the basis of Gen 17:20. Reference to the “twelve princes” of Gen 17: 20 appears in 4Q252 III 1–2. The text is not well-preserved, and it is unclear whether the purpose of the citation was to show that Ishmael was blessed, on account of being Abraham’s son, or to call attention to the inferiority of Ishmael’s blessing as compared to that of Isaac. The latter would be more faithful to the biblical text, which emphasizes the limited nature of the blessing of Ishmael, and that it is Isaac’s line that will continue the covenant. Gen 17:20 is also cited in *Jub.* 15:20.¹⁸ The associated passage ascribing the law of circumcision on the eighth day to the Heavenly Tablets denies election to Ishmael and his offspring. As discussed by Michael Segal, *Jub.* 15:30 pointedly excludes Ishmael from the covenant of circumcision.¹⁹ This polemic is probably operative in *Jub.* 15:25–26 as well, in the insistence that the Heavenly Tablets contain the eternally binding stipulation that circumcision take place no later than the eighth day.²⁰ Further rejection of Ishmael is found in another of the passages pertaining to the Heavenly Tablets. The book of *Jubilees* records two episodes in which Abraham is visited by angels announcing the birth of Isaac (*Jub.* 16:1–4,

¹⁸ The twelve sons of Ishmael are also mentioned among those addressed by Abraham in his testament, *Jub.* 20:1.

¹⁹ Segal, *The Book of Jubilees*, 229–45.

²⁰ We rely here upon Segal’s proposed translation and interpretation of 15:25, “This law is (valid) for all history forever, and there is no circumcising of days. And there is no passing of one day from the eight days” (*The Book of Jubilees*, 233–37). Segal sees this emphasis on the eighth day as intra-Jewish polemic, but it may rather continue the anti-Ishmael rhetoric. See Kugel, “On the Interpolations,” 248–50. The text continues, “Anyone who is born, the flesh of whose private parts has not been circumcised by the eighth day does not belong to the people of the pact which the Lord made with Abraham, but to the people (meant) for destruction, for being destroyed from the earth, and for being uprooted from the earth because he has violated the covenant of the Lord our God.”

corresponding to Gen 18:1–15, and *Jub.* 16:15–31).²¹ During the second visit, on the Feast of Tabernacles, the angels specified that just one of Abraham's sons, and more specifically, just one of Isaac's sons, was designated for ultimate Election. All of Jacob's offspring, but none of the rest of Abraham's descendants, were to become the "share of the Most High."²²

To summarize, 4Q252 and the main text of *Jubilees* record the blessing of Ishmael, probably to contrast its scope with that of Isaac. In *Jub.* 15:25–26, 29–30, the interpolator effectively reverses this blessing.²³

Esau's status in the book of Genesis is more problematic than that of Ishmael, and his rivalry with his sibling over paternal and divine blessing is intense and direct. For all his efforts to secure his father's blessing, all Esau managed to procure was an opaque oracular pronouncement, "Your abode will be away from the earth's richness, and away from the dew of heaven above. You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from off your neck" (Gen 27:39–40). This was the best that his father could do for him, since, as he told Esau (Gen 27:37), Isaac's blessing to Jacob precluded Esau from attaining Elect status, "May nations serve you (Jacob) and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed" (Gen 27:29).

Isaac's pronouncements to his sons have the force of divine benedictions and curses, but, as is typical of poetic prophetic statements, they require

²¹ For a discussion of this second visit, see Kugel, "Interpolations," 236–41.

²² And, "all his descendants had fallen into that (share) which God owns" (*Jub.* 16:16–18). On Israel as the portion of the Most High (Deut 32:8–9), see Segal, *The Book of Jubilees*, 229, 250–51, and the sources cited there. See now also, Mark Smith, "What is a Scriptural Text in the Second Temple Period? Texts Between Their Biblical Past, Their Inner-Biblical Interpretation, Their Reception in Second Temple Literature, and Their Textual Witnesses," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at 60: Scholarly Contributions of New York University Faculty and Alumni* (ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and Shani Tzoref; Leiden: Brill, 2010).

²³ On the even stronger anti-Ishmael polemic in 4Q225, see Cana Werman, *The Attitude Towards Gentiles in the Book of Jubilees and Qumran Literature Compared with the Early Tanaic Halakha and Contemporary Pseudepigrapha* (Ph.D. diss., The Hebrew University, 1995), 125–46 [Hebrew]. 4Q225 II 10 states explicitly of Ishmael, "He will not be a Friend (אֶהְיֶה)." See also, Betsy Halpern Amaru, "A Note on Isaac as First-Born in *Jubilees* and Only Son in 4Q225," *DSD* 13 (2006): 127–33.

elucidation. This seems to be the best explanation for the reference to Saul's defeat of Amalek in 4Q252 IV 1–3. Commentators on this passage have disagreed about whether the mention of Saul is intended to praise the Israelite king for destroying the Amalekites or condemn him for incompletely fulfilling his mission. 4Q252 does not seem interested in Saul himself, however. The purpose of the scriptural cross-references to Gen 36:12a (the birth of Amalek), 1 Sam ch. 14, 15 (Saul's destruction of Amalek), and Deut 25:19 (the eradication of the name of Amalek in "the latter days") is to serve as prooftexts for the fulfillment of Isaac's pronouncement to Jacob and Esau.²⁴ In *Jub.* 26:34, Isaac's poetic response to Esau's plea for a blessing is modified from MT, so that Esau is not just subject to servitude but to eradication, due to transgression: "if you become great and remove his yoke from your neck, then you will commit an offence fully worthy of death and your *descendant will be eradicated from beneath the sky*."²⁵ Esau is not mentioned in any of the passages that cite the Heavenly Tablets, but the issue of the birthright competition is elaborated upon at length in *Jub.* 35–37, and there is an indirect reference to the celestial records of the eternal curse of Esau's descendants in *Jub.* 36:9–11. In his parting words to Jacob and Esau prior to his death, Isaac adjured both his sons to love each other, warning that whichever of the two would violate this, his descendants would be uprooted from the earth; God will destroy him as he destroyed Sodom; and "he will be erased from the disciplinary book of mankind. He will not be entered in the book of life but in the one that will be destroyed." In *Jub.* 37, Esau's sons wage war on Jacob, thereby incurring Isaac's curse upon themselves.²⁶

²⁴ See Tzoref, "Listenwissenschaft." Some scholars have attempted to read the reference to Saul's defeat of the Amalekites as a condemnation of Saul for only partially fulfilling the divine command of eradicating Amalek. As argued by Moshe Bernstein, this reading is not suitable to the text. Cf. Bernstein, "4Q252: From Re-Written Bible," 15–16. On the equation "Esau=Edom=Amalek," see Louis H. Feldman, *Remember Amalek!: Vengeance, Zealotry, and Group Destruction in the Bible according to Philo, Pseudo-Philo, and Josephus* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2004), 67–69.

²⁵ On the treatment of Esau in *Jubilees*, see Werman, *The Attitude Towards Gentiles*, 177–79, ch. 6, "Comparing Esau's Portrayal in Genesis with that in the Book of Jubilees."

²⁶ Isa 34:16–17 probably offers a scriptural precedent for a heavenly record of the eradication of Esau. See Paul, "Heavenly Tablets," 62. Cresson elaborates on the "Damn-Edom" theology found in postexilic prophecy, a term he attributes to

Already in the book of Genesis, Ishmael and Esau are excluded from the covenant despite the facts that they are offspring of Abraham, and that their fathers sought to transmit the covenantal blessing to them. In the biblical text, Ishmael's blessing is limited, and Esau's is both limited and conditional. In 4Q252, the treatment of the divine blessing of Ishmael is unclear; Isaac's "blessing" of Esau is portrayed as having been fulfilled in the eradication of a line of Esau's offspring. In the book of *Jubilees*, these figures are excluded from the eternal blessing reserved for those recorded on the Heavenly Tablets as friends. The blessings they received are shown to have been conditional, so that when they fail the test of proper behavior, they become subject to uprooting like Sodom.

In both 4Q252 and the Heavenly Tablets passages in *Jubilees*, the divine verdict against Sodom is treated as paradigmatic for the destruction of wicked populations. In 4Q252, this is achieved by the use of a pastiche of language from Gen 18 (Sodom) with Deut 13 (the idolatrous city).²⁷ In *Jubilees*, Sodom is held up as a negative model by Abraham and Isaac in their testaments to their offspring. Since the blessings of the non-Elect lines are conditional, Abraham warns his sons that transgression will lead to their being uprooted like Sodom (*Jub.* 20:6). In his testament to Jacob, Abraham repeats the example of Sodom in warning Jacob to distance

W. F. Stinespring, in Bruce C. Cresson, "The Condemnation of Edom in Postexilic Judaism," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring* (ed. James M. Efird; Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1972), 125–48. Some sources that continued and developed this negative portrayal of Esau and Edom in Second Temple Jewish writings are listed by Ulrich Hübner, "Esau," *ABD* 2:575.

²⁷ On the use of Deut 13:13–19 in this passage in 4Q252, see Bernstein, "4Q252: From Re-Written Bible," 15 n. 46; George J. Brooke, "The Deuteronomistic Character of 4Q252," in *Pursuing the Text: Studies in Honor of Ben Zion Wacholder on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (ed. John C. Reeves and John Kampen; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 121–35, at 122–25; Gabriel Barzilai, "The Fate of the Wicked of Sodom and Gomorrah in an Ancient Interpretation from Qumran (4Q252 Col. 3)," *Beit Mikra* 155 (1998): 323–31 [Hebrew]. Tigchelaar is inclined to accept Barzilai's proposal that 4Q252 equates Sodom with Jerusalem (Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, "Sodom and Gomorrah in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Sodom's Sin: Genesis 18–19 and its Interpretations* [ed. Ed Noort and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar; Leiden: Brill, 2004], 47–62). I am not convinced of this, but even if they are correct, then 4Q252 would still exhibit a typological exegesis of Sodom, though not one that is directed against the Gentiles.

himself from Canaanites, the idolatrous descendants of Ham (22:22). In Isaac's testament to Esau and Jacob (36:9–11), he warned that whichever of the two brothers would wish to injure the other would become liable to the fate of Sodom; the continuation of the text confirms that this is Esau.

In *Jub.* 16, the device of the Heavenly Tablets and the example of Sodom are employed to certify rejection of another of Abraham's kin. In the context of reiterating the angels' revelation predicting the birth of Isaac, and the episode of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the angelic rescue of Lot is reported—with a twist that interprets and modifies the biblical account. The interpolator seems to take the biblical notification that Lot was saved because of Abraham as a basis for qualifying the salvation as associative only, and thus temporary and conditional, not covenantal.²⁸ It follows that by engaging in sexual relations with his daughters, Lot lost all entitlement to the privileges of election, so that his offspring will be judged like Sodom and eradicated. This is in keeping with a divine proclamation found in Zeph 2:9,²⁹ but the condemnation does not accord with Gen 20:33, 35, where the text explicitly specifies that Lot “did not know” when his daughters lay with him. The representation of Lot's guilt in this passage is similar to the subversion of the biblical text in writing Ishmael out of the covenant of circumcision. The reference to Lot in *Jubilees* has no direct

²⁸ Gen 20:29: “When God destroyed the cities of the Plain and annihilated the cities where Lot dwelt, God was mindful of Abraham and removed Lot from the midst of the upheaval.” See Jacques van Ruiten, “Lot versus Abraham: The Interpretation of Genesis 18:1–19:38 in *Jubilees* 16:1–9,” in Noort and Tigchelaar, *Sodom's Sin*, 29–46 at 42. Similarly, Noah's sons were saved because of Noah: “To all who corrupted their ways and their plan(s) before the flood no favor was shown except to Noah alone because favor was shown to him *for the sake of his children whom he saved from the flood waters for his sake* because his mind was righteous in all his ways, as it had been commanded concerning him. He did not transgress from anything that had been ordained for him” (*Jub.* 5:19). Noah's non-Elect sons merit only conditional salvation, and in the future they will be destroyed because of their sins. On the conditionality of the Noahide covenant in *Jubilees*, see Werman, *The Attitude Towards Gentiles*, 61–66; Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *Primaevial History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1–11 in the Book of Jubilees* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 222.

²⁹ “‘Therefore, as surely as I live’ declares the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, ‘surely Moab will become like Sodom, the Ammonites like Gomorrah—a place of weeds and salt pits, a wasteland forever. The remnant of my people will plunder them; the survivors of my nation will inherit their land.’”

parallel in 4Q252, but it is possible that the words ים לבדם יחרמו in III 4 hint at the same theological problem, as suggested by Gabriel Barzilai.³⁰

A further deviation from the biblical text, without a parallel in 4Q252, is found in *Jub.* 24:28–33, which states that Isaac cursed the Philistines, and cites the Heavenly Tablets as attesting to the uprooting of the Philistines, and to their accursed state. The claim that Isaac cursed the Philistines after having been coerced into a pact with them occurs in the context of the rewriting of Gen 26. The oath at Beersheva is in the biblical text, but there is no obvious exegetical peg for Isaac's curse. I propose that this tradition arose through a typological understanding of Joshua's curse of the Gibeonites for having duped the Israelites into a pact, enforced by an oath. The Israelites were constrained to abide by the oath, even though they were prohibited from arranging pacts with local populations, on the basis of Exod 23:31–31 and Deut 20:15–18.³¹ Note that both of these biblical passages are concerned with covenants that entitle non-Israelites to inhabit the land. The author of *Jubilees* would find this objectionable, since the Land is reserved only for Israel, partners with God in the only valid enduring covenant. As noted by Werman, the status of the Philistines poses a challenge since they are not among the seven nations that the Israelites were commanded to destroy.³² Note also that the curse uttered by Joshua against the Gibeonites in Josh 9:22 is for them to always be hewers of wood and drawers of water. This raises the issue of the relationship between servitude and eradication. Isaac's blessing of Jacob in Gen 27:29 stated "May nations serve you (Jacob) and peoples bow down to you." Similarly, Esau and Ham, who are to be destroyed, were cursed with servitude.³³

³⁰ Barzilai, "The Fate of the Wicked," 326–28. He restores והחטא[ים לבדם יחרמו], and suggests that the text intends to make the claim that the reward or punishment of individuals is affected only by their own behavior, without any consideration of the righteousness or wickedness of their kin or compatriots.

³¹ The Gibeonites acknowledged that God is with Israel, as Abimelech and Pichol acknowledged God's support of Isaac.

³² Werman, *The Attitude Towards Gentiles*, 158.

³³ For the servitude of Esau, see both the continuation of Isaac's pronouncement to his sons in Gen 27 and the earlier prophecy to Rebecca concerning her twins in utero, Gen 25:23, "and the older shall serve the younger"; for Ham, see Gen 9:27, "he shall dwell in the tents of Shem: and Canaan shall be his servant." On the blend of response to contemporary socio-political concerns and intertextual use of scripture (especially Amos 9) in the curse of the Philistines in *Jubilees*, see Werman, *The Attitude Towards Gentiles*, 147–58; John C. Endres, *Biblical*

I posit that the lack of parallel in 4Q252 to *Jubilees*' curse of the Philistines and of Lot's descendants is an exception that proves the rule, an indication of different approaches applied to a shared tradition. Our analysis has demonstrated that both 4Q252 and the book of *Jubilees* exhibit discomfort with the fact that the book of Genesis records divine (or divinely sanctioned) blessings of the non-chosen sons of Elect individuals. Both texts highlight patriarchal blessings, especially those pertaining to offspring and the Land. Both texts confront exegetical and theological difficulties raised by the status of Ham, Ishmael, and Esau. The author of 4Q252 seems to struggle with this problem. The interpolator in *Jubilees* resolves the problem by asserting that these figures became destined for total eradication due to their transgressions. "For through Ham's sin Canaan erred. All of his descendants and all of his (people) who remain will be destroyed from the earth." (*Jub.* 22:21); Ishmael (*Jub.* 15:30–32); Esau, in Isaac's words: "you will complete a sin unto death, and your seed will be rooted out from under heaven" (*Jub.* 26:34). We have seen that the interpolator in *Jubilees* goes to great lengths to restrict the scope of the scriptural blessing of Abraham's offspring, in excluding Ishmael and Esau, and to extend the divine verdict against Sodom to apply to the descendants, as well as to Moab and Ammon, and the Philistines.³⁴

The treatment of the non-Elect in *Jubilees*' Heavenly Tablets may reflect exegetical development of Ps 69:29 "May [my foes] be erased from the book of life, and not be inscribed with righteousness."³⁵ But a *Tendenz* also

Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), 68–73.

³⁴ In contrast to the eternal covenantal blessing of Shem (*Jub.* 8:17–21) and Jacob (*Jub.* 22: 10–24), Noah's non-Elect sons are susceptible to the Watchers and in danger of being led astray towards sin and destruction (*Jub.* 7:26–28; 10:5), and Abraham's non-Elect offspring are in danger of becoming like the Giants and like Sodom (*Jub.* 20:5–6; 36:10). Abraham warns, "And guard yourselves from all fornication and uncleanness, And from all pollution of sin, Lest ye make our name a curse, And your whole life a hissing, And all your sons to be destroyed by the sword, And ye become accursed like Sodom, And all your remnant as the sons of Gomorrah). See also *Jub.* 22:21–22, which connects the eradication of Ham's line with that of the sons of Sodom, and of all who follow in their path of idolatry.

³⁵ Given the significance of election and dwelling in the Land in 4Q252, note also verse 25: "May their place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in their tents"; and the conclusion of the psalm, 69:35–36: "for God will save Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah. Then people will settle there and possess it; the children

seems to be at play, most likely motivated by the socio-political views of the interpolator, or his predecessor.³⁶ Among the suggestions put forth for a unifying theme in 4Q252 has been Kister's assessment that the text "emphasizes promises and blessings to the fathers of the Jewish people and discusses the legitimacy of dispossessing or destroying other peoples: Canaan, Sodom, Amalek. This theme probably had concrete political significance for the author."³⁷ Kister's characterization of the theme of 4Q252 accurately reflects the composition, and it is plausible to see this theme as indicative of a political orientation. But the primary concerns of the author of 4Q252, do not seem to be so much political and ethical as theological, ideological, and even (and here I revert somewhat to Bernstein) textual.³⁸ The biblical passages selected in 4Q252 encompass the blessings of the Elect patriarchs concerning their offspring's inheritance of the Land, and references to the destruction of peoples whom the Israelites were commanded to eliminate from the land—Canaan, Sodom=idolatrous city, Amalek.³⁹ By listing blessings to and by the Elect patriarchs of Genesis, with intertextual use of Deuteronomy, the author seems to seek understanding of the concept of covenant; to grapple with the exegetical and theological puzzle of the accursedness of the sons of individuals who have been promised that their offspring will dwell eternally in the Land: "And he did not curse Ham, but rather his son, because God had already blessed the sons of Noah" (4Q252 II 6–7). The interpolator of *Jubilees*, on the other hand, does not exhibit any qualms about asserting the accursedness and eradication of the sons of the blessed Elect. He was quite happy to declare all non-Elect as destined for extinction. He did not limit this verdict to the standard list of peoples whom Israel was commanded to destroy, which I suggest was an inherited tradition, shared by the scribe

of his servants will inherit it, and those who love his name (אהבי שמו) will dwell there."

³⁶ On the radical stance towards the exclusivity of Israel's rights to the Land in *Jubilees*, and the anticipation of the destruction of the Gentiles, see Werman, "Attitude," 336–38.

³⁷ Menahem Kister, "Notes on Some New Texts from Qumran," *JJS* 44 (1993): 280–90, at 288; quoted by Tigchelaar, "Sodom." See Brooke, "Deuteronomic Character," 133.

³⁸ See n. 2 above.

³⁹ Following Brooke, "Deuteronomic Character," 133–35, I would thus see 4Q252 as reading Genesis in light of Deuteronomy. I see this as a theologically and exegetically motivated re-casting, however, rather than "militant piety," which seems to imply more practical intentions.

who produced 4Q252. Rather, he extended it also to apply to other nations, those whose geographic location threatened encroachment on Israel's claim to its land—Moab, Ammon, the Philistines, and Edom (generally, rather than specifically Amalek). These nations inhabited territory understood by the author to have been covenantally promised to Israel. In the Pentateuch, Israel was commanded to exclude Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites from joining the congregation of the Lord, but they were not commanded to destroy these peoples. The destruction of these nations, and of the Philistines, appears in biblical prophecy not as a commandment, but as a prediction or promise. This suits the claim that the destruction was inscribed on Heavenly Tablets, supporting a textual motivation for the author and interpolator of *Jubilees*. The radical belligerence supports a socio-political motivation as well.⁴⁰

4. Conclusion

I have argued that the close affinity shown between the list of passages from Genesis featured in 4Q252 and those represented in *Jubilees*' Heavenly Tablets, and the differences between these lists, points to distinctive recastings of a shared exegetical tradition pertaining to Elect figures in Genesis. Both select key points pertaining to blessings and curses in the book of Genesis. Both are especially interested in Noah, Abraham, and Jacob, and their progeny, and in divine revelation to these Elect figures concerning the future of their descendants. Both compositions highlight the election and blessedness of Jacob/Israel and contrast this with the accursedness of the non-elect offspring/nations. *Jubilees* takes greater liberties with the biblical text and goes to greater lengths to emphasize the rejection of Gentile groups, with a harsher condemnation of Ishmael and Esau than that found in 4Q252, and an extension of the patriarchal curses to the Moabites and Philistines.

⁴⁰ A potentially fruitful direction for further consideration of the treatment of covenantal blessing and election in 4Q252 and *Jubilees*' Heavenly Tablets may be sought in George Brooke's recent observations about two types of anthologies: diachronic collections produced for didactic purposes, and synchronic anthologies produced by marginalized groups, which are "concerned principally with issues of identity and community." See George J. Brooke, "Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible and Peshet," *DSD* 17 (2010): 361–86. Brooke cites Cynthia G. Franklin, *Writing Women's Communities: The Politics and Poetics of Contemporary Multi-Genre Anthologies* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997).

