Heavenly Holidays: The Reception of the Jewish Festivals in Jubilees, Philo of Alexandria, and Pseudo-Philo

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Abstract

In this thesis, I examine the reception of the Jewish festivals in the Book of Jubilees, the works of Philo of Alexandria, and the Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo). I argue that each text attempts to flesh out in its own way the meaning of the Jewish festivals for its audience and historical situation. Specifically, I identify three main strategies these authors employ in presenting the significance of the festivals. First, there is an attempt to *naturalize* the festivals, i.e. to portray them as intrinsic to the created order. Second, these authors *transcendentalize* the festivals, i.e. they present the meaning of the festivals as being tied to heavenly events. Third, these works *festalize the Scriptures*. That is, they present scriptural episodes (often from the patriarchal period) as having taken place on the date of a certain festival and, in some cases, as having included observance of that festival. I also note a few occasions on which these authors employ a fourth strategy, *eschatologizing* the festivals, i.e. finding in their motifs and history a preview of Israel's future redemption.

Chapter One introduces these strategies and locates them in the context of debates concerning the nature of law in the Hellenistic Era. Chapters Two and Three address festal material in Jubilees, while Chapter Four engages the festal ideology in the writings of Philo of Alexandria, and Chapter 5 addresses the Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum. Finally, my conclusion (Chapter 6) offers some brief reflections on the similarities and differences among these three authors and suggests a taxonomy of festal ideology to aid further research.

Contents

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of ancient literature, academic journals, and monograph series follow the forms indicated in *SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014).

Declaration

This thesis is my own work, and no part of it has been previously submitted to Durham University or any other institution for a degree.

Statement of Copyright

This thesis is dedicated to my daughters, Adia and Emrys. The joy you bring to my life makes every day a festival!

βίος ἀνεόρταστος μακρὴ ὁδὸς ἀπανδόκευτος.

A life without festivals is a long journey without inns.

– Democritus[1]

[1] B.230 (Greek text in Diels and Krantz, *Fragmente*, 2:191).

Chapter 1
Introduction

The annual festivals of Israel, as they are presented in the Pentateuch, are vital to the nation's identity and worship. Leviticus 23, which likely reflects the most developed version of the festival calendar, delineates one weekly observance (Sabbath) and seven yearly feasts:[1] Passover, Matzot (Unleavened Bread), the Omer (Sheaf), Shavuot (Weeks), Rosh Hashanah (the New Year, or Feast of Trumpets),[2] Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), and Sukkot (Booths). The annual festivals are not spread evenly throughout the year, but are clustered in the spring and fall, reflecting their agricultural origins. Earlier forms of the festival legislation (e.g. Exod 23:14–17; 34:22–23) prescribe three feasts, all of which involve a pilgrimage at key moments of the agricultural year:[3] at Matzot, the firstfruits of barley are offered, while Shavuot celebrates the firstfruits of wheat and Sukkot marks the completion of the harvest.

Israel's festivals reflect the cultural *koine* of the ancient Eastern Mediterranean.[4] Like other ancient festivals, they involve common ritual activities such as sacrifices, banquets, processions, prayers, and songs. Likewise, they are often accompanied by a myth—an understanding or explanation of the meaning of these rituals.[5] The Torah, for example, explains that Passover

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[1] Leviticus 23 itself does not enumerate seven festivals; this is a later Jewish tradition (see Philo, *Decal*. 159–161), and Second Temple literature reflects an ongoing debate about the number of feasts.

[2] Lev 23:24 does not identify the first day of the seventh month (7/1) as the New Year, or as Rosh Hashanah, but as a memorial marked by trumpets.

[3] This pilgrimage most likely originally involved travel to a local or regional shrine. The Deuteronomistic festival calendar (Deut 16:1–17), however, requires pilgrimage to a central shrine (Jerusalem), thereby heightening the role of the festivals in creating and maintaining a national identity.

[4] For the concept of cultural koine, see West, *East Face*; Burkert, *Orientalizing*. Cf. M. Smith, "Common Theology," who theorizes concerning the "common theology of the ancient near East."

[5] For scholarly discussion of myth, ritual, and the (highly disputed) relation between the two, see Grimes, *Craft*, 165–84; Segal, *Myth*, 61–78; Doty, *Mythography*; Bell, *Ritual Theory*, 19–46; Weitzman, "Revisiting."

commemorates the night on which Israel left slavery in Egypt (Exod 12:27; Deut 16:1), while Sukkot reenacts the Israelites' tent-dwelling during their wilderness journey (Lev 23:43).

These myths, etiologies or explanations of the festivals provide great insight into how ancient cultures constructed their identity and perceived their world. The rituals that accompany most feasts are by themselves ambiguous in meaning. They are often generic liturgical actions that could be interpreted and construed in any number of ways. In a sense, then, they serve as a sort of Rorschach test for the celebrants, who assign meanings to the rituals that reflect their own values, concerns, social memory and theological interests. In researching ancient literature on festivals and their attendant myths, therefore, we are in effect excavating textual tels in order to unearth the evolving social *imaginaire* of ancient authors and their society.[6] Festivals, standing at the intersection of cultural values of family, society, time, law, calendar, history, national identity, and theology, are a window into the overarching *Weltanschauung* of a people.

With regard to Israel's festivals, both the rituals and the accompanying myths or explanations underwent significant development during the Second Temple period, as Jews labored to define their identity and social boundaries in the wake of the exile and subsequent struggles with Hellenism and Roman imperial rule. Questions of law and lineage, calendar and cult fueled division among early Jews and spurred the production of a wealth of new texts interpreting, retelling and recasting ancestral traditions to fit the needs of the new environment. The festivals, as a primary expression of the interplay between law, purity, cult and calendar, were at the epicenter of the "passion, vitality and foment"[7] that characterized early Judaism's theological atmosphere.[8] What was the origin and nature of the Jewish festivals? What was their

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[6] On the concept of social *imaginaire*, see Castoriadis, *Imaginaire*; Thompson, "Ideology"; James, "Social Imaginary." On the possible social functions and meanings of festivals, see Janzen, *Meanings*.

[7] This turn of phrase is taken from the title of the 2001 volume edited by L. Luker (*Passion, Vitality, and Foment: The Dynamics of Second Temple Judaism*).

[8] In this thesis I use "early Judaism" interchangeably with "Second Temple Judaism" and "ancient Judaism." While the Second Temple stood from the late 6th century BCE to 70 CE, I use these terms more loosely to refer to the period from Alexander the Great (ca. 330 BCE) to Hadrian (138 CE); cf. Nickelsburg, "Modern Study," 2; Collins, "Early Judaism," 1.

significance and how were they to be properly celebrated? These were questions that occupied early Jewish authors.

1.1 The Nature of Law in Early Judaism: The Crux of the Debate

As Christine Hayes has recently demonstrated, many of the early Jewish debates that characterize this period revolved around questions of the divine Law and its nature.[9] Greco-Roman discourse tended to contrast divine law, which is natural, universal, unwritten, eternal and unchanging, with positive human law, which is written down and particular to a specific people. Human laws are situational and somewhat arbitrary (i.e. they require prudential judgments). They are based on convention and change with the times. On the Greco-Roman model, positive written law is second-best and would not be needed if all humans were wise, rational, and in tune with the law of nature.

During the Hellenistic era, some Jews strove to understand and represent the Torah vis-à-vis this framework. How could they reconcile the divine nature of the Mosaic Law with its specificity and written form? Was the Law for Israel only or for all nations? Did the Torah present the eternal law of nature or a national law that evolved over time? The same questions applied to Israel's calendar and festivals. Were these a matter of divine revelation or human convention? Were they intrinsic to the created order or simply cultural institutions based upon precedent or custom?

1.2 My Thesis and Contribution

In this thesis, I explore three representative examples of early Jewish reception of the festivals: the Book of Jubilees, the writings of Philo of Alexandria, and the Liber Antiquitatum

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[9] Hayes, *Divine Law*; cf. Hayes, "Legal Realism"; cf. Amihay, *Theory*.

Biblicarum (LAB, a.k.a. "Pseudo-Philo").[10] I argue that each text attempts to flesh out in its own way the significance of the Jewish festivals for its audience and historical situation. Each is grappling with a similar set of issues posed by the social and philosophical milieu of the Second Temple era, including internal disputes and external pressures. In brief, I identify and analyze four strategies used by these authors (though not every author uses every strategy) to expound the significance of the Jewish festivals.

1.2.1 Festivals and the Created Order

First, there is an attempt to *naturalize* the festivals, i.e. to portray them as intrinsic to the created order. On this approach, the festival system is not an arbitrary human convention, but a permanent feature of the divinely ordained rational structure of the world. The texts I examine support this claim in a variety of ways. Some point to the festivals' close connection to the agricultural calendar and seasonal rhythms. Others emphasize the arithmological aspects of the festival calendar, especially its heptadic character, as proof of both its divine origin and its relation to the creational structure. Frequently, these works appeal to the Pentateuch's creation account for support and highlight the celebration of the Sabbath, the archetypal festival, as the climax of the creation week. Others allude to Gen 1:14, where God ordains the lights of the firmament as signs for the מועדים (understood as "festivals").[11]

1.2.2 Festivals as a Reflection of Heavenly Realities

Second, these authors *transcendentalize* the festivals. By this I mean that they present the meaning of the festivals as being tied to heavenly events. For example, some texts (e.g. LAB) depict Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur as the earthly reflection of an annual cosmic trial in the

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[10] In this thesis, "Pseudo-Philo" is used interchangeably with LAB, and never has in view other works erroneously attributed to Philo, such as the homilies *De Jona* and *De Sampsone*.

[11] See Rudolph, "Genesis 1:14"; VanderKam, "Genesis 1"; Tigchelaar, "Lights."

heavenly court. Others (e.g. Jubilees) assert that the festivals are celebrated by the highest angels in heaven and that human festival observance must follow the pattern of that transcendent worship. In this way festivals serve to unite humans to angels in synchronous worship of God, or perhaps even to join humans to God in his own observance of the feast. The Sabbath, again, serves as the model, since Gen 2:2 describes God himself as the original keeper of this holy day. Like the *naturalization* strategy, then, the *transcendentalizing* strategy emphasizes that the Jewish festivals are not primarily commemorations of key events in the nation's history, but rather imitations of the divine angelic liturgy that has proceeded uninterrupted *ab initio*.

1.2.3 Festivals and the Scriptural Narrative

Third, these works *festalize the Scriptures*. That is, they present scriptural episodes as having taken place on the date of a certain festival and, in some cases, as having included observance of that festival. For example, in Jubilees, the Noachian covenant is sealed at Shavuot. Similarly, in Philo's telling, it was at Passover that Jacob received the birthright from Isaac. Such a strategy has two clear purposes and effects. First, it is a way of asserting the antiquity of the Jewish festivals, or at least their pre-Mosaic origin. The festivals, these works seem to say, are not a late innovation of the Mosaic legislation, but have a much longer and more ancient pedigree. Retrojecting the festivals into pre-Mosaic times, of course, works well in concert with the claim that the festivals are built into the structure of creation or modeled on heavenly worship (the *naturalizing* and *transcendentalizing* strategies). If the festivals have been around since creation, that would certainly help explain how the patriarchs could observe them prior to their revelation at Sinai. LAB goes even further, and depicts the cultic law, with the festivals as the primary component, as "the ways of Paradise" (13:9), observed by humans in the beginning.

Not all examples of festalization are aimed at establishing the antiquity and pre-Mosaic origin of the festivals. A secondary purpose for this strategy is to reinterpret a scriptural episode by associating it with a feast, or conversely to expand or draw out the significance of a festival

by associating it with a scriptural episode. For example, by placing the Akedah at Passover, Jubilees juxtaposes the Akedah with the deliverance from Egypt. This draws attention to similarities between the two events so that the Akedah becomes a foreshadowing of Israel's later protection from Mastema at the time of the exodus. In turn, the feast of Passover is infused with new meaning as a commemoration of how God preserved the covenant line through Abraham's obedience. Linking the Akedah to Passover thus not only creates a more ancient precedent for the festival, but also provides an alternative etiology that emphasizes the author's preferred motifs.

In exploring how these authors festalize the Scriptures, I pay special attention to elements in the scriptural text that may have led interpreters to assign these texts to a festal setting. In most cases, the authors have been prompted to do so by certain *textual stimuli*, often terms or motifs that remind them of festal themes or practices.[12] For example, when Jubilees links Joseph's mistreatment by his brothers to Yom Kippur, it does so based on numerous parallels between that episode and the scapegoat ritual of Yom Kippur. Similarly, when Pseudo-Philo places Hannah's prayer at Passover, he is following the cues of the scriptural text, which speaks of an annual pilgrimage festival and recounts how Hannah came to be blessed with a firstborn son.

1.2.4 Festivals and the Future: An Eschatologizing Strategy?

A fourth way some texts describe the significance of the festivals is with reference to the future, i.e. they *eschatologize* the festivals. Because some Christian traditions tended to present the Jewish festivals as pointing forward to and being fulfilled in Jesus (the idea that they are merely "shadows," while Christ is the "substance"),[13] this understanding has often received attention out of proportion with its actual prominence in early Jewish texts.[14] Nevertheless, there

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[12] For the helpful terminology of "textual stimuli," see Bernstein, "Angels," 264.

[13] See, e.g., Col 2:16–18; Heb 10:1; Barn. 9–10; 15; Melito, *Peri Pascha*.

[14] See, esp., Daniélou, *Bible*, and Riesenfeld, *Jésus transfiguré*, both of which exerted an outsized influence on subsequent Christian scholarship on the festivals.

are indications that some Jewish traditions understood the feasts to be in some way tied to the future redemption of Israel, so that the hoped-for deliverance of Israel from its enemies could be envisioned as an eschatological Passover or Yom Kippur that would lead to a time of Jubilee or Sabbath rest. Extreme caution is needed here, however, to avoid reading these traditions through anachronistic Christian spectacles. In general, the thought does not seem to be that the festivals are intrinsically prophetic or eschatological or that their primary meaning is to be found in a messianic figure or eschatological redemption. Rather, it seems, these authors assume that if God were to liberate Israel in the future (or forgive its sins, renew its covenant, etc.), there could be no more appropriate day on which to do so than the festival of Passover (or Yom Kippur, Shavuot, etc.).

1.3 The Scope of this Thesis

The literature of early Judaism is so plentiful and diverse that a comprehensive examination of the reception of the festivals in this period would require multiple volumes. I have chosen, therefore, to focus on three corpora: Jubilees, Philo of Alexandria, and LAB. They are natural choices for two reasons. First, each of them contains extensive material on the Jewish festivals. Second, they represent the diversity of Second Temple Judaism. Jubilees advocates a fixed calendar (ostensibly solar in nature) based on heptadic cycles, has an intense interest in both halakic and apocalyptic matters, and valorizes texts and traditions that (in the author's mind) predated Moses. It represents a form of Jewish thought and practice that did not survive beyond the first century CE in any meaningful form. Philo of Alexandria, on the other hand, exemplifies the vibrant intellectual life of Hellenistic Judaism in the first-century diaspora. Familiar with the Scriptures in his native tongue, Greek, Philo strives to present Moses's Law as a valid and satisfying philosophical system for his Alexandrian audiences. Finally, Pseudo-Philo likely embodies more mainstream Palestinian Jewish thought in the first century CE. His presentation of the festivals, especially, adumbrates later rabbinic traditions. As we shall see, despite their

rather different situations, these three authors converge—sometimes in surprising ways—in their understanding of the festivals.

Of course, many other texts of early Judaism could be explored with regard to the festivals: Josephus, the texts at Qumran, and various sections of the New Testament all contain important data on the subject, but the treatment of the festivals in Josephus and the New Testament has already received ample scholarly attention,[15] and the key festival texts from Qumran are often in a fragmentary state with minimal context (e.g., the *Festival Prayers* [1Q34, 4Q507, 4Q508, 4Q505+509]).[16] Therefore, I generally limit discussion of these corpora to my footnotes, where it serves a supplementary function.

1.4 Previous Scholarly Work on the Jewish Festivals in the Second Temple Period

The literature on the Jewish festivals is vast; here I attempt only to note the foundational contributions in the past half-century or so. Most work has focused on the presentation of the festivals in the biblical texts and attempted a) to discern the feasts' origins and relationship to other ANE feasts, and b) to sort out the relationship between the disparate festival material in the Hebrew Bible, which reflects a process of development and innovation.[17]

Surprisingly, given the prominence of the festivals in the life and literature of early Judaism, there has been relatively little work on how they were understood and interpreted in the Second Temple era. The usual handbooks on Second Temple Judaism provide only brief summaries of

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[15] In his *Jewish War*, Josephus narrates numerous important events that took place at festival celebrations. Likewise, when retelling the scriptural narrative in his *Jewish Antiquities*, he briefly summarizes the festival calendar (3.237–257) and occasionally provides a festal setting for biblical stories. See, esp., Colautti, *Passover*; Siggelkow-Berner, *Feste*; Siegert, "Passafest"; Weiss, "Sabbath"; Vermes, "Summary"; Rapoport, *Agada*; Franxman, *Genesis*. On the Jewish festivals in the New Testament, see inter alia Park, *Pentecost*, 176–238; Harris, *Descent*, 143–70; Siker, "Passover"; Beckwith, *Calendar*; Yee, *Jewish Feasts*; Stramara, *Timetable*; Ulfgard, *Feast and Future*; Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*.

[16] For a detailed attempt to reconstruct and interpret these highly fragmentary texts, see Falk, *Festival Prayers*. Other texts (e.g. the Temple Scroll) are discussed below in the footnotes when relevant.

[17] For an overview of recent scholarship, see Nihan, "Calendars"; Berlejung, "Zeiten"; Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 1–45; Gesundheit, *Three Times*; Soggin, *Israel*, 87–163.

the festival calendar, and typically focus more on the concrete rituals of the Jerusalem temple than on the significance assigned to each festival.[18] An exception is C.T.R. Hayward's, *The Jewish Temple: A Non-Biblical Sourcebook*, which insightfully mines key Second Temple works for information about the meaning attributed to the temple and its service. Hayward is especially sensitive to those texts that portray the temple as a cosmic center and its service as a mirror of the heavenly liturgy. The festivals, of course, are only one part of the temple service and thus play only a small role in Hayward's overall discussion.

1.4.1 Calendar and Festival

The discoveries at Qumran in the mid-twentieth century and the work of A. Jaubert[19] prompted close scrutiny of the calendrical traditions in the Second Temple era, revealing the divide between the 354-day intercalary lunar calendar followed in the temple and the 364-day non-intercalary "solar" calendar common to the Enochic books, Jubilees, and the sectarian writings at Qumran.[20] These varying calendrical notions undergird many of the differences in how the festivals are interpreted in the Second Temple period. Also influential was the groundbreaking work of J. Goudoever, who analyzed the Hebrew Bible and New Testament along with numerous Second Temple works in order to determine what calendar they presuppose.[21] He is especially notable for his attention to the lectionary readings assigned to the festivals in Rabbinic sources, as well as the way the rewritten Bible genre tended to date events to feast days.

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[18] See, e.g., Sanders, *Judaism*, 190–212; Schürer (ed.), *History*, 2.237–313; Safrai (ed.), *Jewish People*, 2.890–904.

[19] Jaubert, "Calendrier"; Jaubert, *Date*.

[20] See Baumgarten, "Calendar of the Book of Jubilees"; Baumgarten, "Problems"; Goudoever, *Calendars*; Beckwith, *Calendar*; Ben-Dov, *Head*; Frade, "Theory"; Saulnier, *Calendrical Variations*; Stern, *Calendar and Community*; VanderKam, *Calendars*. As Ben-Dov, "Lunar Calendars," has demonstrated, the calendars in 1 Enoch, Jubilees, and Qumran are each different. The Qumran calendar is best understood as a lunisolar heptadic (or septenary) calendar. Ben-Dov has also trenchantly critiqued Jaubert's theory that the Jubilean calendar is used in the Bible (Ben-Dov, "Investigation," 14–16). For a recent defense of Jaubert, see Guillaume, *Land*, who argues that the 364-day calendar was used by Judean priests in the Persian period and is assumed in the Priestly source of the Pentateuch.

[21] Goudoever, *Calendars*.

More recently, R. Elior has theorized that the fixed calendar at Qumran, which was based on the Sabbath principle (i.e. it was heptadic or septenary), funded the sect's belief that their cultic life synchronized with that of the heavenly world, and that the festivals were eternal institutions, intrinsic to creation and observed from the beginning by God and the heavenly hosts.[22]

1.4.2 Treatments of Specific Festivals

Many contributions to the study of the Jewish festivals in the Second Temple era focus on a single festival, often with a view to discerning developments over time in how it was observed and interpreted. For example, T. Prosic examines the development of Passover and its symbolism from its ancient Canaanite origins to its observance in the first century CE, while Baruch Bokser focuses on the form and meaning of the *seder* from the Second Temple period to the early Rabbinic era.[23] C. Leonhard, on the other hand, examines the role of Second Temple traditions in the development of the Christian Easter from the Jewish Passover.[24] Others limit their scope to a particular author or work. F. Colautti, for instance, attends to the description of Passover in Josephus's works and the special role it plays in his account of the Jewish revolt and the events leading up to it.[25] P. Bengtsson, likewise, examines the prominence of Passover in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Genesis, especially the numerous patriarchal events it links with this feast.[26]

Regarding Pentecost, the most prominent recent work is that of S. Park, who examines the tradition linking the Feast of Weeks with the giving of the Law at Sinai.[27] He traces the development of the festival and demonstrates that the tradition, which scholars have sometimes

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[22] See Elior, *Three Temples*; cf. Fraade, "Theory"; Hayward, "Heaven."

[23] Prosic, *Development*; Bokser, *Origins*. Cf. Segal, *Hebrew Passover*, who surveys the feast's development from the Ancient Near East through the Mishnah.

[24] Leonhard, *Pesach*.

[25] Colautti, *Passover*.

[26] Bengtsson, *Passover*.

[27] Park, *Pentecost*.

dated no earlier than the Tannaitic era, is present in Jubilees, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Book of Acts. An earlier work by J. Potin makes a similar argument based on a close reading of the ancient targumic and lectionary traditions, though he denies any link between the later rabbinic tradition and the earlier sectarian ones.[28]

In many ways, D. Stökl Ben Ezra's treatment of Yom Kippur is a model of careful scholarly study of a single Jewish festival.[29] Though his focus is on the Christian appropriation of Yom Kippur, Stökl Ben Ezra covers a broad range of texts from the Second Temple period. Especially useful is his attention to the ideology or *imaginaire* of Yom Kippur—that set of motifs, myths, images, symbols, terms, and practices that make up the concept of Yom Kippur for early Jews. Texts can evoke Yom Kippur by mentioning any meaningful cluster of these elements, just as an American can evoke thoughts of Christmas simply by mentioning chimneys and reindeer in the same sentence. Employing this model, Stökl Ben Ezra compellingly argues for a widespread and diverse mythological interpretation of Yom Kippur.

Along the same lines, A. Orlov has explored the mythological appropriation of Yom Kippur in later pseudepigrapha, especially those preserved in Slavonic (e.g., the Apocalypse of Abraham).[30] He demonstrates that numerous elements of the Apocalypse allude to Yom Kippur and reflect an apocalyptic and mystical interpretation of the holiday with clear precursors in the Second Temple era. Stökl Ben Ezra and Orlov have clearly shown that there is much to be said about the creative and diverse theological interpretations of the festivals in early Judaism, especially when we shift our focus from halakic texts (e.g. the Mishnah) to the traditions in apocalyptic literature and rewritten Bible.

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[28] Potin, *Pentecôte*.
[29] Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*.
[30] Orlov, *Heavenly Priesthood*; Orlov, *Divine Scapegoats*; Orlov, *Atoning Dyad*.

The final fall festival, Sukkot, has received quite a bit of attention in modern scholarship.[31] Most prominent in this regard is the contribution of J. Rubenstein,[32] who comprehensively surveys texts and material related to the feast, from its origins up to the Amoraic period. Rubenstein is especially helpful in evaluating the reliability of rabbinic traditions that purport to describe the celebration of Sukkot in the era of the Second Temple. He also carefully interrogates the claims that Sukkot possessed a clear eschatological meaning and concludes that these associations were ancillary and infrequent in the Second Temple period, typically a feature of movements alienated from the temple (e.g. Christianity).

Other works cover much the same ground. For example, S. Klayman explores Sukkot's development from the Hebrew Bible to the Tannaitic period, with special interest in the way that eschatological associations developed as part of the flourishing exegetical tradition of the Second Temple period.[33] H. Ulfgard, likewise, aims to depict the development of Sukkot from its biblical origins to its elaborate depiction in the Talmud.[34] He devotes considerable attention to the eschatological interpretation of the feast in the NT, and posits a tension between the aspects of temple dedication and Torah reading that developed after the exile.

The aforementioned works all focus on a single festival, and as a result, tend to offer more of a bird's eye view than an in-depth treatment of the specific texts in all their detail. They are certainly helpful for constructing a theory of how a festival and its meaning developed diachronically, but their broad scope often leads to a surface-level treatment of many texts. More importantly, because these works focus on a single festival, they do not address how an author approaches the festival calendar as a whole, which may provide essential context and prove

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[31] On the biblical texts, see esp. Weyde, *Appointed Festivals*.

[32] Rubenstein, *Sukkot*.

[33] Klayman, *Sukkot*.

[34] Ulfgard, *Story*; cf. Ulfgard, *Feast and Future*. Vicent, *Fiesta*, also surveys the interpretation of the Sukkot in post-biblical literature.

helpful for highlighting ideological and interpretive tendencies that are missed when only one festival is in view.

1.4.3 Treatments of Jubilees, Philo and Pseudo-Philo on the Festivals

There are no scholarly monographs devoted to examining the treatment of the festivals in Jubilees, Philo and LAB. With regard to Jubilees, the most in-depth examination of the festivals and the relevant passages is found in the recent commentaries by James VanderKam and James Kugel.[35] VanderKam is the doyen of Jubilean studies, and his two-volume commentary on Jubilees is a magisterial treatment of the work that provides detailed discussion of the textual, linguistic, literary and theological aspects of Jubilees. Notably lacking, however, is any sustained or systematic examination of Jubilees's festal ideology. Kugel's briefer commentary,[36] on the other hand, pays close attention to the rationale for the festivals in Jubilees, but primarily with an eye to establishing his redactional hypothesis (an approach largely shared by M. Segal in his important monograph).[37] Especially important is the way Kugel notes elements in the scriptural text that may have prompted the author of Jubilees to think that the festivals were observed in the pre-Sinai period. Most other work on the festivals in Jubilees has come in the form of shorter articles dealing with a specific festival. These have tended to focus on calendrical and halakic matters more than ideology, often with a view to proving or disproving redactional theories.[38]

Study on Philo's treatment of the festivals is also limited. The most notable work of recent scholarship is that of J. Leonhardt, which includes a chapter on the "ten festivals" enumerated in Philo's *Special Laws*.[39] Leonhardt ably summarizes most of the relevant material, and helpfully notes the way in which Philo negotiated tensions between his Jewish and Hellenistic

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[35] VanderKam, *Commentary*; Kugel, *Walk*.

[36] See Kugel, *Walk*, 1–206, for his commentary on Jubilees, and pp. 207–96 for his redactional hypothesis.

[37] Segal, *Jubilees*.

[38] See, inter alia, Werman, "Narrative"; Huizenga, "Battle"'; Doering, *Schabbat*, 43–118 (cf. Doering, "Concept"; Halpern-Amaru, *Perspective*, 83–148; Saulnier, "Second Passover"; Eiss, "Wochenfest"; Noack, "Pentecost."

[39] Leonhardt, *Worship*, 18–52.

backgrounds. She attends, however, less to Philo's festal ideology (the focus of my work) and more to his discussion of temple rituals and festal halakah (e.g., the issue of diaspora Passover sacrifices). Other treatments are even briefer. S. Belkin, in his treatment of Philo's interpretation of the biblical law, deals only with the Sabbath, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and concentrates more on Philo's halakah than his interpretation of each festival's significance.[40] The recent "intellectual biography" of Philo by M. Niehoff is especially noteworthy for its brief but incisive analysis of how Philo's Stoic context informs his ethical interpretation of the festivals.[41]

Finally, the role of the festivals in Pseudo-Philo has also been significantly neglected. Most helpful with regard to text-critical and lexical issues are the edition and commentary by Harrington et al.[42] and the two-volume commentary by Jacobson,[43] though neither attempts an in-depth analysis of the ideology in the key festal passages. Indeed, this is only really to be found in the ground-breaking work of R. Hayward, previously mentioned, who briefly but insightfully addresses the cultic ideology of Pseudo-Philo, especially his mythology of the *axis mundi* and his linkage of the cult to Paradise.[44]

In short, my thesis builds on a multitude of previous scholarly study of the Jewish festivals but fills a gap by focusing on and comparing three exemplars of Second Temple Jewish thought, situating their reception of the festivals in the wider context of ancient Mediterranean festal discourse, and highlighting the ideological underpinnings and goals of their respective representations of the festivals.

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[40] Belkin, *Philo*, 192–218.
[41] Niehoff, *Philo*, 172–80.
[42] Harrington, et al, *Pseudo-Philon* (2 vols.).
[43] Jacobson, *Commentary*.
[44] Hayward, *Temple*, 154–67.

1.5 Thesis Outline

The chapters of my thesis are arranged chronologically. I begin with Jubilees, a second-century BCE retelling of Genesis and the early parts of Exodus. Because of its length and its extensive incorporation of festal material, I devote two chapters to this work. In the first (Chapter 2), after introducing the theological emphases and context of the book, I address the controverted issue of Jubilees's literary unity (i.e. whether the work is the product of multiple hands and thus multiple, and divergent, theological perspectives) and explore the author's treatment of the Sabbath and Passover/Matzot. Chapter 3 covers the texts in Jubilees that deal with Shavuot, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and the four "memorial days" that the author designates as festivals.

Chapter 4 engages the presentation of the Jewish festivals in the writings of Philo. I begin by analyzing Philo's view of the calendar in the context of ancient Jewish debates, then note how his general statements about the festivals share in the broader festal discourse of the Greco-Roman world. The rest of the chapter is devoted to examining Philo's exposition of the festivals throughout his corpus, with special attention to *On the Special Laws* 2.39–222, where he identifies and explains the nature and significance of the festivals prescribed in the Law.

In Chapter 5 I turn my attention to Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (LAB), which likely represents a mainstream Palestinian perspective on the Jewish festivals from the late-first-century CE. In this chapter I focus on LAB 11–13, which summarizes the Sinai legislation and catalogs the Jewish festivals, but I also discuss several other instances in LAB where important events are placed at festivals. Finally, my conclusion (Chapter 6) offers some brief reflections on the similarities and differences among these three authors and suggests avenues for further research.

Chapter 2
Heavenly Tablets, *Imitatio Angelorum*, Patriarchal Praxis: Festivals in the Book of Jubilees, pt. 1

Jubilees is a lengthy work that retells the biblical narrative from Genesis through the middle of Exodus.[1] The entire book is presented as a revelation from God to Moses during his forty days on Sinai. At Qumran, the work was known as "The book of the divisions of the times according to their jubilees and their weeks" (CD 16.2–4, drawing on Jub 1:4), while later sources called it simply "Jubilees" or "The Little Genesis."[2] The book survives as a whole only in Ethiopic (Ge'ez, preserved by the Ethiopian church). This was translated from a Greek version that in turn translated a Hebrew original.[3] The Hebrew text was unknown until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which include fragments of fourteen or more copies.[4]

Scholarly consensus dates Jubilees to the mid-second century BCE.[5] A *terminus ad quem* is established by 4Q216, which can be dated 125–100 BCE, while allusions to Enochic materials

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[1] While the narrative of Jubilees ends with the destruction of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea (Exodus 14), the opening scene of the book draws on later parts of Exodus 19–34 that recount the events at Sinai. See VanderKam, "Scriptural Setting."

[2] According to Charles, Jubilees, xv, "Little Genesis" (ἡ λεπτὴ Γένεσις) may refer not to its length, but to its greater level of detail.

[3] Syriac (from Hebrew) and Latin (from Greek) versions are also partially extant; see VanderKam, Textual and Historical Studies, vi.

[4] See DJD 13. Of the festival-related texts I discuss, only Jub 22:1 is present in these fragments. See VanderKam, "Jubilees," 434–38, for a convenient list of the manuscripts and their contents. Cf. VanderKam, "Manuscript Tradition." For recent discussion of the textual state of Qumran at Jubilees, see Monger, "4Q216," who questions VanderKam's case for the textual stability of Jubilees between Qumran and the Ethiopic manuscripts and adduces manuscript evidence from Qumran to argue for the literary development of Jubilees within the Qumran tradition and continued development, even divergence, post-Qumran. Monger further disputes the assumption that a fragment at Qumran implies the presence of a full copy of Jubilees. Only one manuscript (4Q223–224) appears to have been long enough to hold a text as long as the Ethiopic version of Jubilees (600). Cf. Monger, "Development"; Tigchelaar, "Qumran Jubilees Manuscripts."

[5] See VanderKam, "Origins"; Segal, *Jubilees*, 35–40.

evince a composition after 164 BCE.[6] Likewise, the work seems to predate the departure to Qumran, leading VanderKam to conclude that it is "highly likely" Jubilees was composed between 160–150 BCE.[7] A Palestinian provenance is probable, given the book's language of composition, priestly theological interests, geographical references, and quick adoption by the Qumran community.[8] The author demonstrates a close familiarity with the Law and much of the prophets, as well as portions of 1 Enoch, and perhaps Aramaic Levi.[9] The extent of its use at Qumran indicates its importance to that group, but it was also known and respected outside of the community. Early Christians used it and rabbinic texts sometimes refer to traditions that derive from Jubilees.[10]

2.1 Theological Emphases

In terms of genre, Jubilees is often classified with other texts (e.g. Genesis Apocryphon, LAB) as "rewritten Bible,"[11] which describes the way it generally follows the biblical text, paraphrasing, expanding, altering and commenting on it.[12] More recent scholarship has criticized this classification for the way it assumes a) the stability and canonicity of the biblical text by the time Jubilees was written, and b) that Jubilees is motivated to rewrite the biblical text

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[6] Though see Goldstein "Date," for an earlier date (ca. 170 BCE); Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 73 (early 160s). Ravid, *Issues*, 181–184, argues for the end of the third century. As Segal, *Jubilees*, 319–22, observes, the issue is complicated if Jubilees contains multiple compositional layers, each with a different date.

[7] VanderKam, "Jubilees," 434.

[8] See Wintermute, "Jubilees," 45.

[9] For Jubilees's knowledge and reception of Enochic traditions, see VanderKam, "Angel Story"; Knibb, "Which Parts"; Endres, "Watchers"; Segal, *Jubilees*, 116; Bergsma, "Relationship." On its use of ALD, see Grelot, "Le coutumier," 255; Eshel, "Aramaic Levi Document"; de Jonge, "Testament of Levi," 373–76; Stone, "Aramaic Levi"; van Ruiten, "Literary Dependency."

[10] See Bakhos, "Transmitting"; Himmelfarb, "Echoes"; Kister, "Ancient Material"; Reed, "Retelling."

[11] Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition*, 95, coined the term "rewritten Bible." Cf. Vermes, "Rewritten Bible," 1–9. On the genre of Jubilees, see Collins, "Genre"; Segal, "Rewritten Bible". On the genre of "rewritten Bible" more generally see Nickelsburg, "Bible Rewritten"; Harrington, "Bible Rewritten"; Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible"; cf. more recently the essays in Zsengellér, *Rewritten Bible*; Laato, *Rewritten Bible*; Crawford, *Rewriting*, esp. 60–83. For a recent argument that Jubilees is an apocalypse, see Hanneken, *Subversion*.

[12] On Jubilees's use of Scripture, see Endres, *Biblical Interpretation*; van Ruiten, *Primaeval*; van Ruiten, *Abraham*. On the harmonizing tendencies of Jubilees, see Maiden, "Mending the Fractures."

in order to solve theological and exegetical difficulties presented by the text.[13] Despite this, by observing the author's additions to and omissions from the biblical narrative, we may discern the following theological emphases.[14]

2.1.1 Chronology

First, Jubilees imposes a chronological schema of jubilees (49-year periods, see Lev 25:8–17) on the biblical narrative. From creation to the entrance into the Promised Land (still future for the fictive setting) is 2450 years, or fifty jubilees.[15] Levitical legislation required that slaves be set free and the land returned to its original owner in the jubilee year; thus, in this jubilee of jubilees, Israel is freed from Egyptian slavery and enters Canaan, which had been lawfully allotted to them at the post-deluge division of the earth (Jub 9:1–15).

2.1.2 Calendar

Second, Jubilees shows great concern for calendrical issues.[16] In Jub 6:20–38, the angel of the presence emphasizes to Moses the central importance of the correct calendar. It is to be heptadic (or septenary) in structure, revolving around the week. The year is thus 52 weeks, divided into quarters of thirteen weeks marked by memorial days, for a total of 364 days. This is meant to be a solar calendar (2:8–10)[17] that is constant and unchanging, unlike the variable lunar calendar

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[13] See VanderKam, "Revealed Literature"; Najman and Tigchelaar, "Unity," 496–97; Machiela, "Once More," advocates that "rewritten scripture" be seen less as a literary genre and more as a process or activity. Cf. Brooke, "Rewritten Bible."

[14] For summaries of Jubilees's theological outlook, see Testuz, *Les idées*; Wintermute, "Jubilees," 46–48; Segal, *Jubilees*, 5–11; VanderKam, "Origins."

[15] On the chronological framework, see VanderKam, "Chronology"; VanderKam, "Konzept"; Berner, *Jahre*, 234–328; Bergsma, *Jubilee*, 233–38; Scott, *On Earth*, 73–158. Cf. Wacholder, "Eschaton," who argues that the jubilean chronology is also meant to predict a date for the eschatological redemption.

[16] See Halpern Amaru, "Calendar Dates"; Albani, "Rekonstruktion"; Ravid, "Calendar"; Baumgarten, "Problems"; Baumgarten, "Calendars"; VanderKam, "Origin"; Elior, *Three Temples*, 82–134; Jaubert, "Calendrier"; Glessmer, "Aussagen."

[17] In Jub 2:8–10, "one of his most clearly tendentious reworkings of a scriptural text," the author rewrites the biblical account of the fourth day of creation (VanderKam, *Commentary*, 188). In contrast to Gen 1:14, he gives only the sun a role in determining the calendar.

(6:36).[18] Every year will begin on a Wednesday,[19] every festival will fall on its designated day, and no annual festival will conflict with a weekly Sabbath. This calendar is written into the fabric of creation and is inscribed on the heavenly tablets (6:34); thus, it aligns Israel's worship with the activities of the heavenly realm.[20]

2.1.3 Pre-existent Law and Progressive Revelation

Third, Jubilees portrays the Law of Moses as having existed from the beginning, on the eternal heavenly tablets.[21] Certain aspects of the Law (circumcision, Sabbath, festivals) are explicitly grounded in the eternal heavenly activity of the angels. The patriarchs, too, are depicted as observing the Law prior to Sinai. There is some biblical precedent for this (e.g. the distinction between clean/unclean in Gen 7:2, statements about Abraham's law observance in Gen 26:5), but Jubilees develops the theme more extensively. Thus, the patriarchs keep the major festivals and observe the laws regarding tithes, parturient impurity, firstfruits offerings, sacrificial protocol, etc. They also serve as halakic exemplars, modeling for the audience the correct interpretation of legal matters disputed during the author's time (e.g., proper festal dates, timing of circumcision, handling of blood).

Here, though, we must offer an important caveat. The theme of progressive revelation in Jubilees has been underappreciated by most scholars, who tend to depict Jubilees as primarily concerned with proving that the Law is eternal, and concomitantly that the Law was observed before Sinai.[22] In contrast, Jubilees actually seems intended to show that while God's law is

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[18] See Albani, "Rekonstruktion," 99, who notes here the contrast with the Astronomical Book and Qumran's calendar, both of which attempted to correlate the solar and lunar calendar in a 364-day year. Of course, a 364-day calendar would fall short of the solar cycle by 1.25 days per year. On the question of possible intercalation in Jubilees's calendar, see Albani, "Rekonstruktion," 104–109; VanderKam, *Calendars*, 54–56.

[19] Likely an inference from Gen 1:14–19, where the heavenly bodies are created on the fourth day (i.e. Wednesday), though see VanderKam, *Commentary*, 223–24, who holds that Jubilees uses a Sunday calendar.

[20] Elior, *Three Temples*, 82–87; Scott, *On Earth*, 1–15; Rietz, "Synchronizing"; Ego, *Heilige Zeit*, 207–19.

[21] For the heavenly tablets, see García Martínez, "Heavenly Tablets"; Werman, "Engraved"; Kister, "Formulae," who provides crucial insights on the relationship between the heavenly tablets and patriarchal behavior in Jubilees. Cf. Najman. "Interpretation."

[22] E.g., Zeitlin "Book," 29; Segal, *Jubilees*, 6; García Martínez, "Heavenly Tablets"; Kugel, *Walk*, 8–14; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 56, 1212, is a welcome recent exception.

indeed eternal and unchanging on the heavenly tablets, it was only progressively revealed a little at a time to God's people. For example, Shavuot is an eternal angelic festival inscribed on the heavenly tablets, but it was not revealed to and practiced by humans until after the deluge (Jub 6:18). Similarly, circumcision, an eternal ordinance for the upper tiers of the angelic hierarchy, was only introduced to Israel in the time of Abraham. So also the Sabbath, observed from the beginning by God and the angels, was not revealed to Israel until the gift of manna in the wilderness.[23] Elsewhere, prior to the revelation of the heavenly tablets, some grievous sins do not receive the proper penalty under the Law. In the episode of Reuben and Bilhah (ch. 33), for example, the author devotes several paragraphs (33:10–20) to explaining why Reuben's sin (the greatest sin possible, according to 33:20) was forgiven when the heavenly tablets (and the Torah) require the death penalty for the man who lies with his father's wife:

> *Now you, Moses, order the Israelites to observe this command because it is a capital offence and it is an impure thing.… They are not to say: 'Reuben was allowed to live and (have) forgiveness after he had lain with the concubine-wife of his father …' For the statute, the punishment, and the law had not been completely revealed to all but (only) in your time as a law of its particular time and as an eternal law for the history of eternity (33:13–16).*

The same language appears in Jacob's obituary: "He worshiped the Lord wholeheartedly and in line with the visible commands according to the division of the times of his generation" (Jub 36:20). Again, in the work's conclusion, the angel of the presence defines his revelation to Moses as "the laws of each specific time [*ḥegaga gizē wa-gizē*] in each division of its times" (50:13), i.e. the "regulations revealed at specific times and then incumbent upon future generations."[24] Thus, it seems, a major goal of Jubilees is actually to *deny* that the patriarchs had the full revelation of the Law *while simultaneously stressing* that the Law is pre-existent, eternal and unchanging on the heavenly tablets.

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[23] See Jub 50:1–2. Thus, Jubilees never depicts the patriarchs observing the Sabbath. See below on page 51.

[24] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1212.

2.1.4 The Levitical Priesthood and a Priestly People

Fourth, Jubilees has a prominent role for the priesthood.[25] The author portrays a priestly line stretching back to Adam in the garden sanctuary (3:27) and including Enoch (4:25–26), Noah (6:1-3), and Abraham (14:7–20).[26] Further, the Levitical priesthood did not begin in the aftermath of the golden calf episode, as the Pentateuch suggests (Exodus 32:26–29), but with Levi, who was blessed by God with the priesthood for his righteous zeal at Shechem (Jub 30:18–20), and later ordained by Jacob at Bethel (32:1–4).[27] The Levitical priesthood is of utmost honor, as it is the earthly equivalent of the heavenly angels of the presence who serve before the Lord (30:18; 31:14; 32:1–9).

Just as the Law and the priesthood go back to creation, so does the special status of Israel. The election formula of Sinai (Exod 19:5–6) is written back into the seventh day of creation so that when the Lord ordains the Sabbath, he also chooses a people for the Sabbath, the descendants of Jacob, who will enjoy a unique relationship with God as his firstborn, a priestly kingdom separate from the nations (2:17–22).[28]

2.1.5 Angelology

Fifth, the author frequently inserts a role for angels and evil spirits into the biblical narrative.[29] Thus, it is an angel of the presence who reveals the Law and the Book of Jubilees to Moses at Sinai (2:1).[30] Similarly, angels show Adam the Garden of Eden (3:15), evaluate cultic performance (4:2), educate Abraham in the Hebrew language (12:27), report human sin to God (4:6), reveal the proper calendar to Enoch (4:18), teach Noah medicinal knowledge (10:12–13), make a covenant with Abram (14:20), and test Abraham upon the death of Sarah (19:3). These

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[25] See Labahn. *Licht*, 100–30; Himmelfarb, "Earthly"; Himmelfarb, *Kingdom*, 53–84.
[26] Kugel, *Walk*, 7.
[27] Cf. Kugel, "Levi's Elevation," 17–21.
[28] On this distinctive aspect of Jubilees, see Himmelfarb, "Sectarianism."
[29] For an overview of Jubilees's angelology, see Ruiten, "Angels"; Hanneken, "Angels."
[30] Cf. Najman, "Angels at Sinai."

angels are created on the first day along with the heavens and exist in a three-level hierarchy (2:2),[31] two of which are circumcised and observe the Sabbath and other festivals in heaven (2:17–21; 15:27). A third class of angels manages natural phenomena (2:2).[32]

The Watcher myth is also present in Jubilees, though in this version, the Watchers are good angels sent to earth by God to teach humans righteousness (4:15; 5:6).[33] They defile themselves, however, with human women and produce violent offspring, giants who corrupt the earth. God punishes the Watchers for their sin by binding them in the depths of the earth and slaying their giant sons (4:22; 5:1, 10). The ultimate product of the Watchers' sin is evil spirits who plague humanity, misleading and afflicting them.[34] These spirits rule over the nations (12:20; 15:31) but have no power over Israel when it is obedient to the covenant (10:13). The leader of the spirits, Mastema (10:4; 11:5), consistently opposes God's people.[35] Thus, it is Mastema who provokes the testing of Abraham (17:15–16), tries to kill Moses immediately after his call (48:1–4), empowers the Egyptian magicians (48:9), and provokes the Egyptians to pursue the Israelites to the Red Sea (48:12).

2.1.6 Eschatology

Finally, Jubilees demonstrates a clear interest in eschatology, especially in chs. 1 and 23.[36] The author hopes for a regathering from the exile, a purification of the people, a renewed observance of the proper law and calendar, and a new creation, with long life for the sons of Jacob. Just as Israel's history has followed a jubilean structure, so too will the future; it has all been

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[31] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 178, speculates that "the trigger for the idea that the angels were created on the first day" was the term רוח in Gen 1:2. Cf. van Ruiten, "Angels," 588–89, for a slightly different view.

[32] See Sollamo, "Creation."

[33] Endres, "Watchers"; Stuckenbruck, *Myth*, 24–33.

[34] See Jub 10:5, which appears to rely on 1 En 15:8–9, where the evil spirits are explained as the spirits of the deceased giants.

[35] Jub 10:11 calls Mastema "the satan." As Segal, *Jubilees*, 176–77, notes, Mastema's activities correspond to those attributed in Job and Zechariah to the satan. See VanderKam, "Mastema"; Kugel, "Mastéma"; Hamidović, "Mastéma"; Stokes, *Satan*, 75–119. Jub 10:7 and 48:15 suggest that Mastema's opposition is under the ultimate authority of God.

[36] See Davenport, *Eschatology*; Hanneken, *Subversion*, 171–94; Lambert, "Redemption"; Scott, *On Earth*, 161–210; Kugel, "Apocalypse."

determined and revealed to Moses and now to the audience. Notably, Jubilees appears to have no role for a resurrection of the dead or a Messianic protagonist in its eschatological framework.[37]

2.1.7 Jubilees as a Response to the Hellenizing Crisis

The author's theological emphases make perfect sense in the wake of the Hellenizing crisis which threatened Jewish identity and cast significant doubt on the viability of Jewish ancestral traditions in the face of Hellenism's universalizing tendencies.[38] In response to these challenges, Jubilees goes on the offense. Israel's Law is no late invention, as its opponents might claim.[39] Rather, it is the very order of the cosmos, the eternal decree of the Creator, in force since the beginning of time, first observed by God and the angels, and then shared with God's elect people. Likewise, Israel, as a nation, has been in God's mind and plan since creation. The covenant at Sinai was not a *novum*, but a renewal of the initial Sabbath covenant made at creation with the angels and the postdiluvian covenant cut by Noah. A central part of this covenant was the clear revelation of the septenary solar calendar, which synchronizes worship on earth and heaven. To maintain its purity, Israel must not compromise by adopting the lunar calendar of the Gentiles, for to do so would be to sever the crucial connection to the heavenly rhythms of worship.[40] Likewise, it must not fold to the pressure of Hellenism and forsake the covenant of circumcision that marks it out as the special priestly people of God.

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[37] Cf. Jub 23:31; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 67; Charles, *Jubilees*, lxxxix, 150; Bautch, "Afterlife."

[38] See VanderKam, "Origins," 20–22; Schubert, *Tradition*; Najman, "Interpretation," 395.

[39] Wintermute, "Jubilees," 40. First Maccabees may well reflect the rhetorical strategy of the Hellenizers when it describes "renegades" who "misled many, saying, 'Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles around us, for since we separated from them many disasters have come upon us'" (1:11). This expresses the idea that in the "golden age" all nations were one, so that Israel's distinctness from the nations was a late and unnatural development. Jubilees counters this by demonstrating that Israel's identity is rooted in the original creation; cf. VanderKam, "Origins," 21. Hartog, "Jubilees," 19, demonstrates that the author of Jubilees "was comfortably at home within the global intellectual culture of the Hellenistic world."

[40] Cf. Schwarz, *Identität*, 99–126; Ben-Dov, "Time and Identity." Wacholder, "Calendar Wars," demonstrates the use of a lunisolar calendar well before the Antiochean crisis, though Ben-Dov shows that it did not become a marker of national identity until the Hellenistic age. As Werman, "Jubilees," 135, observes, Jubilees's emphasis on "the sanctity and importance of the Hebrew language" (Jub 12:25–27) also fits a time of struggle with Hellenism. Cf. the likely polemic

2.2 Literary Unity

The most disputed question surrounding Jubilees is whether the book constitutes a literary unity.[41] While R. H. Charles set the tone for subsequent scholarship by assuming the work's unity,[42] many over the past century have posited the presence of interpolations. M. Testuz, for example, found the book to have a strong coherence overall, apart from three eschatological passages he identified as later insertions.[43] Similarly, G. Davenport,[44] and later, C. Berner[45] argued for eschatological interpolations that conflict with the heptadic chronology present in the base text. Others such as G. Anderson, M. Kister, and L. Ravid,[46] discovered contradictions between some of the rewritten Bible narrative and the halakic material in Jubilees.

2.2.1 Segal's Redactor

In 2007, M. Segal's *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology* built on the work of Kister and argued for a redactional scheme based on numerous contradictions or discrepancies he found in Jubilees between the rewritten biblical narratives and the legal and chronological frameworks provided for these narratives.[47] For example, the narrative of Judah and Tamar portrays Judah as innocent of incest because Tamar did not technically consummate her marriage with Judah's two sons and was thus not legally Judah's daughter-in-law (41:2,5,27).

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against Hellenism in Jub 3:31 (where nakedness is prohibited in the heavenly tablets), Jub 15:11–15, 25–27 (which stresses circumcision on the eighth day), and the emphasis on the blood prohibition throughout.

[41] For an overview of the issues, see VanderKam, *Commentary*, 25–27; VanderKam, "Composition"; Segal, *Jubilees*, 14–21.

[42] Charles, *Jubilees*, xliv–xlvii.

[43] Testuz, *Les idées*, 39–42. Testuz saw 1:7–25, 28; 23:11–32; 24:28b–30 as interpolations.

[44] Davenport, *Eschatology*, 10–18, 46. Davenport identified two redactors who added 1:4b–26, 29; 23:14–31; 50:5 and later 1:27–28; 4:24; 23:21; 31:14 and the conclusion. He also noted a contradiction in the text regarding the author of the book: some passages state that an angel wrote it, while others say that Moses wrote it while the angel dictated it (see, e.g. 1:26–27 inter alia). VanderKam, "Putative Author," however, posited a distinction between hiphil and qal forms of כתב that was not carried into the Greek translation which formed the basis for the Ethiopic version. This hypothesis was confirmed by 4Q216 4.6 (see Attridge, et al, *Qumran Cave 4.VIII* [DJD XIII], 12).

[45] Berner, *Jahre*, 239–54. Cf. Berner, "50 Jubilees," 17–23.

[46] Ravid, "Relationship," argued that the work would have originally ended at 50:5, which is a fitting conclusion to the book, and that the halakic material regarding the Sabbath in 50:6–13 conflicts with the Sabbath regulations in 2:24–33. See Doering, "Jub 50:6–13," for a response to Ravid.

[47] Segal, *Jubilees*. Segal builds on the work of Anderson, "Status"; Kister, "Aspects." See, more recently, Segal, "Composition"; Segal, "Dynamics."

In contrast, the legal material states that Judah did in fact sin and thus needed to repent in order to be forgiven (41:23–36).[48] Similarly, the Akedah narrative (Jub 17:15–18:17) suggests that Abraham's journey to the mountain and back takes five or six days and occurs on 1/12–1/17. The legal passage (18:18–19), however, presents his journey as the basis for the *seven* days of Matzot (celebrated from 1/15–1/21).[49] A final example: Jubilees uses a calendar that begins on Wednesday, because the sun was created on the fourth day. Adam, then, would have been created on 1/3. According to a legal passage in 3:8–14, Adam entered Eden forty days after he was created, which would be 2/13. The narrative, however, states that Adam entered Eden on 2/17 (Jub 3:17). This indicates that the narrative was written by someone who thought the year began on the first day of the creation week (Sunday), and that Adam was therefore created on 1/6 and entered Eden forty days later on 2/17.[50]

For Segal, these kinds of contradictions are evidence of the book's literary development. The author or composer[51] used a variety of rewritten biblical stories, to which he added two types of material: 1) legal or halakic passages marked by their use of heavenly tablets terminology, and 2) a chronological framework built around weeks of years and jubilees.[52] Jub 5:1-18 offers a clear example of the author's compositional technique, as he adapts a story from the Book of Watchers and appends to it a legal conclusion regarding judgment and Yom Kippur.

2.2.2 Kugel's Interpolator

More recently, James Kugel has built on Kister, Ravid, and Segal's approaches but taken a slightly different tack, proposing that Jubilees consists of a coherent base text with extensive

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[48] Segal, *Jubilees*, 62–66.

[49] Segal, *Jubilees*, 189–202. See p. 55 below for discussion.

[50] Segal, *Jubilees*, 47–58.

[51] In more recent work, Segal prefers "composer" over "author" ("Dynamics," 558–59).

[52] Segal, *Jubilees*, 31–32: "The lack of homogeneity amongst the stories suggests that they cannot be combined into a consecutive, unified narrative layer. It is therefore reasonable to view the legal passages and the chronological framework as one stratum which relied upon a variety of extant rewritten stories."

interpolation.[53] Kugel's original "Author" retells Genesis and Exodus, solving various exegetical difficulties, stressing the eternality of Israel's election, and arranging the events of Israel's history according to a heptadic chronology.[54] Israelite halakah, according to the Author, derives from the actions of the patriarchs.[55] For example, Israel is commanded at Sinai to observe Sukkot in the seventh month only because Abraham had done so long ago when he spontaneously celebrated Isaac's conception (Jub 16:5–27). Similarly, fasting and mourning on Yom Kippur follows the precedent set by Jacob's spontaneous mourning at the (false) report of Joseph's demise (Jub 34:10–19). Many laws of Sinai, then, merely enshrine as commands the practices of the patriarchs which they performed on their own initiative and passed down as an oral tradition[56] prior to Sinai: "God made them official in reaction, as it were, to things that the patriarchs themselves had instituted."[57]

At a later point, Kugel's "Interpolator" added twenty-nine short passages,[58] which can be identified easily by their terminology or "linguistic tics"[59] (referring to items "ordained," "written," or "inscribed on the heavenly tablets" that have no time limit but are to be kept for all eternity).[60] These insertions also clash ideologically with the Author's work. For the Interpolator, all the laws and festivals were written on the heavenly tablets prior to creation—they are not the innovation of the patriarchs but the eternal order of creation—*imitatio Dei* rather than *imitatio*

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[53] Kugel, *Walk*, 11–16, 207–96, and throughout his commentary. This work incorporates his previous article, "Interpolations," 215–72, where he introduced his interpolation theory. More recently, see Kugel, "Compositional History."

[54] Thus, contra Segal, Kugel thinks that the chronological framework was part of the original composition. For Kugel, once the legal interpolations are removed, a coherent composition emerges.

[55] Kugel tempers this claim by conceding that "The original author of *Jubilees* never implied that *all* the laws of Sinai, or even most of them, were based on precedents in the lives of Israel's ancestors" (*Walk*, 219; italics original).

[56] On the aspect of oral tradition, see Kugel, *Walk*, 220, where he compares the Author's view to that of the Pharisees.

[57] Kugel, *Walk*, 209.

[58] Kugel emphasizes that "*the Interpolator is not a rewriter*; he does not edit or rework the original text, or even interweave his different points *seriatim*.… his interpolations throughout the book are just that, interpolations into an existing text, single blocks of writing that often end up repeating some of what had already been said by the original author; they are also frequently somewhat out of place or in other ways at odds with what the original author had written." (*Walk*, 247; italics original).

[59] Kugel, "Compositional," 529.

[60] Kugel here builds on Ravid, "Terminology."

hominis.[61] In addition, the Interpolator modifies the Author's calendar by fixing the date of Shavuot (which he understands as the feast of "oaths," not "weeks") and adding four seasonal days to the Author's 360-day calendar, thus yielding a sabbath-based year of 52 weeks.[62]

2.2.3 Evaluation of Source-Critical Theories

I will interact with these theories in more detail when I discuss the key festival texts of Jubilees later in this chapter and the next. For now, a few general methodological observations are in order.[63] First, we know that Jubilees used sources. In addition to some form of the biblical texts, the author clearly had access to portions of the Enochic literature, the Aramaic Levi Document (or a source common to it and Jubilees), and other rewritten biblical texts.[64] Given the multitude of traditions and texts the author likely drew upon, we should exercise caution in positing (à la Segal and Kugel) that the author redacted a single coherent base narrative that had a clearly defined ideological viewpoint. The situation is almost certainly more complex. The author likely drew upon numerous traditions (written and oral) from a variety of viewpoints. In the absence of an extant source, we are left to imagination and speculation. Nevertheless, source- or tradition-critical approaches are helpful heuristically in that they encourage us to ask what material and ideas an author has inherited and what might be original to him. In my treatment of Jubilees's festival passages, I demonstrate that many of the associations he makes between scriptural events and the annual festivals are likely not original to him. Rather, his original contribution is the way he appeals to the heavenly tablets to demonstrate the angelic precedents of these festivals and their eternal nature.[65]

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[61] Kugel, *Walk*, 207–26; Kugel, "Compositional," 525.

[62] Kugel, *Walk*, 14–15.

[63] For responses to source-critical theories, see VanderKam, "Composition"; VanderKam, "End"; Van Ruiten, "Some Questions"; Najman and Tigchelaar, "Unity."

[64] See above p. 29

[65] Kugel, *Walk*, 13, observes that the motif of heavenly books or tablets appears frequently in Second Temple literature, but that Jubilees innovates by portraying them as containing laws. Given the biblical depiction of the Torah as tablets from heaven inscribed by the finger of God (Exod 31:18), however, I do not see this as a dramatic innovation. Cf.

Second, source theories have depended heavily upon contradictions or inconsistencies within Jubilees as a means of distinguishing source and redaction. These contradictions, they suppose, have come about when the author has failed to adapt his source completely to its new context. In other words, the author has failed to recognize the contradiction he has introduced. This clearly occurs in Jubilees. For example, in Jub 14:24, Abram is 86 years old when Ishmael is born—a detail drawn from Gen 16:16a. But, according to the chronological framework of Jubilees (the system of jubilees, weeks and years the author imposes on his narrative), this event took place in AM 1965, when Abram was 89.[66]

Many of the contradictions the source critics posit, however, are not so clear cut, because the proposed source is not extant and the proposed contradictions involve conflicting ideas, not simple numerical data. In such cases, is it not just as possible that the discrepancies are contradictions not between sources but within the author's own thought, i.e. inconsistencies in his beliefs or theoretical framework that he has failed to recognize or reconcile? Do contradictions or inconsistencies necessarily point to multiple authors?[67] Methodologically, without an extant source, it is virtually impossible to distinguish contradictions created by inconsistency in the author's thought from contradictions that stem from his (incomplete) redaction of his source.[68]

Third, the source theories have also depended upon differences in style and vocabulary between the base narrative and the material dealing with the heavenly tablets. Again, this could indicate redactional activity, but it could also simply result from the legal genre of the sections.

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the Hammurabi Stele (ca. 1780 BCE), which portrays Hammurabi receiving law tablets from an enthroned Shamash (see Lyon, "Hammurabi").

[66] Cf. Jub 11:15, which indicates that Abram was born in AM 1876. As VanderKam, "Chronology," explains, the author "has simply copied a number from Genesis, forgetting that it did not fit his revised chronology" (538).

[67] Cf. Najman and Tigchelaar, "Unity," 499: "single-authored texts may contain different, or even contrasting points of view; and unified compositions may the final products of multiple scribes."

[68] Indeed, in the end, is there much difference between the inconsistency of the author's own thought and his inconsistency in letting stand those contradictions which result from his use of sources?

It would be natural to portray the heavenly tablets as written in a formal "legalese" quite distinct from the register of the rest of the work.

In light of these methodological difficulties and the speculative nature of the source-critical enterprise, in this chapter and the next I will focus on Jubilees as a complete work, and not on the process by which it came to be in that state. This does not mean that we must necessarily treat the work as consistent or coherent—indeed I will point out tensions in the author's thought and the way he has likely made use of, and interacted with, his traditions while adding his own spin that has taken them in a new direction.

2.3 Describing the Festivals in Jubilees: Three Lines of Inquiry

In the rest of this chapter and the next, I will discuss the passages in Jubilees which comment on the festivals or portray festival observance on the part of its characters. I will only deal with those passages where the author explicitly refers to festivals by their name or date. I begin with the Sabbath—the festival par excellence for Jubilees—then treat the annual festivals in their calendrical order. Jubilees also identifies four "memorial days" as festivals. These occur at the solstices and equinoxes of the year and will be treated separately at the end of Chapter 3.

In discussing each festival, I will pay special attention to three aspects: 1) *The festalization of Scripture*. What leads Jubilees (or the tradition from which it draws) to link a specific episode in Genesis or Exodus to a festival? What is the author's purpose in linking event and festival and what is the effect? 2) The *transcendentalizing* of the festivals. The author sometimes appeals to angelic activity in his description of festal observance. What is the function of this appeal? In what way does he understand human earthly festal observance to be connected to angelic or heavenly realities? How does he portray the festivals as integral to the created order and thus as part of the eternal divine law? Does this understanding of the festivals conflict with his appeal to patriarchal precedents for festival observance? 3) *Halakic innovation*. What festival halakah does the author find appropriate? How does his appeal to the heavenly tablets and to angelic activity

function to ground his halakhic theories, especially those in which he may be innovating or out of step with other elements of Second Temple Jewish tradition? I will conclude by summarizing the role of the festival passages in the overall theological strategy of the book and exploring how Jubilees's approach to the festivals yields significant insight into the work's concept of Torah, creation, covenant, time, and worship.

2.4 Sabbath: Resting with God and the Angels

For Jubilees, the Sabbath is the foundational festival (*ba'āl*), written into the very fabric of creation itself.[69] As a weekly, seventh-day festival, it forms the basis of the septenary calendar and informs the author's interpretation of the other festivals. In both the biblical account and the retelling of Jubilees, it is the first festival expressly mentioned and thus provides a model for the others. It is also an ideological nexus that allows the author to differentiate his worldview and halakah from that of other Jewish traditions.[70]

Two lengthy sections in Jubilees address the Sabbath explicitly. The first, in ch. 2, portrays the angel of the presence as he narrates to Moses on Mt. Sinai the story of the creation week, in which God keeps Sabbath with his angels and declares his plans to separate Israel from the nations as his special people marked by their observance of the Sabbath. In the second section, ch. 50, the angel returns to the topic of the Sabbath and its proper observance. While some source critics have argued that ch. 50 is a secondary addition to the book, it makes sense in its

[69] For detailed discussion of the Sabbath in Jubilees, see Doering, *Schabbat*, 43–118; Halpern-Amaru, *Perspective*, 129–48. Doering, "Concept," 193, believes the identification of the Sabbath as a festival may stem from Lev 23:2–3 where the Sabbath is grouped with the annual festivals. As I demonstrate below, several other characteristics of the Sabbath also contributed. Doering, "Concept," 201, is correct to describe the Sabbath in Jubilees as "a festival *sui generis* in that it is clearly distinguished from the other feasts within the framework of the 364-day calendar." This is only natural, since the Sabbath is a weekly observance while the other festivals are annual. Nevertheless, the emphasis in Jubilees is undoubtedly upon the integral unity of the entire festival system.

[70] For example, in Jub 1:9, neglect of the Sabbath is a key reason for the exile. In 1:14, it is "predicted" that errors about the Sabbath will creep in during exile. The author sees his community as a righteous remnant that has returned from exile and renewed proper observation of the calendar and law.

current position as it both follows the order of the biblical narrative and creates an *inclusio* for the entire book, highlighting the central importance of the Sabbath to the election of Israel.[71]

2.4.1 Sabbath, Creation, and *Imitatio Dei et Angelorum* (Jubilees 2)

2.4.1.1 Sabbath as Divine Observance (Jub 2:1)

In Jub 2:1, the angel of the presence recounts to Moses how the Lord created everything in six days and "kept sabbath on the seventh day. He sanctified it for all ages and set it as a sign for all his works."[72] God, according to both Jubilees and the biblical narrative, is the first to observe the Sabbath. The importance of this is hard to overstate. For Jubilees, the Sabbath is not a human institution or human holiday.[73] Nor is it even primarily a commandment that humans are to observe. It is, in the first place, something that God himself does. While Jubilees does not elaborate on the significance of that fact at this point, it plays a major role in the festal ideology of the book by establishing the principle that festivals, if they are to be legitimate, must mirror or participate in divine or heavenly activity. Moreover, just as the Sabbath is primordial and eternal (i.e. a fundamental part of the cosmic structure), so also the yearly festivals, which follow the septenary pattern set by the Sabbath, must also be part of this eternal heavenly reality, and not a human invention or a Sinaitic *novum*.

Notably, Jubilees calls the Sabbath a "sign" (2:1), language likely drawn from Exod 31:17: "It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." In Exodus, the Sabbath is a sign simply in the sense that it reminds Israel of the creation week; its significance extends no further.

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[71] Among those who see ch. 50 as secondary are Kugel, *Walk*, 203–4; Ravid, "Relationship," 161.

[72] Here Jubilees appears to follow a non-Masoretic tradition, shared by the LXX and Samaritan Pentateuch, in which God completes creation on the sixth day (not the seventh, as MT Gen 2:2 states). This has the effect of further distinguishing the seventh day from the preceding days and making it clear that the seventh day was entirely devoted to rest. See also Jub 2:16, which reiterates this point. Here the author may be influenced by Exod 29:11 which makes clear that no creation took place on the seventh day. For Jubilees's use of Exodus in general, see Doering, "Exodus."

[73] One might even say that, for Jubilees, "the Sabbath was not made for man, but man for the Sabbath" (cf. Mark 2:27, which may reflect a debate over the concept of the Sabbath espoused by Jubilees).

For Jubilees, however, the Sabbath is a "sign for all his works," i.e. the entire created order.[74] It is the basic building block or pattern of the heavenly calendar and provides the fundamental rhythm to all creation.[75] Furthermore, it is "for all ages," terminology again drawn from Exodus, which designates the Sabbath an everlasting covenant to be observed forever (31:16).[76] Thus Jub 2:26 can declare that it is "holier than all other days," even "more holy and more blessed than any of the jubilee of jubilees" (v30).

2.4.1.2 Sabbath as Imitatio Angelorum et Dei (Jub 2:16-22)

The angel of the presence goes on to narrate the six days of creation and then turns his attention to the seventh day. Here he describes the sabbath day as a sign or gift to the angels (2:17). In imitation of their creator, they too are to work six days and rest on the seventh, keeping sabbath "with him [God] in heaven and on earth" (2:18) Again, the author's worldview is apparent: festivals are in the first place heavenly institutions, observed in heaven by God and the angels. Earthly observance is an extension of the anterior heavenly reality.[77]

This sabbath privilege, however, does not extend to all angels. Only the two "great kinds"—the angels of the presence and the angels of holiness—participate. In Jubilees, the angelic hierarchy has (at least) three levels, the highest of which are the angels of the presence, who were the first to be created and who serve in God's immediate presence in the heavenly temple.[78] Second in rank are the angels of holiness or sanctification, whose precise role is not

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[74] See VanderKam, *Commentary*, 200, for discussion of whether this statement, and the parallel in 2:25, implies that the Sabbath is for all nations. He notes that Jub 50:7, which requires that "the foreigner who is with you" keep Sabbath, may partially explain this statement. Alternatively, these passages may be meant to include both human and non-human creation in the Sabbath (*megbār*, "creation" or "work" would encompass both) rather than to indicate ethnic universality. Again, Jub 50:7 states that "all your cattle" must observe the Sabbath. A similar idea is found in Philo, *Mos.* 2.22, where he emphasizes that the Sabbath includes even plants.

[75] See Doering, "Concept," 192; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 176–77.

[76] See van Ruiten, "Exod 31,12–17."

[77] The idea of Sabbath communion with angels is given detailed liturgical expression at Qumran in the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice.

[78] See VanderKam, "Angel of the Presence." In other traditions they are understood as the archangels. Cf. Isa 63:9, Tob 12:15 (of Raphael), Luke 1:19 (of Gabriel). In Jubilees the angel of the presence is the narrator, who often replaces the "angel of the Lord" in the biblical text being rewritten (see, e.g. Gen 22:11/Jub 18:10).

articulated, but who appear to reside in heaven and engage in regular liturgical activity directed toward God. On the lowest level are the angels who govern or maintain aspects of the natural creation.[79]

Most significantly, for the author, the classes of angels correspond to classes of humanity. The angels of the presence and the angels of holiness correspond to Israel, which has access to God's presence, and is therefore priestly in some sense.[80] The angels of the presence, however, enjoy a more intimate level of access, perhaps equivalent to Israel's Levitical priests or high priests.[81] The Gentile nations correspond to the lower angels, who are tasked with maintaining natural phenomena.[82]

This clearly distinguishes Israel from the nations, almost in an ontological sense. Israel is associated with the heavenly angels, while Gentiles are earthbound. Israel alone among the nations enjoys the privileged rest of the Sabbath, while the servile nations are like the third-class angels who must continue to maintain creation through the seventh day. Along similar lines, Jub 15:27 explains circumcision, another sign distinguishing Israel from the nations, with reference to its angelic precedent. The two highest classes of angels, the author explains, were circumcised from the day of their creation, and Israel is sanctified through circumcision so that it may "be with him and his holy angels" (15:27). Thus, by means of circumcision and Sabbath-observance—these two eternal signs of the covenant—Israel is separated from the nations and identified with the highest classes of the angels;[83] the nation is God's firstborn son (2:20).[84] God's

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[79] Jub 2:2 describes these as "angels of the spirits of" fire, wind, clouds, etc. Psalm 104:4 is a likely source for this concept.

[80] See Jub 31:13–17, where both classes are said to serve God in his temple.

[81] Barker, "Archangel," 119–20. In 1QSb 4, the Zadokite priests are equated with the angels of the presence. 1 En 14:21–23 also portrays a division between two classes of angels based on their access to the heavenly dwelling of God.

[82] See Sollamo, "Creation." As VanderKam, *Commentary*, 48, notes, the lowest tier of angels "do not keep Sabbath (they are apparently always on duty)."

[83] Cf. the role of Sabbath and circumcision in protection from malevolent spiritual beings. In Jub 50:13, observance of the Sabbath ensures that Israel "will no longer have any satan" in the land, while in 15:28–32 circumcision protects Israel from the dominion of deceiving spirits. Cf. Kister, "Demons." On circumcision as a sign of the covenant, see Fox, "Sign."

[84] The language of firstborn son, which draws on Exod 4:22, fits well with Jubilees's emphasis elsewhere that Israel is a special people, a "priestly kingdom" (echoing Exod 19:5–6), as primogeniture was closely connected with priesthood

election of Israel, then, is not a later development, as a sequential reading of Genesis might indicate. It did not begin with Sinai or Abraham, but with creation itself.[85] As Jub 2:19 shows, God had Israel in mind from the beginning. He purposed to have a people for himself separate from the nations, a people who would observe sabbath with him and the angels.[86]

2.4.1.3 Sabbath Halakah (Jub 2:20–33)

Because the Sabbath was originally divine and angelic, proper Sabbath halakah is governed by a principle of imitation and participation. Human activities on the Sabbath must mirror those of God and the angels, or at least allow participation in the activities of heaven.[87] This is evident from the two passages in Jubilees which detail proper Sabbath halakah: 2:20-33 and 50:6–13.

In the first, the angel of the presence begins with a summary of the required Sabbath behavior. Israel is to "eat, drink, and bless the creator of all" (2:21; cf. 2:31). Eating and drinking are best understood to refer to typical festal behavior, especially the leisure and dining that characterizes festivals.[88] It is unlikely, though perhaps not impossible, that the author thinks Israel imitates God or the angels in their dining.[89] Rather, the point is that Israel's weekly observance is to be devoted to leisure not labor. The thought is repeated in 2:25, where the Sabbath is called a "holy festal day" with the logical consequence that on such a day no work was permitted. The prohibition of "work" does not exclude all activity *per se*, but rather the sort of activity that would be unbecoming of the higher angels, i.e. servile labor allotted to the lower

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in ancient thought. The idea here is that among all the nations, Israel is singled out as God's firstborn son, and therefore, rightly, the ruling nation and the uniquely holy priestly people.

[85] See VanderKam, *Commentary*, 195, who finds here an attempt to solve an exegetical riddle: how could Israel be called God's "firstborn son" (Exod 4:22) when it only became a nation much later? He observes that the election of Israel fits rather naturally in the creation account: "by separating Israel, God was continuing the process of creation, which involved several acts of a separating" (194). As Schwarz, *Identität*, 87–88, notes, however, the text shifts tenses to the future when it speaks of Israel's separation. While elected at creation, Israel is separated only in the events of the exodus and Sinai covenant.

[86] See Doering, "Concept," 187.

[87] Cf. Ego, *Zeit*, 210; Doering, "Concept," 187; Schwemer, "König," 53.

[88] In 13:27 the same phrasing characterizes priestly prerogatives—closely related to the line of thought here. For eating and drinking as festal activity, see 22:5–6 (Shavuot); 49:6, 9 (Passover); 50:9–10 (Sabbath).

[89] Perhaps Exodus 16 is in the background, where the Sabbath commandment is linked with the provision of manna (identified in Ps 78:24–25 as bread from heaven and angelic food); cf. Jub 50:1.

class of nature-angels. Examples of such activity include: food-preparation, drawing water, carrying items from house to house (2:29).[90] This prohibition is reinforced in 2:30–32 by appealing again to the angelic model: the sabbath "is more blessed than any of the jubilee of jubilees. On it we [angels] kept sabbath in heaven before it was made known to any human that on it they should keep sabbath on earth."[91]

The *imitatio* principle is also clear in the language of "blessing." God blessed Israel on the Sabbath; in turn, Israel is to bless God on the Sabbath (2:21; cf. 2:32).[92] The act of "blessing" God is likely priestly in nature, as the author immediately goes on to describe Israel as "a noteworthy people out of all the nations" (2:21), alluding to Exod 19:5-6, where Israel, as a priestly kingdom, is God's special possession. As God's priestly people on earth, Israel's liturgical blessings on the Sabbath mirror the actions of the angelic priesthood. Their Sabbath behavior can also be described in terms of priestly sacrifice: "a fine fragrance which is acceptable in his presence" (2:22).[93] According to Jubilees, it seems, Israel's priestly vocation consists first and foremost in sharing Sabbath with God and the angels.[94]

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[90] As Doering, "Exodus," 493, notes, the prohibition of food-preparation likely reflects Exod 16:5. The other prohibitions come from Jer 17:22 and Exod 16:29.

[91] Here the translation follows Wintermute, "Jubilees," 58, in translating "made known to any human." VanderKam, *Commentary*, 168, translates "made known to all humanity" but this is unlikely given the exclusivistic context and the emphasis in 2:20, 26, 28, 33 on the Sabbath as a special revelation to Israel. A similar issue appears in 2:31, where it is unclear whether the text says a) that God blessed all humanity, but only sanctified Israel to keep the Sabbath (a much more inclusive, universal view), or b) that God blessed "it," i.e. the Sabbath day and *therefore* sanctified only Israel to observe it. Once again, given the context, the more exclusive sentiment seems more likely. Stoner, "Sacrifice," 105, distinguishes the cessation of work (which is commanded of all) from the keeping of the Sabbath (which is the liturgical practice only allowed to Israel and the angels). VanderKam, *Commentary*, 204, on the other hand, refers to Jub 2:31 for a solution: "all humanity received the command to observe the Sabbath, but the Creator God *sanctified* Israel … alone to obey the prescription." Kugel, *Walk*, 35–37, theorizes that the tension is caused by the Interpolator who sees the Sabbath as universal, while the Author does not.

[92] Chazon, "Psalms," 710, notes that at Qumran all the weekday prayers contain aspects of petition and forgiveness of sin, but the Sabbath prayers consist of only blessing and praise.

[93] See Doering, "Concept," 188, who notes the connection between Sabbath and angelic cult, but sees it as a minor note in Jubilees as compared to Qumran, especially the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. For angelic praises on the Sabbath, see 4Q504 vii 4–9. Some traditions indicate that during the Second Temple period the Qedushah was recited on the Sabbath; this would clearly portray the Sabbath as a time of special participation in heavenly worship. Cf. Weinfeld, *Normative*, 51; Flusser, "Jewish Roots."

[94] Doering, "Concept," 187: "the Sabbath is established for Israel, and Israel's election aims from the very beginning at its Sabbath observance." Cf. Himmelfarb, *Kingdom*, 53–84; Schwartz, "Kingdom." On the reception of Exod 19:5–6 in Jubilees, see Doering, "Exodus," 497.

2.4.2 The Sabbath: Angelic Existence and Sacred Time (Jubilees 50)

The second treatment of Sabbath halakah appears at the end of Jubilees, after the angel has recounted the story of the exodus and the first Passover. This follows the narrative order of Exodus, where the Sabbath law is first given in Exodus 16,[95] but it also creates Sabbath "bookends" for Jubilees that emphasize the importance of this foundational festival.[96] The narrative arc of the work thus takes the audience from the creation of the world to the creation of the nation Israel; both events are recounted with a focus on the establishment of the Sabbath.

Jubilees 50 draws extensively on Exod 20:8-11, which prohibited labor only in the most general terms. Jubilees is more pointed and specific, forbidding the following activities:[97] a) sexual intercourse, b) talking about work, c) travel,[98] d) drawing water, e) moving items from house to house, f) lighting a fire,[99] g) riding an animal,[100] h) hunting, i) fasting, j) conducting war. The logic or rationale behind these regulations appears to be twofold, as elaborated in 50:9–11. First, the Lord has given the Sabbath to Israel as a *festal* day, holy and distinguished from normal time (cf. 2:25). The proper activities, therefore, are festal: eating, drinking, resting, and blessing God. There is no place for fasting, of course, as this would be most inappropriate for a joyous occasion (50:12).[101]

Second, as a festal day, the Sabbath is a time to participate in heavenly or angelic activities. It is the "day of the holy kingdom" (50:9), another allusion to Exod 19:6's concept of a priestly kingdom. Israel's kingly superiority to the nations is manifested in its Sabbath observance. In

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[95] See Jub 50:1, which refers to Exodus 16.

[96] See VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1199, 1212–14, contra Kugel, *Walk*, 203–4, and Ravid, "Sabbath," 161, who see this as an interpolated secondary ending.

[97] See Doering, *Schabbat*, 70–107, for detailed discussion of the prohibitions.

[98] Doering, "Exodus," 496, notes the background in Exod 16:29, where Israel is forbidden to leave their tents on the Sabbath.

[99] Cf. Exod 35:1–3.

[100] Perhaps the logic here is that the Sabbath provides rest for livestock (Exod 20:10). Cf. mBetzah 5:2.

[101] Cf. Judith 8:6, where this view is apparently shared. For other practices in the Second Temple period, see Williams, "Sabbath Fasting"; Diamond, *Holy Men*, 121–27. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1209, points to Exod 16:25, where Israel eats manna on the Sabbath, as a possible biblical precedent.

effect, through the Sabbath, Israel becomes superhuman or angelic.[102] This explains the language used in v10: Israel is to rest "from any work that belongs to the work of mankind." Normal human activities are for the other six days; angelic or heavenly behavior is the standard for the Sabbath. This also explains the distinctive and noteworthy prohibition of sexual intercourse on the sabbath (v8), as the author likely envisions the higher angels as celibate.[103] The phrase, the "work of mankind" (v10), interprets the term מלאכה in Exod 20:9, usually taken to mean "servile labor" by the rabbis, but here taken to distinguish between heavenly and earthly labors.[104]

As many have observed, the Sabbath is to time as the temple is to space.[105] Actions inappropriate to the temple (or heaven, the archetypal temple) should not be pursued on the Sabbath. This probably plays a part in the prohibition of sexual activity on the Sabbath. Such activity was forbidden in sacred space, so also in sacred time.[106] The time-space analogy perhaps even better explains why warfare is prohibited on the Sabbath, clearly a controversial topic during the Second Temple period.[107] Just as shedding human blood in the temple would corrupt that sacred space, so too the inevitable bloodshed of war would defile the sacred time of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is to reflect the ideal undefiled space of the heavenly temple with its

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[102] Doering, "Exodus," 498, argues that by appealing to Exod 19:5–6, Jubilees "confers standards of priestly holiness to all of Israel." This is true, but incomplete. The underlying logic is angelic, so it would be better to say that Jubilees extends angelic holiness to all Israel, and more specifically, all Israel *on the Sabbath*.

[103] Cf. Luke 20:34–36. Doering, "Exodus," 495, proposes a background in Exodus 19 for this prohibition, as there God consecrates the people and commands them to abstain from sexual activity before they approach the Lord. This reflects the connection between sacred space and sacred time. According to mYoma 8:1 (cf. bYoma 19b) sexual intercourse is prohibited on Yom Kippur. Since Yom Kippur is described as a "Sabbath of Sabbaths" (Lev 23:32), it is possible that Jubilees derived some of its Sabbath regulations by analogy from the Yom Kippur prohibitions.

[104] On the Sabbath in rabbinic Judaism, see Goldenberg, "Sabbath"; Instone-Brewer, *Traditions*, 1–86. bShabb 150a presents a logic similar to that of Jubilees: "your affairs are what is forbidden, affairs of Heaven are permitted" (Neusner trans.).

[105] See, e.g. Calaway, *Sabbath*, 32–57.

[106] Many did not share this logic, it seems. Later rabbis would encourage sex on the Sabbath, perhaps in reaction to more ascetic views like those of Jubilees (mKet 5:9; bKet65b; mNed 8:6; yMeg 4:1). Some later evidence indicates that the Samaritans and Karaites also prohibited sex on the Sabbath (see Albeck, *Jubiläen*, 9). See Nir, "Adam," 50–63, on early Jewish thought regarding sex and sacred space. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1203 refers to Lev 15:18, which relates impurity to intercourse, as a possible rationale for the prohibition here. Cf. CD 12:1–2, where sex in "the city of temple" is prohibited due to purity concerns.

[107] See 1 Macc 2:29–41; cf. 2 Macc 5:25–27; 15:1–5; 6:11; Jos. *Ant*. 13.12.4; *War* 7.8.7. As Hanneken, *Subversion*, 115, notes, this rule would have effectively prohibited members of the community from being a soldier in any army. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1210, observes that in 1 Macc 2:41, "for Mattathias's group, the decision [to fight] was an innovation vis-à-vis an older practice of avoiding warfare altogether on the Sabbath." Doering, *Schabbat*, 107–8, notes the absence of polemical rhetoric here, which may also indicate that the Maccabees were the innovators in this regard.

angelic priests. Surely, the author reasons, warfare had no role in the original angelic sabbath in heaven.[108] In sum, we can see that while Jubilees builds on the pentateuchal Sabbath halakah, which is primarily concerned with abstinence from manual labor, it significantly supplements the logic of the Torah by requiring that Israel's sabbath activity correspond to the primordial angelic sabbath festival observed in the heavenly tabernacle.

2.4.2.1 Penalties for Sabbath-breaking

Any violation of the Sabbath commandment merits the death penalty (Jub 50:13). This accords with Exodus 31:14; 35:2 and traditional interpretations of Num 15:32-36 (the episode of the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath), and reinforces the serious necessity of Sabbath observance.[109] Once again, however, the rationale for the penalty in Jubilees likely stems from the analogy with sacred space. Just as an unqualified entrant to the holy of holies was worthy of death, so also those who defile the sacred time of the Sabbath must be eliminated. Similarly, just as Israel must maintain the sacredness of the temple in order to ensure God's continued presence, so too must Israel strive to keep the Sabbath precisely in order to continue enjoying the Sabbath rest God has afforded to his people (v13). In other words, Israel observes the sabbath so that it may continue to observe the sabbath! In effect, the sabbath—viewed as sharing in the angelic festal rest of the heavenly temple—is Israel's *raison d'être*. In light of this, it is not surprising that a discussion of the Sabbath and its halakah brackets the entire work of Jubilees. The Sabbath is the climax of the creation account which begins the narrative (chs. 1–2) and is more or less the sole focus of the law revealed on Sinai at the end of the book (ch. 50).[110]

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[108] Hanneken, *Subversion*, 114, notes that "Jubilees identifies the origin and nature of warfare as demonic" in 5:9 and 11:2–5.

[109] See also Jub 2:25, 27.

[110] As VanderKam, "Genesis 1," 305, puts it, Jubilees "envelops the creation in words about the Sabbath."

2.4.3 The Patriarchs and the Sabbath

Given the importance of the Sabbath to Jubilees, it is rather remarkable that the author does not explicitly portray the patriarchs observing the holy day.[111] This is in striking contrast to the three annual pilgrimage festivals (Matzot, Shavuot, Sukkot), all of which are celebrated by the patriarchs long before they are fully revealed at Sinai.[112] Later Jewish texts would depict the Sabbath being observed all the way back to Eden,[113] but Jubilees, with its theory of progressive revelation, insists that this is one part of the law not revealed until the nation was fully formed (Jub 50:1).[114]

2.4.4 Conclusion

Jubilees's treatment of the Sabbath, then, creatively brings the creation account into conversation with the Sinai revelation. The Sabbath is an integral part of the original creation, an eternal institution, but only lately revealed to Israel in the wilderness. Hellenized Jews like Aristobulus, Philo, and Josephus deduced from the Sabbath's role in the creation week that it was a universal law all nations should observe, modeled by Israel for the world to emulate.[115] In striking contrast, Jubilees emphasizes that although the Sabbath was a heavenly holiday,

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[111] Contra Jaubert, *Date*, 33–38, whose analysis of the calendar dates in Jubilees at most only shows that no travel in Jubilees takes place on the Sabbath (a position that is probably untenable in light of Jub 17:15–18:17; see below p. 55). Cf. Baumgarten, "Calendar," 104. Suter, "Jubilees," 402–3, speaks of the "selective anachronism" of Jubilees, "which reads the sacrificial cultus of the temple back into the practice of the patriarch [but] does not seem to include the observance of the Sabbath."

[112] The absence of patriarchal Sabbath observance is also highly problematic for the compositional theory of Kugel, who contrasts the Author with a later Interpolator. In his view, the Author appeals to patriarchal precedent for Israel's customs, while the Interpolator appeals to angelic precedent and presents the festivals as part of the eternal law written on the heavenly tablets (*Walk*, 29–34). This cannot, however, account for the presentation of the Sabbath in Jubilees. Indeed, Jub 2:1–22 (which Kugel attributes to the Author) actually depicts the Sabbath as an eternal law, grounded in the original creation, where it was kept initially by God and the angels. This is exactly the view that Kugel thinks is a distinctive of the Interpolator; it thus calls into question the way Kugel sets in opposition the thought and strategy of the Author and Interpolator.

[113] PRE 20; GenRab 16:5. Cf. GenRab 49:2; 92:4; 95:3.

[114] See Jub 50:1, where the Sabbath day is not revealed until Israel's time in the wilderness of Sin (Exod 16), while the Sabbath year and Jubilee year are not revealed until Sinai (Jub 50:2). Cf. Jub 2:19–22, which speaks of the future revelation of the Sabbath days to the "descendants of Jacob." In this way, Jubilees is clearly distinguished from the view in mQidd 4:14: "We find that Abraham our father performed the entire Torah [even] before it was given, as it says 'Because Abraham listened to My voice, and he observed My statutes, commandments, laws, and teachings' (Gen 26:5)."

[115] Cf. Aristobulus, frg. 5, and Philo, *Opif*. 89–128; *Mos*. 2.21; Josephus, *Ag*. *Ap*. 2.282, and discussion in Doering, *Schabbat*, 190.

originally observed by God and his elite angels, it had Israel exclusively in view from the beginning. As the ultimate sign of the distinctive and particular covenant between God and his people, the Sabbath was never intended for humans in general but for an elect people separate from the nations who would share in God's blessedness and holiness, abstaining from typical human activities so as to enjoy the divine leisure of priest-kings. This *imitatio* principle provides the rationale for Jubilees's extensive and sometimes distinctive sabbath halakah.

For Jubilees, the seventh day is the festival par excellence, and serves as the cornerstone for the entire festival system and the calendar, both of which evince a clearly septenary structure. Along the same lines, if the Sabbath is a transcendent festival written into the fabric of creation, it would be no stretch for the author to assume that the same was true of all the festivals prescribed in the heavenly tablets, and to conclude that the proper observance of the festival calendar was essential for being in synchrony with the heavenly realm.

2.5 Passover/Matzot: Protection from Mastema

The first of the annual festivals, Passover takes place in the first month on the evening of the 14th and is immediately followed by a seven-day pilgrimage festival (Matzot, on 1/15–21). Originally quite distinct festivals (one domestic and pastoral, one an agriculturally-based pilgrimage), Exodus 12–13 and Deut 16 fuse the two, linking them through an etiology that traces their origin to the exodus from Egypt.[116] This approach is shared by Jubilees, which treats the two as a single pilgrimage festival initiated by a distinct Passover sacrifice.[117] Likewise, both share a central motif: protection from hostile forces. Jubilees highlights this theme in the three biblical events it places at Passover/Matzot: the Akedah, Jacob's flight from Laban, and the Israelites' departure from Egypt. In this way, Jubilees presents a patriarchal etiology for

[116] On the relationship between the two feasts and its development, see Veijola, "History"; Wagenaar, "Passover."

[117] For Jubilees's treatment of Passover/Matzot, see Huizenga, "Battle"; VanderKam, "*Aqedah*"; van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 209–26; García Martínez, "Sacrifice"; Leonhard, *Pesach*, 27–30, 234–37; Halpern-Amaru, *Perspective*, 83–128.

Passover/Matzot that adds a new dimension to the Pentateuch's depiction of the feast as a commemoration of the exodus. Jubilees especially focuses its attention on halakic issues surrounding the festival, particularly its timing and location.

2.5.1 The Akedah and Passover (Jub 17:15–18:19)

The Akedah is the first narrative in Jubilees to be explicitly related to Passover. It begins with a scene in the heavenly council (Jub 17:15). Abraham's praises are being sung, for he is faithful and loved by the Lord. Prince Mastema, however, challenges this assessment and suggests that Abraham's love for Isaac may override his faithfulness to the Lord. He thus proposes a test: command Abraham to sacrifice Isaac and the extent of his faithfulness will then be known. The Lord had previously tested Abraham in many ways and already knew that Abraham was faithful, but he accepts the challenge and instructs Abraham to take Isaac to a designated mountain (later identified as Mt. Zion in Jub 18:13) and offer him there. Abraham obeys and is about to slaughter Isaac when the Lord instructs the narrating angel (an angel of the presence) to prevent Abraham from carrying out the bloodletting. Mastema's plan is thwarted and he is "put to shame" (18:12). Abraham goes on to sacrifice a ram instead of his son and, in response to Abraham's obedience, God promises to bless Abraham with a multitude of powerful descendants, through whom the nations will also be blessed. Abraham, Isaac, and his servants then return to Beersheba, where Abraham institutes an annual seven-day festival commemorating his seven-day trip to and from the mountain of the Akedah (18:17–19).

2.5.1.1 Additions to the Genesis Account

2.5.1.1.1 The Chronological Framework

Jubilees adds numerous substantial elements to the Genesis account of the Akedah.[118] Most notably, it supplies a chronological framework that links key points in the narrative to the dates for Passover/Matzot. The initial scene (the heavenly council and the command to Abraham in a vision) occurs on 1/12 (17:15). Abraham departs, and on the third day (1/14) arrives at the mountain (18:3).[119] This connects Abraham's binding of Isaac and subsequent sacrifice of the ram with the sacrifice of the Passover lamb "between the evenings," i.e. as 1/14 is becoming 1/15.[120] No specific dates are given for Abraham's return travel, but we are told that his round trip took seven days, corresponding to the seven days of Matzot (18:17–18).[121] Scholars have puzzled greatly over how to understand the chronological sequence, but a majority now agree that a trip spanning 1/12–18 is in view.[122]

This raises two difficulties. First, 1/18 is a Sabbath on the 364-day calendar, and for many it seems unlikely that the author would have Abraham travel on the Sabbath, given the emphasis on strict Sabbath observance elsewhere in Jubilees. It is important to realize however that the author does not say that the trip actually took 7 days; rather, his point in 18:18 is that the travel

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[118] See Van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 209–26; Segal, *Jubilees*, 191–98. Kundert, *Opferung*, extensively discusses the narrative in Genesis and its transformation in later traditions (see esp. 1.83–89 on Jubilees).

[119] For Abraham to arrive at the mountain on 1/14—the "third day"—requires that both the heavenly council and the command to Abraham take place on the evening of 1/12. Abraham's departure for the mountain, then, must take place the following morning (still 1/12, as Jubilees reckons dates as beginning in the evening).

[120] Werman, "Narrative," 229; cf. Doering, "Beginning," 209–12. See p. 67 below for discussion of the timing of the Passover meal in Jubilees. Kugel, *Walk*, 108–112, 240–42, argues that the Author of Jubilees does not depict the Akedah as a Passover sacrifice (for the Author, the first Passover occurs in Exodus 12). Rather, the Author locates the Akedah on 1/15 because he typically locates significant events in the middle of the month. The Interpolator, however, assumes that the Akedah is a precedent for Passover and therefore supplements the narrative by adding 18:18–19, which also provide an etiology for the connected Matzot festival. Contra Kugel, however, the author's portrait of the Akedah has far too many allusions to Passover for this to be unintentional. Also, the supposed Interpolation (18:18–19) is not in line with Kugel's typical understanding of the Interpolator. For Kugel, the Interpolator sees the festivals as eternal ordinances, not the product of spontaneous human-initiated practices, but this is exactly how Matzot is explained in 18:18–19—as Abraham's spontaneous innovation. Cf. Segal, *Jubilees*, 189–202, for a different redactional explanation of the difficulties.

[121] The text gives only the name "the festival of the Lord" (v18), but Matzot is clearly in view, as it is the only seven-day festival in the first month (contra Testuz, *Idées*, 151, 162–63, who identified it as Sukkot).

[122] Wacholder, "Patterns," 38–40, summarizes many of the options; cf. Segal, *Jubilees*, 199–201; van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 224–25; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 577–78.

took place *during a single calendar week* (beginning on Sunday 1/12).[123] The author likely envisions the trip to the mountain taking a little more than 2 days (from 1/12–14) and the return trip the same (1/15–17 or 1/16–18). In any case, as we noted above, Jubilees never depicts the patriarchs observing the Sabbath; it is not revealed to humans until after the exodus.[124] Furthermore, scholars have failed to consider the fact that both the first and final days of Matzot (1/15 and 1/21) also require a Sabbath rest, according to Lev 23:7–8 (cf. Deut 16:8). Strict Sabbath observance, then, would allow travel only on 1/16–17 and effectively make nonsense of the narrative.

The second, and greater, difficulty is the disconnect between the dates of Abraham's trip and the dates of the festival the author attaches to them. Matzot takes place from 1/15–21, while Abraham's travels span approximately 1/12–18. This leads Segal and Kugel to posit that the Matzot etiology is a secondary addition. For Segal, the redactor has clumsily tried to force a Matzot etiology into a narrative originally intended only to explain the origin of Passover.[125] For Kugel, on the other hand, the Author's Akedah narrative originally had no connection with Passover. The Interpolator, though, noted that the binding of Isaac took place on the fifteenth and was inspired to forge a connection between the Akedah and the seven days of Passover—an effort which spectacularly fails to produce a coherent chronology.[126]

Neither explanation is necessary, however. Though admittedly inelegant, the text makes sense as it stands. The author does not actually say that the specific *dates* of Abraham's trip correspond to the dates when Matzot is observed (1/15–1/21), as many assume.[127] Also, the

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[123] Goudoever, *Calendars*, 68 (followed by Wacholder, "Patterns," 39), sees the sacrifice taking place on 1/15 and Abraham completing his travel on the 1/18. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 577–78, however, holds that Abraham sacrificed on 1/14 (at the end of the day), and began his return trip on 1/15, arriving back at the Well of the Oath on 1/17, just in time to observe the Sabbath on 1/18. This, of course, is not a seven-day journey, and is difficult to reconcile with the emphasis on the length of the journey in 18:18–19. For additional options, see Werman, "Narrative."

[124] See above p. 51.

[125] Segal, *Jubilees*, 198–202, 214.

[126] Kugel, *Walk*, 112, posits that the Author places the binding of Isaac on 1/15 (not 1/14) because this is "a significant day," not because it is Passover/Matzot.

[127] E.g., Baumgarten, "Calendar," 103–4; VanderKam, "Origin," 394; Goudoever, *Calendars*, 68–69 (who thinks that according to Jubilees, Abraham kept the festival from 1/12–18 during his lifetime and it was later shifted to 1/15–21).

author does *not* depict Abraham's 7-day journey as the first observance of Matzot—Abraham does not celebrate the festival on the road. In this way, the story is somewhat different from the other festal etiologies in Jubilees where the patriarchs are portrayed as observing a festival for the first time. Instead, according to Jub 18:18–19, the point of correspondence is simply the *length* of the trip sequence, not its dates.[128] Thus, the text appears to say that Abraham begins observing Matzot at some unspecified later point (perhaps the following year). For the author, Abraham's Matzot observance would have taken place on 1/15–1/21 even though those were not the dates of his original trip.[129]

2.5.1.1.2 "Voices in Heaven": An Expanded Role for Heavenly Beings

A second major difference with the Genesis narrative is the expanded role given to heavenly beings in Jubilees's retelling.[130] In Genesis 22 it is the "angel of YHWH" who stops Abraham from slaying Isaac (22:12) and voices YHWH's promise to bless Abraham and his seed (22:15–18). For Jubilees, however, angelic involvement began much earlier in the story. The testing of Abraham, according to this author, came about when there were "voices in heaven regarding Abraham" (Jub 17:15). This rewrites Gen 22:1 ("After these things/words" [ויהי אחר הדברים האלה]) and appears to interpret דברים to refer to a debate ("voices," *qālāt*) in the divine council.[131] The effect, perhaps, is to distance God a bit from this unsavory testing of Abraham; the demand for a child sacrifice is *not* God's idea, but Mastema's.[132]

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[128] This seems to be the ultimate conclusion of VanderKam, *Commentary*, 581.

[129] See Halpern-Amaru, "Calendar," 484. Modern readers may rightly find the author's link between Matzot and Abraham's journey rather uncompelling, but that is not a firm basis upon which to posit an interpolation. One of the problems for redactional theories is that they allow little room for the author to be human (with the occasional illogic and lack of competence that sometimes entails).

[130] See Fitzmyer, "Sacrifice," 213–15; Kister, "Observations," 7–15; Vermes, "New Light"; VanderKam, "*Aqedah*"; Kugel, *Traditions*, 301–306, 320–25; Bernstein, "Angels,"; R. Kugler, "4Q225"; García Martínez, "Sacrifice."

[131] See Kister, "Observations," 7–11; Kugel, *Traditions*, 301. LXX reads μετὰ τὰ ῥήματα; cf. TgNeo Gen 22:1; GenRab 55:4; LAB 32:1–2; bSanh 89b, for ancient interpretations of the phrase.

[132] Other early Jewish traditions evince a similar interpretation. According to LAB, the antagonism toward Abraham was not limited to Mastema/Satan: "And all the angels were jealous of him [Abraham], and the worshiping hosts envied him. And since they were jealous of him, God said to him, 'Kill the fruit of your body for me'" (32:1–2). Likewise, in the Talmud: "What is the meaning of 'after?' Said R. Yohanan in the name of R. Yosé b. Zimra, 'It was after the words of Satan'" (bSanh 89b; Neusner trans.). Satan appeals to the fact that Abraham has made a great feast for Isaac

By providing a divine council setting and a prosecutorial opponent (Mastema), Jubilees has reshaped the story of the Akedah along the lines of Job.[133] Like righteous Job, whose trials were provoked by the satan's challenges to God in the heavenly court, so Abraham's testing does not occur because God has any doubt about Abraham's faithfulness. Rather, God tests Abraham precisely in order to prove a point to his heavenly prosecutor—he could not let Mastema's challenge go unanswered. This allows Jubilees to deal with the problematic implication of Gen 22:12 ("Now I know that you fear God") that God has learned something from this test. Jubilees, it seems, provides two solutions:[134] first, the verb "I know" (ידעתי read as a *qal* form) is reread as a *piel*, with a causative force ("I have made known"; Eth: *'aydā'ku*).[135] Thus, once Abraham passes the test, the Lord says to him, "I have made known to everyone that you are faithful to me in everything that I have told you" (Jub 18:16).[136] Second, Jubilees emphasizes that it is actually the angel of the presence (or angel of YHWH) who is speaking in Gen 22:12: "I [the angel] said to him, 'Do not lay your hands on the child … because now I know that you are one who fears the

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(Gen 21:8) but has made no sacrifice to God. In the Talmudic version, however, the idea of sacrificing Isaac is God's, though the purpose of proving Abraham's faithfulness to others is the same. For the rabbinic traditions, see Hass, "Aqedah"; Bernstein, "Angels." Cf. 4Q225 2.5–8, where the cast is expanded to include "the angels of holiness" who were "weeping above the altar [in heaven?]" and the "angels of the Mastemah" who were rejoicing and "saying, 'Now he will perish."

[133] Kister, "Observations," 10; Ellis, "Jobraham"; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 563, notes seven points of similarity between the Jubilean Akedah and the story of Job. Van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 212–14, however, expresses reservations. Note, especially, the similarity in content between the satan's challenge in Job and Mastema's in Jubilees. Both have to do with the genuineness of the protagonist's love/faithfulness. Jubilees may also draw in elements from other biblical trial scenes, most notably Zechariah 3, which depicts a vision of the heavenly council involving the angel of the Lord, the satan, and the high priest Joshua. Joshua's legitimacy appears to be at question, but the Lord reaffirms Joshua's priesthood and rebukes the satan, ordering the angel of the Lord to clothe Joshua in clean vestments. Similarly, both Ps 71:13, 24 and 109:3–9, 29 use language of the satan who is put to shame when his accusations are disproved by God, just as Mastema is "shamed" in Jub 18:12 (cf. Jub 48:12). Another possible influence is 1 Chronicles 21, where the satan "stood up against Israel, and incited David" to perform a census (21:1). This brings a plague on Jerusalem at the hand of a destroying angel (v15), which is only averted when David, instructed by the angel of the Lord (v18), builds an altar and sacrifices on Mt. Moriah (vv26–27; cf. 2 Chr 3:1 with the verbal parallel [יראה/נראה] to Gen 22:14).

[134] This exemplifies Kugel's category of "exegetical overkill," which "comes about when the author of a particular text is aware of two separate versions of a story or two different explanations for some phenomenon and, unable or unwilling to decide between them, he seeks to incorporate both in his own retelling" (Kugel, *Potiphar's House*, 38). See Kugel, *Walk*, 370–74.

[135] See VanderKam, *Commentary*, 572.

[136] As Kugel, *Walk*, 111–12, notes, the addition of "to everyone" was necessary since the *qal* and *piel* would be indistinguishable in an unvocalized Hebrew text. Cf. LAB's rewriting of Gen 22:12: "For now I have appeared/made known [*nunc enim manifestavit*] so as to reveal you to those who do not know you and have shut the mouths of those who are always speaking evil against you" (32:4). See Jacobson, *Commentary*, 2:870. The same adaptation appears in the Peshitta (Gen 22:12) and GenRab 56:7.

Lord" (Jub 18:11).[137] This fits rather well with Jubilees's retelling, where the point of the testing is to prove Abraham's faithfulness to those angelic voices in heaven that may call it into question.

2.5.1.2 Textual Stimuli for the Passover-Akedah Connection

What textual stimuli in Genesis 22 led Jubilees (or an earlier tradent) to place the Akedah at Passover/Matzot? Three elements deserve consideration.[138] First, the biblical text centers on the near-sacrifice of Abraham's firstborn son, Isaac, and his ultimate preservation, themes also prominent in the story of the Passover, where the Israelite firstborn are protected from the slaughter of the tenth plague.[139] Jubilees undoubtedly made the connection. Second, when Abraham is prevented from sacrificing Isaac, the Lord provides a ram, which Abraham offers "instead of his son" (Gen 22:13). Jubilees may see this as making sense of the slaughter of the Passover lamb in Exodus 12, which protects the firstborn sons of Israel from the destroying angel.[140] Third, in Gen 22:2, Abraham is told to travel to a mountain that the Lord will show him. Jubilees identifies it as the temple mount, Mt. Zion (18:13; cf. 2 Chr 3:1).[141] Thus, the author of Jubilees likely thought of Abraham's journey as a pilgrimage appropriate to a festival context.

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[137] Cf. Jub 17:7, where the Lord already knows that Abraham is faithful, and 18:9 where the Lord instructs the angel of the presence to stop Abraham "because I know that he is one who fears the Lord"—the crucial word "now" is notably missing in the Lord's statement, whereas it is quite prominent in the angel's (v11). The Latin text of Jubilees has *manifestavi* in both Jub 18:11 and 18:16, which is reflected in the causative *'a'marku* of the Ethiopic (see VanderKam, *Commentary*, 572, for discussion).

[138] Cf. Segal, *Jubilees*, 191–96.

[139] While Isaac is not called the "firstborn" in Genesis 22, he is called Abraham's "only son" three times (22:2, 12, 16, though n.b. the textual variants in the versions). The law for Passover in Exod 13:2, 15, which refers to the male "that first opens the womb," seems to reckon the firstborn through the mother, as would later rabbinic law (see Levenson, *Inheriting*, 220n6). Thus Isaac, the first to open Sarah's womb, is the firstborn in need of redemption. Jubilees emphasizes this understanding by designating Isaac as "firstborn" in 18:11, 15; cf. Halpern-Amaru "Note," 129.

[140] There are, however, some significant differences: 1) The ram at the Akedah does not seem to have apotropaic value (since it is offered after Isaac has already been spared). 2) In Genesis, the ram is a whole burnt offering (עלה in 22:13), which would not be eaten. Jubilees, however, uses a more general term for sacrifice that leaves room for a closer parallel to the Passover lamb. Cf. Werman, "Narrative," 13–14, who thinks that Jubilees assumes Abraham and Isaac ate the ram. Intriguingly, a fourth-century Christian poem depicts Abraham and Isaac eating the sacrifice (see van der Horst, "Poem," 190–205).

[141] Genesis 22:14 itself may make this identification, as it calls Moriah "the mount of the LORD"— a phrase used elsewhere in the HB for Mt. Zion (Isa 2:2–4; 30:29; Ps 24:3). Gunkel argues that the Chronicler was the first to identify the mountain of the Akedah with the Temple Mount, and that "Moriah" in Genesis 22 is a retrojection from 2 Chron 3:1 (*Genesis*, 238; cf. von Rad, *Opfer*, 15–16; and Zimmerli, *1. Mose*, 110). Against this, see Levenson, *Beloved*, 120, who holds that Moriah is a wordplay on the first half of "Jerusalem."

Indeed, these links between Passover and the Genesis account of the Akedah are strong enough that Jon Levenson thinks Genesis 22 was originally intended as an etiology for Passover.[142]

2.5.1.3 Other Traditions Linking the Akedah with Passover

Given the textual stimuli in Genesis 22, it is quite possible that Jubilees was not the first to link the Akedah with Passover. Many other Jewish authors (though none as early as Jubilees)[143] depicted the Akedah as providing a precedent for ritual elements of the pentateuchal legislation.[144] For example, in the Mekilta, the blood of the Passover lamb in Exodus is interpreted as a reminder of the Akedah:

> *And When I See the Blood. I see the blood of the sacrifice of Isaac. For it is said: "And Abraham called the name of that place Adonaijireh" (The lord will see), etc. (Gen. 22.14). Likewise it says in another passage: "And as He was about to destroy, the Lord beheld and He repented Him," etc. (I. Chr. 21.15). What did He behold? He beheld the blood of the sacrifice of Isaac, as it is said: "God will Himself see the lamb," etc. (Gen. 22.8).*[145]

Here the statement of Gen 22:8 is taken as a prophecy of the Passover in Egypt.[146] The Midrash goes on to relate the narrative of 1 Chronicles 21 to the Akedah, a natural connection, given the numerous elements the two share in the tradition (*inter alia*, the testing/inciting role of Satan, the destroying angel, an apotropaic sacrifice that protects from a plague, and the location on the temple mount).[147]

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[142] Levenson, *Beloved*, 111: "The affinity of the aqedah with the story of the first Passover … is patent." Indeed, Levenson goes further, asserting that Genesis 22 is the primary and older etiology for the substitutionary ritual of the Passover, and that the Exodus Passover is a secondary etiology.

[143] 4Q225 may be an exception, although it is likely dependent on Jubilees. Brooke, "Further," 387, notes that in 4Q225 "the Akedah narrative is followed by a sequence of summary items concerning the Exodus, thus endorsing the significance of one narrative for reading the events of the other." Cf. Halpern-Amaru, "Note," 127; Huizenga, *Isaac*, 91; Kugler, "4Q225," 109–16. VanderKam, "*Aqedah*," stresses the differences between 4Q225 and Jubilees and asks whether they may better be viewed as "two largely independent embodiments of exegetical traditions" (261).

[144] See Vermes, "Redemption," 193–227; Huizenga, "Battle," 33–59. Davies, "Passover," is highly skeptical of any early connection between Passover and the Akedah, even rejecting the evidence of Jubilees. Davies and Chilton, "Aqedah," 514–46, consider all rabbinic traditions that locate the Akedah at Passover to be countering the Christian link between Jesus's death and Passover.

[145] Mek. Pisḥa 7 (Lauterbach 40).

[146] See discussion in Kundert, *Opferung*, 5–19.

[147] See Levenson, *Beloved*, 180–82, who notes especially a linguistic link: the Lord "sees" (ראה) in both Gen 22:14 and 1 Chr 21:15.

Likewise, the Fragmentary Targum on Genesis 22:14 depicts Abraham praying at the Akedah, "Now I pray for mercy before You, O Lord God, that when the children of Isaac come to a time of distress, you may remember on their behalf the binding of Isaac their father, and loose and forgive them their sins and deliver them from all distress."[148] This could be taken as looking forward to the Passover deliverance from Egypt.[149] The "Four Nights" tradition also links the Akedah, the Egyptian Passover, and the eschatological redemption. In the fullest version (TgNeo Exod 12:42), the Akedah appears to be dated to Passover night, and the Egyptian Passover is described in terms that evoke the Akedah, emphasizing God's protection of his "firstborn," Israel.[150]

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan may also relate the Akedah and Passover. On Genesis 27, it recounts the trickery of Jacob in securing his birthright from his blind father Isaac. The targum places this event on the evening of 14 Nisan, i.e. Passover. At the beginning of the chapter, Isaac commissions Esau to hunt for and prepare him this Passover dinner, because on this evening "the heavenly beings praise the Lord of the world" (v1). How does Isaac know this? The targum explains that at the Akedah Isaac witnessed this very event (i.e. on Passover) when he gazed upon the throne of glory, an experience that eventually resulted in his loss of vision.

Exodus Rabbah 15:11–12 makes it clear that the Akedah-Passover link survived well into the medieval period, despite efforts to associate the Akedah with Rosh Hashanah. Commenting on Exod 12:2 ("This month shall be for you the beginning of months"), the Midrash identifies Nisan as "a month of redemption in which they were redeemed from Egypt, and in which they will be redeemed.… In this month was Isaac born, and in this month, he was bound."[151] It also explains

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[148] Cf. the similar thought in TgNeo Lev 22:27.

[149] The same word, אניק ("distress"), is used for the plight of Israel in Egypt (TgPsJ Exod 6:5).

[150] See Hayward, "Present," 140. The shortest version of the Four Nights appears in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan and is often taken to be the most original. It refers only to the night when the Lord was revealed to Abraham, which could, but does not necessarily, speak of the Akedah (more likely it refers to the revelations of Genesis 15 or 17). The classic treatment of the Four Nights tradition is Le Déaut, *Nuit Pascale*. For a full discussion of the Akedah in the Targums, see Hayward, "Present," 127–50.

[151] The same date for Isaac's birth is given in bRosh 10b–11a.

why a lamb is slaughtered at Passover, referring to Gen 22:8 "God himself will provide the lamb." Like Jubilees, then, Exodus Rabbah connects the Akedah with the Passover in Egypt, and both with the eschatological redemption expected to occur at a future Passover.[152]

The Akedah-Passover link also appears in Christian texts of the first two centuries CE. In the NT, Christ's death at Passover is several times described in terms that evoke the Akedah narrative (e.g., most notably, Rom 8:32).[153] In the second century CE, the *Epistle of Barnabas* portrays Christ as fulfilling the type of Isaac (7:3). Similarly, Melito of Sardis composed a Paschal homily that explored the typological links between Akedah and the passion of Christ.[154] He apparently assumes that, like Christ's passion, the Akedah took place at Passover.[155]

Given this evidence, it seems plausible that the Akedah-Passover link was widely known in early Judaism and may not be original to Jubilees.[156] Later traditions would link the Akedah with Rosh Hashanah, often drawing out the correspondence between the shofar of Rosh Hashanah and the ram's horns that were caught in the thicket at the Akedah.[157] This is a fairly weak connection, which may indicate its secondary nature.[158] Perhaps in response to the prominence of the Passover-Akedah typology in early Christianity, the rabbinic tradition attempted to associate the Akedah with a different festival that lacked any clear biblical etiology and also played no role in Christian theology.[159]

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[152] Another medieval midrash, Midrash VaYosha, comments on the events of the exodus through a lengthy retelling of the Akedah with many of the same elements as the account in Jubilees. See Mikva, *Midrash vaYosha*.

[153] See Huizinga, *Isaac*, 129–290; Swetnam, *Jesus*; Wood, "Isaac."

[154] *Peri Pascha* 59, 69.

[155] See Wilken, "Melito," 58–59. In other extant fragments, Melito notes how both were bound and silent, and how both carried wood on the way to their death (Frags. 9–10; cf. GenRab 56:3, which compares Isaac to a victim of crucifixion who carries his own cross).

[156] This may explain why Jubilees does not emphasize the Akedah as a precedent for Passover but focuses instead on finding an etiology for the seven days of Matzot, which are for him integral to Passover.

[157] bMeg 31a; bRosh 16a; GenRab 56:9; LevRab 23:24.

[158] Cf. Vermes, "Redemption," 214; Hayward, "Present," 145, 148; Stökl Ben Ezra, "Seasoning," 235.

[159] Similarly, LevRab 2:12 depicts the Akedah as an etiology for the Tamid.

2.5.1.4 The Effect of the Akedah-Passover Association

2.5.1.4.1 Centralization and Pilgrimage

By associating the Akedah with Passover-Matzot, the author of Jubilees enhances the meaning of the festival.[160] First, by locating the Akedah at Mt. Zion, Jubilees reinforces a halakic concern for the centralization of the Passover. Of course, the first Passover in the Hebrew Bible was anything but centralized; it took place in Egypt, with a lamb sacrificed in each household (Exodus 12). The Deuteronomistic school, however, mandated that Passover be offered in Jerusalem (Deut 16:6), a position that appears to have been a matter of continuing debate in the Second Temple period.[161] Jubilees clearly agrees with Deuteronomy on the matter, as it devotes a lengthy section to emphasizing the centralized observance of the feast (49:10,16–22). Here, in its account of the Akedah, Jubilees makes the same point narratively: the *true* first Passover, which sets the standard for all those coming after, was actually observed at the temple mount. God directly commands Abraham and Isaac to make a lengthy journey to Zion to perform the sacrifice. For Jubilees, these two are model pilgrims to Zion whose example is to be imitated.

2.5.1.4.2 Passover as the Defeat of Mastema

Second, by emphasizing the roles of Mastema and the angel of the Lord at the Akedah, Jubilees casts Passover in an apocalyptic light, depicting a two-level drama of heaven and earth. Mastema accuses Abraham and concocts a scheme to thwart God's covenant and devour Abraham's beloved son. At the last minute, the angel of the Lord intervenes ("I stood in front of him and in front of the prince of Mastema," 18:9), Isaac is preserved, and Mastema is shamed (18:12).[162] The same type of apocalyptic drama occurs in the later Passover of Jubilees 49, where

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[160] Contra VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1170, who contends that Jubilees does *not* read Passover/Matzot back into Genesis and the patriarchal period because "they were inextricably tied to post-Genesis events." Instead, he sees Jubilees 17–18 as merely "prefiguring" Passover (1190). This cannot account, however, for Jubilees's clear statement that Abraham observed Matzot during his lifetime (Jub 18:18).

[161] See Weyde, *Festivals*, 73; Gesundheit, *Three Times*, 96–166; Choi, *Traditions*, 92–103.

[162] Cf. GenRab 56:5: "Even as Abraham bound his son Isaac below, so the Holy One, blessed be He, bound the Princes of the heathens above."

the angel of the Lord once again frustrates Mastema's plan to destroy Israel. For Jubilees, therefore, Passover memorializes—perhaps even re-enacts—Abraham's faithful obedience to God that brings about the shame and defeat of Mastema.[163]

2.5.1.4.3 Matzot and Safe Travel

Finally, often overlooked in discussions, is the specific significance Jubilees attaches to Matzot. According to Jub 18:18, Abraham celebrated the festival joyfully "in accord with the seven days during which he went and returned safely."[164] The emphasis on safe travel is notable, especially since other traditional motifs associated with Matzot are absent (e.g. eating unleavened bread or resting on the first and seventh days). Instead, the author highlights how Abraham and Isaac were protected—especially from Mastema, perhaps—in their journey. This motif appears elsewhere in Jubilees 29:1–8, discussed below. Philo also ties this theme to Passover/Matzot, which he depicts as a festival of transition that remembers the safe crossing of the sea.[165]

2.5.2 Jacob and Passover-Matzot (Jub 29:1–8)

Scholarly discussion of Passover/Matzot in Jubilees has usually neglected the narrative of Jacob and Laban in Jub 29:1–8, which retells Genesis 31.[166] This is probably because Passover/Matzot is not mentioned by name in the text. Allusions to the festival, however, abound when the story is read in light of the other Passover texts of Jubilees: 1) Jacob escapes from a type of indentured servitude to Laban, just as the Israelites are delivered from slavery in Egypt; 2) Jacob wishes to escape in order to return to his father's land (Canaan), just as the

[163] See Huizenga, "Battle," 35, 59, who emphasizes the role of "mimetic soteriology" here.
[164] For "joy" at Matzot (Jub 18:18–19), cf. Ezra 6:22 and 2 Chron 30:21; see Halpern-Amaru, "Festivals," 309.
[165] *Spec*. 2.146–148. See below p. 161.
[166] I am aware only of Goudoever, *Calendars*, 125, 178, who notes the parallel of the seventh-day crossing of Jacob, but not the other elements I discuss below. Cf. VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 65.

Israelites will also make their way to their ancestral land, Canaan; 3) Jacob crosses the river into Gilead, just as Israel crosses the Red Sea; 4) Jacob's crossing is completed on 1/21, just as Israel completes Matzot on 1/21, on the shore of the sea (Jub 49:23); 5) Laban pursues Jacob, just as Pharaoh pursued Israel; 6) Three months after Jacob's departure, he makes a covenant on a mountain on 3/15, just as Israel enters the covenant at Sinai on 3/15.

These parallels are too extensive to be coincidental. Surprisingly, however, Jubilees shows little interest in identifying or elaborating on the festal significance of the events, apart from noting the dates on which they occurred. Perhaps the author knows and alludes to a tradition that located the events chronologically and more thoroughly developed the festal connections,[167] but he chooses not to focus on the festal links because this relatively minor narrative does not fit as neatly with his etiological agenda for the festivals as do the Akedah and exodus. There is no role for a firstborn, no sacrificial offering, and no hint of an apotropaic ritual. This is a better explanation than that offered by VanderKam, who hypothesizes textual corruption in Jub 29:5.[168] According to the text, Jacob crosses the river on the last day of Matzot, which requires a Sabbath rest according to Lev 23:8. VanderKam assumes that the author would have had Jacob observe Sabbath halakah; thus the text must be corrupt.[169] As we have already seen, however, Jubilees does not depict the patriarchs as observing the Sabbath or the special rest days of the festivals; these are reserved for the Sinai revelation. There is thus little reason to suspect textual corruption here, and every reason to suppose that the author intentionally placed these events at festivals in order to draw out their significance or have them serve as a supplemental festal etiology.

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[167] For the many linguistic and thematic parallels between the Laban-Jacob narrative and Israel's exodus, see Daube, *Exodus*, 13–14, 24–25; 61–72; Geoghegan, "Abrahamic Passover," 48–49, 55; Hepner, *Legal*, 413. These textual stimuli could have prompted Jubilees, or its tradition, to connect the two calendrically.

[168] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 801.

[169] VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 65.

2.5.3 Passover/Matzot and the Exodus from Egypt (Jubilees 48–49)

Naturally, Jubilees's lengthiest treatment of the Passover occurs in its account of the exodus from Egypt. In chs. 48–49, the angel of the presence narrates these events and reminds Moses of important halakah pertaining to the festival. The story begins in ch. 48 when Moses returns to Egypt after encountering God at Sinai. On the way, Moses is attacked by Mastema, who hopes to prevent the judgment Moses will bring upon the Egyptians. Moses survives and arrives in Egypt where he mediates the ten plagues and is again opposed by Mastema, this time through the Egyptian magicians Mastema empowers (48:9). Moses again overcomes with the help of the angels of the Lord (48:10). Mastema's efforts reach a climax after the tenth plague, as the hostile spirit provokes the Egyptians to pursue the departing Israelites. Once again, the angel of the presence acts as Israel's protector, standing between the Egyptians and Israelites, as the Lord drowns the pursuers in the watery abyss (48:12–19).

2.5.3.1 Additions to the Biblical Narrative

2.5.3.1.1 The Chronological Framework

Jubilees often places key episodes of the patriarchal narratives at festivals in order to provide an etiology for the festival. In this instance, however, the biblical text itself depicts Israel observing the first Passover at the time of the tenth plague, on 1/14 (Exod 12:6). Thus, the author does not need to supplement the biblical text with a detailed chronological framework, as he usually does. He adds only one significant date, in 49:22–23, where the narrating angel explains that Israel is to observe Matzot in the coming years for seven days, corresponding to the way they first observed this festival as they departed from Egypt in haste, completing its seven days on the seashore of the Sea of Reeds after their safe crossing. This has the effect of linking the festival thematically with the preservation of Israel in its flight from Egypt and crossing of the Sea of Reeds.

Exodus itself links the seven days of Matzot with the sea crossing only in a vague manner: "Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days.… You shall tell your child on that day, 'It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt'" (Exod 13:7–8). Exodus does not, however, give a seven-day chronology for the flight and sea crossing, nor does it clearly link the seven days of the festival to the seven-day trip. It merely juxtaposes the two, leaving the door open to later interpreters to forge a closer connection. Jubilees is not alone in making this connection; it appears about the same time in Ezekiel the Tragedian:[170] "When you reach your own land, since you will have had a journey of seven days from that morning on which you left Egypt, you shall all, for seven days each year, eat unleavened bread, and you shall worship God." (Ezek. Trag. 167–171).[171]

2.5.3.1.2 A Role for Mastema

The author also inserts Mastema at three key points in the story. First, it is Mastema who attempts to kill Moses "at the shady fir tree" (Jub 48:2; cf. Exod 4:24–26, where this is attributed to YHWH).[172] Second, in Jub 48:9, Mastema continues to resist Moses by empowering the Egyptian magicians.[173] Finally, Mastema is invoked to explain key elements of the departure

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[170] The *Exagoge* is typically dated to the second century BCE, thus roughly contemporaneous with Jubilees. See Holladay, *Fragments*, 301–29; Lanfranchi, *L'Exagoge*, 1–14, and Jacobson, *Exagoge*, 5–13.

[171] Translation from Jacobson, *Ezekiel*, 61. See Jacobson, *Ezekiel*, 124–26, for discussion. This tradition survived into late antiquity. Cf. e.g., Seder Olam Rabbah 5, where Israel leaves Egypt on Nisan 15 and crosses the sea on Nisan 21. See Guggenheimer, *Seder Olam*, 60. The same reckoning appears in Mek. Beshallaḥ 2–3 and bSot 12b. In bMeg 31a, Exod 13:17ff (the crossing of the sea) is the reading for the seventh day of Matzot.

[172] See Eshel, "Mastema's Attempt," 359–64, who discusses both the logic of Jubilees in attributing this role to Mastema and the differences between Jubilees and the Masada fragment with regard to this episode. Many ancient readers found Exod 4:24–26 problematic. See Willis, *Yahweh*, 4–9, for the ancient textual evidence. LXX has ἄγγελος κυρίου; Targum Onqelos has "the angel of the Lord," as does Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, though the latter also calls him the "destroying angel" (cf. Targum Neoiti. and the Fragmentary Targum, which have similar readings); cf. bNed 32a ("Satan"). In the Jubilean version of the story, all the difficulties of the biblical version are eliminated. Moses has not neglected to circumcise his son, YHWH does not attack Moses, and Zipporah performs no ritual to rescue her husband. Instead, the mysterious story is simplified and focused to make one clear point: Mastema wanted to thwart Moses's mission from the beginning, but was prevented by Moses's defender, the angel of the presence. Jubilees may hint that Mastema opposed Moses as early as Moses's birth. According to Jub 47:4, after Moses was put into the Nile, Miriam would come each day to protect Moses from the birds. Elsewhere in Jubilees, birds are used by Mastema to thwart human success (11:11; cf. 14:12). See Halpern-Amaru, "Protection," 59–67, for extensive discussion.

[173] As Kugel, *Walk*, 348, points out, Mastema is inserted into the story to explain both a) how the Egyptian magicians were able to perform such miracles, and b) why their activity stopped after the fifth plague. Cf. CD 5.17–18, where it is Belial who empowers the magicians.

from Egypt. It is the forces of Mastema who kill the firstborn of Egypt (49:2).[174] Having carried out this destruction, Mastema is bound by the angels of the presence on 1/14 and not released until 1/19 (48:12–19).[175] He then hardens Pharaoh's heart and provokes him to pursue the Israelites as they cross the sea. Once again, the angel of the presence protects Moses and Israel from the Egyptian onslaught. In this spiritual standoff, Mastema is defeated and "shamed" (48:12–13), just as he was when his plan failed at the binding of Isaac (Jub 18:12). By introducing Mastema into both the exodus and Akedah narratives, then, the author has more closely tied together these two Passover narratives.

2.5.3.2 Halakic Emphases

While Jubilees 48 recounts the events of the Egyptian Passover, Jubilees 49 is largely devoted to the Passover halakah. The angel of the presence explains the proper halakah to Moses and repeatedly refers to the specific events of the exodus in order to ground his instructions. This indicates that Jubilees's rewriting of the biblical narrative is meant, in part, to support its distinctive take on disputed halakic issues, especially the timing, date, and place of the sacrifice.[176]

2.5.3.2.1 The Timing of the Passover Sacrifice and Meal

The issue that receives the most attention is the timing of the Passover sacrifice and meal. In Exod 12:6–10, the Passover lamb is to be slaughtered at "twilight," or "between the evenings" (בין הערבים), and is to be eaten the same night, with nothing left to remain until the morning. Jubilees takes great pains to interpret the ambiguous phrase and concludes that Passover is not

[174] Here Mastema's forces replace the "destroyer" of the biblical text (Exod 12:23). In Jub 49:4, though, the destroyers are called "the Lord's forces." Hayward, "Genesis," 385, proposes a background in Ps 78:49, which speaks of a "company of destroying angels" rather than just one destroyer.

[175] Thus the author explains both a) how Israel is able to plunder the Egyptians on 1/14 without any opposition and b) why Pharaoh does not pursue Israel until several days after they depart.

[176] On Jubilees's Passover halakah, see VanderKam, "Exegesis"; Halpern-Amaru, "Use."

to be sacrificed while daylight remains (49:10–12) but is nevertheless to be sacrificed "before the evening" so that it can be eaten on the evening of the 15th. This leaves a very narrow window of time for the sacrifice to occur, namely, while it is evening on the 14th, but before it has technically become the 15th. VanderKam suggests that "the writer would have called the first third of the night 'the evening of the night' so that the sacrifice could occur 'between the evenings'—the evening of the day and the evening of the night."[177] Philo and Josephus both attest that this precision was not practiced in the Second Temple; they depict the sacrifices taking place anywhere from noon to 5pm.[178] On the issue of eating the sacrificial animal, Jubilees was more lenient than later rabbinic tradition. According to the Mishnah, it may not be eaten after midnight (mPes 10.9), but Jubilees allows it to be consumed until the morning.

2.5.3.2.2 The Date of Passover and the Question of Second Passover

Jubilees repeatedly stresses the specific date on which Passover is to be celebrated: 1/14, the very date on which the Lord protected them from the forces of Mastema as he destroyed the Egyptian firstborn (49:2). Thus, Jubilees emphasizes that 1/14 is "its time" (49:1), and that Passover is to be celebrated on this day, "once a year" (49:7).[179] Israel must not "change a day from the day or from month to month" (49:7). This is reiterated in 49:8: Passover "is an eternal statute and it is engraved on the heavenly tablets regarding the Israelites that they are to celebrate it each and every year on its day, once a year, throughout their entire history." In case it is not clear, 49:10 repeats, "The Israelites are to come and celebrate the passover on its specific day—on the fourteenth of the first month." Remarkably, this is stated at some length two more times:

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[177] VanderKam, "Exegesis, 196. Kugel, *Walk*, 200, notes that Mek. Pisḥa 5 has the same understanding. See Doering, "Beginning," for discussion of the phrase throughout the relevant literature.

[178] Philo, *Spec.* 2.145; Josephus, *J.W.* 6.423.

[179] While Lev 23:5 and Num 28:16 (both P) assign Passover to the fourteenth of the month, Deut 16:1–8 depicts Passover as the first day of the seven-day Matzot festival. Jubilees's insistence on the fourteenth of the month likely reflects a debate stemming from this difference.

- 49:14 "Therefore the Lord ordered the Israelites to celebrate the passover on its specific day.… it is a festal day and a day which has been commanded. From it there is to be no passing over a day from the day or a month from the month because it is to be celebrated on its festal day."
- 49:15 "Now you order the Israelites to celebrate the passover each year during their times, once a year on its specific day."

This naturally raises questions concerning "Second Passover." According to Numbers 9, a year after the exodus from Egypt, Israel observes Passover on 1/14. Some of the people, however, have contracted corpse impurity and are thus unable to keep Passover (vv6–7). Moses consults the Lord and is told that any Israelite who is unclean or away on a journey at the time of the festival may observe Passover one month late (on 2/14) with the usual rituals and regulations (vv8–14).[180] As VanderKam points out, then, if Jubilees rejects this practice, "he would be opposing an explicit law in the Pentateuch."[181]

Three pieces of evidence, however, suggest that Jubilees rejects the practice of Second Passover.[182] First, of course, is that Jubilees so strongly and explicitly urges that Passover be celebrated "once a year on its day" and not be changed "month to month" (49:7–8; cf. 49:14–15). This appears to be aimed specifically at the practice of Second Passover.[183] Given the author's

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[180] See mPes 9:1–4 for discussion of the halakic differences between first and second Passover. Second Chronicles 30 may be intended to portray a Second Passover during Hezekiah's reign, although Second Passover does not include a "Second Matzot"; it is simply a one-day observance. This is not the case in 2 Chronicles 30, which describes Hezekiah's feast as a celebration of Matzot in the second month (2 Chron 30:13). The debate in tPes 8:4–5 shows that the status of the Hezekian Passover was not clear. See Chavel, "Second Passover," for discussion of the differences between the two.

[181] "Exegesis," 197. This assumes, of course, that the author knew a version of Numbers that included 9:6–12.

[182] See Saulnier, *Calendrical*, 92–105; Saulnier, "Second Passover," 42–48; cf. Halpern-Amaru, "Festivals," 314; Halpern-Amaru, "Use," 90; Doering, "Purity," 266, cautions against drawing any firm conclusion on the matter, as the evidence is lacking in both directions. Those who believe Jubilees accepts Second Passover include Kugel, *Walk*, 199; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1177–78.

[183] VanderKam, "Exegesis," 197, though, argues that such prohibitions apply only to first Passover. For him, Second Passover is not technically a "moving" Passover, but a separate festival altogether. He also points out that Jubilees only covers events through Exodus 19, and thus should not be expected to refer to the institution of Second Passover, which occurred during the second year in the wilderness ("Exegesis," 198). This explanation, however, is unsatisfying. Jubilees frequently portrays elements of the Mosaic legislation as pre-dating Sinai (e.g. Jub 3:8–14/Leviticus 12); thus the fact that Second Passover is not established in the biblical text until Numbers 9 would be no impediment to the author. Indeed, the striking absence of any patriarchal observance of Second Passover in Jubilees speaks strongly against its legitimacy in the mind of the author. Moreover, Second Passover is never treated as a *separate* festival in any biblical festival calendar or Second Temple source; it is always seen as a delayed Passover.

emphasis on the eternal fixedness of the festivals, it does not seem likely that it would look kindly on an ad hoc concession like that in Numbers 9.

Second, the institution of Second Passover bears all the marks of a tradition incorporated into the Pentateuch at a rather late date. It seems to envision a post-exilic or diaspora setting, when the festival had been firmly centralized.[184] Thus, it may be that Jubilees is familiar with a form of the Pentateuch that lacks this section in Numbers 9.[185] Supporting this is the fact that, at Qumran, the Temple Scroll does not include Second Passover among the festivals, perhaps indicating that it was a controversial practice not observed by some sectarian Jews.[186]

Third, Jubilees clearly knows parts of Numbers 9 and draws extensively on that chapter for the Passover halakah in Jubilees 49.[187] Virtually the only part of the Passover instructions in Numbers 9 that Jubilees does *not* repeat is vv6–12, which allow for a Second Passover. While Jub 49:9 does address the possibility that a person might be impure or on a journey at the time of Passover—the very exigencies the Second Passover law was intended to address—it does not provide a second chance for those in such a situation.[188] Apparently, those who were away or impure simply missed the festival, just as they would in the case of any other pilgrimage festival.[189] After all, neither Shavuot nor Sukkot allowed for a second-chance observance in case of impurity.

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[184] Note also the date in Num 9:1 (first month of the second year), which clashes with the date at the beginning of Num 1:1 (second month of the second year). This is another sign the passage might be secondary.

[185] Scholarship traditionally identifies the Second Passover legislation as P material. Many see the law reflecting a concession to a Northern Israelite calendar that celebrated Passover in the second month instead of the first. See Chavel, "Second Passover," 3–5.

[186] In other calendrical texts (4Q319 and 4Q329) Second Passover is included, but it is missing in 4Q329a. Cf. Saulnier, *Calendrical*, 121–24. Regarding Josephus, Colautti notes, "Not only does [Josephus] omit [Second Passover], but he also avoids mentioning it when his source(s) refer(s) to it as a possibility or as a fact" (*Passover*, 80; cf. 187).

[187] See VanderKam, "Exegesis," 187.

[188] Kugel, *Walk*, 199, ascribes this section to the Interpolator, who "assumes a knowledge of this [Second Passover] law," and implies its legitimacy. The opposite, though, seems to be the case: the author is aware of this tradition, but rejects it by omitting it and by surrounding it with warnings not to change the day or month of the Passover, and to observe it only once a year.

[189] Alternatively, as Saulnier, "Second Passover," 46, proposes, it may be that Jubilees is not very concerned with corpse impurity and thus sees no need for a Second Passover. Cf. Ravid, "Purity," 61–86, who notes the striking absence of laws concerning ritual purity and purification; see, however, the reservations of VanderKam, "Viewed," 209–15. Saulnier's proposal does not account for the other situation addressed by Second Passover, i.e. the person away on a journey.

2.5.3.2.3 The Centralization of Passover

The first Passover, according to Exodus 12, was a family ritual conducted in one's home. This seems to reflect a time when it was still separate from Matzot, which required a (local)[190] pilgrimage. In the wake of the Deuteronomic reform, however, there was a great effort to centralize Passover and Matzot by merging the two and requiring that their sacrifices be offered and eaten at the Jerusalem temple (Deut 16:1–8).[191] Passover, then, became a centralized pilgrimage feast, often for the whole family, although Deut 16:17 requires pilgrimage only of adult males.

Jubilees's Passover halakah places heavy emphasis on the centralized observance of Passover.[192] It blends the Deuteronomic laws with the instructions from Exodus 12 to make it clear that the Passover in Egypt was exceptional and is not to be an exact model of future Passover observance. Thus, the requirement of pilgrimage to a central tabernacle or temple is expressed five times in Jubilees 49.[193] Most explicit is 49:16–17: "It is no longer to be eaten outside of the Lord's sanctuary but before the Lord's sanctuary.… Every man who has come on its day, who is 20 years of age and above,[194] is to eat it in the sanctuary of your God before the Lord, because this is the way it has been written and ordained—that they are to eat it in the Lord's sanctuary."[195] Clearly, the author of Jubilees felt that this was a point that needed to be

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[190] Cf. Exod 23:17, which also does not appear to envision a pilgrimage to a centralized temple.

[191] For an overview of the consensus on Deuteronomic centralization, see Levinson, *Deuteronomy*, 53–97.

[192] See Werman, "Narrative," 225–42; VanderKam, "Exegesis," 198–99.

[193] 49:9, 10, 16–17, 18–19, 21–22.

[194] Cf. Temple Scroll 17.8, which has the same requirement, apparently drawn from Exod 30:14. See Werman, "Narrative," 234, for discussion of the gender and age requirements attached to Passover. Baumgarten, "4QMiscellaneous Rules," 63, calls the restriction of the Passover to adult males a "sectarian stringency" in contrast to the dominant practice of the Second Temple period.

[195] Thus, Jubilees requires the Passover to conform to the normal rules of Temple sacrifice: "They will offer its blood on the base of the altar. They are to place the fat on the fire which is above the altar and are to eat its meat roasted on a fire in the courtyard of the sanctuary in the name of the Lord" (Jub 49:20). In contrast, Rabbinic tradition (mPes 7:9, 12; mZeb 5:8) allowed Passover to be eaten in the city, an accommodation to the size of the Passover observance.

made absolutely clear, perhaps an indication that it was still regarded by some in the second century (especially those of the diaspora) as a questionable innovation.[196]

As I discussed above, for Jubilees the Passover in Egypt is not the first Passover. That honor is accorded to Abraham and Isaac at the Akedah. By portraying a pre-Egyptian Passover, the author furthers his argument for centralization. Abraham and Isaac were both circumcised males of proper age who made a pilgrimage to Zion, where they sacrificed the Passover on the altar, and then (presumably) ate the Passover meal in the presence of the Lord. Originally, then, the author shows, Passover was always intended to be centralized; the Passover in Egypt was the unique exception.

2.5.3.3 The Significance of Passover/Matzot in Jubilees 48–49

2.5.3.3.1 "No Bone Broken": Passover as Apotrope

Although Jubilees depends on Deuteronomic tradition for much of its Passover halakah, its understanding of what the festival signifies draws primarily on the narrative in Exodus, especially the way the ritual application of the lamb's blood to the lintel protects Israel from the Destroyer on the night of the tenth plague. Jubilees substantially develops this apotropaic function of Passover in three ways.[197]

First, Jubilees portrays the Egyptian Passover as a cosmic battle pitting Mastema (and his forces) against Israel and the Angel of the Presence. On the day of the sacrifice, Mastema is bound, which prevents him from opposing the Israelites as they escape from Egypt (Jub 48:15, 18). The Passover ritual itself seems to play a crucial role in binding Mastema, just as it prevents the forces of Mastema from entering any Israelite home (49:3). For Jubilees, however, the

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[196] See Sanders, *Judaism*, 133–34; Barclay, *Jews*, 415.

[197] Passover may originally have been a household festival in which the blood on the lintels was meant to prevent demons from entering the home, perhaps especially after the birth of a child; cf, e.g. Albertz, *Family*, 399–400. If so, Jubilees may be preserving a popular tradition here rather than innovating. On Passover as apotropaic in Jubilees, see Bokser, *Origins*, 20; cf. Jos., *Ant*. 14.25–28, where an improper Passover results in a plague.

apotropaic function of Passover is not limited to that unique first Passover in Egypt but continues to be the purpose of all future observance of Passover. It is essential to the festival.

Second, Jubilees depicts proper observance of Passover as a "pleasing memorial" (49:15), language borrowed from Exod 12:14 (היום הזה לכם לזכרון) where it describes how future generations will commemorate Israel's deliverance. Jubilees, however, uses this language to describe the Passover as a pleasing sacrifice to God that *causes him to remember*, i.e. to take notice of his people and protect them: "Then a pleasing memorial will come before the Lord and no plague will come upon them to kill and to strike (them) during that year when they have celebrated the Passover" (49:15).[198] Most intriguing is that Passover protects for an entire year, not simply one night.

Third, the apotropaic significance of Passover is strikingly linked to the precise ritual requirements of the sacrifice in 49:13–14: "They are not to boil it in water nor eat it raw but roasted on a fire, cooked with care[199] on a fire—the head with its internal parts and its feet. They are to roast it on a fire.[200] There will be no breaking of any bone in it because no bone of the Israelites will be broken.… No bone of it is to be broken because it is a festal day."

The requirement that no bone of the lamb be broken derives from Exod 12:10,[201] where its original purpose is probably to prevent a part of the sacrificial victim from being broken off and taken outside the house.[202] Jubilees, however, goes beyond Exodus, linking the wholeness of the lamb with the preservation of the worshiper. Perhaps Jubilees interprets Exodus 12:10 through the lens of Psalm 34 (via verbal analogy), which promises the righteous that the Lord "keeps all

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[198] Cf. Zech 14:16–19, where the nations' annual observance of Sukkot protects them from the plague of Egypt.

[199] "With care" may derive from Exod 12:11, which stresses the haste with which the lamb is to be cooked (so VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1181).

[200] Deut 16:7, in contrast, requires boiling.

[201] The command appears in the MT at Exod 12:46 (cf. Num 9:3), but the order of the instructions in Jubilees suggests that it is relying on a text closer to the LXX, where the instruction occurs at Exod 12:10; cf. Num 9:12. See Schlund, *Kein Knochen,* for a lengthy discussion of this text in Second Temple Jewish literature (pp. 98–111 on Jubilees).

[202] Cf. Durham, *Exodus*, 173. Sarna, *Exodus*, 64, thinks the regulation is meant to prevent sucking the marrow from the bones; cf. TgPsJ Exod 12:46, which prohibits breaking the bone "to eat what is within it"; cf. the same concerns in bPes 84b–85a. For Houtman, *Exodus*, 2:208, the regulation is meant to link the wholeness of the animal with the wholeness of the community (so also Propp, *Exodus 1–18*, 418; Noth, *Exodus*, 101). Scheiber, "Kein Bein," 95–97, discusses ANE parallels.

their bones; not one of them will be broken."[203] Numerous thematic elements in Psalm 34 might naturally lead the author (or an earlier homilist) to connect the psalm with Passover, including: a) the cry of the oppressed righteous being heard by the Lord (vv4,6, 15–19), b) the angel of the Lord protecting the righteous (v7), c) the language of eating (v8), d) the promise that no bone of the righteous will be broken (v20), e) the death and judgment of the wicked (v21), f) the redemption of the Lord's servants (v22).

2.5.3.3.2 Matzot and the Red Sea Crossing

In each of the stories Jubilees places at Passover, Matzot is also described. While the two are closely related thematically, each also has a distinct significance. For example, in the Akedah narrative, Passover motifs include the rescue of the firstborn, the sacrifice of the ram, and the shaming of Mastema, while Matzot celebrates preservation through the seven-day journey of Abraham and Isaac. In Jubilees 48–49, Passover likewise relates to the salvation of the firstborn Israelites,[204] the binding of Mastema, and the sacrifice of the lamb. Matzot, on the other hand, marks the hasty departure of the Israelites from Egypt and their preservation during the seven-day journey to the other side of the Red Sea, despite the pursuit of Pharaoh and the Egyptian army instigated by Mastema.

2.5.4 Conclusion

Through its chronological framework and halakic commentary, then, Jubilees clarifies for its audience both the significance and proper observance of Passover. The author *festalizes Scripture* by placing the Akedah at Passover, thus providing a pre-exodus etiology for the feast that

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[203] Cf. Menken, *Quotations*, 164, though he fails to note the numerous thematic links between Psalm 34 and the Passover. In the NT, John 19:28–37 suggests that the symbolic interpretation of Exod 12:10 via Psalm 34 may have been fairly widespread in Early Judaism. The evangelist employs elaborate imagery to depict the crucified Jesus as the righteous sufferer who is also the Passover lamb: Jesus is crucified at the same time the Passover lambs are slaughtered, he is offered sour wine on hyssop, and blood and water pour forth from his side. Most importantly, he dies before the soldiers can break his legs, thus "fulfilling" Exod 12:10 and Ps 34:20. See Keener, *Gospel*, 1147, 1150–56.

[204] Or perhaps Israel the firstborn (Exod 4:22); cf. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 573.

demonstrates the antiquity of the requirement of pilgrimage and the apotropaic function of Paschal observance. In effect, by locating the original Passover at the Akedah, Jubilees is able to fill in the halakic gaps left by the account of the Passover in Egypt, which was decentralized and involved no pilgrimage. The author also *transcendentalizes* the feast, not by depicting angelic observance as he did with the Sabbath, but by presenting Passover as a time of cosmic conflict, when possible vulnerability to Mastema requires a protective sacrifice to ensure blessing for the rest of the year. Its calendrical position must therefore be preserved at all costs. Any compromise on the date and time of the festival (including, it seems the later development of Second Passover) is strictly forbidden.

Chapter 3
Festivals in the Book of Jubilees, pt. 2

3.1 Shavuot: The Feast of the Covenant

Shavuot, known in Jubilees as the festival of "weeks" or "the firstfruits of the harvest," occurs in the middle of the third month (3/15), and traditionally marks the beginning of the wheat harvest.[1] If the number of references is any indicator, the author of Jubilees considers Shavuot the most important of the annual festivals.[2] No fewer than nine episodes in his story occur at this festival, including all the key covenantal moments (Noah, Abraham, Sinai). In Jubilees, it is the first festival any human or patriarch is depicted as observing (Noah in Jubilees 6, Abraham in Jubilees 14). Even more striking, it was first celebrated in heaven by the angels.

In this section, I will explore the nine Shavuot passages in Jubilees in narrative sequence, paying special attention to 1) the way the author reinterprets the biblical text by locating these covenant moments at Shavuot, 2) the emphasis the author places on certain aspects of the covenant (calendar, circumcision, and the blood prohibition) by linking these biblical episodes to Shavuot, and 3) the depiction of Shavuot's transcendent origins and its effect on the understanding of the covenant and Israel's identity.

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[1] For the phraseology, "middle of the month," see Jub 14:10; 15:1; 16:13; cf. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 493–96. For Shavuot and the wheat harvest, see Exod 23:16; 34:22; Lev 23:15–21; Num 28:26–31; Deut 16:9–11.

[2] Discussions of Shavuot in Jubilees can be found in Elior, *Three Temples*, 135–52; Eiss, "Wochenfest"; Park, *Pentecost*, 78–127; Noack, "Pentecost."

3.1.1 Shavuot and the Sinai Covenant (Jub 1:1)

According to Jub 1:1, on the sixteenth day of the third month, Moses ascends Mt. Sinai to receive the tablets of the Law. In Exodus, this takes place on the day after the people present themselves at Sinai to hear the Ten Commandments and seal their covenant with God by blood and oath (Exodus 19:16–24:11). Thus, Jub 1:1 indicates that it was on 3/15, i.e. Shavuot, that the Ten Commandments were given and the Sinai covenant was established.[3]

3.1.1.1 Textual Stimuli for the Shavuot-Sinai Link

3.1.1.1.1 The Third Month

Why did the author of Jubilees (or, perhaps, the tradition upon which he draws) link Shavuot with the Sinai covenant? Exodus 19:1 probably played the principal role. It states that Israel entered the wilderness of Sinai "in the third month" (בחדש השלישי) after they left Egypt. Here חדש can refer to either the month or the first day of the month, i.e. the new moon. The latter may be supported by 19:1b ("on that day," ביום הזה), which seems to have a specific day in mind.[4] Later traditions would understand it this way and, closely following the time markers in Exodus 19–24, would calculate 6 Sivan—Shavuot according to Rabbinic reckoning—as the date on which the Ten Commandments were given.[5] VanderKam offers an alternative theory, arguing that Jubilees read "on that day" (ביום הזה) in Exod 19:1 *numerically* as a reference to the 12th day (זה has the gematrial value of 12).[6] Adding the required three-day purification then places the Sinai covenant on 3/15. This is an ingenious proposal, though speculative, since such reasoning is not made explicit in the text.[7] On the other hand, it is perhaps more likely that Jubilees understands

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[3] Kugel, *Walk*, 19; Doering, "Exodus," 488; see van Ruiten, "Rewriting," 25–29, for the differences between Exodus and Jubilees here. VanderKam, "Prologue," discusses at length later Jewish sources and their attempts to make sense of the unclear timeline of Exodus 19–24.

[4] Cf. TgPsJ Exod 19:1, "that very day, on the first of the month"; Childs, *Exodus*, 342; Noth, *Exodus*, 155; Cassuto, *Exodus*, 223–24; Durham, *Exodus*, 257; Sarna, *Exodus*, 103.

[5] See TgPsJ Exod 19:16; PRE 46; bShabb 86b–87a.

[6] VanderKam, "Prologue," 277–78.

[7] VanderKam does not cite later evidence that might support his view. Rabbinic midrash frequently interpreted זה as a gematria for 12, especially when it seemed superfluous in the text; e.g., GenRab 24:5–6 interprets "This (זה) is the

Exod 19:1 to refer simply to the third month. Given the festal character of the Sinai event (see below), the author placed it at Shavuot, the only festival that takes place in the third month.

3.1.1.1.2 Festal Elements in the Biblical Account

There were also multiple reasons for Jubilees to understand the Sinai event as a festival. First, when Moses confronts Pharaoh in Exod 5:1, he requests that the Israelites be allowed to go and celebrate a pilgrimage-festival (חג) in the wilderness. This likely led Jubilees to see the journey to Sinai as a pilgrimage and the Sinai assembly as a festival. Second, the assembly at Sinai includes many festal elements: the Israelites purify themselves, present themselves at a sacred sanctuary in order to see God, wear festal clothing, make festal sacrifices, and eat in God's presence.[8] Third, within the Pentateuch, both Matzot and Sukkot are explained as commemorating exodus-related events. It would be natural for Jubilees also to connect the only other pilgrimage festival to an event in the exodus narrative. Finally, for the author of Jubilees, festivals are a time for Israel to participate in the heavenly activities of the angels. This kind of participation is a prominent feature of the Sinai narrative, as Moses and the elders of Israel ascend to see God and partake of a covenant meal in his presence (Exodus 24:9–11).[9] For the author of Jubilees, there could hardly be a more apt description of a festival, properly understood.

3.1.1.1.3 Other Jewish Traditions Linking Shavuot and Sinai

Jubilees is the earliest text to explicitly connect Shavuot with the Sinai event, but the link may date back to the third or fourth century BCE. Second Chronicles 15 tells of a pilgrimage festival

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book of the generations of Adam" (Gen 5:1) as referring to the twelve tribes of Israel that would spring from Adam. Cf. bShabb 89a; bHor 11b; bMen 89; bKer 5b; NumRab 12:8; LevRab 25:8. For discussion see Rojtman, *Black Fire*, 15–46. It is unclear how ancient the use of Hebrew alphabetic numerals (which underlies the practice of gematria) is, but Greek alphabetic numerals were in use already by the sixth century BCE and were perhaps preceded by a similar practice in Egypt. See Chrisomalis, "Numerals," 485–96. Once alphabetic numerals became widely used, it was probably not long before scribes began to calculate the numerical value of a name or word.

[8] Cf. Jos., *Ant*. 3.78, who uses festal language to describe the assembly at Sinai.

[9] Cf. Jub 22:4; 29:7, where a covenant meal is eaten on Shavuot. For the tradition of the Shavuot meal, see Tob 2:1–2; Jacobs, "Hesitate."

during the third month at which Israel renews its covenant with the Lord by means of an oath (vv10, 14–15).[10] Many later Jewish traditions would also associate Shavuot and the Sinai covenant. For example, Pseudo-Philo depicts a ceremony on 3/16 in which Joshua leads Israel to renew the covenant of Moses (LAB 23:2).[11] Rabbinic sources tended to describe Shavuot as a festival of the giving of the Torah,[12] but the covenant-emphasis of Jubilees is attested in a few places. For example, the Pesiqta says that when Israel reads Exodus 19 annually at Shavuot, "I [God] will deem your reading it as being the same as your standing before Mount Sinai and accepting the Torah."[13]

3.1.1.2 The Significance of Shavuot at Sinai

By beginning his book with the Sinai covenant at Shavuot, the author of Jubilees gives a fuller meaning to what was typically seen as a simple agricultural festival. The Sinai-Shavuot link has many repercussions for the book's theological presentation. First, it establishes Shavuot as a feast not simply of "weeks," but of "oaths"—a celebration of the covenant between God and his people. The author reinforces this meaning repeatedly in the book as he places each key covenant scene at Shavuot, effectively depicting them as a single continuous and eternal covenant, first made with Noah, confirmed with Abraham, and finally renewed with Israel at Sinai. Second, the link shapes the festival calendar so that all three of its pilgrimage festivals now commemorate the exodus experience of Israel, in sequence: Passover recalls their redemption from Egypt, Shavuot their reception of the Sinai covenant, and Sukkot their

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[10] The Targum identifies this as Shavuot (cf. Beattie, *Targums*, 178). Those who think Shavuot and Sinai are linked in the HB include Eiss, "Wochenfest," 173, Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1–11*, 267–75; Goudoever, *Calendars*, 57–58; Park, *Pentecost*, 47–77; VanderKam, "Covenant"; Elior, *Three Temples*, 145. At Qumran the annual covenant renewal occurred at Shavuot (1QS 1:16–2:25a); cf. Delcor, "Bundesfest"; Elgvin, "Covenant," 103; Arnold, *Social Role*, 54–79. Leonhard, "Shavuot," surveys much of the data. Newman, "Priestly," 29–72, explores how the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice come to a liturgical climax at Shavuot and are intended to evoke the experience at Sinai.

[11] See below p. 218.

[12] bYoma 4b; bTaan 28b; bPes 58b; bShabb 86b, 129b; Mek. Baḥodesh 3; PRE 45:5; Seder Olam Rabbah 5:49–51.

[13] Pesiq. Rab Kah. 12 (Braude 305). tMeg 3:5 lists Exodus 19 as the lectionary reading for Shavuot (cf. bMeg 31a). On the antiquity of this tradition, see Halperin, *Faces*, 17–19, who argues for a pre-70 CE date and calls it "very early and very widespread" (18); cf. Teugels, "Moses." Atzmon, "Third Month," 145, argues for a post-70 date.

preservation through the wilderness. Third, the Sinai-Shavuot connection establishes a Shavuot frame for the entire book.[14] The angelic revelation to Moses which comprises the entire Book of Jubilees is given at Shavuot and thus, appropriately, has to do with the story of the covenant and the guidelines for maintaining it.

3.1.2 Shavuot and the Covenant with Noah (Jubilees 6)

The most substantial discussion of Shavuot in Jubilees takes place in the context of its flood narrative.[15] After more than a year in the ark, Noah emerges, erects an altar on Mt. Lubar where the ark has landed, and offers a sacrifice. In response the Lord makes a covenant with Noah, promising the stability of the seasons and giving to Noah and his progeny animals as nourishment. Noah and his sons also swear an oath, sealing the covenant. In an aside, the narrating angel explains to Moses the connection between this covenant and the Sinai covenant: both are established at Shavuot and must be renewed annually at that festival. As van Ruiten notes, in each of this chapter's three sections (vv1–15; 16–22; 23–38), the author begins with Noah, but pivots to the future significance of the Noachian event, thus emphasizing the Noachian covenant's paradigmatic status.[16]

3.1.2.1 Textual Stimuli for the Noah-Shavuot Link

The biblical text tells how Noah exits the ark on 2/27 (Gen 8:14) and offers sacrifices that lead the Lord to make a covenant (Gen 8:20–22). These two elements—covenant sacrifices and a date fairly close to Shavuot—were likely enough to prompt Jubilees's placement of the Noachian covenant at Shavuot. Indeed, Jubilees depicts Noah leaving the ark even later (on 3/1), thus placing all the events of Genesis 8 in the same month as Shavuot.[17]

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[14] Hultgren, *Damascus*, 463.
[15] See Park, *Pentecost*, 94–99; van Ruiten "Covenant."
[16] Van Ruiten, *Primaeval*, 254–55.
[17] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 303–304, notes in several LXX MSS that depict Noah leaving the ark on 3/1.

3.1.2.2 The Significance of Shavuot in Jubilees 6

Jubilees 6 unites multiple theological themes in its depiction of the Noachian Shavuot. The author crafts this Shavuot narrative to express many of his key convictions concerning the nature of the covenant, the importance of the calendar for synchrony with heaven, and the proper handling of blood.

3.1.2.2.1 Shavuot as an Originally Heavenly Festival

Perhaps most striking is the narrating angel's declaration that the "festival had been celebrated in heaven from the time of creation until the lifetime of Noah" (6:18). This recalls earlier statements about the Sabbath and its originally heavenly and angelic character. For Jubilees, it seems, the festivals are written into the very fabric of creation. They belong in the first place to the realm of heavenly angelic worship, and, by extension, to Israel, God's angelic people whose task is to mirror heaven on earth.[18] What the heavenly observance of Shavuot entailed for the author is difficult to determine. Were sacrifices involved, perhaps incense or libation offerings—bloodless rites appropriate to the supernal realm?[19] Was there a heavenly counterpart to the firstfruits offering that played such a key role in Israel's celebration?[20] Did the author imagine angels annually renewing an oath of loyalty to the Lord, and marking the event with rest, a convocation, songs, purifications, or even banqueting? Unfortunately, the author is far from forthcoming, though texts from Qumran such as the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice provide insight into how some ancient Jews envisioned the angelic liturgy.[21]

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[18] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 317: "the implication [of Jub 6:18] is that the heavenly celebration will continue in parallel with the one on earth from this time forward."

[19] Cf. Jub 4:17–25; Rev 8:4; TLevi 3:7. See Himmelfarb, *Ascent*, 33–36. Burnt offerings were likely thought to convert the fleshly animal victim into a form (smoke/fragrance) fit for heavenly reception (cf. Jub 6:3, where this idea is reflected).

[20] Some later traditions identify the two loaves of Shavuot with angelic manna (esp. the double portion received on Fridays, in view of the Sabbath). Cf. RuthRab 5:15. Similarly, the Omer was linked with manna by way of Exod 16:16.

[21] See Chazon, "Communion"; Boustan, "Hymns"; Alexander, *Mystical Texts*, 47–60; Davila, *Liturgical Texts*, 83–167.

3.1.2.2.2 Shavuot, the Flood, and Calendrical Controversy

A central concern in Jubilees 6 is the proper calendar, but what is the connection between Shavuot, the flood, and the calendar? To begin with, the flood story is one of the few biblical narratives to include a detailed chronology. Notably, it does not use Babylonian month-names, but identifies the months by number (e.g. "in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month," Gen 7:11) and assumes a 30-day month (Gen 8:3)—two prominent features of the calendar advocated by Jubilees.[22] Furthermore, a central element of the Noachian covenant is the promise of stable seasons (Gen 8:22). Jubilees, therefore, finds in the flood narrative a natural platform for expressing its own calendrical ideology.[23]

The author builds on the biblical chronology by adding dates for key moments in the flood (Jub 5:20–6:1) that occur on 1/1, 4/1, 7/1, and 10/1. These are established as four "memorial days" that occur at the solstices and equinoxes and bring the total number of days to 364 (6:23).[24] This reinforces the promise of stable seasons and ensures a fixed calendar that will allow humans to synchronize their worship with the angels. Then, in a return to the Sinai narrative frame, the angel tells Moses to make sure that Israel carefully maintains this calendar that is so central to the eternal covenant (6:32–38). He warns Moses that to neglect the proper calendar is to violate the covenant and to place the nation out of step with its heavenly counterparts. Indeed, to do so

[22] See discussion in Najm, "Jubilee"; Hayward, "Genesis," 392; VanderKam, *Calendars*, 28–30; Darshan, "Framework"; Cryer, "Chronology"; Rösel, "Chronologie." As Elior notes, in the MT the flood lasts 364 days (i.e. a septenary year like that advocated by Jubilees), but the text identifies this as one year and ten days (from 2/17–2/27)—likely a scribal change that reflects the lunar year (*Three Temples*, 105). The LXX has the flood begin and end on 2/27, thus agreeing with Jubilees that it lasted a full year, while disagreeing on the specific dates. Notably, Jubilees appears to be aware of some role for the date 2/27 in the story, as it places the animals' departure from the ark on this date. For the tradition that the flood lasted a full year, see 1 En 106:15; cf. Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108*, 668–69.

[23] For discussion of Jubilees's additions, see van Ruiten, *Primaeval*, 197–200. See Darshan, "Framework," 509, who shows that "P takes its model of the Flood account from earlier ancient Near Eastern versions that employed a precise dating system."

[24] See below, pp. 130–137, for discussion of the memorial days.

would be to "walk in the festivals of the nations" (6:35)[25] and to violate the creational order, tantamount to consuming blood or committing murder (6:38).[26]

The festival of Shavuot was also a natural location for this calendrical discourse, because the proper date for Shavuot served as a touchpoint of controversy between Jewish traditions. As later rabbinic literature widely attests, "sectarians" (מינים) advocated a fixed day (Sunday) for Shavuot as the foundation of a continuous and stable calendar.[27] With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it became clear that the rabbis were referring to those who advocated a 364-day calendar (like that of Jubilees, Qumran, and similar groups) and celebrated Shavuot on 3/15. The debate largely revolved around the interpretation of Lev 23:11, 15, which commands that the firstfruits of barley (the "sheaf" or Omer) be offered on "the day after the sabbath" and, seven weeks later, the firstfruits of wheat on Shavuot.[28] The rabbis understood the "sabbath" to refer to the special Sabbath required on the first day of Passover, Nisan 15 (Lev 23:7). The day after the sabbath was then Nisan 16, and 49 days later Shavuot was celebrated on 6 Sivan. At Qumran, however, the "sabbath" in question was taken as the first usual weekly Sabbath after Matzot. On a 364-day calendar, this Sabbath always occurred on 1/25, and the Omer was offered on 1/26. Seven weeks later, on 3/15, came Shavuot.

The 364-day year is septenary in structure; Shavuot, celebrated seven weeks after the waving of the Omer, exemplifies this principle. Indeed, at Qumran the Temple Scroll organizes the entire sequence of firstfruits festivals according to pentecontads (50-day cycles) which separate each firstfruits offering. As the culmination of the first pentecontad, Shavuot enjoyed a sort of

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[25] Cf. Bernstein, "Walking," for discussion of the parallel here with 4QpHos^{a} 2.15–17.

[26] See Wacholder, "Calendar Wars," 214. The verb *'amasana*, used ten times in Jubilees 6 to describe calendrical error, likely reflects an original Hebrew שחת, used in Genesis 6:12 to describe how humankind "corrupted its ways upon the earth" (cf. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 325). Perhaps, then, Jubilees envisions the antediluvians violating the proper calendar, and presents Noah as *re*-establishing the calendar original to creation, a calendar abandoned in the wake of the angels' cosmically-disordering transgression and the giants' chaotic violence. The four days of remembrance may then be intended to prevent such corruption from happening again. Along these lines, Peters, *Noah*, 74–75, observes that Noah is like a "new Adam in the new creation" who witnesses "the reestablishment of seasons and restatement of primeval blessings and prohibitions." Cf. Elior, *Three Temples*, 113, though she perhaps overstates the role of the Watchers in calendrical revelation and change.

[27] mRosh 2:1; bRosh 22b; mMen 10:2; tRosh 1:15.

[28] See Henshke, "Day," for a summary of the debate.

primacy as the cornerstone or model of the pentecontadal year.[29] Thus, when Jubilees ties the delineation of the calendar to the establishment of the Noachian covenant at Shavuot, this reflects the centrality of the calendar to the covenant, the significance of Shavuot to the proper calendar, and the controversy surrounding both topics in Early Judaism.[30]

3.1.2.2.3 Shavuot as the Festival of Oaths

In Jub 6:21, the narrating angel explains to Moses that Shavuot is "twofold and of two kinds." This seems to reflect two possible ways of vocalizing the festival's name, שבעות, either as "weeks" (שָׁבֻעוֹת) or "oaths" (שְׁבֻעוֹת), and thus understanding it both as a firstfruits festival (seven weeks after the barley festival) and a festival of the covenant.[31] The author does not reject or overwrite the biblical legislation which requires the offering of firstfruits seven weeks after the waving of the Omer.[32] Rather, he emphasizes the "oaths" aspect of the feast, making it clear that Shavuot is not ultimately agricultural, but heavenly, and that it has fundamentally to do with the eternal covenant between God and his people.[33]

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[29] Elior, *Three Temples*, 142, theorizes that the entire year was pentecontadal, consisting of seven pentecontads (=350 days) plus two week-long agricultural festivals (Matzot in the spring, Sukkot in the autumn), thus equaling 364 days. Cf. Ben-Dov, *Head*, 52–67; Stern, *Calendar*, 10, 22; Baumgarten, "Pentecontad"; VanderKam, *Calendars*, 51. Philo possibly describes the Therapeutae as observing a festival every 50 days (*Contempl*. 65); see below p. 173.

[30] "The juxtaposition of sections about the festival of weeks and the calendar [suggests] that the correct dating of this festival was the cornerstone of the entire calendar and its festivals" (VanderKam, "Jubilees 6," 99–100); cf. Wacholder, "Calendar Wars," 217.

[31] See Wintermute, "Jubilees," 67; Kugel, *Walk*, 252; Park, *Pentecost*, 98. See VanderKam, *Commentary*, 316–22, for an in-depth discussion of the various views on the name of the festival and the meaning of v21. VanderKam suggests that the twofold nature of the feast refers to the fact that the pentateuchal legislation uses two names ("weeks" and "firstfruits") for Shavuot (cf. e.g. Exod 23:16 and 34:22; *Commentary*, 319). This is possible, but unlikely, as Jubilees 6 focuses on the oath made by Noah and never mentions a firstfruits offering as part of Noah's Shavuot observance.

[32] Contra Zeitlin, *Jubilees*, 6, who thinks the author's goal in 6:17–22 is to replace the idea of weeks with the concept of covenant. Against this is Jub 6:22: "For I have written this in the book of the first law in which I wrote for you that you should celebrate it at each of its times one day in a year." The "book of the first law" is the Pentateuch, whose "written" legislation mandating the counting of weeks and the offering of firstfruits is assumed by the author. As VanderKam, *Commentary*, 316–17 observes, the counting of the Omer—heptadic in nature—"surely would have resonated with the writer." He reasons that Jubilees does not mention the counting of the Omer because such legislation applies only to the land of Israel (Lev 23:9–21). This may explain its absence in the Noah narrative, but not in Jubilees's other Shavuot narratives, all of which take place in the land. Further, as Dimant, "Noah," 139, points out, Mt. Lubar/Ararat is in Shem's portion according to Jub 8:21, and may therefore have been seen as "part of the pre-Sinaitic 'holy land.'" Indeed, the author portrays Noah keeping the law of the fourth-year planting (Lev 19:23–25) in Jub 7:1–2, even though Leviticus explicitly states that this law is for "when you come into the land" (Lev 19:23). Cf. Halpern-Amaru, "Calendar Dates," 476.

[33] Significantly, in Jubilees 6, Noah is not said to make a firstfruits offering in his first observance of Shavuot, but he does swear an oath. Görtz-Wrisberg, "No Second Temple," 399–400, suggests that Jubilees claims a heavenly origin for

That this is the case becomes clearer in later Shavuot episodes in Jubilees, but the idea is already prominent in ch. 6. The biblical text tells how God made an apparently unilateral covenant with Noah and his sons, but it does not depict Noah and his sons taking an oath.[34] Jubilees, on the other hand, presents this covenant as bilateral and conditional.[35] The author, who assumes that an oath is essential to a covenant, has Noah and his sons swear an oath (6:10), then directly connects Noah's oath to Israel's later covenant oath at Sinai in both form and content.[36]

3.1.2.2.4 Sinai as a Renewal of the Noachian Covenant

The author thus presents Sinai as a renewal of the Noachian covenant, or more perhaps more accurately, as a retrieval of the lost Noachian covenant. In the context of the Hellenizing crisis, this is likely meant to portray the Mosaic Law in ways that better fit the Hellenistic conception of divine law. The Mosaic Law is not a novum, a latecomer in history, but is a republication of the ancient Noachian covenant, which is itself ultimately an "eternal covenant" that brings pre-existent angelic and heavenly realities into the human sphere. To establish this point, the author emphasizes the commonalities between the Noachian and Mosaic covenants. Two elements that distinguish Israel from the nations—its calendar and its blood prohibition—are not Mosaic innovations particular to Israel, but obligations that trace back all the way to the beginning of the present age and are binding on all humans. Thus, what appear to be positive laws (Israelite national distinctives) are in fact universal divine law (though progressively revealed).[37]

Shavuot in order to legitimate its new understanding of Shavuot as a festival of covenant renewal. This is Jubilees's response to the Hellenizing crisis and is meant to prevent such covenant apostasy from happening again.

[34] Gen 8:21; 9:8–17.

[35] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 303.

[36] Both Noah and Israel are to swear that they will never consume blood.

[37] As VanderKam, *Commentary*, 56, puts it, "The Sinai covenant in Jubilees is the last and fullest iteration in a single chain of agreements between the Lord and his special people." A similar link between the Noachian and Mosaic covenant appears in LAB, where both Noah and Moses are portrayed as receiving revelations concerning cultic and calendrical matters (19:11). See below p. 235.

3.1.2.3 Noah's Sacrifices and the Date of the Noachian Covenant

According to Gen 8:20–22, Noah builds an altar and makes burnt offerings "of every clean animal and of every clean bird." Ancient interpreters struggled to define the nature of the sacrifice. Some viewed it as a thanksgiving offering, while others depicted it as making atonement.[38] Jubilees significantly expands the account of the sacrifice, distinguishing between multiple sacrifices involved here.[39]

First, in Jub 6:2, Noah makes an atoning sacrifice with a goat on Mt. Lubar "for all the sins of the earth."[40] This sacrifice is needed, according to the text, because all life on earth had been obliterated.[41] The logic here is likely that the earth/land (*medr*/ארץ) has been polluted by the death of all humanity (perhaps also by humanity's sins), and thus needs purification.[42] Next, Noah makes burnt offerings that involve a bull, ram, sheep, goats, salt, a turtledove, and a dove (Jub 6:3).[43] This sacrifice does not agree with the biblical prescription for the Shavuot offerings,[44] which leads most scholars to conclude that it is not intended to portray a Shavuot ritual.[45] Notably, the author does not give a specific date for the sacrifice, and appears to see it as dealing more with the flood that has passed than with the Shavuot covenant to come. Perhaps it is merely (with regard to Shavuot) a preparatory sacrifice (cf. Jub 44:1 where Jacob performs a similar sacrifice one week prior to Shavuot).[46]

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[38] Thanksgiving: Philo, *QG* 2.50–52; PRE 23. Atonement: Jos. *Ant*. 1.3.7.

[39] See Dorman, "Commit"; Gilders, "Blood and Covenant"; van Ruiten, *Primaeval*, 215–27.

[40] Cf. 1QapGen X.13: "I atoned for all the land." See Reeves, "Noah," for discussion of the halakic dispute that may be behind the details of the sacrifice in Jubilees and the Genesis Apocryphon.

[41] VanderKam, "Angel Story," 166, sees this sacrifice as atoning for the pollution of the land brought about by the sexual transgression of the angels.

[42] Van Ruiten, *Primaeval*, 226, offers Num 35:33–34 as a background. The holy land may be in view here, as Ararat is part of Shem's inheritance (Jub 8:21). Cf. Halpern-Amaru, *Rewriting*, 27–30.

[43] Jubilees is much more specific than Gen 8:20, where the offerings are simply described as "clean animals." For Leviticus, of course, not all clean animals are proper sacrificial victims; Jubilees is careful to have Noah conform to the later Levitical regulation (cf. Lev 1:1–17).

[44] Lev 23:18–19; Num 28:27.

[45] Van Ruiten, *Primaeval*, 227, suggests that it is "an inauguration sacrifice for all future offerings." Kugel, *Walk*, 58, believes that the Author of Jubilees intended this as a new moon sacrifice, performed on the first of the month (3/1) in line with Num 28:15, but the Interpolator linked it to Shavuot. Peters, *Noah*, 82, argues for connections with Yom Kippur. Falk, *Parabiblical*, 69–70, better accounts for the data by proposing that Jubilees (along with the Genesis Apocryphon) depicts a purification offering that follows the way the Temple Scroll harmonizes Lev 4:13–21 and Num 15:22–26.

[46] On the other hand, it is possible that Noah's sacrifice is closer in nature to Abraham's offering in Jubilees 14, which inaugurates the covenant and occurs on Shavuot. Perhaps the author assumes that a significant amount of time

The ambiguity extends to the date of Noah's covenant and the corresponding date of the first human observance of Shavuot. Jubilees states several times that the covenant was made "during this [i.e. the third] month" (6:10, 11, 17, 20, 22). VanderKam, therefore, finds that "There is no indication in Jubilees 6 that Noah and his sons agreed to the pact in the middle of the month; the text gives the impression that the entire ritual occurred on 3/1, the date of Noah's sacrifice."[47] It seems strange, however, that the author would describe the covenant as "during" the third month if he meant the first day. More likely, the author intends 3/15 as the date of the covenant, since he explicitly draws a direct parallel between the Sinai covenant (made on 3/15) and the covenant Noah makes on Ararat (6:11).[48] Just a few verses later, the author insists on the stability and absolute fixedness of the calendar (6:20–22), so it is difficult to imagine him depicting any flexibility or change in the date of Shavuot.[49] Moreover, three other Shavuot narratives in Jubilees employ a distinct chronological pattern in which events pertaining to the festival begin on 3/1 and conclude with the festival observance on 3/15—a pattern the Noah narrative fits quite well.[50]

3.1.3 The Covenant between the Pieces at Shavuot (Jubilees 14)

According to Jub 6:18, after Noah's death, his sons "corrupted" the festival of Shavuot either by observing it improperly or not observing it at all. They also broke one of its main stipulations by eating blood. Shavuot was not kept again until Abram, and it is his first observance of the feast that is the focus of Jubilees 14.[51] This chapter retells the story of Genesis 15, "the covenant between the pieces," and places it at Shavuot. In the biblical account, Abram has a vision, makes

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would be required after Noah left the ark to build an altar and to purify or to inaugurate the altar (in 1 Kings 8:2, 65; 2 Chron 7:8–10, the inauguration process takes seven days).

[47] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 311.

[48] Contra VanderKam, *Commentary*, 312, who maintains that "the parallel involves just the month, not the date within it."

[49] Especially in view of the heated controversy between calendrical traditions on how to reckon the date of Shavuot.

[50] See the chart in the Appendix below for data.

[51] Jubilees depicts Abraham observing all three pilgrimage festivals (Matzot, Shavuot and Sukkot), but Shavuot is the first one he observes, a fact that highlights the festival's covenantal importance to the author.

a sacrifice, and receives from God a covenant promise of land and offspring. Jubilees hews rather closely to the text of Genesis, but with some significant additions.[52]

3.1.3.1 The Chronological Framework

While the biblical text does not provide a date for the events of Genesis 15, Jubilees states that they occurred in the third month, i.e. the month of Shavuot. The narrative begins on 3/1, when Abram receives a dream-revelation[53] from the Lord (Jub 14:1). He is told that he will have an heir from his loins, that his seed will be like the innumerable stars and that he will inherit the land of the Canaanites. When he requests confirmation for this promise, the Lord instructs him to acquire and offer five types of sacrificial animals.[54] Abram gathers the animals and performs the sacrifice "in the middle of the month" (14:10).[55] The precise date and timeline of the sacrificial events is unclear. According to the text, it is dusk or sunset when Abram places the animals on the altar (v13) and, by the time the animals are consumed, the sun has completely set (v17). In v20, the covenant is concluded "during this night."[56] For Jubilees, the day begins at sunset,[57] so both the covenant sacrifice and the accompanying vision appear to take place at the beginning of

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[52] See van Ruiten, "Land," for a detailed comparison of Genesis and Jubilees in this section. Cf. Ruiten, *Abraham*, 119–36; Begg, "Rereadings," 37–39.

[53] Eth: *baḥəlm*. Cf. Lange, "Träume," 27–30.

[54] As with Noah, the animals Abram sacrifices are Levitically acceptable. VanderKam, *Commentary,* 493, 496, observes that Genesis does not explicitly depict this scene as sacrificial, and that Jubilees modifies several details to emphasize its sacrificial nature (e.g. building an altar and disposing of the blood; cf., similarly, Josephus, *Ant*. 1.184). Abraham's wards off the unclean birds (Gen 15:11 has "birds of prey" [העיט], which implies to the informed reader their impurity; cf. TgPsJ Gen 15:11; TgNeo Gen 15:11), reflecting his priestly concern for the purity of the sacrifice and covenant ceremony. See Halpern-Amaru "Protection," 59–67.

[55] Here Jubilees somewhat awkwardly inserts two weeks between God's command on 3/1 and Abram's sacrifice on 3/15. VanderKam, *Commentary,* 493 suggests that Jubilees is attempting to solve a problem posed by the Genesis account, which depicts all the events as taking place on the same night, but has Abram look at the stars (Gen 15:5) *before* the sun actually sets (vv15–17). Other traditions solved the problem by characterizing Abram's viewing of the stars as an apocalyptic vision or journey (e.g. LAB 18:5; ApocAb. 20:1–3; GenRab 44:12). As I discuss below, however, Shavuot scenes in Jubilees repeatedly feature a sequence beginning on 3/1 and concluding on 3/15 or 3/16, so this may merely be following the pattern. On the controverted phrase, "the middle of the month," and its implications for the calendar in Jubilees, see VanderKam, *Commentary,* 494–95, who theorizes that Jubilees here uses traditional terminology that reflects a previous iteration of the calendar with a 30-day third month. In the 364-day calendar, the third month has 31 days so that the precise middle of the month would be 3/16. More likely, however, Jubilees is simply imprecise here.

[56] See VanderKam, *Critical Text*, 86, for MSS variants; many MSS read "day." In a later publication, VanderKam opts for the reading, "day" (*Commentary,* 499–500).

[57] Cf. Jub 49:1. On this issue, see Baumgarten, "Beginning"; contra Zeitlin, "Beginning," who tried to show that the day began at dawn.

Shavuot, on the evening of 3/15.[58] The Shavuot character of the events is reiterated in 14:20 when the narrating angel makes explicit the connection between the covenants of Abram and Noah: "During this night we concluded a covenant with Abram like the covenant which we concluded during this month with Noah. Abram renewed the festival and the ordinance for himself forever."

3.1.3.2 Textual Stimuli for the Shavuot Setting

Several elements in Genesis 15 may have suggested a festal setting to the attentive reader. First, such a momentous occasion, it might be reasoned, should certainly have occurred on a high, holy day. Second, the seemingly superfluous phrase in Gen 15:18, "on that day" (ביום ההוא), may have suggested to some readers that a special day was in view. Third, the special construction of an altar and the subsequent sacrifices might have seemed appropriate for a festival.[59]

Later Jewish traditions also associated Genesis 15 with a festival. Seder Olam Rabbah 5 locates the covenant between the pieces at Passover (15 Nisan).[60] So also, PRE 28 places it on the eve of Passover.[61] This association probably arose because Abraham's vision deals with Israel's slavery in Egypt and eventual redemption. The timing of the vision/sacrifice at sunset may also have prompted readers to think of the timing of the Passover sacrifice and meal, which involves the juncture of dusk and sunset. Alternatively, the *Apocalypse of Abraham* locates this sacrifice at

[58] Contra VanderKam, *Commentary*, 501, who posits a ceremony bridging 3/15–16 in which the covenant and sacrifice are made on 3/15 during the daylight hours, but the "symbolic confirmation" of the covenant occurs after sunset—thus on 3/16. The issue largely revolves around the textual variants in vv18, 20 (night or day?) and whether one considers the sacrifice to have taken place when the animals are slaughtered and placed on the altar or when they are consumed by fire. Cf. a striking parallel in LAB 23:2 where a covenant and dream-vision occur on Shavuot; cf. below p. 218.

[59] Cf. GenRab 44:14, which links these sacrifices to various festivals.

[60] Through verbal analogy with Exod 12:41 ("the same day"); so also Isaac's birth, which Jubilees locates at Shavuot (Jub 16:13).

[61] Friedlander 198. Cf. further Mek. Pisḥa 14; TgNeo Exod 12:42; TgPsJ Exod 12:40–42. See Stemberger, "Genesis 15," for discussion.

Horeb/Sinai, which leads Rubinckiewicz to propose a Shavuot setting for the story, although recent scholarly opinion holds that Yom Kippur is more likely.[62]

Why does Jubilees locate this event at Shavuot? The most obvious factor is the story's focus on the covenant promise that God would provide Abram with descendants and land.[63] Shavuot is the feast of oaths, on which all significant covenants are cut; certainly, the covenant between the pieces could be no exception. In addition, the author probably noticed numerous parallels between this story and the account of the Sinai covenant in Exodus 19–24: a) both Abram and Moses build altars, b) both stories focus on the establishment of Israel's nationhood, and c) both stories have the same theophanic elements: darkness, smoke, torches,[64] and fire.[65] Indeed, Jubilees amplifies the connection with Moses by adding a key detail in Jub 14:11: Abram pours the blood of the animals on the altar, just as Moses does in Exod 24:6 (n.b. also the division of the sacrifice in both texts).

3.1.3.3 Angels and Shavuot in Jubilees 14

One more noteworthy element in Jubilees 14 is the role of angels. In Jub 14:20, the narrating angel of the presence declares, "During this night *we* concluded a covenant with Abram like the covenant which *we* concluded during this month with Noah" (italics mine). While Jubilees has already stated that angels observed Shavuot in heaven from creation until the Noachian covenant (6:17-18), he now explains that angels were party, in some way, to both the Noachian and Abrahamic covenants. Perhaps their role in the covenant was merely mediatorial.[66] Given

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[62] Rubinckiewicz, *L'Apocalypse*, 58–60; Orlov, *Priesthood*, 6, 97.

[63] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 495, denies the presence of an oath in Jubilees 14, but vv13, 18 certainly imply it, and an ancient audience would likely assume it. Cf. Ha, *Genesis*, 74; Baden, *Promise*, 48–50. For the practice of animal slaughter as part of ANE oath ceremonies, see Hess, "Slaughter."

[64] In Exod 20:18 לפיד is typically translated as "lightning," but the same word appears in Gen 15:7.

[65] See Hahn, *Kinship*, 112–13.

[66] In Jubilees 14, the covenant is sealed when theophanic manifestations pass between the pieces (v17); it is possible that these elements were understood as an angelophany (as in the Sinai narrative) so that the angels function here as heavenly priestly mediators in the covenant ritual. See Kugel, *Walk*, 96, who stresses that the angels are mediators only, not parties to the covenant, since v18 only mentions the Lord as making the covenant.

previous statements about angelic festival observance, however it seems plausible that the text here envisions the patriarch entering a covenant originally made with the angels and subsequently extended to Noah.[67]

3.1.4 Circumcision and the Promise of Isaac at Shavuot (Jubilees 15)

Jubilees 15 picks up Abram's story twenty-two years after the covenant between-the-pieces. In the interim, the patriarch has fathered Ishmael, but this is not the true fulfilment of the covenant-promise. The author therefore focuses on the story of Genesis 17, where Abram is promised a son through Sarai and is given the commandment of circumcision.

3.1.4.1 The Shavuot Setting of the Covenant

The author begins his story by adding to the biblical account a clear time marker: "in the third month, in the middle of the month" (v1). This echoes the earlier story of the covenant with Abram (ch. 14) and the covenant with Noah (ch. 6). On this day, Abram celebrates "the festival of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest," a title for Shavuot drawn from Exod 34:22. The author has previously described Shavuot as a dual festival having both an agricultural character (weeks/firstfruits) and a more transcendent theological character (oaths/covenants). This is the first time in Jubilees that the agricultural element of the festival is observed.[68] Abram makes a "new sacrifice" of "the firstfruits of the food for the Lord" (15:2)—both phrases come from the pentateuchal legislation for Shavuot.[69] Along with the grain offering, Abram presents burnt

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[67] In the *Apocalypse of Abraham*'s account of the covenant between the pieces, Abraham is taken up to the heavenly temple, where he participates in the angelic liturgy. Cf. Himmelfarb, *Ascent*, 66. Thus, at least some ancient interpreters read Genesis 15 as a story of how Abraham gained the prerogative to participate in angelic activities.

[68] In 7:35–39, however, Noah instructs his children to offer the various firstfruits at their proper time, a commandment passed down through the generations from Enoch (7:38), who learned it from the angels (4:17–26). Abram, the author explains, received books from his father that contained the teachings of Enoch and Noah (Jub 21:10). Thus, the audience is likely meant to understand that Abram learned the festal requirements from these books. See Najman, "Interpretation," for discussion of Jubilees's "fascination with the importance and authorizing power of sacred writing" (381). On the relationship between the ancestral book tradition in Jubilees and the Torah, see Müller, "Halacha," 56–68; cf. van Ruiten, "Interpreting."

[69] Leviticus 23:16 requires a מנחה חדשה; cf. Num 28:26.

offerings of a bull, ram, and sheep, supplemented with cereal, drink, and incense offerings (15:2). These match the Levitical prescriptions for Shavuot in kind, but not in number.[70]

Abram's sacrifice prompts another vision (15:3–22), much as in ch. 14. Visionary activity is often connected with Shavuot in Jubilees,[71] which fits well with the book's view of festivals (especially Shavuot) as moments of participation in angelic life and worship, times of special synchronicity or concurrence between heavenly and earthly realms.

3.1.4.2 Textual Stimuli for the Shavuot Setting

A textual clue in Gen 17:21 (cf. Jub 15:21) likely led Jubilees to place this event at a festival. There, the Lord explains that Isaac will be born to Sarah and Abraham next year "at this season" (למועד הזה). The semantic range of מועד opened up the possibility that a festival was in view.[72] Isaac would be born one year from now, on the same festival day Abraham and Sarah were currently observing. Later Jewish traditions read the text in the same way; e.g., ExodRab 15:11 places the story at Passover—a natural choice since Isaac is Abraham's "firstborn" through Sarah.[73] The author of Jubilees, on the other hand, focuses on the covenantal aspects of Genesis 17, which suggest to him a setting at the festival of "oaths."[74] In his mind, Isaac is Abraham's "firstfruits" (cf. Jub 16:13, where he makes this clear). Thus, Shavuot is a fitting time for Abraham to receive both the promise and its initial fulfilment.[75]

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[70] Lev 23:15–22 requires bread, a bull, seven lambs, and two rams. Cf. Albeck, *Buch*, 20; Schiffman, "Sacrificial," 112. As in the Noah narrative, the author portrays the patriarchs as sacrificing Levitically acceptable animals, but does not seem concerned with matching the large scale of the later tabernacle/temple operation. See Park, *Pentecost*, 114, for discussion.

[71] Cf. the chart below in the Appendix.

[72] Kugel, *Walk*, 97.

[73] Cf. Mek. Pisḥa 14 (on Exod 12:41); Seder Olam Rabbah 5; bRosh 10b–11a. These traditions also state that Isaac was born the following year at Passover. The Passover link was also driven by Gen 18:10, 14, which says that Isaac will be born כעת חיה ("at a living time"); readers understood this to refer to the beginning of the spring season.

[74] Genesis 17 refers to the covenant as eternal or everlasting three times (vv7, 13, 19), which aided the author in connecting this covenant with the eternal Noachian covenant (Gen 9:16/Jub 6:16) also made at Shavuot.

[75] Kugel, *Walk*, 97; Park, *Pentecost*, 118; von Görtz-Wrisberg, "No Second Temple," 395.

3.1.4.3 Circumcised Angels and Covenant Exclusivism

In Jubilees 15, the covenant promise deviates little from Genesis 17. God pledges that Abraham will be the father of many nations, that his offspring will include kings (Jub 15:8, 16), and that they will inherit the land of Canaan. To enter the covenant, males must be circumcised on the eighth day after birth. The eighth-day timing of circumcision is present in Genesis but receives much greater emphasis in Jubilees.[76] The author repeats the requirement multiple times (vv12, 14, 25, 26) and stresses that no sooner or later than the eighth day is acceptable.[77]

The Lord further tells Abraham that it will be through Isaac (not Ishmael) that the covenant with Abraham's descendants will continue, producing a nation and a dynasty (Jub 15:17). Royal themes are especially evident here, as vv8, 16 also mention kings who will emerge from Isaac's line to rule the nations. Likewise, in 15:10, Abraham's seed will "rule" the land of Canaan forever, not merely "possess" (אחז) it as in the MT. In addition, the Shavuot birthdate of Isaac (3/15) is shared by Judah (Jub 28:15), the patriarch of the tribe from which the Davidic dynasty would arise. Later Jewish tradition would hold that David was also born (and died) at Shavuot.[78]

Most fascinating, however, is the way circumcision is explained by appeal to an angelic precedent. Like other elements (Sabbath and Shavuot) of the eternal covenant, circumcision is linked to the angels and written back into creation. According to Jub 15:25, it is "an eternal ordinance ordained and written on the heavenly tablets." Moreover, "this is what the nature of

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[76] As van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 155 notes, Gen 17:12 MT says that the child should be circumcised at eight days, but the exclusion formula in v14 says that any male who is not circumcised (*simpliciter*) will be cut off. Jubilees, however (along with LXX, Old Latin, and Samaritan Pentateuch; cf. Justin, *Dial*. 27) repeats the temporal element in Gen 17:14: any male who is not circumcised *on the eighth day* will be cut off. Theissen, "Text," compellingly argues that Jubilees preserves an earlier reading of Gen 17:14 that was shortened through scribal error in the MT. The emphatic rhetoric of Jubilees, however, suggests that competing versions of the commandment may have already been in circulation in the second century BCE. The more lenient mShabb 19:5 allows circumcision to be delayed due to the Sabbath, a festival day, or sickness. Jubilees, on the other hand, thinks that circumcision is in fact most appropriate on a festival day (cf. John 7:23, which suggests that circumcision on the Sabbath was acceptable in the first century CE). Cf. Shemesh, "Shabbat"; Segal, *Jubilees*, 233–36.

[77] On the strange formulation in Jub 15:25 that there is "no circumcising of days," see Segal, *Jubilees*, 232–33, who explains it as indicating the ordinance's permanence.

[78] David's death at Shavuot is found in yHag 2:3; yBes 2:4; for his birth, cf. the principle in bRosh 11a. The antiquity of this tradition is not clear, but probably dates back at least to the first century CE, since Acts 2:29–34 mentions David's death in a Shavuot setting.

all the angels of the presence and all the angels of holiness was like from the day of their creation." These are the same two classes of angels that keep Sabbath along with Israel, according to Jub 2:2. Apparently, these angels possess male genitalia and were created in a circumcised state.[79] The logic of the passage is unmistakable. Angels are without foreskins; therefore, it is of utmost importance that Israelites be circumcised. If circumcision is the sign of the eternal covenant (15:26, 28), and angels are circumcised, it seems that Jubilees envisions an eternal covenant between God and his angels in which Israel is now allowed to participate: "In front of the angels of the presence and the angels of holiness he sanctified Israel to be with him and his holy angels" (15:27b). That is, *via* circumcision Israel is effectively angelified and rendered fit to participate in this angelic life.[80] The significance of circumcision could hardly be stated in more exalted terms.

In 15:28–34, the angel pauses his account to address Moses directly. Moses must be careful to emphasize the eternal importance of circumcision in order to ensure Israel's survival. It is Israel's unique and defining mark. Just as circumcision separates the higher angels from the lower nature-angels, so also it separates Israel from the nations.[81] Indeed, as circumcision elevates Israel to the level of the higher angels, so the nations' lack of circumcision corresponds to their subjugation to (oppressive) spiritual powers.[82] Echoing Deut 32:8–9, the angel explains that while all nations ultimately belong to God, Israel has a special status: "He made spirits rule over all [other nations] in order to lead them astray from following him. But over Israel he made no angel or spirit rule because he alone is their ruler" (15:31–32).[83]

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[79] See García-Martínez, "Foreskins." Angelic genitalia are implied in the Watcher myth; cf. Isa 6:2, where "feet" may be euphemistic.

[80] Cf. Gilders, "Concept," 185, who sees here an ontological change; cf. van Ruiten, "Angels," 591. See Steinberg, *Angelic Israel*, on angelified humans in later rabbinic literature.

[81] Cf. Jub 15:31, where Israel is "sanctified" and "gathered from all humanity," perhaps implying a separation from mere humanity. Similarly, in Jub 31:14, Levi is sanctified and taken "out of all humanity" to be a priest.

[82] For circumcision's spiritually protective effects, see Kister, "Demons"; cf. CD 16:4–6.

[83] Jubilees appears to read Deut 32:8–9 to mean that the Lord has given the nations to the seventy "sons of the gods" (see 4QDeut^{j} xii.14 for this reading), i.e. angels/spirits, but has reserved Israel as his own portion.

For the audience of Jubilees, living in the wake of the Hellenization crisis when many Jews would forego circumcision altogether or even undergo epispasm, this depiction of circumcision and its vital importance would carry special force.[84] As the angel warns, all who disobey the ordinance will be uprooted from the land, never forgiven or pardoned for their sin.

3.1.5 Isaac's Birth and Weaning (Jubilees 16–17)

Jubilees 16–17 draw on Genesis 18–21 and depict two events that occur at Shavuot. First, Abraham moves from Hebron to the "well of the oath" (Beersheba, 16:11), a fitting location for Shavuot and the covenant-related events to follow.[85] Sarah conceives in the middle of the sixth month and gives birth to Isaac the following year at the "festival of the firstfruits of the harvest" in the middle of the third month, i.e. on Shavuot (16:12–13).[86] The author thus places both the promise of Isaac's birth and the birth itself at Shavuot, highlighting Isaac's covenantal importance and his identity as the firstfruit of a larger harvest to come. Eight days later, Isaac is circumcised (16:14). Because circumcision is only valid when it occurs on the 8th day, Isaac is here called "the first to be circumcised according to the covenant which was ordained forever" (v14).

The second event occurs two years later (17:1; cf. Genesis 21).[87] To celebrate Isaac's weaning, Abraham gives a large banquet in the third month. Ishmael, who is thirty-four years old at the time, attends. While Abraham rejoices seeing his two sons, Sarah does not, and tells Abraham to banish Hagar and Ishmael (17:4). The Lord approves, reiterating his promise that it is through

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[84] For epispasm and related practices see Jos., *Ant*. 12.241; 1 Macc 1:15; Hall, "Epispasm"; cf. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 524–25, on the relevance of this passage to the Hellenizing crisis; cf. Eiss, "Wochenfest," 172; von Görtz-Wrisberg, "No Second Temple," 399–400.

[85] Genesis explains this name with reference to a covenant between Abraham and Abimelech (Gen 21:31), but Jubilees strategically omits this story and connects the name to the divine oaths made at the location (Jub 16:11, 15, 20; cf. 18:17; 22:1; 24:21; 44:1). Indeed, Jubilees identifies the location as "the well of the oath" *before* it is given that name in the Genesis text.

[86] This nine-month pregnancy contrasts with traditions that Isaac was born in the seventh month of pregnancy (LAB 23:8). Rabbinic sources place Isaac's conception at Rosh Hashanah and his birth at Passover, i.e. in the middle of the seventh month of pregnancy (see GenRab 73; ExodRab 15:11; Mek. Pisḥa 14 on Exod 12:41; Seder Olam Rabbah 5; bRosh 10b–11a). Cf. van der Horst, "Seven."

[87] See below, p. 114, for the chronological difficulty in ch. 16.

Isaac that the covenant will continue (17:6). While the text does not explicitly say that this occurs at Shavuot, the reference to the "third month" would otherwise be gratuitous; it is likely meant to signal a Shavuot setting to the reader.[88] Further, Abraham celebrates with a banquet, which reflects the Shavuot custom at the time of Jubilees (cf. Tob 2:1).[89]

3.1.6 Abraham's Death (Jubilees 22)

Genesis 25 devotes only two sentences to Abraham's death (vv7–8), and nothing in the text indicates a festival setting. Jubilees, however, places the event at Shavuot and presents a detailed narrative that infuses the story with great covenantal and festal significance.[90]

The account begins with Isaac and Ishmael coming to Hebron to celebrate Shavuot (Jub 22:1). This may be understood as a patriarchal precedent for cultic pilgrimage at Shavuot.[91] Abraham had built an altar at Hebron and was performing priestly duties there. Isaac makes a sacrifice on Abraham's altar, a peace offering, which forms the basis for a festal banquet enjoyed by all (vv3-4).[92] As is fitting for a festival that celebrates the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, Rebecca bakes fresh loaves of new wheat and gives them to Jacob to present to the patriarchal priest, Abraham, as a firstfruits offering, a precedent to the two loaves of the Shavuot ceremony in Lev 23:16-17, 20.[93] As high priest, Abraham blesses God in words that highlight Israel's unique covenant relationship with the Lord (22:7–9).

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[88] Cf. Park, *Pentecost*, 118. Weaning was often ritualized on a child's birthday in the ancient world. See Stavrakopolou, "Religion," 359, for weaning rituals in ancient Israel.

[89] See Jacobs, *Delicious Prose*, 59–72. Cf. also Jub 29:7 where Jacob and Laban eat a festal meal at Shavuot, discussed below.

[90] See van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 295–330. In Jub 22:7 it seems to be implied that Abraham was also born on Shavuot, as he states about "this day" (Shavuot) that he is "now 175 years of age"; cf. Werman, *Jubilees*, 345.

[91] 4Q219 l.37 uses חג (as well as מועד) to refer to Shavuot here; the former typically includes the idea of pilgrimage (Deut 16:16; Exod 23:15–16; 34:18–25), while the latter is used more generally for holidays. The Ethiopic uses *baʿāl* for both here.

[92] See Lev 23:19 regarding sacrifices at Shavuot. The "joyful" nature of Shavuot in Jub 22:4 accords with the Shavuot prescription of Deut 16:11: "Rejoice before the Lord your God." See Halpern-Amaru, "Joy," 196–97. On meals at Shavuot in ancient Judaism, see Tob 2:1; Jacobs, *Delicious* Prose, 59–72.

[93] Cf. von Görtz-Wrisberg, "No Second Temple," 394.

Abraham then summons Jacob and pronounces a lengthy blessing on him (vv10–30), asking God to "renew his covenant" with Jacob (v15, 30)—a central theme of Shavuot in Jubilees. Then, like Moses at Sinai, Abraham exhorts Jacob to observe the commandments, emphasizing especially those precepts that separate Israel from the nations (v16). This episode thus reinforces the central importance of Shavuot to the story of the patriarchs and the concept of the exclusive covenant.[94]

3.1.7 Judah's Birth on Shavuot (Jub 28:15)

According to Jub 28:15, Judah, like Isaac, was born on Shavuot. This highlights the covenantal significance of Judah.[95] Birthdates are provided for all of Jacob's children, but only three occur on significant days: Levi is born at the new year (1/1), Judah at Shavuot (3/15), and Joseph at the summer solstice, a day of remembrance (4/1).[96] All three are prominent in the story and worldview of Jubilees. Clearly, for Jubilees, birthdates are not accidental; they indicate and presage the person's significance. In the case of Judah, the dynasty which springs from his line fulfills the royal aspects of the Shavuot promise to Abraham in Jubilees 14–15.[97] Indeed, Judah's birthdate here may indicate an awareness of the tradition that David was born on Shavuot.[98]

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[94] Paradoxically, given this emphasis, Ishmael appears to participate in the festival (22:4), though cf. Jub 29:7 where Laban participates in a Shavuot covenant banquet. Halpern, "Joy," 197, notes that Jubilees "assigns to Shavuot the universal character that rabbis attribute to Sukkot." Conversely, while Sukkot was universalistic for the rabbis, it is particularistic for Jubilees. Since Shavuot is first celebrated on earth by Noah, it is not technically an Israelite-only festival, though it would be to Israel alone at Mt. Sinai that the festival would be revealed again, having been forgotten by all the other sons of Noah.

[95] See the discussion of Judah's role in Park, *Pentecost*, 122–25.

[96] Cf. Midrash Tadshe 8, which also provides birthdates for Jacob's sons, perhaps indicating that this was an originally independent tradition incorporated into Jubilees.

[97] Cf. 1QSb V, 20–27, for a similar emphasis at Qumran. Indeed, it is quite possible that the text depicts the Prince renewing the covenant. See Hultgren, *Damascus*, 481–82.

[98] See above fn. 78. This would help explain why Judah, and not Levi, is born on Shavuot. Given the primarily priestly character of the covenant in Jubilees, Levi would be the more natural choice. Of course, for Jubilees, Levi's birthday (1/1) has great priestly significance; see below p. 132.

3.1.8 Jacob and Laban's Shavuot Truce (Jubilees 29)

Jubilees 29 recounts how Jacob secretly flees from Laban's employ in order to return to Canaan. Laban pursues him and catches up with him in Gilead on 3/13 (v5). While Laban intends to harm Jacob, the Lord warns him off in a dream (v6). As a result, Jacob and Laban call a truce, swearing on 3/15 (Shavuot) that they will not attack each other (v7). In this way, Jacob secures his freedom and begins his sojourn in Canaan.

The biblical text (Genesis 31) from which Jubilees draws this account does not mention any dates or festivals.[99] Why, then, would Jubilees place the episode at Shavuot?[100] Once again, it seems that the author found numerous elements of the biblical text appropriate for Shavuot: 1) Most prominent, of course, is the covenant made between Jacob and Laban, sealed with an oath (Gen 31:44, 53).[101] 2) This covenant is accompanied by a banquet of bread (Gen 31:54), appropriate for the celebration of the firstfruits of the grain harvest. 3) Jacob offers a sacrifice on the mountain (Gen 31:54), as befits a festal celebration. 4) Some elements of the story (oath/covenant, mountain, sacrifice, banquet, memorial pillars) may also have reminded the author of the Sinai ceremony, the paradigmatic Shavuot event. Indeed, the Jacob-Laban account has the same narrative shape as the exodus-Sinai story. Jacob is mired in virtual slavery to Laban, makes an escape with all his possessions, crosses a body of water (here, the Euphrates),[102] is pursued by his oppressor, delivered by the Lord's intervention, and celebrates a Shavuot-covenant on a mountain.

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[99] See Begg, "Escape," 26–36, on Jubilees' rewriting of the Laban narrative.

[100] As Halpern-Amaru, "Calendar," 491, shows, the author must considerably stretch the timeline implied in Gen 31:22–23 in order to have the treaty take place at Shavuot. In Gen 31:23, Laban catches up to Jacob after seven days.

[101] N.b. the verb שבע in Gen 31:53, which Jubilees understands as the root of the feast's name, שבעות.

[102] In Jubilees, Jacob crosses the Euphrates and enters Gilead on 1/21, i.e. the last day of Matzot (Jub 29:5) and the same date on which Israel crossed the Red Sea (Jub 49:23). This explicitly reinforces the Passover-Shavuot narrative pattern here. See above p. 63.

3.1.9 Jacob's Shavuot at Beersheba (Jubilees 44)

A final Shavuot story takes place in Jubilees 44, which draws on Genesis 46:2–4 and tells how the aged Jacob/Israel made his way to Egypt to see Joseph before he died. In the biblical text, Jacob journeys to Beersheba where he makes sacrifices and receives a vision from God promising that Israel will become a great nation in Egypt and will eventually return to Canaan. There are no dates or clear festival references in the biblical version. As Jubilees retells the story, however, Jacob leaves Hebron on 3/1, travels to Beersheba to sacrifice on 3/7, and remains there seven days,[103] celebrating the "harvest festival—the firstfruits of grain" on 3/15 and receiving a vision the following day (3/16).[104] So committed is the author to placing this event at Shavuot that he is even willing to confront the halakic challenge it poses: how could Jacob offer the firstfruits of grain if there was a famine in the land? The author's answer—that Jacob offered old wheat (v4)—shows uncharacteristic halakic flexibility.[105]

Given the halakic difficulty, what leads Jubilees to place this story at Shavuot? Three features of the biblical text may have contributed: 1) Jacob's travel pattern in Gen 46:1 (from Hebron to Beersheba) matches that of Abraham in Jubilees 16, where Abraham travels from Hebron to Beersheba, builds an altar and celebrates Shavuot on the day Isaac is born. This parallel may have led the author to understand Jacob's journey as a festal pilgrimage to the aptly named "well of the oath" in order to celebrate Shavuot, like his grandfather, at the very altar Abraham built. 2) Jacob post-sacrifice vision at Beersheba (Gen 46:2) may remind the author of the two Shavuot visions given to Abraham (Jubilees 14–15), which were also preceded by sacrifices.[106] 3)

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[103] Park, *Pentecost*, 121 notes the septenary emphasis in the account: it is the seventh day, Jacob is at the well of the oath (or "seven"), and he stays seven days in order to celebrate Shavuot. This fits well with Shavuot, which required the counting of seven sevens (or weeks) from the offering of the Omer (Lev 23:15–16). Indeed, as VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1091, observes, the chronological sequence in Jubilees 44 may imply the practice of counting seven weeks to Shavuot; this would explain the reference to the two seven-day periods in 44:1, 3 (contra Kugel, *Walk*, 14–15, who holds that Jubilees rejects such a practice).

[104] See Potin, *Pentecôte*, 125, for the motif of visions at Shavuot.

[105] Old wheat is forbidden in mMen 8:1, but bMen 83b attests to a dispute about the issue. See Finkelstein, "Jubilees," 51; Fogel, *Grains*, 284.

[106] Cf. Jub 1:1, where Moses receives a vision on 3/16 after his Shavuot sacrifices.

The message of the vision in the biblical text fits well with the covenantal themes so central to Shavuot: Jacob should not be afraid to leave the promised land and travel to Egypt, because the Lord will use that time in Egypt to fulfill his covenant promise, multiplying Abraham's descendants and bringing them out of Egypt and back to Canaan. That is, the move to Egypt is God's way of preserving the covenant.

This is the final Shavuot episode in Jubilees, and the author tells the story in a way that clearly recalls his other Shavuot episodes. Especially noteworthy is the pattern of dates in Jub 44:1–4, with key events on 3/1, 3/7, 3/15, and 3/16. The same pattern, where a sequence of events starting on 3/1 leads to Shavuot on 3/15 and a subsequent vision, occurs in Jubilees's earlier Shavuot narratives. Similarly, many of the Shavuot episodes have numerous motifs in common (as the chart in the Appendix illustrates). These serve to tie together the key covenantal moments in both the book and the story of Israel.

3.1.10 Conclusion

In its treatment of Shavuot, Jubilees invests the firstfruits festival with new meanings by linking the holiday to both key scriptural episodes and transcendent or heavenly realities. The author *festalizes Scripture* by portraying Shavuot as the context for every important covenant in the Pentateuch—the covenant with Noah, the promise to Abraham, the institution of circumcision, and especially the giving of the law at Sinai. In doing so, the author finds textual stimuli in his biblical source which prompt him to supply a festal setting for these key events. Perhaps he inherited a tradition that had already linked Sinai with Shavuot. This may have led him to regard Shavuot as the festival of covenant oaths and to consider it an appropriate festival setting for the other critical covenant moments.

The author also *transcendentalizes* the festival by claiming that Shavuot was no mere Israelite agricultural custom, but in fact a heavenly institution (like the Sabbath) celebrated by the angels in heaven from the beginning of time. Indeed, the festival celebrates the eternal covenant that,

through circumcision and calendrical synchrony, joins God's chosen people to the exalted angels in their unceasing worship of God.

By filling Shavuot with this covenantal and transcendent significance, Jubilees makes the weighty theological claim that the Sinai covenant is not a complete novum but is in fact the renewal of the eternal covenant that existed originally between God and his angels and was then extended to all humanity at the time of Noah. When Noah's sons abandoned the covenant, God responded by narrowing its scope to Abraham and ultimately to Israel. The other nations he subordinated to oppressive spirits who lead those people astray to follow a chaotic calendar and to violate the basic norms of human behavior. Thus, the author forges a delicate theological balance between the covenant's universality and exclusivity: Israel is following the universal law of creation, but it does so because it is the specially chosen people of God.

3.2 Yom Kippur: A Day of Forgiveness and Mourning

Yom Kippur, or "the day of atonement" (יום הכפרים in Lev 23:27) is the second of the fall feasts described in the festival calendars of Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28–29. It takes place on the tenth day of the seventh month (7/10), ten days after Rosh Hashanah (יום תרועה in Num 29:1).[107] The author of Jubilees never explicitly identifies it as a "feast," calling it instead an "ordained" day (Jub 34:18–19), but he clearly considers it a holy day and an essential part of Israel's calendar.[108]

Two passages in Jubilees discuss Yom Kippur.[109] The first is a brief aside (5:17–19) in the middle of the flood narrative where the angelic narrator contrasts God's punishment of the flood generation with his forgiving attitude toward the Israelites each year on Yom Kippur. The second passage (34:10–19) provides an etiology for Yom Kippur that traces it back to the

[107] Jubilees identifies Rosh Hashanah (7/1) not as a new year or a feast of trumpets, but as one of the "memorial days" along with 1/1, 4/1 and 10/1. See below, pp. 130–137, for discussion of the memorial days.

[108] See below, p. 183, regarding the question of Yom Kippur's festal status in the Second Temple period.

[109] Recent scholarship on Yom Kippur in Jubilees includes Körting, *Schall*, 269–87; Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 95–97; Dorman, "Commit"; Orlov, *Atoning*, 32–42; Carmichael, "Story."

patriarchal period, when Jacob mourned after learning of Joseph's (fictive) demise. In discussing these two passages, I will give special attention to what may have prompted Jubilees to tie these two episodes to Yom Kippur and how linking those events to Yom Kippur in turn shapes the meaning of Yom Kippur for the author.

3.2.1 Noah's Flood and Yom Kippur (Jubilees 5)

Jubilees 5 retells the story of the flood, drawing on Genesis 6–8 and supplementing it with other traditions, especially those found in the Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 1–36).[110] The narrating angel tells Moses how angels married human women, begetting giants and filling the earth with wickedness and corruption. In response, the Lord resolves to obliterate all living things on the earth, save Noah and his family.[111] Noah builds an ark and survives forty days of rain and the subsequent flood.

In the midst of this narrative is an apparent digression, in which the narrating angel describes the judgment of the angels and their gigantic offspring and reflects on the nature of God's judgment and mercy (5:6–19). God orders the giants to be slain by the sword while their angelic fathers watch (vv7–10). Then he orders the seven angels of the presence to tie up the transgressing angels "in the depths of the earth" (v6), where they will remain "until the great day of judgment" (v10). The second section takes up this theme of eschatological judgment, emphasizing its certainty. "All who transgress from their way" will be punished (v13), for no transgression can be kept secret and no favoritism will be practiced (v16). This judgment is "ordained and written on the heavenly tablets" (v13). This is a dark picture of judgment, but the narrating angel interjects a hopeful note in an aside to Moses. For Israel, God has provided a

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[110] Henceforth abbreviated as BW when possible. See van Ruiten, *Primaeval*, 181–214, for discussion of Jubilees 5 and its use of Genesis. For Jubilees's knowledge and reception of Enochic traditions, see VanderKam, "Angel Story"; Knibb, "Which Parts"; Endres, "Watchers"; Segal, *Jubilees*, 116; Hanneken, "Watchers"; Reed, *Fallen*, 86–95.

[111] For the flood as a response to the effects of the Watchers' incursion, cf. 1 Enoch 6–11; CD 2.14–21; TNaph 3:5.

way of forgiveness: "it has been written and ordained" that "once each year"—a clear reference to Yom Kippur—the Lord will forgive all Israelites who "turn from all their errors" (v18).[112]

Along with this clear reference to Yom Kippur, the text also includes other allusions to the holy day and its rituals: 1) The tripartite transgression-formula (wickedness [*'abbasā*], sins [*ḫaṭi'at*], errors [*gēgāy*]) in Jub 5:17–18 draws on Lev 16:16 (פשע, טמאה, חטאת). 2) The angels are tied up in the depths of the earth (Jub 5:6), much like the scapegoat is bound and hurled into a rocky place in the wilderness (Lev 16:22).[113] 3) The watchers are bound in the earth until the "great day of judgment" (Jub 5:10), terminology used elsewhere for Yom Kippur.[114] 4) The flood here purifies the earth of its corruption, just as Yom Kippur cleanses the land of Israel and its inhabitants (Lev 16:30).[115]

3.2.1.1 The Traditional Link between the Flood and Yom Kippur

What prompts Jubilees to link Yom Kippur to the watcher/flood narrative? The answer appears to be that Jubilees draws on a tradition that portrays the flood and the judgment of the angelic watchers as an etiology for Yom Kippur. This tradition is found in a fuller form in the Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 1–36), which Jubilees uses as a source.[116] As many scholars have noted, the account of the watchers and their judgment in BW contains numerous allusions to the Yom Kippur "imaginaire:"[117]

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[112] "Written and ordained" may describe its presence in the Pentateuch, since Lev 16:34 describes Yom Kippur as taking place "once each year" (אחת בשנה); cf. Exod 30:10; Jub 34:18. VanderKam, *Commentary,* 289, though, thinks that the phrase "written and ordained" must mean "etched on the heavenly tablets" since the rest of the quoted material does not appear verbatim in the Torah.

[113] In Lev 16:22 the scapegoat is merely taken to a "barren region" and released, but in the Second Temple period it was bound and hurled from a cliff in the wilderness (cf. Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 88; Orlov, *Divine*, 218; Ayali-Darshan, "Origin").

[114] See 1 En 10:5; 19:1; 54:6; 4Q265 frag. 7, line 4; Isa 1:13 LXX; bRosh 21a; see Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 88, for discussion.

[115] For the flood as a purification of the earth, see 1 En 10:20; Philo, *Worse*, 170; T.Adam 3:5; Kugel, *Bible*, 118–20.

[116] See above, p. 29. The Watchers narrative is also connected with Yom Kippur in Apoc.Ab. 13; see Orlov, *Divine*, 55–74. Against literary dependence, see Van Ruiten, *Primeval*, 197; Dimant, "Fallen Angels," 102–3, who notes the positive nature of the angelic mission in Jubilees and the absence of the names Azazel/Asael and Shemihazah.

[117] See Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact,* 8–10; Stökl Ben Ezra, "Yom Kippur," 351–57, Grabbe, "Scapegoat"; Dimant, "1 Enoch 6–11."

1) One of the leaders of the Watchers is named Asael (עסאל/עשאל), which is close in sound to the term used in Leviticus 16 for the scapegoat (Azazel, עזאזל).[118] The spelling of the name appears to have been extraordinarily unstable in the tradition. In later versions of BW, the spelling of the name seems to have been influenced by Leviticus. Thus, Greek versions have Αζαλζαλ or Αζαηλ, while the Ethiopic version of 1 Enoch gives the fully Leviticized reading *'azaz'el*. Most notably, 4Q180-81 and 4QBook of Giants[a] (4Q203) identify the watcher's name as Azazel (עזאזל /עזזאל).[119] Given the many thematic parallels with Yom Kippur in BW, it is likely that a correspondence was intended between the leader of the watchers and the scapegoat of the Yom Kippur ritual.[120]
2) In 10:4 Raphael is told to bind Asael and cast him into the wilderness. This is the same action performed on the scapegoat.[121] Of the rebellious angels, Asael is singled out and given a specific punishment, which reinforces his identity as the scapegoat figure.[122] The other angels (Shemihazah and company) are punished as a group separately from Asael.
3) In 10:6, Asael's final destruction is to take place on "the day of the great judgment," terminology used elsewhere in Jewish tradition for Yom Kippur.[123]
4) In 1 Enoch 10:8, Raphael is told to write all sin on Asael. This resembles the Israelite high priest's ritual action of transferring sin to the scapegoat through the laying on of hands: "Then Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess

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[118] The Qumran fragments of BW already show orthographic variation: 4Q201.iii.9 reads עסאל, while 4Q204.ii.26 has עשאל. See VanderKam, "Angel Story," 167, for an extensive discussion. Intriguingly, bYoma 67b links Asael the fallen angel with Azazel the scapegoat: "The goat was called Azazel because it obtains atonement for the affair of Uza and Aza'el." Cf. Reed, "Asael"; Stuckenbruck, *Giants*, 81–82.

[119] See Reed, "Asael," 121–22; cf. Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 87; contra Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic," 383–405.

[120] For us, all that matters is that the watcher myth and Yom Kippur were linked by the time of Jubilees, something the Qumran evidence suggests was indeed the case.

[121] See Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 88, on the further connection between the name of the wilderness "Doudael" (Δουδαήλ) in 1 En 10:4 and later Jewish traditions. In mYoma 6:8, the scapegoat is taken to Beth Haroro (Danby, *Mishnah*, 170, lists Hiddudo as a variant; Neusner, *Mishnah*, 276, accepts this reading). TgPsJ Lev 16:21–22 refers to a rocky desert called בית הדורי; cf. Orlov, *Divine*, 208. Hanson, "Rebellion," 222–24, contends that the Azazel story in BW retells and expands the Shemihazah narrative with drawn from Yom Kippur. Cf. the retelling of the Watcher myth in the Similitudes, where Azazel's host is thrown into an abyss and covered with "jagged stones" (1 En 54:5).

[122] Orlov, *Atoning*, 53.

[123] See above fn.114.

over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away into the wilderness" (Lev 16:21).

5) In 1 Enoch 10:20, 22, the land is said to be cleansed from all impurity, wrong, lawlessness, and sin. All godlessness and impurities are removed. This parallels the effect of Yom Kippur in Lev 16:21, where it cleanses Israel from the same maladies.[124]

6) The angels' movements in 1 Enoch 9:2–4 resemble those of the High Priest on Yom Kippur. The angels enter the heavenly holy of holies and draw near to God's throne to make intercession for the land and its inhabitants. Then, upon exiting the heavenly sanctuary, they perform the scapegoat ritual on Asael. Similarly, in 1 Enoch 14, the story is told from a different angle. Here, Enoch enters the heavenly holy of holies to intercede on behalf of the watchers, but no mercy is granted; rather, the watchers' condemnation is decreed, and Enoch is sent to deliver the message. Both stories involve entrances into the heavenly Holy of Holies, which would be appropriate (only) on Yom Kippur, according to Lev 16:2.[125]

In short, the story of the Watchers in BW is a "mythologization" of the Yom Kippur ritual.[126] For BW, Yom Kippur reenacts the pre-diluvian binding/expulsion of the watchers and anticipates the eschatological judgment of evil that would, like the flood, rid the world of its corruption.[127]

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[124] Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 89.

[125] See Halperin, *Faces*, 81–82; Himmelfarb, "Apocalyptic," 210; Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 82–89.

[126] Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 85.

[127] See Kawashima, "Jubilee," for thematic links between Yom Kippur and the flood in Genesis. He concludes that the flood "provides a quasi-mythic paradigm for the Day of Atonement" and notes that in Gen 8:4, the ark comes to rest on 7/17, one week after Yom Kippur (375).

3.2.1.2 The Significance of Yom Kippur in Jubilees 5

Because of his familiarity with the Enochic tradition the author of Jubilees finds in the flood narrative a natural setting for his initial discourse on Yom Kippur, though his strategy in linking Yom Kippur to the flood is notably different from that of BW. BW does not explicitly mention Yom Kippur but rather alludes to the holiday and supplies it with a mythological origin story. Jubilees, on the other hand, explicitly mentions Yom Kippur, but eliminates many of the narrative allusions to Yom Kippur that are necessary for understanding why the author links Yom Kippur and the flood.[128] If we did not have the Book of the Watchers, we would likely be at a loss to explain the link assumed by the author of Jubilees.

3.2.1.2.1 Transcendentalizing Yom Kippur

If Jubilees assumes the Yom Kippur mythology of BW, then he likely understands the temple ritual on this high holy day to be *imitatio angelorum*. In his mind, when the high priest places the sin of the people on the scapegoat and sends it out to be cursed, bound, and thrown from the cliff, he is imitating the antediluvian actions of the angels of the presence who bound and imprisoned Azazel and the Watchers.[129]

3.2.1.2.2 Eschatologizing Yom Kippur

Furthermore, like 1 Enoch, Jubilees assigns eschatological significance to Yom Kippur. The binding of the watchers in the "depths of the earth" is temporary; it prefigures "the great day of judgment when there will be condemnation on all who have corrupted their ways and their actions before the Lord" (Jub 5:10).[130] Similarly, the cleansing brought by Yom Kippur looks

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[128] Contra VanderKam, "Angel Story," 168, who holds that BW's references to Yom Kippur are rather limited, and that Jubilees has rewritten BW to establish a primeval precedent to Yom Kippur.

[129] At Qumran, angels are depicted as engaging in other parts of the Yom Kippur liturgy, e.g. 1Q28b 4.24–27, in which the high priest is "an angel of the presence" who "casts the lot along with the angels of the presence." Here, the high priest's activity is grounded transcendentally in a heavenly and angelic exemplar. Cf. Jub 31:14, where Levi and his descendants "approach [the Lord] to serve in his temple like the angels of the presence and like the holy ones."

[130] Notably, the term "judge" or "judgment" appears eight times in Jub 5:10–16.

forward to an eschatological cleansing of human nature. Jub 5:12 speaks of God creating a new nature so that "everyone will be righteous … for all time."[131] According to most scholars, this means that the new nature is created after the flood,[132] but it makes more sense to understand it eschatologically: the new nature is the product of the eschatological judgment.[133] Thus, when the Israelite High Priest performs the Yom Kippur ritual—especially when he sends away the scapegoat—he prefigures the eschatological expulsion of the wicked and the cleansing of creation.[134]

We must also take into account the close association between Yom Kippur and the Year of Jubilee, which is so central to Jubilees's theological and chronological framework.[135] The Jubilee, announced by the High Priest on Yom Kippur (Lev 25:9), occurs every fifty years and brings remission of debt, freedom from slavery, and a return to ancestral lands. It is, effectively, a sabbath year of sabbath years, just as Yom Kippur is the "sabbath of sabbaths" (Lev 16:31). For the author of Jubilees, both Yom Kippur and the Year of Jubilee look forward to the time when Israel would be "pure of every sexual evil, impurity, contamination, sin, and error, … live confidently in the entire land … and no longer have any satan or any evil person. The land will be pure from that time until eternity" (Jub 50:5). Especially notable here is the way Jubilees relates the eschatological Jubilee/Yom Kippur to the purification of the land and the expulsion of every "satan" and "evil spirit/person"; these clearly echo the watchers/flood narrative and indicate the same eschatological expectation.[136]

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[131] Cf. 1 En 10:20–21.

[132] See, e.g., Berger, *Buch*, 351; Stuckenbruck, "Jubilees," 301; VanderKam, "Angel Story," 161–63; cf. Philo, *Mos.* 2.65, for a similar idea.

[133] See Charles, *Book*, 45; cf. Jub 1:29, where the "new creation" is clearly eschatological.

[134] Other traditions interpreted the flood itself to prefigure the final judgment and new creation; cf. Streett, "As it Was."

[135] See Bergsma, *Jubilee*, 233–37; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 1196–97, 1199–1201.

[136] See the similar eschatological vision of Yom Kippur/Jubilee in 11QMelchizedek; 4Q463; ApocAb 13–14; Apocalypse of Weeks (1 En 91:11–17; 93:1–10); cf. Dan 9:24–27. Campbell, *Exegetical*, 60–61, suggests that 11QMelch iii 18, which may speak of "the divisions of the times," refers to the Book of Jubilees, perhaps Jub 50:5, given the similar themes.

3.2.1.2.3 Repentance and the Annual Remission of Sins

The transcendental and eschatological aspects of Yom Kippur are implied in Jubilees 5, but the author's main point is made explicit in 5:17–19. Here the author contrasts the Lord's judgment on the flood generation with his treatment of his people Israel. The flood generation was judged without mercy, so too the nations at the eschatological judgment prefigured by the flood. For Israel, however, as the heavenly tablets indicate, mercy can be obtained through repentance.[137] Once a year, Yom Kippur brings forgiveness and pardon of sins to "all who turn from their errors" (5:18). Jubilees clarifies Leviticus 16 on one key issue, making it clear that repentance was required if Yom Kippur was to be effective.[138] It may be that the author is comparing God's favorable disposition toward Noah with the favor he shows to Israel each year on Yom Kippur.[139] The similarity between Noah and Israel is only partial, however, as Noah is never said to sin, repent, or obtain forgiveness in Jubilees.[140]

3.2.2 Joseph the Scapegoat and Jacob's Self-Affliction (Jub 34:10–19)

The second explicit reference to Yom Kippur occurs in Jub 34:10–19, which tells how Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers.[141] As the story begins, Jacob sends Joseph to check on his brothers, whom he finds in the land of Dothan. There, his brothers sell him into slavery to Ishmaelites on their way to Egypt, where Joseph is bought by Potiphar. To cover up their misdeed, the brothers slaughter a goat, dip Joseph's clothing in its blood, and send it to Jacob,

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[137] Kugel, *Walk*, 55–56, suggests an alternative explanation for the contrast: "Before the flood, people were apparently not fully punished for their sins: that is how things had gotten out of hand, until God had no alternative but to destroy most of humanity and start over again." After the flood, however, to prevent the situation from repeating, "each and every sin committed would automatically be punished with the full force of the law."

[138] As Kugel, *Walk*, 56, notes, Lev 16:30 makes it sound as if atonement was "automatic, requiring nothing more than the release of the scapegoat and the ceremony in the temple." Cf. mShevuot 1:6. Notably absent from Jubilees's description of Yom Kippur here is any mention of sacrifice, temple ritual or sanctuary cleansing; rather, repentance alone effects forgiveness. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 289, attributes this to the pre-tabernacle narrative setting, but Jubilees elsewhere adapts temple/tabernacle rituals to the pre-tabernacle period.

[139] Isaiah 58:5 calls Yom Kippur a "day of favor" (יום רצון); cf. Hrobon, *Ethical*, 204.

[140] Contra Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 95, who sees Noah here as an example of repentance.

[141] On this episode, see Carmichael, "Story"; Douglas, *Jacob's Tears*, 38–61; Kugel, *Walk*, 166–67; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 928–35; Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 95–97; Körting, *Schall*, 283–86.

claiming he had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob reacts to the news with intense grief, mourning all night and day on the tenth day of the seventh month. The angel who is narrating the story to Moses concludes by explaining the connection to Yom Kippur:

> *For this reason, it has been ordained regarding the Israelites that they should be distressed on the tenth of the seventh month—on the day when (the news) which made (him) lament Joseph reached his father Jacob—in order to make atonement for themselves on it with a kid—on the tenth of the seventh month, once a year—for their sins. For they had saddened their father's (feelings of) affection for his son Joseph. This day has been ordained so that they may be saddened on it for their sins, all their transgressions, and all their errors; so that they may purify themselves on this day once a year (34:18–19).*

3.2.2.1 Jubilees's Adaptation of Genesis 37

The account in Jubilees is heavily compressed and selective when compared with its source in Genesis 37. Most notably, Jubilees omits: a) Joseph's prior dreams or activities, which provoke his brothers' animosity;[142] b) the roles of Reuben and Judah in the decision not to kill Joseph; c) the "coat of many colors" (כתנת פסים), which stokes the brothers' hatred, and is subsequently dipped in blood and presented to Jacob;[143] d) details of the brothers' treatment of Joseph, specifically the way they strip his coat and cast him into a pit prior to selling him into slavery. Jubilees also adds two significant elements: a chronological framework that locates Jacob's mourning on 7/10,[144] and a halakic pronouncement that the heavenly tablets designate 7/10 as an annual day of mourning and atonement.[145]

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[142] Cf. LAB 8:9; T.Jos. 1:3–4, which also depict the brothers' action as unprovoked.

[143] VanderKam, *Commentary,* 930, observes that the distinctive nature of the coat is important to the logic of Gen 37:31–32, since it would "leave no doubt in Jacob's mind about whose garment was blood-stained; in Jubilees he has to recognize less distinctive garb."

[144] Jacob receives the bloodied robe on the night of 7/10 and mourns all night and day—thus the entirety of 7/10 (Jub 34:13). This likely reflects Lev 23:32, which requires observance of Yom Kippur "from evening to evening." See Kugel, *Walk,* 167.

[145] Kugel, *Walk,* 56, 167, argues that Jub 5:17–18 is the work of the Interpolator, while Jub 34:10–19 comes from the Author, but 34:18–19 casts serious doubt on his view. According to Kugel, a distinctive of the Interpolator is the way he appeals to the heavenly tablets. In 34:18–19, though, the "Author" uses the same "legalese" (and reference to what is "ordained"—clear heavenly tablets terminology) that Kugel thinks is the trademark of the Interpolator. Kugel also holds that the Author sees Yom Kippur as automatically forgiving sins, while the Interpolator requires repentance. This can hardly be sustained in light of 34:18–19, which speak of the Israelites being "distressed" and "saddened for all their sins" on Yom Kippur. Cf. VanderKam, *Commentary,* 932–34.

3.2.2.2 Textual Stimuli for the Joseph-Yom Kippur Link

What textual stimuli in Genesis 37 may have led the author to find in this story an etiology for Yom Kippur? There are several elements to consider:[146]

1) Joseph's mistreatment takes place in the *wilderness* (Gen 37:22), just as Lev 16:10, 21, 22 requires that the scapegoat be taken to the wilderness.
2) Joseph is cast alive into a *waterless pit* (Gen 37:22).[147] Similarly, in BW, Asael/Azazel is cast alive into an "opening in the wilderness" (1 En 10:4) later described as a waterless "chasm" (1 En 18:11–12). This is modeled on the Yom Kippur ritual of the Second Temple period in which the scapegoat is thrown alive into a chasm or gorge.[148]
3) To cover up their misdeed, the brothers slaughter a goat and present its blood to Jacob as if it were the blood of Joseph (Gen 37:31). This evokes for the author of Jubilees the slaughtering of the goat for YHWH, whose blood is brought into the holy of holies to atone for the sanctuary and the people (Lev 16:9).
4) Jacob deeply mourns the fate of Joseph when he hears the news, even donning sackcloth (Gen 37:34–35). This recalls Lev 16:29–31, which requires the people to afflict their souls on Yom Kippur.[149]
5) Before they cast Joseph into the pit, the brothers remove Joseph's prized robe, which they later dip in the blood of a goat (Gen 37:23, 31). Jubilees omits this detail, but its presence in Genesis may have reminded the author of the High Priest's wardrobe changes throughout the Yom Kippur ritual. Many early Jewish texts dwell upon this

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[146] See Orlov, *Atoning*, 32–42; Dorman, "Commit," 57.

[147] Perhaps Jubilees connected the roughly homophonous שלך ("cast") in Gen 37:20 and שלח ("send out") in Lev 16:10, where it describes the sending away of the scapegoat.

[148] See above fn.121.

[149] Eth. *ḥamama*, used in Jubilees 34:10–19 to describe Jacob's mourning, translates ענה in Lev 16:29, 31. Later interpreters understood this "self-affliction" primarily as fasting, but mourning, including the use of sackcloth and ashes, was also involved (see Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 34–35; cf. Isa 58:3–5; Barn. 7:3–5).

aspect of the ritual[150] and later traditions link Joseph's robe to the high priest's garments. Some also connect the dipping of Joseph's robe in blood to the blood-manipulation of the Yom Kippur ritual.[151]

Given these textual links, it comes as no surprise that Jubilees is only the first of numerous Jewish traditions to link the story of Joseph with Yom Kippur. For example, the Jerusalem Talmud explains that the robe worn by the High Priest on Yom Kippur atones for "spillers of blood," citing Gen 37:31 where the brothers dip Joseph's robe in blood (yYoma 7:5). Similarly, TgPsJ Lev 9:3 explains the various animals used in the cult with reference to events in Israel's history. The sacrificial calf atones for the sin of the golden calf, the ram invokes the merit of Isaac at the Akedah, and the goat atones for the "affair of the male goat which the tribes of Jacob slaughtered in order to deceive their father."[152] It is not clear how early these traditions are, or how they are related to Jubilees, but they raise the possibility that the connection between Joseph and Yom Kippur may not be original to Jubilees.[153]

3.2.2.3 The Significance of Yom Kippur in Jubilees 34:10–19

In his reading of Genesis 37, the author festalizes the biblical account, overlaying the Joseph narrative with a Yom Kippur framework. He presents Genesis 37 as an etiology for two key elements of the holy day: the slaughter of the goat for YHWH and the requirement of self-affliction. Importantly, it does not seem that the author intends to depict Jacob actually observing Yom Kippur (especially on an annual basis); rather, he portrays his mourning as an event that Yom Kippur will later commemorate.[154] In this regard, Yom Kippur is distinct from

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[150] See, e.g., Philo, *Leg*. 2.50–56.

[151] See, e.g., yYoma 7:5; bZeb 88b; LevRab 10:6; bArak 16a. See Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 96–97; Boustan, *Martyr*, 88–89; Orlov, *Atoning*, 38–40.

[152] This intriguing passage also depicts the goat as an image of Satan (likely reflecting the interpretation of עזאזל in Leviticus 16 as an angelic/demonic figure) and explains that the sacrificial goat prevents Satan from slandering Israel over the Joseph affair.

[153] See Boustan, *Martyr*, 88, on the earliness of these rabbinic traditions.

[154] Indeed, in Jub 34:17, Jacob mourns for an entire year, which hardly fits the one-day-a-year character of Yom Kippur.

the other festivals, which were celebrated by the patriarchs prior to Sinai. It also does not seem to be a part of the eternal angelic festival calendar like the other festivals; rather, it is a historically contingent and holy day that is meant to deal with sin. In this sense, Jubilees seems quite different from Pseudo-Philo and the later rabbis, who understand Yom Kippur as part of the annual heavenly new year cycle in which God examines and judges all creation.[155]

By linking Yom Kippur with Genesis 37, the author not only transforms the scriptural text, but also infuses the festival with new significance. Yom Kippur becomes a day of remembrance, memorializing a dark moment in the patriarchal history. The ritual slaughter of the goat is reconceived as a reminder of the brothers' deception and their use of a goat's blood to "cover up" (כפר) their transgression. There are also halakic implications. Leviticus's terminology of "self-affliction" (Lev 16:29, 31) was understood in various ways during the Second Temple period (usually as fasting). With Jacob as a model, however, Jubilees focuses on the affective aspects.[156] Israel is to be "distressed" and "saddened" on Yom Kippur for all their "sins, transgressions, and errors" (34:18–19).[157] This three-part formula for sin draws on Lev 16:21 and makes it clear that Yom Kippur covers intentional sin, not just unintentional errors, a matter of much debate in Early Judaism.[158] The cleansing of sin, however, does not happen merely by virtue of the Yom Kippur sacrifice; repentant mourning is the key element that makes the ritual effective.[159]

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[155] See below p. 223.

[156] In Jub 34:13, Jacob mourns all night, perhaps reflecting the practice of a Yom Kippur vigil. According to bYoma 19b this was widely observed in the Second Temple period; cf. tYoma 1:9. See Tabory, "Early History," 285; Penner, *Patterns*, 165–66. It appears to have been modeled on the high priest's vigil the night before his service, which was intended to avoid nocturnal defilement.

[157] VanderKam, *Commentary*, 933, observes that in the Joseph narrative it is the brothers who have sinned but Jacob who is saddened. Thus, the connection with Yom Kippur—where those who mourn are precisely those who have sinned—is less than elegant. Perhaps Jubilees thinks of Yom Kippur as a time when the righteous mourn for the nation's sin (cf. Ezek 9:4).

[158] See mYoma 8:9. For the tripartite formula, cf. Jub 5:18–19; see Bautch, "Formulary"; Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 96.

[159] Contra Kugel, *Walk*, 167, 238, repentance is clearly in view here as in 5:18–19. Dorman, "Commit," 56, suggests that the author's halakic priorities might be influenced more by Lev 23:26–32 than Leviticus 16.

3.2.3 Conclusion

For Jubilees Yom Kippur is not a feast but a holy day of mourning, cleansing, and forgiveness. The author adduces two narratives from Genesis to explain its key elements. The judgment of the watchers and the flood generation provides the myth that accounts for the high priest's ritual actions.[160] On Yom Kippur the high priest imitates the highest angels, cleansing the land by binding and expelling the scapegoat, an action which also anticipates the eschatological cleansing of creation and expulsion of all evil. Similarly, Jubilees 34 festalizes the Joseph narrative, with its many verbal and conceptual links to Yom Kippur, to provide an etiology for Israel's practice of mourning and self-affliction on 7/10. Perhaps most important, while both stories provide etiologies for Yom Kippur, neither indicates that the holy day was observed prior to the giving of the law at Sinai. Like the Sabbath, therefore, it illustrates the author's understanding of progressive revelation.

3.3 Sukkot: Safety in the Sojourn

The last of the annual festivals is Sukkot, a week-long autumn pilgrimage festival that celebrates the ingathering of the harvest and looks forward to the beginning of the rainy season.[161] In this section, I discuss the two patriarchal observances of Sukkot narrated in Jubilees, paying special attention to their festal halakah, the textual stimuli that led to their creation, and the significance assigned to the festival in each episode.

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[160] Dorman, "Commit," 51–57, overstates Jubilees's disinterest in the temple ritual of Yom Kippur, though she correctly notes the emphasis on individual repentance. The individual aspect of Yom Kippur seems to have gained prominence during the Second Temple period, in part, perhaps, because the holy day was observed at home and did not require a pilgrimage.

[161] On Sukkot in the biblical tradition and later Judaism, see Rubenstein, *History*; Ulfgard, *Story*, 76–153; Delcor, "Fête"; MacRae, "Meaning"; Klayman, *Sukkot*; Vicent, *Cabañas*; Weyde, *Appointed*, 145–246; Leonhard, "Laubhüttenfest."

3.3.1 Abraham and the First Sukkot on Earth (Jub 16:15–31)

Jubilees 16 narrates the first observance of Sukkot in the book.[162] The angel of the presence recounts how he and his companions visited Abraham and Sarah at the oak of Mamre on the first day of the fourth month (16:1).[163] They announced that Sarah would conceive and promised that they would return to her "at a specific time" (*ba-gizē sa'āt*, 16:4). Sarah conceives in the sixth month, and Isaac is born nine months later (16:10–14). Genesis never narrates the second visit of the angels, so this inspires Jubilees to fill the gap.[164] According to Gen 18:14 the angels would return at a "set time" (מועד); naturally, Jubilees understands this to refer to a festival.[165] Thus, Jub 16:15–31 recounts the visit in a narrative flashback,[166] placing it at Sukkot in the 7th month, shortly after Sarah has conceived.[167] Because this entire episode is the author's addition to the Genesis account, it provides a helpful window into his understanding of the significance of Sukkot.

According to this account, Sukkot, which the author calls "the festival of tabernacles,"[168] was in the first instance a celebration of the good news of Isaac's conception and the promise that through Isaac would come a holy nation, the special possession of the Lord, a kingdom of priests

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[162] For commentary, see van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 189–94; Kugel, *Walk*, 102–105; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 537–51; Klayman, *Sukkot*, 120–37; Rubenstein, *History*, 93–98; Ulfgard, *Story*, 155–72.

[163] This occurs two weeks after Abraham is circumcised. For Jubilees, 4/1 is the summer solstice and may have been chosen because in Gen 18:1 Abraham is sitting at his tent door "in the heat of the day" (כחם היום).

[164] See Kugel, *Walk*, 102.

[165] See Jub 2:9 for another instance of מועד understood as "festival"; cf. Rudolph, "Festivals."

[166] The narrative flow here is confusing and disputed. It is not clear whether the Sukkot celebration takes place before or after Isaac's birth. Isaac's birth and circumcision are depicted in 16:10–14. The angels' visit in the seventh month is recounted in 16:16; when they visit they find Sarah pregnant, so this is almost certainly a flashback. It is not clear, however, whether 16:17–31 continue the flashback or resume the narrative. The dates in 15:1 and 16:15 favor a post-birth Sukkot celebration, but these are either the result of textual corruption or confusion on the part of the author. See VanderKam, *Commentary*, 537–38; Kugel, *Walk*, 102; van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 169, 189.

[167] This contrasts with other traditions, which saw the return visit as the moment of conception (reading Gen 18:10,14 to refer to conception, not to Sarah having *already* conceived). Interestingly, these traditions also place the visit at a festival in the seventh month, namely the fall new year (7/1). See, e.g. bRosh 10b–11a; GenRab 73; ExodRab 15:11; Mek. Pisḥa 14 (on Exod 12:41); Seder Olam Rabbah 5; possibly LAB 23:8.

[168] Jub 16:21, 29. This name comes from Deut 16:13; Lev 23:34. In Jub 16:27, Abraham is said to name Sukkot "the festival of the Lord," the name used in Lev 23:39. Notably absent here is the title, "festival of ingathering," as Sukkot is known in Exod 23:16; 34:22. Indeed, there is no explicit agricultural component to Sukkot in Jubilees 16, despite some scholarly attempts to find one (e.g. Ulfgard, *Story*, 168, who points to the "righteous plant" that is to come through Isaac [Jub 16:27]—a tenuous connection since this refers to sowing, not reaping); cf. Halpern, "Joy," 194, who thinks that the rescue motif here depicts "the ingathering of the patriarch"—this is unlikely, as the text does not use the language of ingathering. The use of the four species in the Sukkot liturgy (Jub 16:30–31) may indicate Sukkot's character as a firstfruits festival, but this is not emphasized in Jubilees 16.

(16:16–19). The festival Abraham celebrates is the result of his overwhelming joy (16:19), a point illustrated forcefully by the repeated use of terms related to "joy" in this account.[169] This fits well with the biblical festival laws commanding "joy" at Sukkot (Lev 23:39–40; Deut 16:14–15).

3.3.1.1 Sukkot Halakah in Jubilees 16

The author describes in some detail the ritual actions of Abraham in observing this first Sukkot. First, Abraham builds booths or tents for both himself and his servants (Jub 16:21).[170] This is prescribed in Lev 23:42, although that passage does not include slaves in the booth-dwelling ritual. Deut 16:14, on the other hand, includes slaves, but does not command the construction of booths.[171] Second, Abraham offers sacrifices on each of the seven days. These agree in kind, but not quantity, with the offerings prescribed for Sukkot in Num 29:12–39.[172] Third, Abraham takes "palm branches and the fruit of good trees" (Jub 16:31). An earlier verse mentions "leafy branches and willow branches from the stream" (16:30). Together, these comprise the four species which Lev 23:40 instructs the Israelites to take during Sukkot, presumably as a wave offering.[173]

Fourth, and perhaps most interesting, is the ritual of marching around the altar in a circle. Abraham takes the four species "and each and every day he would go around the altar with the branches—seven times per day" (16:31).[174] This ritual, not prescribed in the Bible, appears to be

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[169] In v20 (twice), 25, 27, 29. As van Ruiten, *Abraham*, 188, notes, the LXX transforms Sarah's laughter (Gen 18:9–15) into rejoicing (Gen 21:6; συγχαίρω), which matches Jubilees's portrayal of Sarah and Abraham's response to the events surrounding Isaac; cf. Segal, *Jubilees*, 305. Notably, Philo, *Spec*. 2.54, associates Sarah's laughter with festal joy, perhaps indicating that a festal placement of this episode was already an established tradition.

[170] Nothing in Jubilees indicates that the booths were constructed from the four species, as later Jewish tradition would require (suggested by Neh 8:15).

[171] See Finkelstein, "Jubilees," 51–55, on the issue of slaves and Gentiles at Sukkot. mSukk 2:8 exempts slaves from the law of the sukkah.

[172] Klayman, *Sukkot*, 124, 126, suggests that Jubilees's description may be influenced by the author's experience of contemporary temple practice. However, Halpern-Amaru, "Joy," 194, observes that the peace offering in Jub 16:23 may be modeled on Solomon's peace offering at Sukkot in 2 Chr 7:7 (cf. 1 Kgs 8:64). This is one of several instances where the Solomonic Sukkot has influenced Jubilees's portrait; cf. below, p. 127, on Jubilees 32 and Shemini Atzeret.

[173] Cf. Jos., *Ant*. 3.235; 13.372. In later Jewish tradition, the four species would be bound together to create the *lulav*; cf. mSukk 4:1–5.

[174] In v31 Abraham also praises God and gives thanks, possibly a reference to the Hallel; see VanderKam, *Commentary*, 550, for the numerous thematic links between the Hallel and the situation surrounding Abraham's Sukkot celebration. According to mSukk 4:5, the Hallel was a central part of the Sukkot liturgy.

how the author interprets the command to "rejoice before the Lord" (Lev 24:40). Circumambulation was a widespread liturgical ritual in the ancient world, often with a purificatory purpose.[175] In Psalm 26, perhaps composed for the Sukkot liturgy, the Psalmist washes his hands and circumambulates the altar, singing a song of thanksgiving (vv6–7).[176] Later rabbinic tradition would interpret this festal rite as a sort of rain dance, meant to ensure the needed precipitation for the year to come.[177] Jubilees is the earliest witness to this Sukkot ritual, which was likely controversial at the time (tSukk 3:1 indicates that the Boethusians opposed this ritual).

Finally, in Jub 16:30, the heavenly tablets prescribe that celebrants should "place wreaths on their heads" at Sukkot. Jubilees is the sole witness to this practice, which is not required in the Pentateuch. Wreaths were typical festal headwear in the ancient Mediterranean world. The gods were often depicted on ancient coins and other engravings with wreathed head, and clothing at festal times was meant to mirror the gods' own clothing, as they were thought to be perpetually in festal celebration.[178] This leads many to posit a Hellenistic influence on Jubilees at this point.[179] Given how widespread the practice was, though, it is not certain that the author of Jubilees would have seen it as distinctively Greek. This is again a halakic element that was likely controversial among Jews at the time of Jubilees and ultimately failed to become a widely observed Sukkot custom.[180]

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[175] For a recent full treatment, see Baudy, *Umgangsriten*. Of note, she explores the themes of mythic reenactment and of calendrical repetition in the ritual of circumambulation. According to mSukk 4:5 the temple practice follows the model of Josh 6:1–27 (where Jericho is circled six times on days 1–6 and seven times on day 7). Klayman, *Sukkot*, 125, detects possible Hellenistic influence from the *pompe* rite.

[176] See Pesiq. Rab Kah. 27. Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2043, thinks that altar-circling at Sukkot dates to the First Temple period. Cf. Sweeney, "Prophets," 37–39, who argues that the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal is set at Sukkot and that the prophets' "limping" (1 Kings 18:26) is a ritual circle-dance around the altar for Sukkot.

[177] mSukk 4:5–6; bSukk 37b–38a; cf. mRosh 1:2.

[178] See Brøns, *Gods*, 33–144, who provides numerous examples of wreaths and their uses in Greek religion; cf. Baus, *Kranz*.

[179] E.g., MacRae, "Meaning," 275; Schiffmann, *Courtyards*, 119; Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 7.154–71. Wreaths were especially notable in Dionysian rituals, an intriguing fact given Sukkot's likely origin as a celebration of the grape harvest. See Klayman, *Sukkot*, 128, for extensive discussion. Plut., *Quaest.conv*., 6.2, links the Dionysian festivals and Sukkot.

[180] Rubenstein, *History*, 53–54, though see his discussion of the Dura Europos painting which may depict a Sukkot procession including wreaths and *lulavs*.

3.3.1.2 An Angelic Origin for Sukkot?

3.3.1.2.1 The First Sukkot on Earth

Several elements suggest that the author imagines Sukkot to have—like Shavuot and the Sabbath—a heavenly or angelic precedent. In Jub 16:21, Abraham is said to be "the first to celebrate the festival of tabernacles on the earth."[181] By itself, this is an ambiguous statement, as "on the earth" could simply be pleonastic and need not imply that Sukkot could be celebrated in heaven.[182] Or, perhaps the author means that Abraham is the first to celebrate Sukkot "in the land," i.e. the Land of Israel. This is possible, but unlikely, given the way that Jubilees uses the same expression elsewhere. For example, regarding the Sabbath, the narrating angel explains, "We kept sabbath in heaven before it was made known to all humanity that on it they should keep sabbath on earth" (2:30).[183] Even more compelling is Jub 4:12, which uses phrasing almost identical to our passage: Enosh "was the first one to call on the Lord's name on the earth." Here the author refers to a specific liturgical activity that obviously occurred in heaven prior to its earthly observance.[184]

Moreover, the author of Jubilees likely considered it no mere coincidence that Abraham celebrates Sukkot just after he has been visited by the angels. Perhaps, the author reasoned, it was precisely on this visit that the angels instructed Abraham about how Sukkot should be observed. Finally, the author may have noticed that *already* in Gen 18:10, 14, the angels refer to the time at which they will return as a festival. This perhaps implied that Sukkot was already

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[181] Weitzman, "Revisiting," 49; VanderKam, *Commentary,* 543.

[182] Thus Kugel, *Walk*, 245, who attributes the statement to the Author. In Kugel's view, it is the Interpolator, not the Author, who thinks that the festivals have heavenly archetypes.

[183] Cf. Jub 2:18: God "told us [the higher angels] to keep Sabbath with him in heaven and on earth."

[184] Cf. 16:28, where the narrating angel says, "We blessed [Abraham] eternally and all the descendants who would follow him throughout all the history of the earth because he had celebrated this festival at its time in accord with the testimony of the heavenly tablets." Sukkot halakah is "ordained forever" in the heavenly tablets (vv28–30) and Abraham's festal praxis is judged by angels to be in accordance with those pre-existent requirements. In v27, the angels' judgment recalls the role of priests in evaluating sacrifices, as they deem Abraham's celebration "acceptable to the most high God." Cf. Jub 4:2, where the angels "accept" Abel's sacrifice but do not "accept" Cain's.

known to and observed by the angels, as they refer to it as a known feast before it had ever been celebrated by humans.

3.3.1.2.2 Angelic Liturgy and Apparel at Sukkot?

It is also possible that the author highlights aspects of Abraham's Sukkot celebration in order to draw a parallel with angelic worship of God. Did the author think that circling the altar imitated a similar angelic action in heavenly worship? It was commonplace to depict the angelic hosts in a circle around the divine throne,[185] and later sources portray angels engaged in an eternal heavenly circle-dance.[186] Similarly, the wreaths worn at Sukkot may be thought to mirror angelic apparel.[187] In TLevi 8:9, when Levi is invested with the priesthood, a wreath is placed upon his head.[188] This is notable because the text makes a clear link between the priestly garments given to Levi and the garments worn by his angelic priestly predecessors. So also in Jubilees, Levi's ordination is his angelification (significantly, this ordination occurs at Sukkot; Jub 32:1–9).[189]

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[185] See the heavenly scenes in 1 Enoch 14, Daniel 7, Revelation 4–5.

[186] Hekhalot Rabbati §153; §189; §198; §276; Basil, *Epistle* 40; in the Acts of John 95–96, the circular dance of the disciples around Jesus is almost certainly meant to imitate the angels, as is the χορεία of Philo's Therapeutae (*Contempl*. 83–85). Philo, *Cher*. 7, also says that the heavenly elements are engaged in a circular dance. Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Protr*. 12.119.1–2; 12.120.2. Miller, *Measures*, explores in-depth the relationship between dance and cosmology in the ancient world. Early Islamic tradition refers to angels eternally circumambulating the Ka'ba shrine, an act imitated by pilgrims to Mecca (see Burge, *Angels*, 216).

[187] Angels wear στέφανοι in Jos.Asen. 14:8; Rev 10:1; 3 Bar. 6:2; 7:4; 8:1–4; T.Job 43:14. See Klayman, *Sukkot*, 129–31; cf. Aune, *Revelation*, 172–76, for an extensive list of ancient sources that depict gods and other heavenly personnel crowned with wreaths. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, 7:154–17, argues for a Dionysian origin for the wreaths, processions, and θύρσοι of Sukkot.

[188] Cf. T.Levi 8:2; Jos., *Ant*. 3.172 uses στέφανος for the priestly crown; so also Philo, *Mos*. 2.114. Klayman, *Sukkot*, 129, observes that in the HB the high priest's diadem or headband could be wreath-like, as it appears to have a rosette or floral decoration.

[189] Reinforcing the heavenly/angelic origin of Sukkot is the repeated septenary symbolism related to the festival in this passage. In all, the term "seven" is used twelve times just in this episode: a) Sukkot occurs in the seventh month (16:29); b) lasts seven days (16:29); c) its sacrifices involve seven lambs, seven rams, seven sheep, and seven goats (16:22–23); d) its incense offering has seven ingredients (16:24); e) Abraham circles the altar seven times per day (16:31); f) Sukkot was first celebrated at Beersheva (i.e. "the seven wells"; 16:20). Is the author thus attempting to tie Sukkot to the septenary structure of the calendar and creation?

3.3.1.2.3 Angelic Sukkot Worship in the Psalms

In the LXX, Psalm 28 (MT 29) may indicate that the idea of angelic Sukkot worship was not limited to Jubilees or sectarian Judaism. The Psalm's inscription identifies its liturgical setting: ἐξοδίου σκηνῆς. Most agree that this is a reference to the eighth day of Sukkot, known as Shemini Atzeret (שמיני עצרת). ἐξόδιον is the LXX's preferred translation for עצרת.[190] B. Sommer describes the genre of the psalm as "heavenly praise."[191] The psalmist addresses heavenly beings (בני אלים/υἱοὶ θεοῦ) and enjoins them to offer praise and sacrifices to the Lord in his heavenly temple (vv1–2).[192] The Psalm uses storm imagery (thunder and lightning in v3) suitable to Sukkot, which preceded the yearly rains.[193] According to Sommer, the Psalm envisions "joint human-angelic worship,"[194] or perhaps angelic worship *directed* by a human priest[195]—remarkably in line with Jubilees's vision of joint human-angelic worship at Sukkot.

3.3.1.3 The Significance of Sukkot in Jubilees 16

The pentateuchal texts offer different rationales for Sukkot but largely depict it as an agricultural festival that celebrates the ingathering of the harvest (Exod 23:16; 34:22; Deut 16:13ff). Deut 16:13 calls Sukkot "the festival of booths," but does not explain the name or command Israel to build or dwell in booths during the festival. That requirement is present only in Lev 23:42–43, which uses the same name for the festival, but goes further, linking the name and practice to the exodus: "You shall live in booths for seven days; all that are citizens in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt." This explanation is a bit forced, as Israel

[190] Lev 23:36; Num 29:35; Deut 16:8; 2 Chr 7:9; Neh 8:18 (all except Deut 16:8 refer to Shemini Atzeret). See MacRae, "Meaning," 264; Sommer, "Little Higher." mSop 8:3 assigns it to Pentecost, likely because of perceived references to Sinai.

[191] Sommer, "Little Higher," 129.

[192] Verse 2 mentions the holy αὐλή, while v9 describes praise in the ναός.

[193] Sommer, "Little Higher," 138.

[194] Sommer, "Little Higher," 129.

[195] Sommer, "Little Higher," 152.

dwelled in tents, not booths, during their sojourn. Many scholars therefore conjecture that the practice probably sprang from the use of temporary field shelters during the busy harvest season. The priestly tradition then attempted to add a memorial significance to the festival by linking it (albeit tenuously) to the "booths" of the wilderness sojourn.[196]

In Jubilees, Abraham *constructs* booths for the festival (16:21). This is notable because Abraham is already living as a sojourner in tents;[197] thus, the booths are specially constructed dwellings for use in the festival only. This implies that the booths in this episode are not intended to memorialize the nomadic lifestyle of the sojourner. Moreover, the exodus has not yet occurred, so Abraham's Sukkot cannot memorialize Israel's exodus from Egypt. Thus, it seems that Jubilees rejects the etiology of Sukkot offered by Lev 23:42–43, or at least does not think it tells the whole story.[198] As with other festivals, the author reads Sukkot back into the patriarchal period (and beyond) to show that it was not an innovation of Sinai and not primarily a memorial of the exodus.

Jubilees's version of Sukkot nevertheless dovetails thematically with the Levitical etiology, as it portrays Abraham's Sukkot as a memorial of the patriarch's own "exodus" and "wandering." Abraham rejoices because "the Lord had rescued him and was making him so happy in the country where he resided as an alien" (16:20). This may refer to his departure from Ur (and Haran)[199] or, perhaps, to his deliverance from Egypt, after which Abram "blessed the Lord his God who had brought him back safely" (13:15). For obvious reasons, both of Abraham's departures (from Ur and from Egypt) were seen by ancient readers as foreshadowing Israel's own deliverance.[200] For Jubilees, then, Abraham's Sukkot celebrates the same kind of divine

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[196] Cf. Rubenstein, *History*, 13–20, 31–50; MacRae, "Meaning"; Scott, *Booths*, 113.

[197] See Jub 13:5, 15; cf. 19:13; 29:13.

[198] See Rubenstein, "Sukkot," 173.

[199] Cf. Jub 13:7, where Abram "blessed the Lord who had led him from Ur of the Chaldeans and brought him to this mountain"—a clear parallel to the rationale for Sukkot in Jub 16:20.

[200] See, especially, GenRab 40:6. This may be intended in the final composition of the Pentateuch; see, e.g., the parallel between Gen 15:7 and Exod 20:2. D. Sheriffs speaks of a "consensus among commentators on the implicit typology between the exodus from Ur and the exodus from Egypt" (*Friendship*, 46). Cf. Zakovitch "Exodus"; Van Seters, *Abraham*, 216, 264; Geoghegan, "Abrahamic."

actions—rescue and preservation during sojourn[201]—that Leviticus would later connect to the festival. Thus, the Mosaic innovations merely supplement and do not supplant the already established patriarchal meaning of the feast.[202]

3.3.2 Jacob's Sukkot and the Addition of the Eighth Day (Jub 32:1–29)

The second Sukkot episode in Jubilees involves Abraham's grandson, Jacob, and comes at the end of a narrative arc concerning Jacob's vow to God. In Jubilees 27:19–27, as Jacob was fleeing Esau, he spent the night at Bethel where he dreamt of a ladder to heaven and received promises of protection, land, and descendants from the Lord. In response, Jacob anoints a pillar and pledges to return one day to build a proper shrine and pay a tithe to the Lord.

In Jubilees 31, after Jacob and Esau have reconciled, Jacob returns to Bethel (on 7/1) to fulfill his vow (v1). He builds an altar, then visits his parents to invite them to join him in his sacrifice (v3). Isaac is unable, but Rebekah and Deborah accompany Jacob back to Bethel (vv27–30). On the night they arrive at Bethel, Jacob's son Levi has a dream in which he is ordained as a priest (32:1). This confirms a blessing he had received from his grandfather Isaac on their recent trip (31:11–17). Jacob then fulfills his vow by devoting to the Lord a tenth of all his possessions, including his children (32:2). Counting up from Benjamin (who is *in utero Rahel*), Jacob identifies Levi as the tenth and thus dedicates him to the Lord, robing him in priestly garments and ordaining him.[203] Levi's first priestly act takes place on the first day of Sukkot (7/15) as he mediates Jacob's manifold offerings (32:4–9).[204]

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[201] Reinforcing the sojourning motif is the fact that Abraham has just migrated from Gerar (גרר, Jub 16:10), a toponym related to the term for "sojourner" (גר).

[202] Jubilees does, however, significantly depart from the biblical Sukkot regulations about the place of foreigners at Sukkot. In Deut 16:14, "strangers" are to participate in Sukkot festivities, while Zech 14:16–19 envisions foreign nations making pilgrimage to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkot (and being cursed if they do not). Jub 16:25, on the other hand, says of Abraham that "there was no foreigner with him, nor anyone who was uncircumcised." In this way, as Kugel, *Walk*, 104, 245, notes, Jubilees has extended to Sukkot a restriction that applied to Passover, which limited the festival only to the circumcised.

[203] See T.Levi 9:3–4; PRE 37 for Levi as Jacob's human tithe.

[204] For a comparison of the offerings, which continue over the next seven days, with the biblical prescriptions for Sukkot, see VanderKam, *Commentary*, 879–81.

On the evening of 7/22[205] Jacob decides to make Bethel into a permanent temple-city for his family, complete with a courtyard and wall (v16). In response, the Lord appears to Jacob in a dream, blessing him, granting him the name "Israel,"[206] and reiterating his promise to give Jacob numerous descendants, a powerful dynasty, and a vast territorial inheritance (vv17–19). Jacob then has a second vision: an angel descends with seven tablets for Jacob to read and copy (v21).[207] The angel tells Jacob to return to Isaac at Hebron and to forsake his temple-building plans for Bethel because the tablets reveal a different future for him and his family. In response to this angelic revelation and the information on the tablets, Jacob celebrates one more day at Bethel. He calls the seven days of Sukkot, "the Festival,"[208] and the eighth day, "Retention," just as it is written on the heavenly tablets (v28).

3.3.2.1 Textual Stimuli for the Bethel-Sukkot Link

The material in Jubilees 31–32 is almost entirely absent from Genesis 35.[209] It is not, however, simply the creation of the author of Jubilees, as he has relied on the Aramaic Levi Document, which predates Jubilees and makes it clear that Jacob traveled to Bethel to fulfill his earlier vow—something not clear in the biblical text.[210] ALD also presents Jacob's trip as the occasion for Levi's ordination.[211] Jubilees, however, provides the account with a festal framework not found in Genesis or ALD. According to Jubilees 31–32, Jacob leaves for Bethel on 7/1, tithes and

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[205] For Jubilees, since the day begins in the evening, this takes place immediately after Sukkot has officially ended.

[206] On this episode, see especially Hayward, *Interpretations*, 112–55.

[207] The second vision in toto is an addition to the Genesis account. According to Rapp, *Jakob*, 236–41, the angel's anonymity and the reference to seven tablets (not called the heavenly tablets—they appear only here in Jubilees) indicate that this part of the story is not the creation of the author but is drawn from a source. For the tradition of an angelic vision during Jacob's second sojourn at Bethel, see GenRab 82:2–3, where it is derived from a reading of Hos 12:4, "He strove with the angel and prevailed, he wept and sought his favor; he [Jacob] met him [i.e. the angel] at Bethel, and there he spoke with him." The tradition of Jacob's vision of the tablets appears in Pr.Jos. frg. B, with no indication that Jubilees is the basis for that text.

[208] Cf. 1 Kings 8:2, 65; Ezek 45:25.

[209] See discussion in Schwartz, "Jubilees"; Eshel, "Jubilees 32." On the Bethel narrative in ancient Judaism, see Rapp, *Jakob*, 165–254; 293–96; Kugler, *Patriarch*, 139–70.

[210] ALD is widely considered to be older than Jubilees and likely a source for Jubilees (Crawford, *Rewriting*, 65; Stone, "Aramaic," 429). Others posit a common source for the two, but still see ALD as older (Greenfeld, et al, *Aramaic*, 19–22; Kugler, *Patriarch*, 146–55; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 90–93). Kugel, *Walk*, 343–64, holds that ALD is later than Jubilees and that it used Jubilees as a source.

[211] ALD 5:1–5.

ordains Levi on 7/14, celebrates Sukkot from 7/15 to 7/21, and because of his vision on 7/22 celebrates an eighth day as well.

3.3.2.1.1 Jacob's Water Libation

In linking Jacob's visit to Sukkot, it appears that the author followed several textual stimuli in both the biblical text and the traditions he inherited. First, he undoubtedly noticed that in Gen 35:14, Jacob pours out a drink offering at Bethel. Perhaps this brought to mind the water and wine libation of Sukkot.[212] The connection is clear in the later Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, which says that Jacob set up "a pillar of stone and he offered a libation of wine and a libation of water on it—for thus would his children do on the Feast of Tabernacles."[213]

3.3.2.1.2 Succoth=Bethel?

Second, it is possible that Jubilees connects Bethel with the "Succoth" (סכת/סכות) mentioned in Gen 33:17. While these two places seem clearly distinct in Genesis, they were apparently not so to ancient interpreters, who read Succoth not as a place name, but as a reference to the "booths" in which Jacob dwelt as he celebrated Sukkot *at Bethel*.[214]

3.3.2.1.3 Vows and Tithes

Third, Jubilees may have connected the fulfillment of vows and the offering of tithes with Sukkot. As noted above, Jubilees follows the ALD and has Jacob visit Bethel in order to fulfill his

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[212] See mSukk 4:3, 9.

[213] TgPsJ Gen 35:14. The Targum is probably not directly dependent on Jubilees but may have been familiar with a tradition placing the Bethel episode at the festival (thus Hayward, "Second," 168). Unlike Jubilees, however, the Targum presents Jacob's actions as merely prefiguring Sukkot, not as an actual observance of Sukkot.

[214] Thus GenRab 78:16, which also mentions annual water libations offered by Jacob during his stay at Bethel. bMeg 17a closely connects Succoth and Bethel and states that Jacob spent six months sacrificing at Bethel, which likely implies festal activity from Sukkot to Passover. See Schwartz, "Jubilees," 83–84, who thinks this tradition may show knowledge of Jubilees. Eshel, "Jubilees 32," 29, notes also the possible link between Bethel and Sukkot in *Apocryphon of Joshua* B (4Q379), frg. 26, where she reconstructs the reading "God built his *sukko* in Bethel."

vow.[215] But, Jubilees goes further than the ALD by placing this pilgrimage at Sukkot and adding extensive halakic material on the second tithe, a hotly disputed issue in the Second Temple period.[216] Jubilees 32:10–15 claims that the second tithe is commanded in the heavenly tablets and was observed by the patriarchs. For Jubilees, since Sukkot is a required pilgrimage at the end of the harvest season, it is a natural time to offer the second tithe on all required crops.[217] The Temple Scroll, notably, implies that the second tithe was offered at Sukkot,[218] and the traditional Torah reading for the eighth day of Sukkot begins with the laws concerning tithes and ends with laws concerning Sukkot (Deut 14:22–29; 16:13–17).[219] Thus, it appears, the emphasis on tithes and vows made upon pilgrimage to a holy place may have contributed to the author's choice to give the narrative a festal framework.[220]

3.3.2.1.4 Temples and Priests

Finally, the theme of temple-building or cultic dedication may have prompted the author to link Jacob's trip with Sukkot. According to Jubilees, Jacob intends to construct a cultic center at Bethel, but an angelic vision dissuades him: "[Do not] build up this place, and do not make it an eternal temple. Do not live here because this is not the place" (Jub 32:22). God has chosen Jerusalem, not Bethel, as the place for his name; thus, this episode looks forward to the building of Solomon's temple as the true "house of God."[221] Indeed, Jacob here foreshadows David, who

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[215] This vow is made when Jacob is first at Bethel (Gen 28:19–22). While Genesis narrates the vow, it does not explicitly portray Jacob fulfilling that vow on his return trip to Bethel (Gen 35:1–15). The rewritten tradition in ALD 5 fills this lacuna, as do later Jewish texts, e.g. GenRab 81:1; yNed 1.1. Jubilees, taking its cue from ALD, fabricates two additional parts of the story from Genesis 28: a) Jacob states that he will return to his father's house (Gen 28:21), which he does in Jub 31:5; b) Jacob promises to build a temple at Bethel upon his return (Gen 28:22). Jubilees 32:16ff recounts Jacob's intention to fulfill this promise, something the Genesis narrative does not make clear.

[216] See Kugel, *Walk*, 152–53. Unlike later rabbinic traditions, Jubilees requires an annual second tithe. See Schiffman, "Priestly," 488–89.

[217] TgPsJ 1 Sam 1:21 depicts Elkanah fulfilling a vow at Sukkot. Cf. Rubenstein, *History*, 56.

[218] 43.1–17 discusses the second tithe just after the prescriptions for Sukkot.

[219] bMeg 31a.

[220] Klayman, *Sukkot*, 135 notes many elements in the narrative that might reflect the experience of Sukkot pilgrims, including the preparation and cleansing involved, the tithes made, and the eating of sacrifices.

[221] In light of Jerusalem's centrality, ancient interpreters struggled to make sense of the name "Bethel" ("house of God") and Jacob's dedication of Bethel as a shrine. Some rabbinic traditions solved the problem by interpreting Bethel as a cipher for Jerusalem (bPes 88a; TgPsJ Gen 38:22; TgNeo Gen 38:22) so that Jacob's actions at Bethel foreshadow the

also planned to build a house for God and was told that God had other plans.[222] And, just as David received from God a blueprint of the future temple (1 Chron 28:12, 19), so Jacob is shown the heavenly tablets which reveal God's plans (Jub 32:21). Mroczek summarizes: "for both [traditions], the denial and deferral of an *earthly* temple become an occasion for revelation about ideal temples and correct worship."[223]

The allusion to Solomon's temple is significant because according to the biblical tradition it was dedicated at Sukkot (2 Chron 5:3).[224] Solomon holds the festival for seven days plus an assembly (עצרת) on the eighth day (2 Chron 7:8–10). Immediately after the festival, Solomon has a night-vision in which the Lord tells him, "I have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice" (2 Chron 7:12). In Jubilees, likewise, Jacob has a night-vision immediately after Sukkot, but he is told *not* to build a temple at Bethel because it is *not* the place (32:17, 22).[225]

The construction of the Second Temple was also linked to Sukkot. In Ezra 3, the returning exiles make pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the seventh month to rebuild the altar, fulfill their vows, and celebrate Sukkot (vv1–6)—the same sequence found in Jubilees's Bethel narrative. Along the same lines, it is on the seventh day of Sukkot that Haggai delivers his oracle to the gathered pilgrims in which he contrasts the humble beginning of the Second Temple with the eschatological splendor it will receive from the Lord (Haggai 2).

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construction of the Jerusalem temple. See Schwartz, "Jubilees," 82. Jubilees, on the other hand, clearly distinguishes the two, and thus tells how Jacob was thwarted because of God's plans for Jerusalem. See Lipton, *Revisions*, 97–98.

[222] On the Davidic parallel, see esp. Mroczek, "Temple." Hayward, *Interpretations*, 136, notes that, just as with David, Jacob is told that he will not build the Lord a house (i.e. temple), but rather the Lord will build him a house (i.e. dynasty).

[223] Mroczek, "Temple," 513 (emphasis original). Cf. Goudoever, *Calendars*, 69; contra Schwartz, "Jubilees," 71.

[224] Eshel, "Jubilees 32," 27.

[225] The visions also have in common the promise of an eternal Davidic dynasty.

3.3.2.2 The Significance of Sukkot in Jubilees 32

3.3.2.2.1 Sukkot and Israel's Angel-like Priesthood

In addition to portraying Sukkot as a festival for tithes and the celebration of the temple's construction, Jubilees also ties the feast to Levi's priestly ordination, which takes place at Bethel the day before the feast. Genesis, of course, never identifies Levi as a priest, but this was a common idea in many Second Temple texts.[226] What is notable in Jubilees is how Levi's priesthood is likened to angelic activity. Thus, Isaac prophesies that Levi and his descendants will have the exclusive right "out of all humanity" to "approach him [the Lord] to serve in his temple like the angels of the presence and like the holy ones" (Jub 31:14).[227] Levi's service on earth is parallel to the highest angels' service in heaven; indeed, it is possible that Levi is seen as having access to the actual heavenly temple. As a confirmation of Isaac's prophetic blessing, Levi has a dream (on the night before Sukkot) in which he is ordained (32:1). This story is quite brief in Jubilees but draws on a much fuller version in the Aramaic Levi Document (or, perhaps more likely, a tradition common to both).[228] In the ALD, Levi enters in a visionary state into the heavenly temple (4:4–6), where he is anointed and ordained by seven angels (4:11–12); this again emphasizes the angelic origin and nature of his priesthood.[229]

Some scholars speculate that during the Second Temple period Sukkot had become the festival at which new priests were ordained to serve in the temple.[230] In 1 Macc 10:17–20, for example, Jonathan is installed as high priest at Sukkot. Further, the sacrifices in Jubilees 32 match the rite of priestly ordination better than the rites of Sukkot.[231] If this is the case, then it

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[226] See Kugel, "Levi's Elevation."

[227] For the comparison between priests and angels, see Malachi 2; 1QSb 4.24–26; PRE 37. The theme is thoroughly explored in Angel, *Otherworldly*, esp. 36–45; cf. VanderKam, "Blessing"; Fletcher-Louis, *Glory*, 14–17.

[228] On ALD's date and relation to Jubilees, see above p. 29.

[229] Although the text is fragmentary, the seven appear to be what Jubilees calls "the angels of the presence." Cf. T.Levi 8. ALD places Levi's dream before he visits his grandfather Isaac, but Jubilees relocates the dream so that it occurs just before Sukkot. Notably, Zech 3:1–7 likely depicts priestly ordination at the hands of a chief angel; cf. Sweeney, *Twelve*, 593; Petersen, *Haggai*, 199–200; Boda, *Zechariah*, 240–41; cf. also 2 En 22:8–10.

[230] Schiffman, *Courtyards*, 108; Regev, *Hasmoneans*, 43–45.

[231] Schiffman, *Courtyards*, 108.

would be quite natural for Jubilees to locate Levi's ordination at Sukkot. This has the effect, in turn, of portraying Sukkot as a festival that emphasizes the link between Israel's priestly service and the heavenly service of the angels.

3.3.2.2.2 Shemini Atzeret

Perhaps the author's primary goal in narrating Jacob's Sukkot is to supply an etiology for Shemini Atzeret, the eighth day of Sukkot. In Jubilees 32, immediately following Sukkot,[232] Jacob receives two night visions, one of the Lord[233] and one of an angel (Jub 32:16–29). In the first, largely taken from Gen 35:9–13, Jacob's name is changed to Israel and he is promised a powerful dynasty.[234] In the second vision—not reported in Genesis—an angel descends with seven tablets that depict the future as well as a previously unknown festal requirement, i.e. the command to observe an additional festal day after Sukkot. When Jacob awakes, he celebrates this eighth day of Sukkot, known as "Addition" or "Retention,"[235] by repeating sacrifices proper to Sukkot.[236]

The 8th day of Sukkot is known as עצרת in Lev 23:36 and Num 29:35, where the term almost certainly refers to the special "assembly" held on this day.[237] Pentateuchal references to the 8th day appear only in the Priestly texts and do not portray it as integral to the festival calendar.[238] It

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[232] Jub 32:16 dates the visions to the evening of 7/22. The new day begins in the evening for Jubilees; thus, this is immediately after Sukkot ends.

[233] Genesis uses אלהים, not יהוה, to refer to the object of the vision here.

[234] On Jubilees's treatment of the names Jacob/Israel, see Hayward, *Interpretations*, 112–55.

[235] Cf. VanderKam, *Commentary*, 894–95, for extensive discussion of the linguistic issues here and the difference between the Ethiopic and Latin. He favors the meaning "detaining," as does Hayward, *Interpretations*, 140. Kugel, *Walk*, 267–71, argues that the Hebrew text of Jubilees would have used two distinct terms for the name of the eighth day in v27 and v29, each representing a different understanding of the festival. Kugel's Author interprets עצרת as "retention" (v27) which alludes to Jacob's being held back as a patriarchal precedent for the eighth day. On the other hand, Kugel's Interpolator thinks that the proper name of the festival (in the heavenly tablets) is "addition" (תוספת; vv28–29), because it is "added" to the seven days of the festival. The Hebrew text, however, is not extant for this section and both the Ethiopic and Latin texts have the same word in vv27 and 29; i.e. they do not point to two different terms in their *Vorlagen*. A better explanation is the textual corruption posited by Ronsch (see below).

[236] This, despite Num 29:35–38, which prescribes different sacrifices for the eighth day than the previous seven. Jubilees perhaps shows its desire here to fully merge Shemini Atzeret with Sukkot, a development attested in 2 Macc 10:6, where Sukkot is described simply as an eight-day celebration.

[237] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2029–30; cf. Kutsch, "Wurzel," 65–67. LXX translates it ἐξόδιον, which is a technical term for the final day of a festival (LSJ, s.v. "ἐξόδιον").

[238] See Lev 23:36, 39, 40, where the text consistently portrays Sukkot as a seven-day festival; the eighth day is mentioned separately. Cf. Num 29:12, 35. See Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2029, 2032; Scott, "Booths," 110–11.

seems to have been a matter of some debate in the Second Temple period. Nehemiah 8:18 suggests that it was unknown to the returning exiles. Similarly, in the Deuteronomistic account of Solomon's Sukkot (1 Kings 8:66) the people are sent away on the eighth day—there is no celebration.[239] The Chronicler's version, however, tells of a "solemn assembly" (עצרת) on the eighth day (7/22) and has the people depart on 7/23 (2 Chron 7:8–10).

Jubilees 32, then, is meant to provide a patriarchal precedent for this disputed holiday. The author stakes out his position in the debate: עצרת is prescribed in the heavenly tablets and commemorates the revelation Jacob received on that night at Bethel. Further, Jubilees proposes an explanation of the name עצרת. It did not originally refer to a cultic assembly, but to the way Jacob was "kept back" at Bethel an eighth day to receive this revelation from God.[240]

3.3.2.2.3 Sukkot and Jacob's Preservation

Finally, we may note that just as Abraham's Sukkot in Jubilees 16 celebrated how God had delivered him from danger and preserved him during his wanderings, so Jacob's Sukkot has a similar purpose. When Jacob first announces his intention to make a pilgrimage to Bethel, he states that he will there celebrate how God "brought [him] back safely to this land" when he had escaped his brother Esau's revenge (31:1). These themes of deliverance and preservation are invoked again as he sacrifices at Bethel, "praising the Lord who had freed him from all his difficulties and who had granted him his vow" (32:7). The vow to which he refers, of course, was made on his initial stay at Bethel: "If the Lord is with me and guards me on this road on which I am traveling and gives me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father's

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[239] See Pakkala, *Ezra*, 160–64; Weyde, *Appointed*, 113.

[240] Kugel, *Walk*, 158, proposes that the Hebrew text would have read, "he called its name 'Retention' (עצרת) because he was held back (נעצר) there for a day." The Latin text has "retention," while the Ethiopic reads, "addition." Ronsch, *Jubiläen*, 148, plausibly suggests that the difference is due to confusion at the Greek stage in which ἐπίσχεσις was read by the Ethiopic translator as ἐπίθεσις (scribal confusion of *sigma* [C] and *theta* [Θ] was common due to their similar form). One possibility scholars have not considered is the presence of a numerological justification for Atzeret in Jub 32:29: it is "in accord with the number of days in the year." The gematria value of עצר is 360, i.e. the number of days in early solar calendar traditions; alternatively, עצרה (used in 2 Kings 10:20; Joel 1:13; 2:15) would be 365.

house …" (27:27). In other words, Jacob summarizes his experience—like his grandfather, Abraham—in terms that evoke the exodus and wilderness wanderings of Israel, the very events memorialized by Sukkot in the Priestly tradition.

3.3.3 Summary

Jubilees's two Sukkot stories have much in common, despite their surface differences. Both rely on biblical expansions and recount seventh-month patriarchal feasts of joy celebrating God's deliverance and special provision. Both emphasize that Sukkot and its halakah are eternal, written in the heavenly tablets. Indeed, Sukkot was originally a heavenly festival celebrated by the angels; Abraham was just the first to observe these holy days on earth. In the same vein, Jacob's Sukkot marks the beginning of the Levitical priesthood, which has its ultimate origin in the heavenly priesthood of the holy angels. Appropriately, it is angels who reveal to Jacob the heavenly tablets containing the halakah for the eighth day of the feast.

As we have seen before, Jubilees presents a story of progressive revelation: Sukkot is not revealed to humans until Abraham, and Shemini Atzeret is not disclosed until Jacob. In the author's mind, the full significance of the festival is likely not explained until Sinai, when it takes on the additional function of commemorating Israel's exodus and preservation. Nevertheless, Jubilees narrates the patriarchal versions of the feast so that they anticipate the same themes of deliverance and protection emphasized in the Priestly festival calendar. Here, again, Jubilees festalizes the Scriptures by responding to elements in the text that might suggest a festal setting. Further, by portraying the specifics of these patriarchal festal observances, Jubilees makes an argument that several disputed halakot (circumambulation, the second tithe, the eighth day) are in fact ancient and legitimate.

3.4 The Four Memorial Days: Marking the Seasons

The final festivals to be considered are unique to Jubilees. These are the four "memorial days" or "days of the seasons" (Jub 6:23), which occur on the first day of the first, fourth, seventh and tenth months.[241] Their calendrical function is to divide the year into four seasons of thirteen weeks, yielding a complete year of 52 weeks (6:29–30). They fall at the solstices (4/1, 10/1) and equinoxes (1/1, 7/1) of the solar cycle, i.e. "between the seasons."[242]

Jubilees appears to derive this concept from the Enochic tradition, where the Astronomical Book (AB) presents a calendar of 360 days (12 months of 30 days each) plus four intercalary days at the end of the third, sixth, ninth, and twelfth month. These intercalary days thus fall on the 31st day of those months where they mark the end of the seasons.[243]

3.4.1 Noah and the Memorial Days

In Jubilees, however, the memorial days are one day later and begin the seasons. They are eternal ordinances (6:23–24, 28–31), but they are given additional meaning after Noah's flood, as Noah specifically designates them as "festivals" that commemorate key dates in the progress of the deluge (6:24):[244]

- 1/1 Noah is instructed to build the ark (Jub 6:25)
- 4/1 The abysses and floodgates close (5:29; 6:26)
- 7/1 Waters begin to recede (5:29; 6:26)

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[241] For discussions of the memorial days in Jubilees, see VanderKam, *Commentary*, 322–24; Kugel, *Walk*, 66–68; Ben-Dov, *Head*, 21–51.

[242] See Jub 29:16, where Jacob sends food to his mother Rebecca "four times per year—between the seasons of the months, between plowing and harvest, between autumn and the rain(y season), and between winter and spring" (thus Wintermute, "Jubilees," 112; cf. Ben-Dov, *Head*, 43; VanderKam, *Commentary*, 811). Ronsch, *Jubiläen*, 140, interprets "between the seasons" as the summer solstice (4/1), 7/1 as the day between plowing and harvest, 10/1 as the day between the autumn and rainy season, and 1/1 as the day between winter and spring, but this is overly complicated. The Latin text takes "between the seasons" as an introductory phrase, which yields better sense, so that the passage refers to the middle of "threshing" (4/1), the autumnal harvest (7/1), the middle of the autumnal rains (10/1), and the middle of the spring rains (1/1): "quater in medio temporum mensuum et in medio area usque ad messem autumnum et in medio autumni pluuias et in medio pluuiarum ueris [emended from eius by VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 1:283]."

[243] See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 2*, 457–62; cf. Boccaccini "Solar."

[244] Kugel, *Walk*, 66–68, misunderstands the point of Jub 6:23–24 and thus posits a contradiction between Author and Interpolator on this issue.

- 10/1 Mountain peaks become visible (5:30; 6:27)
- 1/1 The earth becomes visible (5:30; 6:25)

Two of the dates (10/1 and 1/1) are supplied in the Genesis narrative (Gen 8:5, 13) and Jubilees appears to have extrapolated from these to supply the other dates, perhaps also drawing on Lev 23:24, where 7/1 is identified as a memorial (זכרון). These biblical dates may have been the driving force behind the shift of the seasonal days from the 31st of the month in the Enochic calendar to the 1st in Jubilees.

3.4.2 Significant Events on Memorial Days

3.4.2.1 1/1: Cultic Inauguration

In the Pentateuch, it is on the first day of the first month that Israel's tabernacle is set up and consecrated and the first sacrifices are offered (Exod 40:2, 9, 17).[245] This likely prompts Jubilees to place several cultic inaugurations at the same date:

- Abraham builds his first altar in the Land and makes his first sacrifices in Bethel on 1/1 (13:4–8).[246]
- After Abraham dies, Isaac rebuilds an altar his father had first constructed at Beersheba (the "well of the oath") and there offers a sacrifice. This occurs on 1/1 and—reinforcing the numerical significance—in the first year of the first week of a jubilee (24:21–23).
- On 1/1, at Bethel, Jacob has his vision of a heavenly ladder. In response, he sets up and anoints a cultic pillar there, vowing to return later and build a temple on the site (27:19–27).

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[245] In Exodus, this date is likely intended to evoke the creation of the world, as ancient temples were widely understood as microcosms and, conversely, the world was understood as a temple. Cosmogony was thus analogous to temple construction. In Jub 6:25, the waters of the flood dry up to reveal the earth on 1/1; the author draws this date from Gen 8:13, where it echoes the creation of the world.

[246] Cf. the textual note in VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 1:112. Given the parallel with Isaac and Jacob, the author most likely intends to place Abraham's cultic construction at 1/1.

- In Jub 7:1–5, Noah plants a vine from which he makes wine. He keeps the wine (in accordance with the *orlah*-prohibition, Lev 19:23–25) until the first day of the first month (1/1) of the fifth year, at which point he makes an extensive sacrifice. This was the first truly complete sacrifice made after the flood, as it was the first time a proper drink offering could be made.[247] Thus, the episode fits the theme of cultic inauguration.
- Levi is born on 1/1 (Jub 28:14), the same date on which the priests are consecrated in Exodus 40.[248] For Jubilees, of course, Levi is not merely the progenitor of the Levitical priests but is himself the very first priest of the sons of Israel/Jacob.
- Noah is told to build the ark on 1/1 (Jub 6:25).[249] At first glance, this does not seem to be related to the cultic inauguration motif. Numerous scholars, however, have noticed similarities in the Hebrew Bible between the ark and the temple, including their dimensions, tripartite structure, and divinely mandated origin.[250] If Jubilees makes the same connection, it might explain why the author supplies this date.[251]

3.4.2.2 4/1: Transition, Judgment or Remembrance?

The second memorial day marks the summer solstice (4/1) and has at least five significant events associated with it in Jubilees:

- Although Adam and Eve disobey the commandment on 2/17, they do not depart from the Garden of Eden until 4/1 (Jub 3:32), when they are exiled to the land of Elda.[252]

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[247] Many note that Noah's sacrifice resembles the one for Rosh Hashanah (7/1) in Num 29:1–6; cf. Dimant, "Noah," 138; Gilders, "Where," 745. Van Ruiten, *Primaeval*, 270–83, theorizes that Jubilees has drawn this sacrifice from Num 29:1–6 and applied it by analogy to 1/1 (and likely to all four memorial days). The sacrifices match what 11QT 14.9–18 prescribes for 1/1.

[248] Cf. the priestly consecration on 1/1 in the Temple Scroll (15.3–17.5). In ALD 11:5–7, Kohath is born on 1/1. Kohath is the son of Levi through which the Aaronic priesthood derives (cf. Exod 6:16–20).

[249] N.b. that in Gilgamesh 11.71–75, the boat is built at the new year (Akitu) festival over seven days.

[250] Holloway, "Ship," 329, argues that Noah's ark "was patterned on an idealized Solomonic temple." Cf. Blenkinsopp, "Structure," 220–21.

[251] Contra Halpern-Amaru, "Calendar," 482, who posits a theme of divine protection for 1/1.

[252] Cf. bAvodZar 8a, where Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden at the summer solstice. Adam notes the days growing shorter and fears that this is God's judgment.

- When Noah ordains the memorial days, he links 4/1 to the date on which "the openings of the depths of the abyss below were closed" (Jub 6:26).[253]
- In Jub 16:1 the angel of the presence and his companions visit Abraham at the oak of Mamre, where they inform him that Sarah will give birth to Isaac.[254] The angels then rescue Lot from the judgment that falls on Sodom et al. "during this month" (16:5).
- On this date, Joseph was born to Rachel (Jub 28:24).[255]
- According to Jub 45:1, Jacob's family moves to Goshen, in Egypt, on this date. VanderKam thinks the author places this event on 4/1 because it is Joseph's birthday; thus, "the timing was perfect."[256]

It is difficult to discern any common motif or theme connecting these events. Halpern-Amaru suggests that 4/1 is a date of "major transition,"[257] which fits the expulsion from Eden and the move to Goshen very well, but not the other events. Finkelstein, on the other hand, finds a theme of judgment, which he thinks might explain why Adam and Eve are not expelled until more than a month after their sin.[258] Judgment is also central to the story of Sodom in Jubilees 16, but it is not present in the other episodes. One intriguing element behind many of the stories is *remembrance*, which may account for the author's placement of these events on a memorial day. In Gen 8:1, God causes the flood to cease because he "remembered" Noah and all the animals, while Gen 19:29 says that the Lord saved Lot from Sodom because he "remembered" Abraham. The conception of Isaac occurs when God "remembers" Sarah (Gen 21:1).[259] So also Rachel is blessed with Joseph because God "remembers" her (Gen 30:22). In light of this, it is possible that

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[253] Gen 8:2 identifies this event but not the date. In Jub 5:39 it happens "during" the fourth month—a puzzling difference.

[254] See above fn.163 for the suggestion that this date stems from the reference to the "heat of the day" in Gen 18:1.

[255] GenRab 73:1 preserves a tradition that dates Joseph's conception to Rosh Hashanah (7/1) on the basis of Gen 30:22–24, which depicts God "remembering" Rachel, a motif associated with Rosh Hashanah. Jubilees seems to know this tradition, as a a conception date on 7/1 and a term of nine months would yield a birthdate on 4/1.

[256] VanderKam, *Commentary,* 1105.

[257] Halpern-Amaru, "Calendar," 483.

[258] Finkelstein, "Book," 43–44.

[259] MT Gen 21:1 uses פקד but the Targums have דכר, "remember." Cf. bBQam. 92a.

the "memorial days" in Jubilees have a double reference to both divine and human remembering.[260]

3.4.2.3 7/1: Cultic Renewal and Rosh Hashanah

The third memorial day marks the fall equinox (7/1) and has three events associated with it in Jubilees:

- In Jub 5:29, the "earth's deep places were opened" on 7/1 so that the water level began to go down (cf. 6:26).[261]
- Jubilees 12:16–27 depicts Abram observing the stars in an all-night vigil on 7/1 to discern the "character of the year with respect to the rains" (v16) when he comes to realize that the Lord alone is in control of the rain and all the heavenly bodies. Concluding that his astrological investigations are ultimately pointless, Abram prays to the Lord, pledging his loyalty and petitioning the Lord to protect him and his offspring from the "power of the evil spirits" (v20). The Lord responds by promising Abram numerous offspring and sending the angel of the presence to teach Abram Hebrew so that he can read and study his father's inherited books over the next six months.
- In Jubilees 31, Jacob leaves Salem on 7/1 to travel to Bethel where he builds an altar (vv1–3).[262]

Again, there does not seem to be a clear theme or motif that connects these three events.[263] Some pentateuchal texts identify 7/1 as a distinct festival, on which Israel would observe a Sabbath and hold a sacred assembly at which a "memorial of trumpets" (זכרון תרועה) would be

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[260] Jub 30:20 may be relevant: the angels *remember* Levi's righteousness "at all times of the year," perhaps a reference to the memorial days.

[261] Gen 8:2–3 refer to the water subsiding but make no reference to the opening of the earth as the cause of this. 4Q252 places the event on 7/14, not 7/1.

[262] Jub 31:1 also mentions the first day of an unnamed month. VanderKam, *Commentary,* 847, holds that this is also 7/1, but the events in 31:1–2 and the travel of 31:3 are difficult to fit into a single day.

[263] Halpern-Amaru, "Calendar," 483, suggests that 7/1 is about "new beginnings," but that only accounts for the scene in Jubilees 12.

performed, along with burnt offerings (Lev 23:24; Num 29:1–6). This likely contributes to Jubilees's identification of 7/1 as a "memorial day."[264] Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, Ezra 3:1, 6 tells how the altar for the Second Temple was built and inaugurated on 7/1.[265] Jubilees echoes this story and has Jacob return to Bethel on 7/1 to build the altar there (31:3).

Similarly, Jubilees 12:16ff seem to echo the scene in Nehemiah 8 (set on 7/1) in which Ezra and his comrades read and translate the law of Moses for the people so that they can understand and obey (8:1–8). So in Jubilees the angel of the presence reveals the ancestral books to Abram and enables him to understand them (12:25–27).

Jubilees does not identify 7/1 as the new year (ראש השנה) as later Jewish traditions would,[266] but the fact that Abram attempts to discern the character of the year on 7/1 may suggest that Jubilees knew a tradition that the new year was autumnal prior to the exodus.[267] In later Jewish texts Rosh Hashanah is the day God determines the rain and climate for the coming year, an idea for which Jubilees 12 is perhaps the earliest witness.[268]

3.4.2.4 10/1: An Uneventful Memorial Day

The final memorial day marks the winter solstice (10/1), the shortest day of the year, and has only two events associated with it in Jubilees:

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[264] Cf. 4Q319 12 2; 4Q320 4 iii 6; 4Q409 1 I 5; 11QTempleScroll 25.3, which refer to 7/1 in these terms.

[265] Cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 11.75, which mentions the fulfilment of vows at this time, a detail not in Ezra but quite relevant to Jubilees 31. Cf. 1 Kings 8:2/2 Chron 5:3, which place the inauguration of the First Temple in the seventh month.

[266] See Adler "Rabbinic"; Elgvin, "Roots."

[267] Cf. TgPsJ 1 Kings 8:2; Exod 12:1. The Gezer Calendar attests to an autumnal new year, as well. Among those who posit some connection between Jubilees 12 and Rosh Hashanah are Fletcher-Louis, "Book of Watchers," 163–64; Elgvin, "Roots," 61; Kugel, *Walk*, 89–90; Halpern-Amaru, "Festivals," 309. Cf. Körting, *Schall*, 283, for the opposing view.

[268] tRosh 1:3; bRosh 8a; Sifre on Deut 11:12. Astrological lore taught that one could determine the nature of the year's weather by observing the stars at the equinoxes and solstices; cf. Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* 2.10–13; see Jacobus, *Zodiac*, 241, for other examples. Some Jewish traditions concurred, but many saw such a practice at fruitless for the same reason that Abram expresses: the Lord controls the climate (bBer 18b; cf. Finkelstein, "Book," 45). See bShabb 156a, which tells how Abraham used to practice astrology, but God commanded him to stop because "Israel is free from planetary influence." This implies that the nations *are* under planetary influence, as Abram's prayer suggests: "Save me from the power of the evil spirits who rule the thoughts of people's minds" (Jub 12:20). A comprehensive treatment of new year traditions in Israel and the ANE can be found in de Moor, *New Year*.

- According to Jub 5:30/6:27, during the year of the flood, on 10/1 "the summits of the mountains became visible." This follows Gen 8:5, which places this event on the same date.[269]
- In Jub 33:1 Jacob visits his father Isaac on 10/1, presumably to bring supplies, as Jub 29:16 suggests he did four times per year on the memorial days.

Neither of these events is especially noteworthy, and no significant events occur on 10/1 in the Hebrew Bible.[270] Thus, Halpern-Amaru's suggestion that 10/1 signals "reorientation in the storyline" is difficult to sustain.[271]

3.4.2.5 Other Memorial Day Traditions

The concept of four memorial days is probably not original to Jubilees. The *Aramaic Levi Document*, which predates Jubilees, places the birth of Levi's four children on each one of the memorial days.[272] Kohath, from whom Aaron and all the priests will come, is born on 1/1 at sunrise (ALD 11:7), just as his father was according to Jub 28:14. Levi's firstborn, Gershom, is born "in the tenth month toward sunset" (ALD 11:4). Almost certainly the first day of the tenth month is intended (and perhaps dropped out due to scribal error),[273] as it matches the pattern for Levi's other children. Merari, Levi's third son, who dies in infancy, is born in the fourth month (ALD 11:9)—again, the first day is assumed.[274] Finally, Jochebed, Moses's mother, is born to Levi on 7/1 (ALD 11:10–11), the same day as her future husband Amram (Kohath's son; ALD 12:5).

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[269] Several ancient versions read "eleventh month." See VanderKam, *Book of Jubilees*, 1.36.

[270] According to Ezra 10:16–17, Ezra and his companions began examining the matter of foreign marriage on 10/1 and continue until 1/1, but this does not seem to have influenced Jubilees.

[271] "Calendar," 483.

[272] See Greenfield et al, *Aramaic Levi*, 35, 189–90. Cf. Ben-Dov, *Head*, 40–44. On the knowledge of ALD by Jubilees, see above p. 29.

[273] It would be very strange if the text named the time of day but not the day itself. The text of ALD is notoriously fragmentary and evinces extensive change and corruption throughout its transmission history.

[274] Following 4QLevi^{e} (4Q214a 2 i 3), which appears to read "fourth month" (cf. Greenfield et al, *Aramaic Levi*, 96, 190; Drawnel, *Aramaic Wisdom*, 191, reads "ninth month"). See Ben-Dov, *Head*, 41.

Thus, the practice of placing significant events, especially birthdays, on these "seasonal days" is inherited by Jubilees.

Mishnah Rosh Hashanah may preserve a later adaptation of the tradition of four memorial days.[275] It describes four new year days, each of which falls on the first day of a specific month (mRosh 1:1).[276] With the exception of 7/1, these do not match the seasonal days of Jubilees, but like Jubilees, they seem to be related to the offering of the tithe.[277] Likewise, the Mishnah enumerates four judgment days, each occurring at a festival (mRosh 1:2). At Passover, God judges by determining the bounty of the grain harvest. At Shavuot he determines the bounty of the tree-fruit harvest, while at Sukkot he determines how much rain will fall in the coming year. Rosh Hashanah seems to be a bit of a special case, as here God appears to judge all humans, determining who will be born or die in the coming year. It is not clear how these new year days and judgment days are related to the seasonal days of Jubilees, but they seem to reflect a similar calendrical tendency to identify four points in the year that serve to orient the calendar with regard to the seasons and the harvests.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter and the last, I have explored the presentation of the festivals in Jubilees, beginning with the Sabbath, which serves as the foundation of both the septenary calendar and festival system. The Sabbath is the paradigmatic festival, illustrates the core concepts of Jubilees's festal theology. 1) Divine Participation: The Sabbath is celebrated first by God, then by a select group of angels, and finally by Israel. For Jubilees, then, festivals are the means by which Israel participates in the life of God and the angels. 2) Halakah as *Imitatio*: Because Israel's

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[275] Finkelstein, "Book," 43–44; rejected by VanderKam, *Commentary*, 232.

[276] Nisan 1 (1/1: the new year for kings and feasts), Elul 1 (6/1: new year for cattle), Tishri 1 (7/1: new year for kings, Sabbath years and jubilee years), Shebat 1 (11/1: new year for fruit trees). Cf. a less developed tradition in Josephus, *Ant*. 1.81.

[277] See esp. Jub 29:16.

Sabbath worship is participation with the angels, its behavior on the Sabbath must imitate the angelic life. Thus, Sabbath halakah is guided by the principle of *imitatio angelorum*. Israel's Sabbath liturgy must reflect that of the angels, and they must abstain from sex, war, commerce, etc.—all the "work of mankind." 3) Eternally Written, but Progressively Revealed: For Jubilees, the Sabbath is a creation ordinance, valid from the beginning. It was not revealed, however, to God's people until Israel's sojourn in the wilderness. It thus illustrates Jubilees's concept of progressive revelation: that God has chosen to bring his people into participation in the eternal heavenly covenant not all at once but in stages, beginning with the revelation of the calendar and Shavuot to Noah. This explains for Jubilees how the law can be eternally valid and unchanging despite indications in the Pentateuch that the patriarchs were unaware of so many aspects of the Mosaic code.

The first two of the annual festivals, Passover and Matzot, illustrate the way in which the author festalizes the Scriptures. In retelling the patriarchal narratives, the author reads the festivals back into the pre-Sinai era, depicting the fathers as observing the festivals. Moreover, he portrays key episodes in the biblical narrative as taking place at festivals. The first Passover, Jubilees insists, was not in Egypt, but at Moriah, where Abraham's firstborn son was protected from the plot of Mastema. Matzot, likewise, was not first celebrated in the departure from Egypt, but by Abraham in gratitude for his safe travels to and from Moriah. In this way, he provides a different and more ancient etiology for these festivals than that provided in the Pentateuch. This in turn infuses the festivals with additional significance and focuses their central motifs. Passover is thus no longer simply a historical commemoration of the slaughter of the Egyptian firstborn but a means by which Israel may ensure its safety from Mastema in the year to come. Along the same lines, the link between the Akedah and Passover enables the author to make his central halakic points about the importance of the date and location of the sacred feast in a way that the Passover of Exodus would not facilitate.

Shavuot is the most important festival in Jubilees and illustrates both Jubilees's strategy of festalizing the Scriptures and of transcendentalizing the festivals. In the Pentateuch, Shavuot seems to be merely an agricultural firstfruits festival, devoid of any commemorative significance, with an unclear calendrical location. For Jubilees, however, it is the festival of covenant oaths. Every major covenantal moment in Genesis occurs on Shavuot: the Noachian covenant, the promises to Abraham, the institution of circumcision, the birth of Isaac (and Judah), and the revelation at Sinai. In the Second Temple period, the hotly disputed date of Shavuot was ground zero in the debate over the proper calendar. For Jubilees the proper calendar is of central importance as it ensures that Israel's worship on earth is synchronized with the angelic worship of the heavens. It is thus no surprise that Jubilees portrays Shavuot as the festival at which God reveals the proper fixed septenary calendar to Noah and that Noah's response is to celebrate—for the first time ever on earth—the feast of Shavuot by swearing an oath of loyalty to God. Before Noah, Jubilees explains, Shavuot was celebrated in heaven by the angels. Through his oath, his observance of the proper calendar, and his celebration of Shavuot, then, Noah is the first on earth to join the eternal angelic covenant. Similarly, it is at Shavuot that Abraham and his offspring are further initiated into the angelic covenant through the introduction of circumcision, which more closely assimilates them to the nature of the highest angels who were created in a circumcised state.

In contrast, the autumnal Yom Kippur is never identified as a feast in Jubilees. It is a rather a day of penitent mourning for sin. Like Passover, however, Yom Kippur is explained by means of both apocalyptic myth and patriarchal precedent. Drawing on the Enochic account of the pre-flood binding and imprisonment of the Watchers, Jubilees appears to interpret the Yom Kippur expulsion of the scapegoat (the goat for Azazel) as a ritual re-enactment of the antediluvian punishment of the Watchers' leader. Other elements of the fast day, such as the date and the required self-denial, are given an etiology that traces their origin to the scapegoating of Joseph by his brothers and the grief of Jacob when he hears of Joseph's "death." In addition to

transcendentalizing Yom Kippur with reference to the Watchers and festalizing the scriptural narrative of Joseph, the author also appears to eschatologize Yom Kippur so that it looks forward to the final cleansing of creation and expulsion of evil. The Jubilee year officially began on Yom Kippur and the author seems to anticipate an eschatological Jubilee when Israel would be purged of its sins, freed from its oppressors, and returned to its ancestral lands.

The final festival, Sukkot, is both agricultural and commemorative in the Pentateuch, as it celebrates the completion of the harvest and remembers the provision of God during Israel's wilderness wandering. Jubilees, however, again reads the festival back into the patriarchal period, portraying Abraham as the first to celebrate it as a response to the good news of the conception of Isaac. Jacob, too, later celebrates Sukkot at Bethel; he is the first to observe the eighth day of Sukkot. By festalizing the Scriptures in this way, Jubilees is able to provide a non-exodus etiology for the festival and to make a case for halakot that were controversial in the Second Temple era (e.g. wearing wreaths, circling the altar, second tithe). Like the Sabbath and Shavuot, however, Sukkot is ultimately understood as having a heavenly and angelic origin. Abraham, the author explains, was merely the first "on earth" to celebrate the festival.

In this discussion, several notable emphases have become evident. First, we have seen that Jubilees frequently appeals to transcendent realities to explain the origin and/or significance of the festivals. The author insists upon a fixed septenary calendar meant to synchronize Israel's activities with those of heaven and the angels. Israel's festival observance is explained in many cases as imitation of, or participation with, the angels in heaven. Sabbath, Shavuot and Sukkot, especially, are said to have been celebrated by the exalted angels and only subsequently taught to Israel (by angels). In observing these festivals, Israel is separated from the rest of humanity and joins the angels in the eternal covenant. Other festivals, such as Passover and Yom Kippur, are not explicitly said to be observed by angels, but are nevertheless explained with reference to transcendent realities, such as the expulsion of the watchers and protection from the attacks of Mastema.

Second, Jubilees festalizes the Scriptures by locating key biblical events on festival dates and having portraying patriarchal observance of the festivals. In most cases, as I have shown, the author does so not arbitrarily but in response to elements in the biblical text (textual stimuli) that prompt him to associate the narrative with a festival. His intention, it seems, is partly etiological. Some of his rewritten stories supplant the pentateuchal etiology (e.g. the Akedah as the origin of Passover; Abraham's celebration as the origin of Sukkot), while others seem intended to explain elements for which the biblical text gives no rationale (e.g. Shavuot, the eighth day of Sukkot). In addition, by linking narrative and festival, Jubilees infuses both the story and the feast with new meaning and, perhaps more importantly, makes his case that Israel's festivals are not innovations of the Mosaic period, but have an ancient (eternal?) pedigree. The author also frequently uses his rewritten patriarchal festal narratives to make a case for his own halakic viewpoint, especially on controversial issues of his time. This is balanced, however, by his insistence on progressive revelation. One ought not to expect to find the patriarchs observing the law in every detail, he suggests, as the requirements of the heavenly tablets were revealed progressively to God's people.

The prominent role of the calendar and festival system in the narrative and theology of Jubilees is probably best understood as a response to the threat of Hellenism and the divisions over these issues that occurred during the Second Temple period. Hellenistic legal discourse portrayed divine law as rational (i.e. not arbitrary), universal, unwritten, eternal and unchanging—a stark contrast to the dominant pentateuchal picture of the Mosaic Law as a specific written code, particular to Israel, with a relatively recent origin at Sinai. The festivals, especially, seemed to be arbitrary observances that commemorated key events of Israel's particular history, namely the formative events of the exodus. Ironically, despite its revulsion to Hellenistic culture, Jubilees has much in common with the Hellenistic viewpoint about what constitutes divine law. And so, the author attempts narratively to reshape the law of Moses from a historically contingent national common law (as in the Pentateuch) into an eternal and

absolute code, embedded in creation. The festival system is not a Sinaitic novum instituted to memorialize the events of the exodus or simply mark the agricultural cycle, but a mirror of the heavenly liturgical cycle and a means of ensuring Israel's protection and continued covenantal status.

Chapter 4
Natural Law, *Allegoresis*, and Divine Participation: Festivals in Philo of Alexandria

Philo (ca. 15 BCE–45 CE) was a Jewish resident of Alexandria, a center of Hellenistic Judaism in the first century CE.[1] A member of a wealthy and prominent family, he played an important role in the religious and political life of the Jewish community in Alexandria, at one point participating in a diplomatic embassy to Gaius Caligula on behalf of Alexandrian Jews. Philo was a prolific author whose deep learning in the Greek philosophical tradition and thorough knowledge of the Pentateuch (in Greek translation) is evident throughout his works. His thought is an eclectic blend of Middle Platonic metaphysics, Stoic cosmology, anthropology, and ethics, and Neopythagorean arithmology.[2]

The Philonic corpus is wide-ranging[3] but focuses on the Pentateuch. It includes question-and-answer commentaries on Genesis and Exodus, a multi-volume Allegorical Commentary, with 23 (extant) treatises presenting a symbolic and spiritual allegorization of the Genesis narratives, and a 12-volume Exposition of the Law that covers creation, the patriarchs and the legal material of the Pentateuch.[4]

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[1] Introductions to Philo's life and work may be found in Sterling et al, "Philo"; Hadas-Lebel, *Philo*; Wolfson, *Philo*; Borgen, *Philo*, 1–29; Niehoff, *Philo*; Seeland, *Reading Philo*; Winston, *Philo*, 1–38; Runia, *Exegesis*, 1–18; Williamson, *Jews*, 1–27; Kamesar, ed., *Companion*, 9–94; Barclay, *Jews*, 158–80.

[2] On the philosophical influences of Philo see Hadas-Lebel, *Philo*, 159–80; Runia, *Exegesis*; Niehoff, *Philo*; Bréhier, *Idées*; Anderson, *Philo*; Winston, *Logos*, 9–26; Dillon, *Middle Platonists*, 114–83.

[3] See Sterling et al, "Philo," 256–57, for a comprehensive list of Philo's works, extant and lost. A critical text of Philo can be found in Cohn et al. Unless otherwise noted, the text and translation used in this chapter are those of Colson et al in the Loeb Classical Library.

[4] A Gentile audience for the Exposition of the Law was often posited due to its accessible style and apologetic nature, but a consensus now treats it as addressing primarily Alexandrian Jews. See Sterling et al, "Philo," 268.

Philo's systematic discussion of the Jewish festivals occurs in his treatise, *On the Special Laws*, part of his larger Exposition of the Law. In *Spec.* 2.39–222 he enumerates ten festivals: the "feast of every day," the weekly Sabbath, the monthly new moon, and the seven annual festivals established in the Pentateuch.[5] Briefer discussions of, and allusions to, the festivals are also found scattered throughout his corpus. In this chapter, I will first examine Philo's understanding of the calendar. Then, I will attempt to situate Philo's view of festivals in general within his Jewish and Hellenistic context. Finally, following the structure and sequence in *On the Special Laws*, I will explore Philo's treatment of the ten festivals in detail.

4.1 Philo's Calendar

In his extant treatises, Philo offers no sustained discussion of the calendar, only scattered hints from which we must attempt to piece together a coherent position.[6] Most scholars hold that Philo follows the lunisolar calendar typical of mainstream Second Temple Judaism.[7] Thus, Philo identifies the new moon as the beginning of the month,[8] and his dating of the Sheaf agrees with the Pharisaic reading of Lev 23:11, 15 (a view rejected by proponents of a 364-day calendar).[9]

Numerous pieces of evidence in Philo, however, problematize this conclusion:

1. Philo does not use names for the months, as the lunisolar calendar tended to. Instead, he numbers them, as proponents of a solar calendar did.[10]
2. Philo states that that the year is twelve months, a fixed number with symbolic import, corresponding to the twelve loaves of presence, the twelve tribes, the twelve stones on

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[5] Notably, Philo does not discuss (or even mention) Purim or Hanukkah, as these are both post-pentateuchal. This may also reflect his understanding that the festivals of the Torah are not positive law with a human origin, but divinely-ordained natural law sewn into the very fabric of creation.

[6] For a helpful discussion of Philo's calendar, see Jacobus, *Zodiac*, 390–99.

[7] Stern, *Calendar*, 21–22; Goudoever, *Calendars*, 34; Niehoff, *Philo*, 258; Ben-Dov, "Time," 26.

[8] *Spec*. 1.177; 2.41; 2.140–142. The monthly new moon is listed as a festival in *Spec*. 2.41. See the discussion in Stern, *Calendar*, 117–19; Leicht, "Observing," 29–30.

[9] See below fn.162.

[10] Cf. Saulnier, *Calendrical*, 149.

the high priest's breastplate, and the twelve signs of the zodiac.[11] Likewise, he repeatedly says that the equinoxes occur seven months apart (counting inclusively).[12] Neither of these is true of a traditional lunisolar calendar, in which 7 of 19 years contain an intercalary thirteenth month. Notably, Philo never refers to an intercalary month.[13]

3. He repeatedly refers to months as having 30 days, which fits well with the Enochic calendrical tradition but not with a lunisolar calendar where months alternate between 29 and 30 days.[14]
4. For Philo, the year has 365 days (i.e. a solar year), a number he links with Enoch (Gen 5:23).[15] Lunar years, however, are typically 354 days, while years with an intercalary month stretch to 384 days.
5. Philo explains that the entire Jewish calendrical system, especially festivals, is based on a heptadic principle, i.e. the Sabbath.[16] This is also the governing principle of the Jubilees/Qumran calendar.
6. Philo links two major festivals (Matzot and Sukkot) to the solar equinoxes. This best fits a fixed solar calendar.[17]
7. Philo speaks glowingly of the Therapeutae, who appear to follow a Sabbath-centered solar calendar, perhaps even a pentecontadal calendar akin to that of the Temple Scroll.[18] Likewise, he admiringly describes the Essenes for whom a heptadic solar

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[11] Twelve months: *Opif*. 60; *QG* 3.59; *Spec*. 1.81. Twelve loaves: *Spec*. 1.171–172. Twelve tribes: *Fug*. 184. Twelve stones/signs: *QE* 2.212.

[12] *Spec*. 1.172, 182; 2.151–154.

[13] Saulnier, *Calendrical*, 155. But, Stern, *Calendar*, 54, holds that "intercalation is implicit" in Philo "from the synchronization of his lunar calendar with the equinox and the solar year."

[14] *Opif*. 60; *QG* 2.5; 2.14; *Somn*. 2.112, 257. *Opif*. 101 shows Philo *is* aware of the length of a lunar month, but he never describes the calendrical month in these terms.

[15] *QG* 1.84.

[16] *Spec*. 2.40.

[17] Against this, however, he also ties these festivals to the full moon in the middle of the month. The conjunction of a full moon and solar equinox occurs only once every nineteen years, so he is more likely referring to the full moon after the equinox, as in the traditional rabbinic reckoning. Cf. Eusebius, who understands Philo's statements this way (*Hist. eccl*. 7.32.16–18). Stern, *Calendar*, 53–55, points out Philo's imprecision regarding the equinoxes. Sometimes he places the vernal equinox at the beginning of the first month, other times at the middle. See *QG* 2.17, where the vernal equinox "always occurs" on 1/27; cf. *QG* 2.33, where the ark comes to rest on 7/27 at the autumnal equinox.

[18] See Taylor, *Women*, 155–57; Saulnier, *Calendrical*, 154.

calendar was a well-known distinctive.[19] Indeed, a heptadic solar calendar may have a precedent in Alexandrian Judaism in the writings of Aristobulus.[20]

It is difficult to come to a firm conclusion on this matter. Philo is clearly aware of calendrical diversity among his Jewish contemporaries, but he does not seem very concerned to settle the matter or pronounce dogmatically in favor of one reckoning.[21] Is it possible that he observes the dominant lunisolar calendar of the Jerusalem temple, but theoretically embraces the ideal of a fixed heptadic calendar befitting what he sees as the mathematical regularity and symmetry of nature?[22] Whatever the case may be, Philo's emphasis always falls on the stability, rationality and uniformity of the calendar, and in this way he is conceptually much closer to the theological priorities of Qumran and Jubilees than those of the rabbis.[23]

Two striking passages in Philo's *On the Life of Moses* especially demonstrate that, like Qumran and Jubilees, Philo is a calendrical realist who thinks it important that human festival observance synchronize with heavenly reality.[24] First, in retelling Exodus 16, Philo notes that the dispensation of a double portion of manna on the day before the Sabbath had an important effect:

> *[Israel] learned to date aright the day [i.e. the Sabbath] of which they had dearly longed to have knowledge. For, long before, they had asked what was the birthday of the world on which this universe was completed, and to this question, which had been passed down unsolved from generation to generation, they now at long last found the answer, learnt not only through divine pronouncements but by a perfectly certain proof.*[25]

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[19] Neither Philo nor Josephus mention the calendar in their lengthy discussions of the Essenes, which "suggests that the calendar was not a sectarian issue in first-century CE Judaism" (Stern, *Calendars*, 376). Scholars have noted the presence of both lunar and solar traditions at Qumran: "The Qumran calendaric texts follow the Enochic pattern of accepting two schematic years—a solar one of 364 days and a lunar one of 354 days—but they align themselves with Jubilees in dating festivals by the 364-day system" (VanderKam, *Meaning*, 257).

[20] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 7.32.16–18, reports that Aristobulus placed Passover at the spring equinox. Cf. Taylor, *Women*, 155.

[21] See *QE* 1.1: "Some reckon by the sun, others by the moon."

[22] Stern demonstrates that Philo often speaks imprecisely in ways that reflect more of a mathematical ideal than astronomical reality, e.g. placing the full moon on the 15th of the month (*QG* 1.91; Stern, *Calendar*, 117–19).

[23] Cf. Saulnier, *Calendrical*, 153, who finds "strong similarities" with the 364-day calendar of Jubilees. Ben-Dov, "Time," 25, concludes that Philo "stands conceptually midway between Jubilees and Aristobulus," in that he builds on Aristobulus's interest in the heptad but does not go so far as to advocate a purely heptadic calendar like Jubilees.

[24] For discussion of calendrical realism vs. nominalism, see Hayes, *Divine*, 199–221; Schwartz, "Law"; Rubenstein, "Nominalism." For the classic statement of rabbinic calendrical nominalism, see yRosh 1:3.

[25] *Mos*. 2.207; cf. 2.263–69. Cf. Mek. 31:12–17, which maintains the right of the *bet din* to fix the festival days but not the Sabbath: "the Sabbath is in the charge of God who definitely fixed the day, and it does not depend on the *bet din*."

For Philo, then, the gift of manna provided not only food but divine revelation of the correct day for observing this most fundamental of all festivals. Indeed, this was a much-needed revelation since, unlike other calendrical phenomena governed by the sun, moon, or stars, the Sabbath is not clearly marked by any astronomical or natural element. "Which day is the Sabbath?" is a question that can only be answered by divine revelation.[26]

A second passage, in *Mos*. 2.209–10, confirms Philo's understanding that the correct calendar is divinely revealed so as to synchronize earth and heaven:

> *The prophet [Moses] magnified the holy seventh day, seeing with his keener vision its marvelous beauty stamped upon heaven and the whole world and enshrined in nature itself.… As he scanned her, he recognized in her the birthday of the world, a feast celebrated by heaven, celebrated by earth and things on earth as they rejoice and exult in the full harmony of the sacred number.*

Here, as in Jubilees, the Sabbath is the cornerstone of the calendar, a weekly festival that unites heaven and earth in synchronous worship.

4.2 Philo's Festal Ideology

Before we explore in detail Philo's interpretation of the specific Jewish festivals, a few comments on his concept of the festivals in general are in order. At several points, Philo reflects on the nature of festivals and the rationale for such activities. His thoughts may be summarized under three headings: festal virtue, natural law, and divine participation.

4.2.1 Philo's Festal Ideology and Greco-Roman Feasts

First, Philo understands the festivals as times of leisure and rest from the cares of everyday life.[27] Those who make pilgrimage to the temple enjoy "safe refuge from the bustle and great

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[26] The Sabbath is "based exclusively on human counting; it is a direct revelation with no natural intermediary. The Sabbath's seven-day rhythm is not governed by the celestial lights created on the fourth day, but is a direct commandment from God" (Feldman, "Tame," 192).

[27] *Spec*. 1.192; 2.214; *Mos*. 2.211; *Decal*. 161; *Somn*. 2.144; *Migr*. 92; *QG* 4.188.

turmoil of life."[28] The festivals have a social function, as well, engendering friendship (φιλία), reciprocity, and especially national unity (ὁμονοία), as they commemorate formative events in a nation's history.[29] Philo does not emphasize the commemorative aspects of the Jewish festivals, but he does acknowledge them. For example, he sees Passover remembering the departure from Egypt, while Sukkot recalls the sojourn in the wilderness, and the trumpets of the New Year (Rosh Hashanah) harken back to the giving of the law at Sinai.

In all of this, Philo clearly shares the festal ideology of his Greek and Roman contemporaries, who also thought of festivals as times of leisure devoted to celebrating national unity through by recalling the events of the past.[30] But Philo goes to great pains to distinguish the Jewish festivals from their Greco-Roman counterparts in other ways. The festivals of the nations, he asserts, are based on "myth and fiction, and their only purpose is empty vanity."[31] Behavior at these events is characterized by: "drunkenness, tipsy rioting, routs and revels, wantonness, debauchery; lovers thronging their mistresses' doors, nightlong carouses, unseemly pleasures, daylight chamberings, deeds of insolence and outrage, hours spent in training to be intemperate, in studying to be fools, in cultivating baseness, wholesale depravation of all that is noble mind."[32] For Philo, the Jewish festivals are not to follow this pattern, but to be times of true joy and piety, characterized by self-control and philosophical activities.[33] Of course, the reality sometimes failed to live up to the ideal, especially at a vintage festival like Sukkot, whose all-night celebrations of the new wine prompted non-Jewish authors such as Plutarch and Tacitus to

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[28] *Spec*. 1.69–70.

[29] *Spec*. 1.70.

[30] On Greek and Roman festival practice, see Brandt, *Festivals*; Scullion, "Festivals"; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 134–47; Graf, *Roman Festivals*, 9–102; Burkert, "Ancient Views."

[31] *Cher*. 91.

[32] *Cher*. 92. Philo's lengthy attack on Greco-Roman festal piety continues in *Cher*. 93–96. Cf. *Spec*. 3.40, 125; *Mos*. 2.211; *Agr*. 113. In *Ebr*. 95, Israel's behavior with the golden calf is an example of improper festal behavior akin to that at pagan festivals. Cf. *Spec*. 3.125.

[33] *Spec*. 1.192–193.

portray the festival as Dionysian.[34] Thus, Philo's festal discourse has both an apologetic function vis-à-vis outsiders and a hortatory function, urging his fellow Jews to proper festal behavior.

4.2.2 Jewish Festivals and the Law of Nature

Second, Philo greatly emphasizes that the Jewish festivals are a part of the natural law. For Philo, the Mosaic law is the written form of the natural law: "the world is in harmony with the Law, and the Law with the world, and … the man who observes the Law is constituted thereby a loyal citizen of the world, regulating his doings by the purpose and will of Nature, in accordance with which the entire world itself also is administered."[35]

Again, in *Mos.* 2.52, he declares that the laws of Moses "seek to attain to the harmony of the universe and are in agreement with the principles of eternal nature."[36] Thus, the festivals are not merely arbitrary national holidays, unique to a nation, state, or people. Rather they are inherently rational and have a universal significance, reflecting as they do the very structure of creation. Philo draws on several lines of evidence to stake this claim. To begin with, he notes the arithmological features of the festivals and their calendrical placement, especially the way they feature the heptad, the central structural principle of the universe.[37] Most basic, of course, is the Sabbath, which occurs every seventh day and is, in Philo's view, the cornerstone of the entire festival calendar. Similarly, Matzot and Sukkot, two of the major pilgrimage festivals, occur seven months apart, each lasting seven days. Shavuot, the remaining pilgrimage festival, occurs 49 (7x7) days after Matzot. Passover occurs on the fourteenth (7+7) day of the first month, while the Feast of Trumpets and Yom Kippur both occur in the seventh month. And, of course, it is no coincidence in Philo's mind that there are seven annual feasts in all.

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[34] Plutarch, *Quaest. conv.* 4.6.2; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.4–5.

[35] *Opif.* 3. Cf. *Mos.* 2.48: "he who would observe the laws will accept gladly the duty of following nature and live in accordance with the ordering of the universe." Cf. *Mos.*, 2.12–14.

[36] On Philo's view of natural law, see Martens, *One God*, 83–102; Niehoff, *Jewish Identity*, 247–66; Najman, "Law"; Horsley, "Law"; Myre, "Loi"; cf. the numerous essays in Runia et al., *Laws*.

[37] See below p.155.

Along the same lines, Philo highlights the relationship between the festivals and the natural cycle. The festivals cluster around the equinoxes, with Passover/Matzot at the vernal equinox and Sukkot at the autumnal. They also coincide with the key moments of the agricultural seasons, each one marking a specific harvest: Passover (barley), Shavuot (wheat), and the fall festivals (fruit).[38] While other Second Temple traditions downplay the agricultural element of the festivals and emphasize their role in commemorating historical events, Philo moves in the opposite direction, elevating the more universal agricultural features and assigning secondary importance to the commemorative aspects that drew on Israel's particular history.

In addition, Philo frequently observes how the Jewish festivals promote behavior that encourages humans to live in accordance with nature, a central value for Stoicism.[39] For example, the Sabbath urges a balance between the active and contemplative life, and grants rest equally to slave and free—a return to the state of nature. At Matzot, one eats bread in its simplest state, a gift of nature without the artifice of leaven. Similarly, at Sukkot, all dwell in tents and enjoy equally the bounty of nature.

4.2.3 Festal Virtues and Divine Participation

Third, and perhaps most striking, Philo depicts festivals as times of participation in the divine life. This idea was also right at home in the Greco-Roman *imaginaire*, as in the ancient Mediterranean, festivals were commonly viewed as an opportunity for humans to participate in the life of the gods. The gods, of course, are perpetually feasting, enjoying their divine music, food and rest. The *Iliad*, for example, describes the Olympians in festal assembly partaking of wine, nectar, and ambrosia and listening to the lyre of Apollo and the song of the Muses.[40] Through the music, food, and rest afforded by festivals, humans too could occasionally enjoy the

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[38] *Mos*. 2.222–223.
[39] Cf. Niehoff, *Philo*, 154–56, 161–65.
[40] *Iliad* 1.595–604; cf. 23.300.

life of the gods. Plato, in his *Laws* represents the ancient consensus when he says that festivals are a gift from the gods, as they allow humans "to be made whole again" by "participating in the festivals alongside the gods."[41] This idea of festivals as divine mimesis is not in conflict with their commemorative purpose. Indeed, the events typically commemorated were times when fellowship with the gods was particularly vibrant, perhaps a mythical golden age (e.g., the Kronia recalled the time of Kronos before the introduction of the slave/free divide). By reenacting and retelling the events that took place *in illo tempore*,[42] festivals and their rituals transport the celebrants back to the sacred pre-historical time and carve out a space for the divine life in the midst of the mundane.[43]

Philo, however, also finds this idea in the Scriptures, most prominently in the Sabbath, which allows and encourages humans to participate in and imitate God's own activity during the week of creation. But Philo also uncovers this concept through a nuanced reading of two key passages. First, in *Cher*. 84, Philo cites Num 28:2,[44] which in the MT instructs the Israelites to bring each offering "at its proper time," or "at its festival" (במועדו, n.b. the third-person suffix). In Philo's Greek text, however, the Lord speaks of offerings "at *my* festivals" (ἐν ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἑορταῖς), reflecting a Hebrew *Vorlage* of במועדי.[45] Philo derives an important theological point from the first-person pronoun: the festivals are the Lord's own. That is, the festivals are not properly festivals of mortals, but God's own festivals, which he himself observes.[46] Indeed, in the truest sense *only* the Lord is able to keep festival, since "God alone in the true sense keeps festival. Joy and gladness and rejoicing are His alone; to Him alone it is given to enjoy the peace which has

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[41] *Laws* 653d: θεοὶ δὲ οἰκτείραντες τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίπονον πεφυκὸς γένος ἀναπαύλας τε αὐτοῖς τῶν πόνων ἐτάξαντο τὰς τῶν ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς [τοῖς θεοῖς], καὶ Μούσας Ἀπόλλωνά τε μουσηγέτην καὶ Διόνυσον ξυνεορταστὰς ἔδοσαν, ἵνʼ ἐπανορθῶνται τάς γε τροφὰς γενόμενοι ἐν ταῖς ἑορταῖς μετὰ θεῶν.

[42] See Eliade, *Sacred*, 90–95; 105–6.

[43] For more on what constituted the "Mediterranean Koine" festal ideology, see Burkert, "Views."

[44] His citation reads: δῶρα καὶ δόματα καὶ καρπώματα, ἃ διατηροῦντες προσοίσετε ἐν ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἑορταῖς ἐμοί. He also cites this text in *Sacr*. 111.

[45] Philo's citation in *Cher*. 84 differs slightly from LXX (which reads ἐν ταῖς ἑορταῖς μου) but witnesses to the same *Vorlage*. Interchange between ו and י is common in ancient mss; see Tov, *Textual*, 243–44. In *Sacr*. 111, Philo's text better matches the LXX. It is not clear whether the LXX or MT reading is to be preferred.

[46] Cf. *Cher*. 85 for the same point: the pentateuchal festivals "are no feasts of mortals. For God has claimed the feasts for Himself."

no element of war. He is without grief or fear or share of ill, without faintheartedness or pain or weariness, but full of happiness unmixed … his nature is most perfect."[47]

The second text Philo cites is Lev 23:2, which refers to the "festivals of the Lord."[48] Philo again takes this to mean that the true feast is too beautiful and perfect for human nature—only God can truly observe the feast: "Moses, great here as ever, seeing how vast was the beauty which belonged to the true feast, held that its perfection was beyond the capacity of human nature to realize, and consecrated it to God with these very words, 'The Lord's feasts.'"[49]

Elsewhere, Philo implies that angels also participate in God's festivals and the pure joy that accompanies them. While commenting on Gen 26:8b, Philo allegorizes Isaac's "playing" with Rebecca as a "festive enjoyment" in which only a perfect person can partake. He goes on to say that this "festive enjoyment" is akin to God's own continual joy, which is mirrored by that of the angels and the stars. Thus, for Philo, all heavenly beings have continual joy, and human beings participate in that heavenly existence at times of festal joy.[50]

Because the festivals are the Lord's own, humans can participate in them only by employing the contemplative and ascetic virtues to purify the soul. Thus, in *Sacr*. 111, Philo defines the feast of the soul: "For the soul's feast is the joy and gladness which the perfect virtues bring, and by perfect is meant virtues unspotted by all the tainting evils to which the human race is liable. Such a feast the wise man only can keep."[51]

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[47] *Cher*. 86.

[48] *Spec*. 2.51

[49] *Spec*. 2.51. Cf. 2:53: "It was a necessary pronouncement that the feasts belonged to God alone, for God alone is happy and blessed, exempt from all evil, filled with perfect forms of good." Philo's realism here (i.e. the belief that the festivals exist in the mind of God and are not a human construct or the result of human convention) stands in striking contrast to the nominalism on exhibit in mRosh 2:8–9, which cites the same passage as Philo ("These are the feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim"), but takes it to mean that God gives human courts the right to determine festival dates and set the calendar. On the categories of realism and nominalism applied to Jewish law, see Hayes, "Legal Realism."

[50] *QG* 4.188. At times, Philo seems to suggest a more concrete connection between earthly and heavenly liturgies, as in *Post*. 103–111; *Plant*. 126, 135; *Ebr*. 94; *Somn*. 1.35–37, where he explains that humans have received the special honor of ministering to God through hymns and songs of praise, in synchrony with the heavenly bodies, which are always singing "songs with music that is divinely inspired and perfect" (μουσικῆς τελείας ἐνθέοις ᾠδαῖς). Moses, he says, heard these songs during his 40-day fast on Sinai (Exod 24:18).

[51] Cf. *Spec*. 1.191: "A feast is a season of joy, and the true joy in which there is no illusion is wisdom firmly established in the soul, and the wisdom that is stable cannot be acquired without applying medicine to the sin and surgery to the passions." To observe the feast, one must "be purified in every way and washed clean and fair by the ablutions and lustrations, which the right reason of nature pours into the souls of those who love God." Again, in *Spec*.

4.3 The Ten Feasts

We may now turn to Philo's festival catalog. His most detailed discussion of the Jewish festivals occurs in *Spec.* 2.39–222, where he lists ten festivals: 1) the "feast of every day," 2) the weekly Sabbath, 3) the monthly new moon, 4) Passover, 5) Matzot, 6) the Omer, 7) Shavuot, 8) Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), 9) Yom Kippur, and 10) Sukkot. In what follows I will treat them in that sequence.

4.4 The Feast of Every Day: The Wise Life

The first item in Philo's list is also the most unusual: "the feast of every day."[52] Such a feast, of course, does not appear in any biblical festival lists, nor is it known from other Jewish traditions. Philo acknowledges that it may surprise his readers.[53] After all, if every day is a feast, then no day is a feast, since festivals exist to mark out certain times as special and to distinguish them from ordinary time. What, then, is Philo's rationale for this festival?

4.4.1 The Exegetical Basis for the Feast of Every Day

It may be that Philo is simply trying to bring the total number of festivals to ten, which he views as a perfect number.[54] He claims, however, to find this festival in the Law,[55] and he does seem to have an exegetical basis: Numbers 28, from which Philo draws his festival list, commands Israel to sacrifice two lambs on the altar every day (i.e. the *Tamid*, vv1–8). For Philo,

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2.52, to participate in the divine feast is to "to find delight and festivity in the contemplation of the world and its contents and in following nature and in bringing words into harmony with deeds and deeds with words." Cf. *Congr*. 161–162.

[52] *Spec*. 2.41. For discussion, see most recently, Gribetz, "Festival"; cf. Niehoff, *Philo*, 161–65; Leonhardt, *Worship*, 25–28.

[53] *Spec*. 2.41.

[54] Cf. Colson, *Philo*, 7.335; Belkin, *Philo*, 192. In Philo's other lists, he limits the number of feasts to seven, which also fits well with his numerological theories; see *Decal*. 160–161; *Spec*. 1.181–189.

[55] *Spec*. 2.42: "the law records that every day is a festival."

sacrifice likely implies festival,[56] but Num 28:2–3 LXX makes it even clearer by identifying the *Tamid* as a festal offering.[57]

4.4.2 Philosophical Sources for Every Day as a Feast

Philo's primary inspiration, however, is likely the Hellenistic philosophical tradition that depicted some wise men living every day as a festival.[58] For example, Plutarch says that Crates and Diogenes of Sinope both viewed every day as festal.[59] Plutarch is careful to stress that this means every day is to be lived in virtue and tranquility, not in the debauchery that typically accompanied Greek and Roman festivals. Along these lines, Philo explains that in the case of the contemplative sages, those "righteous men who follow nature and her ordinances," life is an uninterrupted festival.[60] Conversely, the wicked can never truly keep festival.[61]

4.5 The Sabbath: Festival Par Excellence

The Sabbath is central to the divine law for Philo and is extensively discussed throughout his works.[62] Here, I am primarily interested in the way Philo portrays the Sabbath as a festival and relates it to the larger festival system. I therefore focus on two key sections in his Exposition of

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[56] Colson, *Philo*, 7.334; cf. Gribetz, "Festival," 362. Leonhardt, *Worship*, 26–28, finds the same connection between sacrifice and festival in Plato, *Laws* 828a, and theorizes that Philo's festival list is meant to show how Plato's ideal state finds its fulfillment in Israel's law.

[57] Here the LXX (which uses ἑορτή with regard to the Tamid) is more specific than the MT's reading, במועדו, which most modern translations render "at the appointed time."

[58] Leonhardt, *Worship*, 26, thinks this was "probably a philosophical commonplace" by Philo's time, contra Belkin, *Philo*, 192, who finds no Jewish or Greek parallels to the festival of every day.

[59] In *Tranq. an.* 4, Plutarch tells how Crates laughs and jokes all the time; thus he is said to live his whole life as a festival. Similarly, with regard to Diogenes: "And I am delighted with Diogenes, who, when he saw his host in Sparta preparing which much ado for a certain festival, said, 'Does not a good man consider every day a festival?' and a very splendid one, to be sure, if we are sound of mind" (20). See discussion in Betz, *Plutarch*, 228–30. A similar thought may be stated negatively in Seneca, *Ep*. 18, and Rom 14:5.

[60] *Spec.* 2.42, 46. As noted above, Philo interprets Num 28:2 LXX ("my feasts") and Lev 23:2 LXX ("the Lord's feasts") to say that *sensu stricto* only God himself keeps festival, as he alone experiences uninterrupted joy. Only the wise and virtuous, then, can truly observe the festivals, since they alone imitate God and participate in his excellence through the virtues. And, since God keeps festival every day, so too can the virtuous, through their *imitatio Dei*.

[61] *Spec.* 2.49.

[62] See the comprehensive treatments in Leonhardt, *Worship*, 53–100; Doering, *Schabbat*, 315–82.

the Law (*Decal*. 96–105; *Spec*. 56–139), along with a few other passages that supplement his portrait of the seventh-day festival.

4.5.1 The Sabbath's Relation to Other Festivals

For Philo the Sabbath is the cornerstone of the entire festival calendar. In his exposition of the Decalogue, he explains that the fourth commandment is a summary (κεφάλαιον) of the entire festival calendar and the body of festal halakah.[63] Philo especially emphasizes that the Sabbath is a structural and numerological key to the festival system.[64] Thus, there are seven annual festivals.[65] The holiest month is the seventh (i.e. Tishri).[66] The time between the Sheaf and Shavuot is "seven sevens." Each of the equinoctial feasts, Sukkot and Matzot, are seven-day observances, and begin after two "sevens" (weeks) in their respective months.[67] Finally, on a multi-annual scale, both the Sabbath year and the Jubilee reflect the septenary principle.[68]

This hebdomadic structure is built into creation itself, as illustrated by the seven first days of creation and the seven planets that constitute the heavenly sphere.[69] Indeed, "seven is a factor common to all the phenomena which stand highest in the world of sensible things and serve to consummate in due order transitions of the year and recurring seasons."[70] Thus, Philo stresses that the calendar is both orderly and logical as well as integral to creation, i.e. not the invention

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[63] *Decal*. 158. Cf. Niehoff, *Philo*, 152–53, for the Stoic doctrine of legal principles, or heads (*capita*).

[64] See *Spec*. 2.214: "All the yearly feasts prove to be as it were the children of that number [seven] which stands as a mother." Cf. *Spec*. 2.156, where Philo calls the number seven the "source and fountain" of everything good, especially these select times of corporate celebration. On Philo's arithmology, see Moehring, "Moses"; Berchman, "Arithmos"; Runia, "Arithmological Passage."

[65] Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Passover, Matzot, the Sheaf, and Shavuot; listed in *Decal*. 159–161.

[66] *Decal*. 159. Philo begins his list of festivals in *Decal*. 159 with the seventh-month festivals. N.b. that Philo never uses the Babylonian month-names (such as "Tishri").

[67] *Decal*. 161; cf. *QE* 1.9. Philo here also notes that the time between the equinoxes is seven months, counting inclusively. For obvious reasons, he here neglects to mention the eighth day of Sukkot, though he acknowledges it elsewhere.

[68] *Decal*. 162–164.

[69] *Decal*. 104–105. Philo does not view the planets as wanderers, but stresses their perpetual uniformity and conformity to the divine law. Sometime during the first century CE, Romans widely adopted a seven-day week in which the names of the days drew on the names of the seven planets (Forsythe, *Time*, 131–32).

[70] *Spec*. 2.57. Philo goes on to name the seven planets, the constellations (Arktos and Pleiades each have seven stars), the lunar cycles, and other heavenly bodies as examples. Cf. *Opif*. 114–119, where he applies a septenary classification to the human soul, body and head. In *Spec*. 1.170–72, he connects the Sabbath to the structure of the sacrificial system.

of humans. The Sabbath is, in one sense, the "first feast." The festivals which derive from the Sabbath (for Philo, this includes all the Mosaic festivals) are the "only feasts appointed by nature."[71] All other festivals, especially those of the various nations, are man-made artifice.

4.5.2 Sabbath as Festival Par Excellence

As the cornerstone of the festival system, the Sabbath exemplifies for Philo the nature of festivals in general. Simply put it is the festival *par excellence* in that it commemorates an important event, allows humans to participate in divine life, provides humans with a respite from everyday life, and encourages the festal virtues.

4.5.2.1 Commemoration of the Creation

First, drawing on Exod 20:11, Philo connects the Sabbath to the creation account, which tells how God created over the course of six days, but rested on the seventh (Gen 2:2–3).[72] Festivals often have a commemorative function, and the Sabbath is no exception, as it commemorates the creation week and celebrates the "birthday" of the world.[73] Thus, the Sabbath transcends the national particularity typical of most festivals. This was not the view of all Second Temple Jews. As we have seen, for Jubilees the Sabbath is the special privilege of Israel that distinguishes it from other nations and unites it with God and the highest angels. In contrast, Philo emphasizes that the Sabbath is "the festival, not of one city or one country, but of all the earth, a day which alone it is right to call the day of festival for all people, and the birthday of the world."[74] Ideally, all people everywhere would observe the Sabbath, as the law of nature dictates. Indeed, Philo may harbor the expectation that this would one day happen:

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[71] *Praem*. 153.

[72] See Lanzinger, "Sabbath"; Calabi, "Repos."

[73] *QG* 2.13; cf. *Opif*. 89; *Spec*. 1.170; 2.59.

[74] *Opif*. 89. See Runia, *Creation*, 267; Belkin, *Philo*, 193–94. Cf. *Mos*. 2.22, where Philo emphasizes that the Sabbath brings liberation to all creation, human and non-human, including plants, which "are set at liberty on that day and live as it were in freedom, under the general edict that proclaims that none should touch them." Cf. Lev 25:2–4, 11, for the likely source of this thought.

> *If a fresh start should be made to brighter prospects, how great a change for the better might we expect to see! I believe that each nation would abandon its peculiar ways, and, throwing overboard their ancestral customs, turn to honoring our laws alone. For, when the brightness of their shining is accompanied by national prosperity, it will darken the light of the others as the risen sun darkens the stars.*[75]

4.5.2.2 Imitatio et Participatio Dei

Second, more than simply commemorating creation, the Sabbath urges imitation of God and participation in his heavenly life. The Sabbath is "a feast celebrated by heaven" which joins earth and heaven in the "full harmony of the sacred number [seven]."[76] Humans imitate God by working six days a week and then resting on the Sabbath to contemplate nature, just as God rested on the seventh day in order to contemplate his works.[77] Heavenly rest is the only true rest, for all human Sabbath rest is derivative and partial—a copy of the archetypal heavenly leisure of God and the angels. Thus, the Sabbath teaches humans, "Always imitate God."[78] By following the Sabbath παράδειγμα, Philo says, humans can "make our mortal nature resemble, as far as possible, God's immortal one."[79]

4.5.2.3 Leisure and Proper Sabbath Behavior

Third, the principle of *imitatio Dei* determines the nature of acceptable behavior on the Sabbath. God rested on the seventh day in order to contemplate his works.[80] Humans, therefore, must spend their Sabbath leisure contemplating both the "truths of nature" (i.e. God's deeds) and their own deeds in the previous week.[81] Impure behavior has no place, for the Sabbath is

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[75] *Mos*. 2.44.

[76] *Mos*. 2.210; cf. *Cher*. 87, which depicts God as eternally enjoying a Sabbath rest. Qumran's Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, which is full of heptadic numerology, shows how some Second Temple Jews pictured such heavenly Sabbath celebration.

[77] *Decal*. 97–101. Philo's preferred vocabulary for imitating God here is ἕπεσθαι θεῷ (*Decal*. 98). On the relation between work and rest, see Lanzinger, "Sabbath," 99–105.

[78] ἕπου φησίν αἰεὶ θεῷ (*Decal*. 100).

[79] *Decal*. 101.

[80] *Decal*. 97–101. In *Leg*. 1.5–7, 18, however, Philo denies that God stops creating on the seventh day, instead emphasizing that he rather turned to the creation of divine things. See Burer, *Sabbath*, 73–75; Runia, *Timaeus*, 105, 439.

[81] *Decal*. 98; *Opif*. 128.

sacred time just as the temple is sacred space.[82] The Sabbath is to be devoted to studying wisdom.[83] Bodily labor ceases so that the soul's study of virtue may take center stage.[84] Far from encouraging indolence (the charge of some Greeks and Romans),[85] the Sabbath rather distinguishes between two modes of activity, that of the body and of the soul, creating a weekly rhythm of labor and rest that is modeled by God himself (in the creation week) and ensures the necessary balance between the two best modes of life, the practical (labor) and the contemplative (rest).[86]

If the Sabbath provides the weekly contemplative counterpart to the practical life, then the other festivals do the same on an annual scale. They punctuate the creative pursuits of the practical life with periods of leisure needed to nurture the contemplative life of the wise. It is interesting to note that Greco-Roman festal ideology tended to view labor as a curse—its pain eased only in those festal times of leisure, when humans could participate in the blessed life of the gods.[87] For Philo, on the other hand, the practical life of action is not a curse, but a way of imitating God's creative activity and a necessary ballast to the contemplative life.[88]

4.5.2.4 Festal Virtues and Sabbath Ideology

Fourth, Philo attempts to demonstrate that the Sabbath exemplifies the festal virtues lauded by his Greek and Roman contemporaries. The Sabbath, he explains, teaches gentleness

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[82] Cf. *Spec*. 2.56, where Philo speaks of the virginal nature and chastity of the Sabbath (based on the numerology of the number seven). For prohibited behavior on the Sabbath, cf. *Migr*. 91 and *Mos*. 1.205, 211–12. In *Mos*. 2.214, Philo opines that "bloodshed" would pollute the holiness of the Sabbath. This may indicate agreement with Jubilees that warfare on the Sabbath is forbidden (Jub 50:12). Cf. Doering, *Schabbat*, 537–65; Hadas-Lebel, *Philo*, 101–103; Belkin, *Philo*, 200–203. See mShabb 7:2 for the classic list of thirty-nine labors forbidden on the Sabbath.

[83] *Decal*. 100.

[84] *Spec*. 2.61. Philo provides some idea of how the Sabbath was observed in Alexandria when he refers to the myriad of "schools," or synagogues, that throng on the seventh day with students eager to study the Law (*Somn*. 2.127).

[85] Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.105–106; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.4.3; Seneca, *On Superstition* (apud Augustine, *Civ*. 6.11).

[86] *Decal*. 101; cf. *Spec*. 2.64; *Leg*. 1.18.

[87] Cf. e.g. Aristotle, *Eth. nic*. 1177b; Balme, "Attitudes."

[88] See *Mos*. 1.48 for Moses as an exemplar of the balance between contemplative and practical. In *Spec*. 2.60, the Sabbath law forbids idleness, requiring not simply rest on the seventh day, but work on the previous six. See, however *Fug*. 36; *Spec*. 3.1, on the superiority of the contemplative *modus vivendi*. Cf. Wolfson, *Philo*, 2.262–66; Radice, "Unsociable." Niehoff, *Philo*, 157, remarks that for Philo, Sabbath observance "conforms to the rhythm of working and resting instituted by nature," and thus fits Philo's apologetic for the identity of the Mosaic law with the law of nature.

(ἡμερότης), fellowship (κοινωνία), simplicity/humility (ἀτυφία) and equality (ἰσότης).[89] The Sabbath is a time of commensality and fellowship in houses of prayers.[90] Slaves cannot be compelled to work on the Sabbath, and thereby experience a sort of equality and fellowship even with their owners.[91] This is a return to the original simple and natural state of things, since "no one is a slave by nature."[92] This is especially illustrated in the Sabbath Year and Jubilee Year, during which the land is not to be worked in any way but is to enjoy rest and the "freedom of undirected nature,"[93] hearkening back to the Edenic state before the advent of labor and the sweat of the brow.[94] In this year, also, the Law forbids owners to close up their fields, thereby giving the poor "an unrestricted use of such fruits as are of natural growth."[95] For Philo, this reinforces the virtues of compassion and equality by recreating the natural condition of the world prior to the artifice of private property. Similarly, in the Jubilee Year, there is a "restoration" (ἀποκατάστασις) of the land to the original state:[96] "the whole country is called God's property, and it is against religion to have anything to that is God's property registered under other masters."[97]

The Sabbath also inculcates self-discipline, a festal virtue Philo elevates in direct contrast to the shameful pagan behavior he witnessed at Greek and Roman festivals. The Sabbath, he says,

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[89] *Decal*. 162–64. Cf. Hadas-Lebel, *Philo*, 101. Famously, the popular Greek Kronia and the Roman Saturnalia also attempted to recreate through ritual the original equality of the golden age of Kronos/Saturn. Labor ceased as shops closed, and masters served their slaves at the table in a show of commonality and fellowship. Banqueters wore simple clothes, recalling the simplicity of the golden age. Cf. Niehoff, *Philo*, 163, who finds among Stoics "a lively interest in holidays as an occasion for social reversal and philosophical invigoration." The Roman Compitalia involved the elevation of slaves to priestly duties. See Scullard, *Festivals*, 59, 205–207. The first book of Macrobius's *Saturnalia* (fifth-century CE) provides a helpful window into the rationale attributed to the festival by its celebrants. Cf. *QE* 1.14, where Philo explains the roasting of the Passover lamb as an instance of the "simplicity" desired at festivals.

[90] *Contempl*. 30–33; *Mos*. 2.215–16; *Spec*. 2.62–63.

[91] Elsewhere he uses ἡμερότης to describe the kindness that should be shown to slaves (*Spec*. 2.79, *Virt*. 121; *Praem*. 156). This may reflect Deut 5:12–15, which grounds the Sabbath not in creation but in the exodus. In *Spec*. 2.66, he says that the Sabbath declares freedom to slaves. See, however, Hadas-Lebel, *Philo*, 100, who rightly observes that Philo does not typically emphasize the Deuteronomic grounding of the Sabbath.

[92] *Spec*. 2.69; my translation. Cf. *Spec*. 2.84.

[93] *Decal*. 163.

[94] See *Mut*. 258–60, where the Sabbath is characterized by the "spontaneous and self-grown" manna or the produce of the sabbatical year; cf. Burer, *Sabbath*, 76–77.

[95] *Spec*. 2.105–106.

[96] *Decal*. 164.

[97] *Spec*. 2.113.

should "be occupied, not as by some in bursts of laughter or sports or shows of mimes and dancers on which stage-struck fools waste away their strength almost to the point of death, and through the dominant senses of sight and hearing reduce to slavery their natural queen, the soul, but by the pursuit of wisdom only."[98]

In the same way, the Sabbath year keeps a person from becoming dominated by money and trains him to endure minor hardships, like an athlete buffeting his body to grow stronger.[99] The Therapeutae serve as paragons of Sabbath and festal virtue, as they pass their lives contemplatively, disciplining their bodies with a strict ascetic diet and lifestyle, but Philo can also point to Sabbath meetings that took place throughout the diaspora as "schools of prudence and courage and temperance and justice and also of piety, holiness and every virtue."[100]

4.6 New Month Day

The third festival in Philo's catalog is a monthly observance: the new month day (νουμηνία).[101] Philo continues to follow the order of the list of festivals in Numbers 28, which prescribes animal, grain, and drink offerings for the first day of each month (vv11–15).[102] He goes beyond his biblical source in specifying that the new month is determined by the lunar cycle.[103]

Apart from its inclusion in Numbers 28, Philo offers five reasons to consider the new month day a festival. First, because it is a beginning, it is worthy of being honored. Second, the arrival of the new moon brings light to the sky, a light lost at the lunar conjunction when the moon is not visible. Third, the festival celebrates the symbolic lesson taught by the heavenly bodies: on

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[98] *Mos*. 2.211–212.
[99] *Spec*. 2.87.
[100] *Mos*. 2.216.
[101] Discussed in *Spec*. 2.140–144; 1.168, 180–188. Cf. Leonhardt, *Worship*, 28–29.
[102] Cf. Num 10:10.
[103] On the determination of the new moon, see Leicht, "Observing"; Stern, *Calendar*, 112–19, who argues that Philo places the "new moon" festival *after* the conjunction, at the first sighting of the new moon, since at the conjunction the moon would be invisible and would not fit Philo's second explanation of the festival. Colson, *Philo*, 7.390, doubts the authenticity of the statement that the new month day is κατὰ σελήνην.

this day the sun begins to illumine the moon and the stronger light "supplies the help … to the smaller and weaker."[104] For Philo, this encourages kindness and generosity in sharing one's property freely. Fourth, Philo asserts that the moon's quick transit of the zodiac and return to the conjunction serves as a lesson that we ought not to be overwhelmed by the passions in seeking to attain our goal.[105] Finally, Philo notes the role of the moon in the tides and the harvests as a reason to celebrate this heavenly body's revolution.

Philo's treatment of this festival is rather brief and vague. He does not discuss any ritual behavior associated with the festival or give any indication that it was observed apart from the temple.[106] A Hellenistic audience would hardly need justification for, or explanation of, new moon festivals, as these were common in the Greco-Roman world.[107] Therefore, Philo is content to propose these somewhat tenuous connections between the new moon and the typical festal virtues of philanthropy and self-control, as well as to note the obvious "naturalness" of the festival.[108]

4.7 Passover: Escape from Slavery to Passions

After the New Moon, the fourth festival Philo discusses in *On the Special Laws* is Passover.[109] To refer to the festival, Philo frequently uses the common transliteration of פסחא, πάσχα, but he often prefers διαβατήρια or διάβασις, which appear to be translations of פסחא or פסח. In the ancient Mediterranean, διαβατήρια denotes an offering that precedes a fraught river (or border) crossing,[110] while διάβασις refers to the act of crossing itself, or the means of crossing (a bridge

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[104] *Spec*. 2.141.

[105] *Spec*. 2.142. Philo here plays on the term used for the lunar conjunction (σύνοδος): ἐν ταῖς τοῦ βίου πράξεσι τὰ τέλη συνῳδὰ ταῖς ἀρχαῖς ἀποφαίνωμεν.

[106] See, however, Col 2:16, which may refer to diaspora observance of the new moon.

[107] Leonhardt, *Worship*, 29, points to Plato, *Laws* 453, 828. Cf. Plutarch, *Mor*. 828a.

[108] On the ideal of φιλανθρωπία in Philo, see Borgen, *Philo*, 243–60.

[109] Scholarly discussions of Philo on Passover can be found in Bokser, *Origins*, 22–24; Leonhardt, *Worship*, 29–36; Pearce, *Land*, 81–103, 124–26; Belkin, *Philo*, 61–64; de Lange, "Celebration"; Martola, "Eating"; Schlund, *Knochen*, 57–76.

[110] LSJ, s.v. διαβατέος. Cf. Origen, *Cels*. 8.22, who also uses the term for Passover. See Jameson, *Cults*, 103–105. Philo seems to use the term specifically for the Paschal sacrifice. It is almost certainly not original to Philo, and thus gives insight into an Alexandrian Jewish understanding of Passover as an apotropaic sacrifice intended to ensure a safe

or pass).[111] In the Greek versions of the Hebrew Bible, the term is not used to describe the Passover festival, though διάβασις is used in Josh 4:8LXX to describe the crossing of the Jordan that occurs just before Passover,[112] as well as in Isa 51:10LXX to describe the crossing of the Red Sea.[113] Notably, like many other Second Temple traditions, Philo distinguishes Passover from Matzot while acknowledging that they are closely linked both chronologically and thematically.[114]

4.7.1 Festal Ideology: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity

For Philo, as for other early Jews, the Passover was primarily a commemoration of Israel's liberation from Egypt. Philo describes the festival as both a "reminder" (ὑπόμνημα) of, and "thank-offering" (χαριστήριον) for, this national deliverance.[115] As was expected of festivals in the ancient world, the Passover functioned to increase social cohesion and unity among the people, all the more as pilgrimage to a central shrine became the norm.[116] In this regard, Philo points to Exod 12:4, which commands multiple households to band together in sharing a lamb; this illustrates for Philo the fellowship (κοινωνία) and equality (ἰσότης) engendered by the Passover as Israel sacrifices "in harmonious oneness" as "one character and one soul."[117]

Indeed, for Philo, perhaps the most striking aspect of Passover is its egalitarian or democratic nature: "For at other times the priests according to the ordinance of the law carry out both the public sacrifices and those offered by private individuals. But on this occasion the whole nation

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crossing of the Egyptian border and the Reed Sea. As Jameson notes, signs were expected to accompany such sacrifices to indicate their efficacy (*Cults*, 104). The death of the firstborn was likely understood this way in Alexandria.

[111] LSJ, s.v. διάβασις.

[112] Josh 4:19 states that the crossing was completed on 1/10.

[113] Cf. Josephus, who speaks of Passover using ὑπερβασία (*Ant*. 2.14.6) and πάσχα (*J.W*. 2.10; 6.423). See Colautti, *Passover*, 5–8.

[114] Of Matzot, he writes, συνάπτει δὲ τοῖς διαβατηρίοις ἑορτὴν (*Spec*. 2.150). On the relationship between Passover and Matzot in the Second Temple era, see above p. 71.

[115] *Spec*. 2.146. Cf. the use of εὐχαριστία in the same section. Cf. *Mos*. 2.224. At no point does he ascribe atoning significance to the sacrifice.

[116] *QE* 1.10: The "whole multitude came together with harmonious oneness to give thanks for their migration.… [and] came together not only in body but also in mind."

[117] *QE* 1.5; cf. *Her*. 193; *QE* 1.10.

performs the sacred rites and acts as priest [ἱερᾶται] with pure hands and complete immunity."[118]

Philo draws here on Exodus 12, which recounts the Egyptian Passover. His point could hardly be made from the Deuteronomistic pentateuchal Passover legislation, which emphasizes the centralization of the festival. While Exodus 12 says it was the Lord who commanded a household ritual, Philo's attributes the sacrifice to the people's impatient exuberance: they were so excited to be delivered that "they naturally enough sacrificed without waiting for their priest."[119] Philo here portrays the law as remarkably flexible in terms of halakah. Priestly prerogatives can be suspended in case of excitement, it seems. Even more, Philo states, the law actually sanctions this suspension by requiring such a priest-less sacrifice annually; thus, the Egyptian Passover is not a one-off celebration, but a model for all subsequent Passovers. At Passover, the entire nation is priestly for a day (cf. Exod 19:5–6). Every house becomes a temple, with blood on its lintels, and the guests must undergo a priestly cleansing.[120]

Based on Philo's statements, E.P. Sanders posits that in the first-century diaspora the Passover sacrifice was slaughtered in a domestic setting away from the temple.[121] He acknowledges, though, that there is no direct evidence for this, and that Philo could be speaking only exegetically and theoretically. The question remains controverted, but J. Leonhardt is probably correct that, given his emphasis on the exclusivity of the Jerusalem temple, Philo does not endorse (and perhaps does not even attest) such a domestic sacrifice. Rather he depicts a

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[118] *Spec*. 2.146; cf. *Mos*. 2.224; *QE* 1.10. Cf. Plut. *Quaest. conv*. 1.3, who advocated egalitarian practices at fellowship meals: "If in other matters we are to preserve equality among men, why not begin with this first and accustom them to take their places with each other without vanity and ostentation, because they understand as soon as they enter the door that the dinner is a democratic [δημοκρατικός] affair and has no outstanding place like an acropolis where the rich man is to recline and lord it over meaner folk?" For the theme of equality at the banquet, see Smith and Taussig, *Many Tables*, 33–34.

[119] *Spec*. 2.146. Interestingly, Philo here also assumes the existence of an official Israelite priesthood at the time of the exodus, prior to the establishment of the Levitical order at Sinai. He clarifies this, however, in *QE* 1.10.

[120] *Spec*. 2.148; *QE* 1.12. Philo elsewhere mentions the custom of Second Passover for those unclean at the time of the first (*Mos*. 2.225–26).

[121] Sanders, *Judaism*, 133–34. For discussion of the controversial question with regard to Philo, see Leonhardt, *Worship*, 31–33.

domestic commemoration of the festival in the diaspora, "probably with a meal of lamb, slaughtered but not sacrificed."[122]

4.7.2 Allegorical Interpretation

Cognitive dissonance surely must have been the order of the day for Alexandrian Jews as they celebrated their Passover each year *in Egypt*.[123] It is no surprise, then, that Philo's discussion of Passover pays minimal attention to Israel's national liberation, valorizing instead an allegorized reading that focuses on the liberation of the individual soul. The διάβασις of Passover becomes an allegory for the soul's purification, as the individual "crosses" or "passes over" from an Egypt of bodily pleasure and passions to a life of wisdom.[124] The great wind which held back the torrents of the Red Sea (Exod 14:21) is interpreted as virtue, which repels the waves of passion.[125] It is likely that Philo's emphasis on the passions (πάθη) stems from a folk etymology associating Πάσχα with the verb πάσχω, and therefore with the passions. As he explains, "Passover [Πάσχα] is when the soul endeavors to unlearn irrational passion [πάθος], and freely experiences [πάσχῃ] rational enjoyment [εὐπάθειαν]."[126] By forsaking such passions and embracing virtue, one is able to participate in the divine life, for the Lord is the one who truly keeps Passover. To make this point, Philo appeals to Exod 12:11, where the feast is called the "Passover of the Lord." This implies for Philo that the Lord himself somehow keeps the festival and that human festival-keeping is *imitatio Dei*.[127]

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[122] Leonhardt, *Worship*, 33. On meals in Philo, see Sokolskaya, "Meals."

[123] Hadas-Lebel, *Philo*, 104; Bloch, "Leaving."

[124] *Spec*. 2.147; *Migr*. 23, 25; *Her*. 193. On Philo's allegorical interpretation of Passover see Delassus, *Thème*; Pearce, *Land*, 81–128, esp. 124–26; Decock, "Migration." In *Leg*. 3.94, Philo discusses the Second Passover (Num 9:6–14), instituted for those who were unclean or away during the first-month festival. For Philo, the Second Passover represents a second chance for those who failed to leave the passions completely in the first instance. A more literal interpretation of the Second Passover appears in *Mos*. 2.228–32, where it illustrates Moses's wisdom in legal deliberation and the merciful flexibility of the law even on such a clear matter as the date of a festival.

[125] *Spec*. 2.147. See Goudoever, *Calendars*, 128; cf. *Leg*. 2.34,

[126] *Her*. 192 (my translation). The contrast between πάθος and εὐπάθεια is a Stoic commonplace; cf. Brennan, "Stoic Theory."

[127] *Sacr*. 63: "For it is no mortal passage, since it is called the passover of the Uncreate and Immortal one. And right fitly is it so called, for there is no good thing which is not divine and is not of God."

Philo also allegorizes specific aspects of the Passover ritual. Through an etymological reading, the Passover lamb (πρόβατον) becomes a symbol of the soul's "first step" (πρόβατον) in its migration to wisdom.[128] Philo associates the tenth day of the first month, on which the lamb is to be set apart (Exod 12:3), with the tithe that belongs to God, and thus interprets the beginning of the Passover ritual as the first step in offering the self to God.[129] The full moon, at which the Passover sacrifice takes place, illustrates the illumination of the soul.[130] The readiness and haste with which Israel was to eat the Passover (Exod 12:11) points to the speed with which the life of virtue should be taken up:

> *We are bidden to keep the Passover, which is the passage from the life of the passions to the practice of virtue, "with our loins girded" ready for service.[131] We must grip the material body of flesh, that is the sandals, with "our feet," that stand firm and sure. We must bear "in our hands the staff" of discipline, to the end that we may walk without stumbling through all the business of life. Last of all we must eat our meal "in haste" (Exod. xii. 11). For it is no mortal passage, since it is called the passover of the Uncreate and Immortal one. And right fitly is it so called, for there is no good thing which is not divine and is not of God.*[132]

Similarly, the unleavened bread eaten at the meal indicates the speed with which the meal was prepared, but on an allegorical level, it represents the humility of the virtuous soul, which is not "puffed up" and swollen by arrogance, as leaven causes bread to rise.[133] The accompanying bitter herbs portray Israel's bitter servitude in Egypt, but also symbolize the regret over past folly felt by those who have repented from the life of the passions.[134]

Like most festivals, Passover was a time of gaiety and jovial celebration over a sumptuous dinner and abundant wine. Philo, however, urges a more austere observance of the festival, appealing to the simplicity of the dinner Moses prescribes. The lamb is simply prepared, roasted

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[128] *Leg*. 3.165; cf. *QE* 1.3.

[129] *Congr*. 105–106 (δεκάτη is often a technical term for the tithe offering in the LXX). In *QE* 1.2, Philo compares the Passover as sacred time to the temple as sacred space and speculates that the lamb is chosen on 1/10 in order to give time for the worshiper to purify himself for the sacred festival: "one should not enter with unwashed feet on the pavement of the temple of God."

[130] *QE* 1.2; 1.9.

[131] In *Leg*. 3.154, Philo interprets the girding of the loins as the restraint of the sexual passions.

[132] *Sacr.* 63; cf. *Migr*. 25.

[133] *QE* 1.15; *Sacr*. 62; cf. a similar point by Paul in a Passover context (1 Cor 5:6–8).

[134] *QE* 1.15.

without dressings or sauces.[135] The unleavened bread and the bitter herbs remind the diner of the danger of uncontrolled passion. Prayers and hymns, not raucous partying, should be the order of the evening.[136] Perhaps most demanding of all, a vigil is required on Passover eve (Exod 12:42), which encourages the soul to be "sleepless and watchful for the vision of things worthy to be seen.… which not unmixed (wine) but sober wisdom produces. For one of these is the cause of drunkenness and delirium while the other (is the cause) of soberness."[137]

4.7.3 A Patriarchal Passover?

Most of Philo's Passover discussion is devoted to its allegorical interpretation, but one passage indicates that he is also familiar with traditions in which the patriarchs are portrayed as observing the festival. In *Sacr*. 64, Philo comments on the requirement to eat the Passover "in haste" (Exod 12:11). He adduces Jacob as an exemplar of this haste, citing Genesis 27, where Jacob tricks his blind father Isaac into blessing him instead of Esau. Jacob does so in part by bringing Isaac a meal of meat ("two kids") and bread, which Rebekah has prepared so quickly that Isaac remarks upon the speed with which "Esau" (i.e. Jacob) has acquired his prey (Gen 27:20). It seems quite likely that Philo associates this episode with Passover not simply due to the "haste" motif, but because he is aware of an exegetical tradition that has made the same link.[138]

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[135] *QE* 1.14. Philo does not draw at all on the Passover regulations in Deuteronomy, which allows the sacrifice to be boiled, and, notably, emphasizes Jerusalem as the only proper locale for the feast. Indeed, Philo never explicitly indicates that the Passover sacrifice takes place at the Jerusalem temple. See Lange, "Celebration," 164–65.

[136] *Spec*. 2.148: "The guests … are there not as in other festive gatherings, to indulge the belly with wine and viands, but to fulfil with prayers and hymns the custom handed down by their fathers." Leonhardt, *Worship*, 30, sees a possible reference to the Hallel here; cf. Cohen, *Philo Judaeus*, 305–13. Wis 18:9 provides another diaspora reference to the use of hymns and chants at Passover.

[137] *QE* 1.15. Philo may indicate that he is aware of mystical Jewish practices on Passover eve. See the next note for targumic references to visions on Passover evening.

[138] See Vermes, *Post-Biblical*, 111–12; Hayward, *Targums*, 130–31. Interestingly, TgPsJ Gen 4:3 and PRE 21 also place the sacrifices of Cain and Abel at Passover. Cain and Abel's sacrifice is, of course, the main text addressed in Philo, *De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini*. In addition, TgPsJ Gen 27:1 places Isaac's vision of the ladder and throne at Passover, while TgPsJ Exod 12:40 puts Abram's vision between the pieces (Genesis 15) at the same feast (so also PRE 28; Seder Olam Rabbah 5). Philo likewise seems to associate visionary experiences with the Passover vigil in *QE* 1.2: "For when bright and visible visions appear to souls, they begin to hold festival" (accepting here Marcus's correction of the corrupted text). Cf. *QE* 1.15: "He wishes to show through a symbol that every soul which piety fattens with its own mystical and divine piety is sleepless and watchful for the vision of things worthy to be seen." These pieces of evidence suggest that Philo is aware of and endorses traditions which have festalized the patriarchal narratives.

This tradition is attested in TgPsJ Gen 27:1, which dates the episode to 14 Nisan.[139] Rebekah prepares two kids, "one for the Passover and one for the festival offerings" (27:9), in accordance with Mishnaic law (mPes 6:3). The same date and similar details also appear in PRE 32 and ExodRab 15:11. Josephus, too, seems to see this as a cultic meal, as he remarks that Isaac was disqualified from the priestly service of preparing it due to his blindness.[140] It would be natural to link Genesis 27 to Passover because of the motifs they share: 1) both involve a cultic meal, 2) the matter of the firstborn son plays a central role in both; 3) both culminate in a flight from the wrath of the harmed party (Israel flees Egypt, while Jacob flees Beersheba).

4.8 Matzot: Embracing the Ascetic Life

Philo's fifth festival, Matzot, is a seven-day festival that begins immediately after Passover, on the fifteenth of the first month.[141] Because of their calendrical proximity, Passover and Matzot were often conflated in early Judaism. Philo clearly distinguishes the two, while emphasizing their close connection.[142] Philo's name for the festival is ἄζυμα, drawn from the only ritual aspect of the feast he discusses, namely that during this week Israel would eat only unleavened bread.[143]

4.8.1 Historical Commemoration and Universalizing Allegorical Interpretation

For Philo, there are two ways to look at the festival. On one hand, it is a celebration particular to Israel, a historical commemoration of the nation's departure (ἀποικία) from Egypt.[144] Its one

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[139] See Bengtsson, *Passover*, 65–73, for a full treatment. As Hayward, *Targums*, 130–131, observes, both the Targum and Philo here portray Jacob as a model student of the law. On Philo's treatment of Jacob, see Uusimäki, "Mind."

[140] *Ant*. 1.267; cf. Hayward, *Targums*, 131.

[141] While Philo's list of the ten feasts in *Spec*. 2.41 places the Omer after Passover and before Matzot, his discussion in *Spec*. 2.150–175 addresses Matzot before the Omer (following the order of Leviticus 23). On this festival in Philo, see Leonhardt, *Worship*, 36–38.

[142] συνάπτει δὲ τοῖς διαβατηρίοις (*Spec*. 2.150). Colson's translation of συνάπτει as "combines" is too strong as it suggests mixture (Colson, *Philo* 7.397).

[143] Cf. Mark 14:1. A fuller version of the name (ἑορτὴ τῶν ἀζύμων) is used in Lev 23:6 LXX; cf. Acts 12:3.

[144] *Spec*. 2.150.

notable ritual element (eating unleavened bread) memorializes the haste with which the Israelites had to leave Egypt.[145] Philo, however, wishes to downplay the particular and national character of the festival in order to emphasize its universal nature, as befits his view of the Torah as universally applicable natural law.[146] To do this, he focuses on three key elements that transcend the historical and particular.

First, he notes the festival's numerology, focusing especially on the hebdomadic nature of the feast's calendrical placement.[147] If one counts inclusively from the autumnal equinox, Matzot occurs during the seventh month. Moreover, the feast lasts seven days; beginning on the fifteenth of the month, it spans the third "seven" (i.e. week) of the year. Philo notes that the date of Matzot (1/15) is not only the vernal equinox, but also a full moon, when both day and night are illuminated with continuous light from the heavens. There is "no darkness" and "no shadow" on this special day.[148]

Second, Philo universalizes the festival by depicting it as a "reminder of the creation of the world."[149] On his reckoning, the world was created in the Spring (in the first month). Matzot, which occurs around the vernal equinox, bespeaks the "first epoch in which this world was created."[150] All was perfectly ordered: "the earth was adorned with every manner of plants, and the uplands and lowlands, wherever the soil had depth and goodness, became luxuriant and verdant. So every year God reminds us of the creation of the world by setting before our eyes the spring when everything blooms and flowers."[151]

Third, the ritual of eating unleavened bread is not merely (or even primarily) a reminder of Israel's haste in exiting Egypt, but rather harkens back to the golden age of creation—"the first epoch"—in which the world's "earliest inhabitants, children of earth in the first or second

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[145] *Spec*. 2.158.
[146] *Spec*. 2.150. See Treitel, "Nomos," 490.
[147] *Spec*. 2.150.
[148] *Spec*. 2.155. On the association of Matzot with the full moon, see McKay, "Date."
[149] τῆς τοῦ κόσμου γενέσεως ὑπόμνημα (*Spec*. 2.160).
[150] *Spec*. 2.151.
[151] *Spec*. 2.151–152.

generation, must have used the gifts of the universe in their unperverted state before pleasure had got the mastery."[152] Unleavened bread is in its natural state, a "gift of nature," while leavened bread is artificial food.[153]

4.8.2 Matzot's Festal Ideology: Back to Nature

For Philo, then, Matzot is a "back to nature" festival. It inculcates the festal virtues of ascetic discipline, frugality, and purity. It is a time to appreciate the bare necessities, "to confer admiration and honour on the old-time life of frugality and economy, and as far as possible to assimilate our present-day life to that of the distant past."[154] Leaven enhances the taste of food, transforming bare nutrition into pleasurable fare.[155] But pleasure can quickly become a master and soften one's character. By engaging in the golden age mimesis of Matzot, a person can "rekindle the embers of the serious and ascetic mode of faring,"[156] and purify one's character of pleasure's mastery.[157] For Philo, it is therefore fitting that the twelve loaves (taken by Philo to represent the twelve tribes) which are placed before God in the Jerusalem Temple are unleavened.[158] The implication is clear: a pure and disciplined lifestyle, as taught by the festival of Matzot, is a requirement for being in God's presence and participating in the divine life.

4.9 The Sheaf: Firstfruits of the Virtuous Life

Philo turns now to his sixth festival: the Omer (τὸ δράγμα).[159] Leviticus places this festival after Passover and Matzot and requires that "on the day after the Sabbath" the firstfruits of the

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[152] *Spec*. 2.160.

[153] *Spec*. 2.159. In 2.158, Philo also explains the unleavened bread as being, in a sense, unfinished, which reflects the state of the harvest at the time of the festival.

[154] *Spec*. 2.160.

[155] *Spec*. 2.159.

[156] *Spec*. 2.160.

[157] Cf. the same point in *Congr*. 161–62, 167, where Philo reflects on the "bread of affliction," a phrase used in Deut 16:3 to describe the unleavened bread of the festival.

[158] *Spec*. 2.161. A similar point is made using the twelve loaves in *Congr*. 168–72. In *Spec*. 1.173 the twelve loaves symbolize ἐγκράτεια.

[159] Philo here follows the order of Leviticus 23, which describes Passover and Matzot, then the Sheaf. In *Spec*. 2.41, however, Philo places the Sheaf before Matzot. Philo is unusual among early Jewish writers in that he includes the Sheaf

grain harvest be brought to the high priest for a wave offering (Lev 23:11,15). Seven weeks after this offering, Shavuot is to be celebrated. In early Judaism the date of the Omer (and thus of Shavuot) was disputed due to the ambiguity of the phrase, "on the day after the Sabbath."[160] Groups that adhered to a 364-day calendar (e.g. the Qumran community) offered the Omer on 1/25 (the first weekly Sabbath after Matzot), followed by Shavuot on 3/15.[161] Most ancient Jews, though, followed the Pharisaic tradition in which the Omer was offered on 1/16, which was the first required day of rest after Passover, although it was usually not the weekly Sabbath (i.e. Saturday). Shavuot was then observed on 3/6. Philo clearly assumes the Pharisaic interpretation; indeed, he seems unaware of the controversy.[162]

4.9.1 The Universal Nature of the Festival

In Lev 23:10, the Sheaf festival is clearly tied to Israel's national history and covenant with God. It recalls the entrance into the promised land and consists of a firstfruits offering harvested specifically from the land of Israel. Philo acknowledges this particularity but reinterprets the festival in order to find a more universal significance. First, he portrays the Omer as a firstfruit offered not just for the land of Israel but for the whole earth and the whole human race. By offering the Omer, Israel acts as the world's priest.[163] Here Philo offers an apologia against pagan charges that Jews are misanthropic due to their exclusive monotheism and separatist practices. On the contrary, Philo responds, Israel's exclusive worship of the one God is actually on behalf of, and for the benefit of, other nations.[164]

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in the festival calendar (see Leonhard, *Pesach*, 146). Other early Jews do not describe it as a distinct "festival," though see its inclusion in 4Q320 frg. 4 iii.

[160] See VanderKam, *Calendars*, 25, for summary; cf. Saulnier, *Calendrical*, 75, 108, 124, 150; Fraade, "Theory." Rabbinic discussion of the issue is reflected in mHag 2:4; mMen 10:3; tRosh 1:15; bMen 65b–66a.

[161] See above, p. 83.

[162] See Belkin, *Philo*, 217; Hayward, *Temple*, 135. The LXX of Lev 23:11 reads τῇ ἐπαύριον τῆς πρώτης, which probably influences Philo's understanding. In *Spec*. 2.162, he writes that the Sheaf offering is μετὰ τὴν πρώτην [τῶν ἀζύμων] εὐθὺς ἡμέραν.

[163] *Spec*. 2.162–63. Cf. *Decal*. 160. On the Sheaf and the theme of Israel's priesthood for the world, see Birnbaum, *Place*, 186–88. Philo may have Exod 19:5–6 in mind here.

[164] *Spec*. 2.167.

Second, the festival teaches moral virtues that have universal application, namely that all humans should be thankful to God, remember him as the source of all good things, and repay him for their blessings.[165] Elsewhere, Philo interprets the festival allegorically, stressing its significance for the individual: when the mind arrives in the land of virtue and derives its benefits, it should not claim credit for them but recognize God as the one who has brought them about. Similarly, the firstfruits offering teaches that the individual should perform the best (i.e. first) deeds in God's honor.[166]

Finally, Philo notes the hebdomadic numerology of the Sheaf festival, which suggests its universality: it precedes by seven sevens (49 days) the festival of Pentecost.[167] Indeed, for Philo the Sheaf is primarily a prelude (πανήγυρις προέορτος) to the much more prominent Pentecost. This explains for Philo why barley—a lesser grain—is offered as the Sheaf, while the superior wheat is saved for Pentecost.[168]

4.10 Shavuot: The Feast of the Heptad

Philo's seventh festival is Shavuot, which he calls by two names, both drawn from the Greek Pentateuch. First, he refers to it as the feast of first-products (ἑορτὴ πρωτογεννημάτων), indicating its nature as a firstfruits festival.[169] Second, he identifies it as the feast of "Weeks" or "sevens" (τῶν ἑβδομάδων), which speaks of its calendrical placement seven weeks after the offering of the Sheaf.[170] It is not clear whether Philo uses "Pentecost" (πεντηκοστὴ ἡμέρα) as a name for the festival or simply a description of its date.[171]

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[165] *Spec*. 2.171–172.

[166] *Somn*. 2.75–77.

[167] *Spec*. 2.176.

[168] *Spec*. 2.175. That the Omer is barley is not explicit in the biblical texts, which seem to assume knowledge of the agricultural cycle in the Land of Israel. Cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 3.250.

[169] *Spec*. 2.179. Cf. Exod 23:16, 19; 34:26; Lev 23:19–29.

[170] *Spec*. 2.41. Cf. Exod 34:22; Num 28:26; Deut 16:10, 16.

[171] *Decal*. 160 is the best candidate for understanding it as a proper name. The name was certainly in use when Philo was writing; cf. Tob 2:1; 2 Macc 12:32; Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Cor 16:8.

4.10.1 Rituals and Significance

In the biblical texts, Shavuot is an agricultural pilgrimage festival that marks the end of the wheat harvest with a firstfruits offering of two ceremonial loaves accompanied by typical festal sacrifices (Lev 23:15–21). Philo largely follows Leviticus in his discussion, depicting Shavuot as a time to acknowledge God's gracious provision in the harvest by dedicating its firstfruits as a thanksgiving before the rest of the harvest is consumed.[172]

The primary Shavuot ritual Philo discusses is the presentation of two loaves (Lev 23:17). These loaves are leavened—noteworthy because leaven is otherwise prohibited in offerings (Lev 2:11). Philo addresses this tension and argues that leavened loaves are appropriate for Shavuot because they reflect the completeness and perfection exemplified by the festival; just as wheat is the best of the seed crops, so leavened bread is wheat in its most edible state.[173] Moreover, leaven causes bread to rise, which Philo interprets allegorically as pointing to the joy and "rational elevation" of the soul dedicated to contemplating the divine.[174] He similarly finds meaning in the number of loaves (two) offered at Shavuot. These reveal the forward- and backward-looking nature of the harvest, as people both store up grain for the future as well as bring out what is necessary for daily use.[175] Finally, Philo interprets the "preservation offerings" (θυσίαι σωτηρίου) of Shavuot as a thanksgiving for the way God has "preserved" the harvest from the usual calamities.[176]

4.10.2 Numerology and the Universal Nature of the Festival

As with the Sheaf, Philo emphasizes Shavuot's universality, attempting to show that it accords with nature and not simply the customs of a particular people. He therefore never

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[172] *Spec*. 2.179–182.
[173] *Spec*. 2.184, 186.
[174] *Spec*. 2.185.
[175] *Spec*. 2.187.
[176] Lev 23:19; *Spec*. 2.184.

mentions any link between Shavuot and the giving of the Law/Covenant at Sinai.[177] Instead, Shavuot is purely agricultural, reflecting the natural cycle of sowing and reaping, not commemorating the history of one nation.

Philo reinforces the universal and natural character of the festival by focusing on its numerological features. When he lists the "ten feasts," Philo places Shavuot seventh, emphasizing its connection with the heptad, a point that is reinforced by its name, the feast "of sevens" (τῶν ἑβδομάδων).[178] Similarly, he points out that "seven sevens" separate the Sheaf from Shavuot.[179] As the fiftieth day, Shavuot follows the "pattern of some quite superior form of existence," for 50 is a triangular number ($3^2 + 4^2 + 5^2 = 50$).[180] Elsewhere, discussing the Jubilee year (i.e. the fiftieth year), he asserts that the number fifty represents completion or perfection and calls it "the most sacred of numbers and the most deeply rooted in nature."[181]

4.10.3 The Therapeutae and Shavuot

Philo gives additional insight into the festival's significance in his description of the Therapeutae (*On the Contemplative Life*).[182] The Therapeutae, according to Philo, are a community of visionary ascetics residing by Lake Mareotis near Alexandria. They exemplify the contemplative life, engaging in meditation and allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures.[183] They assemble regularly on the Sabbath, which they consider especially sacred and festal (πανέορτος), to engage in philosophical discourse.[184]

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[177] Cf. Leonhardt, *Worship*, 40.

[178] *Spec*. 2.41.

[179] *Spec*. 2.176. More precisely, Philo says that there are "seven sevens" plus the "monad," which symbolizes God.

[180] *Spec*. 2.178. On triangular numbers see Colson, "Triangular."

[181] *Det*. 64; *Contempl*. 65.

[182] Philo's description of the Therapeutae has received extensive scholarly treatment. See most recently Stefanut, *Therapeutae*; Taylor, *Women*; Gusella, "Therapeutae." Some have argued that the Therapeutae did not actually exist; cf. Brakke, "Origins." A strong argument for the historicity of the Therapeutae is offered in Hay, "Things." This question is mostly irrelevant to my project; fictitious or not, Philo's description gives us insight into his understanding of Shavuot. An older debate concerned the treatise's authenticity, but Niehoff, "Symposium," 105, notes that its authenticity is now "overwhelmingly acknowledged."

[183] *Contempl*. 28–29. For Philo's views on the contemplative life, see Bergmeier, "Stand." On the exegetical work of the Therapeutae see Deutsch, "Therapeutae."

[184] *Contempl*. 36.

Of primary interest is Philo's description of a festal assembly held by the Therapeutae, apparently on the eve of Shavuot, which Philo calls here "the greatest feast."[185] Dressed in white robes, they pray, recline and "feast" on water and leavened bread, accompanied by a homily, hymns, and chants until dawn.[186] The meal (especially the presence of *leavened* bread), the vigil, and the visionary activity all mirror other early Jewish descriptions of Shavuot.[187] Some scholars suggest, however, that the Therapeutae actually observed such a festival *every fifty days*, not only at Shavuot.[188] This would then be similar to the calendar of the Temple Scroll at Qumran, where firstfruits are offered at pentecontadal intervals.[189] Philo seems to be speaking, however, of an annual festival (he calls it their "greatest festival," which would make little sense if it were repeated every seven weeks).[190] Furthermore, in his description of the Therapeutae's festival, he borrows heavily from his previous account of Shavuot in *On the Special Laws*.[191] If Philo is, in fact, describing here a Shavuot celebration, it offers significant insight into the prominence the festival held among certain mystical traditions. The Therapeutae's elevation of Shavuot

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[185] ἔστι δὲ προέορτος μεγίστης ἑορτῆς, ἣν πεντηκοντὰς ἔλαχεν (*Contempl*. 65). Philo states that the Therapeutae meet "after seven weeks" (δι᾽ ἑπτὰ ἑβδομάδων). Hadas-Lebel, *Philo*, 105, considers this "a kind of allegorical Passover" celebrated every seven weeks, while Goudoever, *Calendars*, 180–84, theorizes that it is a celebration of the Sheaf. Some of the language here does match what Philo says elsewhere of the Sheaf: προέορτός ἐστιν, εἰ δεῖ τἀληθὲς εἰπεῖν, ἑτέρας ἑορτῆς μείζονος (*Spec*. 2.176). Goudoever cannot, however, account for the fact a) that the Therapeutae's assembly takes place "after fifty days" (which could never apply to the Sheaf), and b) that the Therapeutae eat *leavened* bread, which was forbidden during Passover/Matzot and at the time of the Sheaf.

[186] On the chant tradition, see Coleman, "Antiphony." On the symposia of the Therapeutae in the context of the broader Greco-Roman tradition, see Streett, *Subversive*, 215, 223; Niehoff, "Symposium"; Klinghardt, *Gemeinschaftsmahl*, 183–216; Smith, *Symposium*, 158–59.

[187] See the Appendix for numerous examples from Jubilees; cf. LAB 23:2–3; Acts 2:1; bHag 14b. The Therapeutae may intend to imitate the Temple service. See Taylor, "So-Called," 10; Hayward, *Temple*, 131. Of course, many elements Philo mentions are simply aspects of normal Greco-Roman festival practice, e.g. the vigil (παννυχίς), which often accompanied festivals such as the Panathenaea and the Thesmophoria; see Farnell, *Cults*, 3:83–121; Hägg, *Ancient*, 28; Parker, *Polytheism*, 156–66.

[188] Taylor, *Women*, 157; Leonhardt, *Worship*, 49. Colson, *Philo*, 7.152, avers that this would be the natural meaning of δι᾽ ἑπτὰ ἑβδομάδων, but διά typically marks successive intervals of time by using an ordinal (e.g. δι᾽ ἔτους πέμπτου, "every fifth year"), not a cardinal number as Philo uses here. For the view that the Therapeutae's festival is Shavuot see Conybeare, *Philo*, 306–16.

[189] See above, p. 84. Baumgarten, "Pentecontad"; Ben-Dov, "History." This was not truly a complete pentecontadal "calendar," though, as the sequence of pentecontads extends only through the end of the sixth month (the final pentecontad begins on 6/23 with the wood festival).

[190] *Contempl*. 65. Vermes, *Scrolls*, 79–80, takes a mediating position, holding that the Therapeutae celebrated every fifty days, but that Philo here describes Shavuot which was the most important of these pentecontadal celebrations.

[191] *Contempl*. 65; *Spec*. 2.176.

resembles the status accorded the festival in Jubilees and at Qumran, a prominence largely based on the feast's septenary character, thought to reflect the structure of heavenly worship.[192]

Whatever the identity of the festival, one thing is clear: the Therapeutae exemplify Philo's festal ideology. In his view, they are completely in tune with the natural order and the mathematical rhythms of creation. Their festal celebrations are times not of drunkenness and debauchery but of orderly, harmonious contemplation of God's law, characterized by asceticism, simplicity, and equality.[193]

4.10.4 A Pre-Sinai Pentecost?

One final item to consider is whether Philo gives any indication that Shavuot was celebrated prior to the giving of the Mosaic Law. While he says nothing explicit to this effect, his reflections on the narrative of Cain and Abel strongly suggest that places this narrative at Shavuot. To begin with, he identifies the sacrifice the brothers are supposed to bring as a "firstfruits" offering. The problem with Cain's offering is that it came simply "from the fruits" (ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν) rather than "from the firstfruits" (ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων καρπῶν).[194] Philo glosses this latter phrase with πρωτογεννήματα, which he elsewhere uses only to describe the offering of Shavuot. Indeed, ἑορτὴ πρωτογεννημάτων is his preferred name for Shavuot; for all other firstfruit offerings he uses ἀπαρχαί.[195] Moreover, in discussing Cain's sin, Philo depicts him as violating the law of Exod 23:19, the very text that prescribes the firstfruit offering at Shavuot.[196]

This tradition linking Cain/Abel with Shavuot survives in GenRab 22:4, where the question of Abel's lifespan arises. Those who hold that the world was created in the spring (as Philo does) say that Abel lived from Passover to Pentecost. Thus, the offerings and the subsequent murder

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[192] Cf. Park, *Pentecost*, 133. Scholars have often noted similarities between the Essenes and the Therapeutae; see, e.g., Vermes, *Essenes*, 16–17; cf. Lieber, "Voice," for specific parallels between 4QShirShabb and Philo's Therapeutae.

[193] Notably, Philo explains that the Therapeutae believe that slavery is contrary to nature (*Contempl*. 70).

[194] *Sacr*. 1.52; cf. *QG* 1.60.

[195] *Decal*. 160; *Spec*. 1.183; 2.179, 181.

[196] He cites Exod 23:19 twice, in *Sacr*. 1.72 and 1.76. For Exod 23:19 as a Shavuot prescription, see Sarna, *Exodus*, 146.

took place at Shavuot.[197] If Philo does indeed place the incident of Cain and Abel at Shavuot, it would cohere with his view that the righteous fathers were a law in themselves and would reinforce his contention that the law of Moses is the law of nature. For Philo, then, Shavuot is not, essentially, a national festival but a universally valid firstfruits festival built into creation.

4.11 Rosh Hashanah: Commemorating Sinai and Establishing Cosmic Peace

Philo next treats Rosh Hashanah, which he calls by several names.[198] The festival list in *On the Special Laws* uses ἱερομηνία ("holy month [day]"),[199] which in broader Hellenistic culture refers to the sacred month during which the chief pilgrimage festival (often a vintage festival like Sukkot) occurs.[200] It is not surprising that Philo (or his tradition)[201] uses this term for Rosh Hashanah, since the holy day is the first in a series of three festivals that spanned nearly the entire seventh month and included a pilgrimage for Sukkot. Philo also refers to Rosh Hashanah as the festival "of trumpets" (σαλπίγγων),[202] a name he finds in Lev 23:24, which calls 7/1 a "memorial of trumpets" (μνημόσυνον σαλπίγγων). Philo explains that the name refers to the trumpets sounded at the same time the sacrifices are being brought in and offered up.[203]

Elsewhere, Philo seems to be aware that the festival, in some sense, marks a new year, as he calls it ἀρχὴ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ.[204] Similarly, he sometimes calls Nisan the seventh month and refers

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[197] See Byron, *Cain*, 46. Rapoport, *Agada*, 5–6, finds evidence of a similar tradition in Josephus, *Ant*. 1.54, where Cain brings tree fruit as an offering (cf. mRosh 1:2 which places the judgment of tree fruit at Shavuot). In contrast, PRE 21 places the offering at Passover, likely because Abel offers a lamb; cf. TgPsJ Gen 4:3.

[198] On Philo's discussion of Rosh Hashanah, see Leonhardt, *Worship*, 41–43; Belkin, *Philo*, 210–14; Hoenig, "Origins."

[199] *Spec*. 1.186; 2.41, 188.

[200] Dillon, *Pilgrims*, 2–3. Philo refers to this practice and the drunkenness of the vintage festival in *Mos*. 2.23.

[201] Apart from Philo, we have no extant use of ἱερομηνία to refer to Rosh Hashanah.

[202] *Spec*. 1.186.

[203] Cf. mTamid 7:3. Belkin, *Philo*, 213, opines that, for Philo, the sounding of the trumpet is a ritual proper to the temple; i.e. not practiced in Alexandrian synagogues. In *Decal*. 159, he says that "they announce" (ὑποσημαίνουσι) the festival with trumpets, probably referring to the temple priests. Philo provides no further ritual detail, except that the sacrifices are doubled, reflecting Rosh Hashanah's dual character as both a new moon day and the beginning of the sacred month (*Spec*. 1.180).

[204] *Spec*. 1.180, the Hebrew equivalent is ראש השנה. In *Decal*. 161, his festival list begins with Rosh Hashanah, perhaps implying an autumnal new year; cf. Belkin, *Philo*, 210–11; contra Bloch, *Biblical*, 14.

to the existence of an alternative calendar that begins in Tishri.[205] His preferred calendar, however, begins in Nisan; thus, he does not elaborate on Rosh Hashanah as the new year.

4.11.1 Sinai as a National and International Event

Philo explains the meaning of the festival by following a familiar strategy. He begins by acknowledging that it has a significance specific to Israel, namely to commemorate the giving of the law at Sinai. According to Exod 19:16, a loud trumpet heralded God's speaking of the law from heaven.[206] This link between Sinai and Rosh Hashanah depends on the LXX, which uses σάλπιγξ to render three different Hebrew words: the שופר at Sinai (Exod 19:16), the תרועה of Rosh Hashanah (Lev 23:24), and the חצרה blown at sacrifices (Num 10:2–10). Thus, it is an interpretation of the feast possible only in the diaspora where the LXX was widely used.

Having established the festival's national significance, Philo argues that Rosh Hashanah also has a universal significance. Indeed, Philo insists, the Sinai revelation (and thus the Feast of Trumpets) did not involve Israel alone, for the sound of the trumpet blast (and thus, perhaps the Law itself?) reached the ends of the earth.[207]

4.11.2 Cosmic Peace and Stability at Rosh Hashanah

Notably, Philo does not depict Rosh Hashanah as a day of judgment, or as the beginning of a ten-day period of penitence, as rabbinic tradition would do in the centuries to follow. He may, however, be familiar with the idea that on Rosh Hashanah God determines the fruitfulness of the coming year and acts to ensure climatological stability.[208] This view was current in early

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[205] *Spec*. 2.150; *QG* 2.17, 45, 47; n.b. he uses numerals, not names, for the months. The Egyptian calendar of Philo's time began at the autumnal equinox with Thoth.

[206] Exod 19:16 LXX: φωνὴ τῆς σάλπιγγος ἤχει μέγα. *Spec*. 2.189: ἀπ᾽ οὐρανοῦ φωνὴ σάλπιγγος ἐξήχησεν. Cf. *Decal*. 33; 44, for more on the trumpet at Sinai.

[207] Here Philo seems to be aware of the tradition that the Law was, in a sense, revealed to the nations of the world at Sinai. bShabb 88b speaks of the law being translated into the seventy languages of the world at Sinai; cf. ExodRab 5:9, "God spoke and the voice reverberated throughout the world.…God's voice, as it was uttered, split up into seventy voices, in seventy languages, so that all the nations should understand." Cf. Rogers, "Universalization."

[208] Some (Hoenig, "Origins, 324–25; Leonhardt, *Worship*, 42) detect echoes of the Rosh Hashanah liturgy in Philo's exposition, but these are quite tenuous.

Judaism; e.g. Pseudo-Philo describes the trumpets of Rosh Hashanah as an offering that pacifies the Watchers in charge of natural phenomena, while in Jubilees 7/1 is the date when God decrees the amount of rainfall for the coming year.[209] Similarly, Philo also depicts the festal trumpets as an offering and links the feast with the stability of the cosmos. In discussing Rosh Hashanah, he lists the natural disasters that might "wage war" on humans, "the regular harmonious alternations of the yearly seasons turned into disharmony," the droughts, storms, or oppressive heat and cold, etc.[210] The Feast of Trumpets, he asserts, is an offering of thanksgiving to God, who makes and keeps peace between what Philo depicts as warring or rebellious factions (στάσεις) in the universe. This peace allows the "plenty and fertility and abundance" of the harvest later celebrated in the seventh month at Sukkot.[211]

Indeed, he notes, the trumpet, so often a symbol of war used to direct troop movements and announce attacks, becomes during Rosh Hashanah a symbol of the cosmic peace achieved through God's sovereignty over the created world. This thought is especially appropriate insofar as the Greek ἱερομηνία, its onset signaled by a sacred trumpet blast, brought with it a truce that allowed the pilgrimage and festivities of the holy month to take place.[212] On the other hand, Philo's comments here, which are completely unrelated to the rather minimal biblical material on 7/1, evince his familiarity with the traditions surrounding the New Year that became mainstream in the post-biblical era, though only fully expressed in later rabbinic texts.

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[209] See p. 134 above, and p. 220 below.
[210] *Spec*. 2.191–192.
[211] *Spec*. 2.192.
[212] Leonhardt, *Worship*, 42.

4.12 Yom Kippur: The Sage's Entrance into the Unseen

Philo now turns to Yom Kippur, which he usually refers to as "the Fast" (ἡ νηστεία), a name widely used in early Judaism that speaks to the central halakic requirement of the holy day.[213] Although it is a fast, Leviticus 23 (and Numbers 28–29) includes it among the "festivals of the Lord," and Philo follows suit.[214] Indeed, Philo discusses Yom Kippur more than any other festival; its rites and symbols are a constant presence throughout his corpus.[215] In this section, I will discuss how Philo presents the activities of Yom Kippur, his defense of the holy day as a festival, and his allegorical interpretation of the feast's key features.

4.12.1 The Rituals of Yom Kippur

Philo provides significant insight into how Yom Kippur was observed in his day, especially in the diaspora.[216] He testifies that all Jews, even those who were otherwise irreligious, observe this holy day.[217] Three ritual activities, in particular, are prominent in Philo's discussion: fasting, sacrifice, and prayer.

4.12.1.1 Fasting and Abstinence

For Philo, Yom Kippur is a time of abstaining from both food and drink.[218] Sex is also prohibited, as this holy day is like a "time of [holy] war."[219] According to Lev 16:31, Yom Kippur is a Sabbath, so no labor is permitted. Philo portrays his countrymen instead devoting

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[213] See, e.g., *Spec*. 1.186; 2.41; *Decal*. 159; cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 17.166; 1QpHab xi:7–8; Acts 27:9. The name persists in early Christian texts as well as the Jerusalem Talmud. See Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 15–16. In *Plant*. 61, Philo uses ἡμέρα τοῦ ἱλασμοῦ, drawn from Lev 25:9 (cf. Lev 16:30; 23:37).

[214] Lev 23:2, 4; cf. Num 29:39.

[215] Discussions of Yom Kippur in Philo can be found in Lieber, "Between"; Nikiprowetzky, "Spiritualisation"; Wenschkewitz, *Spiritualisierung*, 150–51; Calabi, "Sacrifices"; Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 46–49, 101–15; Leonhardt, *Worship*, 43–45; Scullion, *Traditio-Historical,* 152–86; LaPorte, "Sacrifice."

[216] *Spec*. 2.193ff deals with diaspora observance, while *Spec*. 1.186ff focuses on the temple ritual.

[217] *Spec*. 1.186; *Mos*. 2.23–24.

[218] *Spec*. 2.196. Cf. Lev 23:27, 29; *Mos*. 2.23–24.

[219] *QG* 2.49. Philo here alludes to the abstinence from sex required of Israel in its wars; see 1 Sam 21:4–5; 2 Sam 11:11–13; cf. von Rad, *Holy War*, 41–50. In this section, Philo also links Yom Kippur to the "cleansing" (κάθαρσις) of Noah's flood, and asserts that those on the ark had to abstain from sex just as at Yom Kippur. This is of special interest, since both the Book of the Watchers and Jubilees also connected Yom Kippur with the flood (see pp. 102–108 above).

themselves to prayers from morning until evening, with the aim of securing God's favor and the forgiveness of sins. Notably, Philo assumes that both voluntary and involuntary sins can be forgiven on Yom Kippur.[220] God's grace on this day, he explains, is such that he treats repentance the same as innocence.[221]

4.12.1.2 Temple Sacrifices

In the Jerusalem temple, the usual festal sacrifices are offered: a calf, a ram, and seven lambs.[222] Unique to Yom Kippur, however, are three additional sacrifices: two goats and a ram. The ram is a whole burnt offering, but over the goats a lot is cast.[223] One is sacrificed to God while the other is sent out into the wilderness, bearing the curses that had previously rested on the sinful people.[224] Philo here draws primarily on Leviticus 16, but while the biblical text presents the sacrifice as the essential element in bringing forgiveness, Philo focuses on the individual's own prayer and repentance. He does not clearly explain the relationship between the two elements, but he apparently thinks that the individual's repentance is a *sine qua non* for the temple sacrifice to be effective. On Yom Kippur, sinners are "purified" and have their "lawlessness [ἀνομία] … washed away" by forsaking their old ways and embracing a new life of obedience.[225]

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[220] *Spec*. 2.196. *Post*. 48. This was debated in early Judaism; see Jub 5:17–18; mYoma 8:9.

[221] *Spec*. 1.187

[222] *Spec*. 1.187.

[223] See also *Her*. 179–86, where Philo alludes to a ritual of "marking" the two goats.

[224] *Spec*. 1.188. Philo is the first to depict the scapegoat as carrying "curses," though the judgment of the watchers in 1 Enoch 10 and Jubilees 5 probably alludes to the idea. Cf. mYoma 6:4, which describes the ritual mistreatment of the scapegoat as it was driven out; Barn. 7:6–10 describes this as the "cursing" of the scapegoat. The transfer of curses to the head of an expelled victim was a common component of many Mediterranean *pharmakos* rituals; cf. McLean, *Cursed*, 83–93.

[225] *Spec*. 1.188. Philo's use of ἀνομία likely draws on Lev 16:21 LXX. There, however, Israel's ἀνομία is placed on the scapegoat, while in Philo it is purified through repentance. For Philo, it is the curse associated with ἀνομία that is carried away by the scapegoat. Philo further explains that the sacrifices of Yom Kippur belong to the day's festal aspect, while the purification of sins belongs to its other (untitled) aspect, which has to do with repentance (*Spec*. 1.187). Thus, he appears to dissociate purification of sins from the Yom Kippur sacrifices and to associate it solely with an individual's repentance. In *Post*. 48, he attributes the expiation (ἱλασμός) of sins on Yom Kippur to fasting, self-affliction and prayer, with no mention of animal sacrifice; cf. *Mos*. 2.24, where it is prayer that propitiates God. The same thought is present in *Congr*. 107.

Elsewhere there are hints that Philo wishes to downplay the role of animal sacrifice on Yom Kippur.[226] For example, when he describes the high priest's entrance into the holy of holies, he leaves unmentioned the numerous ritual manipulations of animal blood and instead speaks only of the incense the high priest brings into the inner sanctum.[227] Incense, in some traditions, is the rational or bloodless oblation offered by the angels in the heavenly sanctuary; it is often understood to symbolize prayer and is contrasted with animal sacrifices.[228] Along these same lines, Philo points out that the high priest wears only a fine linen tunic when he enters the holy of holies. The reason for this, he suggests, is that "fine linen is not, like wool, the product of creatures subject to death."[229] This is a remarkable statement, as it implies that death and the symbols of death have no place in the innermost chamber; it is far from clear how this would allow for the introduction of blood at all into the holy of holies on Yom Kippur.

4.12.1.3 The Prayer of the High Priest

Philo also gives significant attention to the high priest's prayer within the holy of holies: "the Grand Priest enters [the holy of holies] once a year only on the Fast as it is called, to offer incense and to pray according to ancestral practice for a full supply of blessings and prosperity and peace for all mankind."[230] This prayer's content seems to be a fixed tradition—Philo describes it as κατὰ τὰ πάτρια—perhaps of the sort mentioned in the Mishnah and elaborated in the

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[226] On Philo's understanding of the sacrificial system in general, see Nikiprowetzky, "Spiritualisation"; Gilders, "Jewish Sacrifice," 94–105; Klawans, *Purity*, 116–23; Robertson, "Toward."

[227] *Spec*. 1.84. Cf. *Legat*. 306: the high priest "enters once a year only on the Fast as it is called, to offer incense and to pray according to ancestral practice for a full supply of blessings and prosperity and peace for all mankind." Again, no mention is made of blood offerings here, only incense and prayer.

[228] See Ps 141:2; Luke 1:8–10, 13; Rev 5:8; 8:3–4; TLevi 3:5–6; cf. Num 16:46–47; Sir 45:16; Wis 18:21 for incense's function in atonement. Cf. Himmelfarb, *Ascent*, 34. In *Spec*. 1.171, Philo states that the incense which accompanies the twice-daily Tamid is an offering for the "rational spirit" (τὸ λογικὸν πνεῦμα) made in the image of God. Similarly, in *Spec*. 1.274–276, he points to the incense offering's holier location (within the shrine) as indicating its vast superiority to the animal blood offerings performed on the bronze altar outside the Holy Place. *Somn*. 2.232 portrays the sage's mind as the high priest who enters the holy of holies, where it offers the "incense of consecrated virtues," in contrast with the "tangible" animal offerings.

[229] *Spec*. 1.84; cf. *Somn*. 1.217. Wool is a component of the high priest's everyday robes (Exod 28:6, 15). This attitude toward wool likely stems from Pythagoreanism, as Pythagoras is said to have repudiated clothing made from dead animal products. He also rejected the validity of blood sacrifices and advocated instead offerings of incense and praise—a strikingly similar posture to that of Philo (Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 1.1).

[230] *Legat*. 306.

Talmud: "May it be your will, Lord our God, that this year shall be rainy and hot."[231] Yom Kippur occurred just before the rainy season in Israel, and was thus an appropriate time to ask for rain and a good harvest, which fits Philo's language of a fertile harvest (φορὰ ἀγαθῶν εὐετηρία).[232] The Mishnah states that the world is judged with regard to water (i.e. rain) at Sukkot, while according to the Tosefta God's decree about the coming year's rain is "sealed on Yom Kippur," and ultimately put into effect with the first rains at Sukkot.[233]

The second half of the high priest's prayer asks God to ensure "peace for all humans." Philo highlights the universal scope of the prayer, likely for apologetic purposes.[234] It is also possible that he considers Yom Kippur the time when the whole world is judged.[235] The high priest's request for "peace" along with a plentiful harvest strongly echoes Philo's description of Rosh Hashanah, which celebrates God as "the peace-maker and peace-keeper, who destroys faction both in cities and in the various parts of the universe and creates plenty and fertility and abundance of other good things [εὐθηνίας καὶ εὐετηρίας καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀγαθῶν ἀφθονίαν]."[236] The Talmud also describes the high priest praying for peace on Yom Kippur: "One who has prayed should take three steps backward and afterwards pray for peace."[237] Philo's account here is significant, then, in that it provides a Second Temple era witness to the traditions found later in the rabbinic literature.[238]

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[231] mYoma 5:1; bYoma 53b. The Mishnah, however, describes the prayer as being offered after the high priest has exited the holy of holies.

[232] *Legat*. 306; contra Rubenstein, *History*, 287–88.

[233] mRosh 1:2; tRosh 1:12.

[234] Cf. the similar universalistic emphasis in his discussion of the Sheaf (see above p. 170), which he depicts as a sacrifice on behalf of the nations. Philo also emphasizes the cosmic scope of the high priest's role, as indicated by his clothing which colorfully represents the elements of the cosmos (*Spec.* 1.93–97).

[235] Cf. mRosh 1:2, discussed above.

[236] *Spec*. 2.192; n.b. the numerous verbal parallels between this description and the high priest's prayer.

[237] bYoma 53b. This likely refers to the concluding benediction of the Amidah: "May God who makes peace in the heavens make peace for us and for all."

[238] Philo also relates how on Yom Kippur the high priest pronounces the divine name (יהוה) in the holy of holies: "showing a name which only those whose ears and tongues are purified may hear or speak in the holy place, and no other person, nor in any other place at all" (*Mos*. 2.114). Cf. mYoma 4:1; yYoma 3:7; 6:2; Hayward, *Divine Name*, 99; McDonough, *YHWH*, 101.

4.12.2 Festal Ideology: An Ascetic Feast on God's Word

4.12.2.1 The Fast as the True Feast

Philo is aware that his pagan contemporaries might question how Yom Kippur can be a "feast" when it is devoid of the banqueting and merrymaking that marks holidays in the Greco-Roman world.[239] Philo insists, however, that true joy is found not in the debauchery of pagan festivals but in the self-restraint, prayer, and piety required on Yom Kippur.[240] It is not that Moses advocates starvation. Rather, because constant feeding dulls the mind and incites the passions, an occasional fast can reorient a person to the "pursuit of all that is worth seeing and hearing."[241] Fasting is thus the "best possible form of nourishment for the best part of us."[242] In this way, Philo avers, Yom Kippur may actually be the "greatest of the feasts."[243]

The timing of the fast amplifies its ascetic effects. It comes just as the harvest has been gathered, and thus trains people to rely on God, not on the size of the harvest, for sustenance and nourishment.[244] In the midst of abundance, Philo opines, it is good for a person to be reminded of what it is like to go hungry. Yom Kippur, then, is a time to thank God for his provision as well as to petition him to continue preserving from famine and starvation.[245]

4.12.2.2 Manna and Yom Kippur

Along these lines, Philo recounts a traditional prayer for Yom Kippur that mentions manna as an example of God's provision.[246] This likely reflects a pre-Philonic exegetical tradition linking manna with Yom Kippur through the verbal parallel between the command to afflict (ענה)

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[239] *Spec*. 2.193–94. In *Spec*. 1.187, he establishes Yom Kippur's festal nature on the basis of the sacrifices offered, which match those of other festal days.

[240] *Spec*. 2.193–99; cf. *Mos*. 2.23, where he compares Jewish observances during the seventh month to Greek festivities during their holy month.

[241] *Spec*. 2.202.

[242] *Spec*. 2.201.

[243] *Spec*. 2.194.

[244] *Spec*. 2.197–98.

[245] *Spec*. 2.203.

[246] *Spec*. 2.198–99.

oneself on Yom Kippur (Lev 16:29–31) and the description of how the manna "humbles" (ענה) the Israelites (Deut 8:2, 3, 16).[247] Philo explains how the two are linked: on Yom Kippur, one afflicts oneself by fasting, but this fast is in fact a feasting on the word of God, symbolized by manna, i.e. the bread of affliction.[248] Elsewhere, Philo strikingly declares that the wise man is like the high priest who enters the holy of holies on Yom Kippur and feasts on the manna.[249] Manna, of course, is the food of heaven and the bread of angels, according to Ps 78:24–25. To eat manna, therefore, is to participate in the divine life and to dine with the denizens of heaven—an element central to Greco-Roman festal ideology. Philo is thus able to demonstrate that despite (perhaps, because of) its ascetic requirements, Yom Kippur is properly understood as a festival in the truest sense.

4.12.3 The Allegorization of Yom Kippur: The Soul Draws Near to God

On an allegorical level, Philo invests great significance in the rituals of Yom Kippur. Numerous elements—the date of the festival, the architecture of the temple, and the figure of the high priest along with his clothing and annual entrance into the holy of holies—are taken to represent deeper realities pertaining to the life of the sage. In Philo's hands, the festival becomes an allegory of the soul's approach to and participation in the divine.

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[247] The LXX does not preserve the verbal link, as it translates ענה differently in the two passages. This suggests the tradition did not originate in the diaspora. Cf. 1QWords of Moses iii.9–11, which appears to date the cessation of the manna to Yom Kippur, perhaps reflecting this traditional link. bYoma 74b provides a more extensive version of the tradition. See Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 41–48, for discussion.

[248] For the word/manna link see Deut 8:3, quoted in *Leg*. 3.174, where Philo makes the connection between Deut 8:3 and Yom Kippur explicit: "This afflicting [spoken of in Deut 8:3] is propitiation; for on the tenth day also by afflicting our souls He makes propitiation. For when we are being deprived of pleasant things, we think we are being afflicted, but in reality thereby we have God propitious to us."

[249] *Her*. 75–85. A jar of manna, of course, was stored in the ark of the covenant, in the holy of holies (Exod 16:33–34). By the Second Temple era, however, the ark was missing, and no other tradition refers to priestly consumption of manna on Yom Kippur; cf. though Rev 2:17, where access to the "hidden manna" is granted to those who conquer.

4.12.3.1 The Numerology of Yom Kippur: Seven and Ten

To begin with, Philo pays close attention to the numerical elements associated with Yom Kippur, especially the date (the tenth day of the seventh month). He notices that Moses calls Yom Kippur "a Sabbath of Sabbaths" (σάββατα σαββάτων), which Philo translates to "a seven of sevens" (ἑβδομάς ἑβδομάδων).[250] For Philo, seven is a holy number, so this title indicates the elevated holiness of the day. If the festivals are sacred time just as the temple is sacred space, then Yom Kippur is the holy of holies.[251]

Likewise, Yom Kippur is held on the tenth day of the month, a number with all sorts of fascinating properties for Philo and other ancient arithmological traditions.[252] It is the "all-perfect" number, and is linked to the Ten Commandments, the tithe, Passover, the temple furnishings, the tribe of Levi, the manna stored in the ark, and of course, Yom Kippur.[253] The number nine represents the sensible world with its nine parts, but ten represents God and the heavenly world.[254] It is thus on Yom Kippur—the tenth day—that humans rise above the sensible world through fasting and self-affliction in order to draw near to God himself.[255]

4.12.3.2 Temple Architecture: The Holy of Holies as the World of Forms

The architecture of the temple also illustrates the levels of reality and human existence. Outside the holy place stands the bronze altar, a publicly visible and sensible reality. It symbolizes the public or political life, which concerns the body and material existence. The holy place, in contrast, is unseen and inaccessible to the common person.[256] Open only to the priests,

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[250] *Spec*. 2.194; Lev 16:31; 23:32.

[251] *Spec*. 2.194; Philo describes Yom Kippur as ἁγίων ἁγιωτέρα, which he elsewhere uses to describe the inner sanctum of the temple; cf. *Her*. 1.75; *Spec*. 1.275.

[252] *Spec*. 2.200. See *Decal*. 20–31 for a lengthy treatment of the decad.

[253] *Spec*. 2.200; cf. *Post*. 48, 173–74; *Congr*. 89–120.

[254] The nine parts are the earth, the stars, and the seven planets (*Congr*. 103–104). Cf. *Congr*. 105 for the decad as a symbol of God and heaven.

[255] *Congr*. 103, 107.

[256] Philo describes the tabernacle as containing τὰ ἀθέατα (*Ebr*. 135–136).

it is where the bloodless and rational worship of the daily incense ritual takes place. Thus, it represents the contemplative life of the mind, focused on the world of ideas.[257]

Most sacred and inaccessible is the innermost chamber, the holy of holies.[258] Only the high priest, whom the Law requires to be free from any defect and perfect in nature, is allowed to enter.[259] Philo describes the holy of holies in terms reminiscent of the divine: it is unseen/invisible (ἀόρατος).[260] Even the high priest on his yearly entrance is prevented from seeing it by the incense cloud that envelops him.[261] Elsewhere, Philo describes the holy of holies as "thick darkness … the unapproachable region where there are no material forms," like the cloud into which Moses entered when he met God on Sinai.[262]

Thus, when the high priest enters the holy of holies on Yom Kippur, it is a picture of the perfect man's mind entering the realm of incorporeal and imperishable forms.[263] In visionary ecstasy, the high priest "examines the unseen" and contemplates the divine beauty.[264]

4.12.3.3 The Clothing of the High Priest: Symbol of Immortality

The fine linen robe, which is worn by the high priest only on Yom Kippur, illustrates for Philo the philosophical life in its purity.[265] On every other day, the high priest performs his public duties at the bronze altar, wearing a multicolored garment, much like the coat of many colors worn by Joseph, whom Philo takes as a model of the person dedicated to statecraft and

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[257] *Ebr*. 87; 134–36.

[258] Philo's preferred term is τὰ ἄδυτα (not in the LXX), though he uses it imprecisely. At times, it refers to the holy of holies alone (e.g. *Ebr*. 135–136; *Her*. 82; *Mos*. 2.87, 95; *Spec*. 1.84, 231; *Legat*. 306, 308), but at other times it can refer to the tent or sanctuary as a whole (*Congr*. 168; *Mos*. 2.152; *Spec*. 1.274). Elsewhere, he calls it ἁγιώτατος [τόπος] (*Spec*. 1.66) or, drawing on the LXX, τὰ ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων (*Leg*. 2.56; *Mut*. 192).

[259] *Ebr*. 135–136.

[260] *Spec*. 1.72; cf. *Her*. 75, which associates τὰ ἀόρατα with the world of the mind. In *Spec*. 1.66, Philo describes the cosmos as the true temple, with heaven as the holy of holies and angels as the priests.

[261] *Spec*. 1.72.

[262] *Post*. 14; 173. In *QE* 2.29, Philo portrays Sinai as a temple with three divisions corresponding to the holiness of the people, the priests, and the high priest. Moses alone is like the high priest, who is divinized upon entering the holy of holies. Cf. Litwa, "Deification," 14–17.

[263] *Ebr*. 136.

[264] ἐπισκοπεῖν τὰ ἀθέατα … κατανοῶν … τὸ θεοειδέστατον κάλλος (*Ebr*. 136).

[265] Philo discusses the priestly garments in *Spec*. 1.84–97; *Somn*. 1.215–218; *Mos*. 2.109–135; *Migr*. 102; *Opif*. 146; *Her*. 152–53; *QE* 2.107. See Kaiser, "Bedeutung."

the public life.[266] The fine linen robe of Yom Kippur, however, indicates that the high priest has separated himself from the fleshly concerns of public life.[267] The multicolored garment worn every day is "for honor and glory" (Exod 28:2), to be sure, but the fine linen robe is "for still greater and more perfect honor and glory."[268] The everyday robe of the priest is made of wool, but the robe for Yom Kippur is made from pure linen, a fabric that does not come from mortal animals and thus symbolizes immortality.[269] Moreover, this robe is pure white and unadorned, corresponding to the purity of the ascetic sage.[270] The fine linen shines with the brightness of the heavens.[271] In contrast to the inferior multicolored robe, with its jingling golden bells, the linen robe is silent, befitting the contemplative life of the holy of holies.[272] Indeed, Philo at one point says that the high priest enters the inner chamber "naked," so to speak, as he has laid "aside the garment of opinions and impressions of the soul."[273]

4.12.3.4 The Rational Sacrifice: The "Blood of the Soul"

As I noted above, Philo downplays the multiple animal sacrifices of Yom Kippur, focusing instead on the high priest's prayer and incense offering within the holy of holies, which he takes to represent the life of the sage in service to God. The sage lives a pure life, dedicating his mind to God as a votive offering to be "enshrined" in the holy of holies, which for Philo symbolizes heaven.[274] Philo does not, however, completely ignore the blood ritual of the holy day, which is so central to Leviticus 16. Instead, he allegorizes it. Just as the high priest enters the holy of holies to pour out the blood of the atoning sacrifice, so the sage mentally enters the divine world of ideas in order "to pour as a libation the blood of the soul … to God our Saviour and

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[266] *Somn*. 1.215–218.
[267] *Leg*. 2.56.
[268] *QE* 2.107.
[269] *Ebr*. 86; cf. *Somn*. 1.217, where he equates linen with ἀφθαρσία.
[270] *Mut*. 44.
[271] *Somn*. 1.217.
[272] See *Leg*. 2.56. Cf. the linen clothing of the Therapeutae (*Contempl*. 38).
[273] *Leg*. 2.56.
[274] *Her*. 75–76.

Benefactor."[275] Philo's phrase here, "the blood of the soul," alludes to Lev 17:14 (ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ πάσης σαρκὸς αἷμα αὐτοῦ ἐστιν), which he reads through a Platonic lens as an explanation for the blood of Yom Kippur: it is a symbol for the soul. Similarly, the incense symbolizes "whole mind" and the "virtues" offered by the mind that is "mastered by the love of the divine."[276]

4.12.3.5 The Two Goats: Allegorical and Apocalyptic?

Philo is also quick to allegorize the other animal sacrifices of Yom Kippur. The two goats of Lev 16:7, for example, represent two types of people. The goat offered to God is the person "whose concern is with things of divine virtue," while the scapegoat depicts those who are concerned with human matters. The former is brought into God's presence, but the latter is exiled to wander far from God.[277]

Philo employs similar language and imagery drawn from Yom Kippur when he encourages his audience to "cast down" (καταβάλλειν) the passions, an allusion to the ritual casting down of the scapegoat from a high cliff.[278] Here Philo also describes these passions as "living" (alluding to the scapegoat, which is led out alive) and "fit for expulsion," using the same term (ἀποπομπαῖος) Lev 16:8 LXX uses for the scapegoat.[279] This battle against, and expulsion of, the diseased appetites is what Philo sees as the deeper meaning of Yom Kippur: "'to make atonement over them'"[280] is "to acknowledge [ὁμολογῆσαι][281] that though we have them still

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[275] *Leg*. 2.56. As noted above, in describing the high priest's entrance, Philo focuses almost exclusively on the visionary aspect: the priest is allowed to "behold the sights which are forbidden to others" (*Ebr*. 135–37).

[276] *Leg*. 2.56. *Somn*. 2.232: the mind "mastered by the love of the divine … strains its powers to reach the inmost shrine [and] dedicates not a palpable offering, but incense, the incense of consecrated virtues."

[277] *Her*. 179–186; *Leg*. 2.52. Cf. *Plant*. 61, which makes a similar point about the "wise soul" who is "the portion of God." In *Post*. 69–70, the irrational man, "cut off from the life of God," is symbolized by the scapegoat of Yom Kippur. On the other hand, the virtuous are represented by the goat for the Lord and designated as those who have "won the happy lot" (τῶν τὸν εὐδαίμονα κλῆρον ἀπολαχόντων). Cf. *Her*. 112–113, where Philo speaks about Israel's blessedness in terms that recall the casting of lots on Yom Kippur. After citing Lev 16:16 (which speaks of the purification achieved on Yom Kippur), he declares that Israel has received the "better lot [μοῖρα]."

[278] *Post*. 72.

[279] Cf. *Leg*. 2.52.

[280] This draws from Lev 16:10, where the high priest "makes atonement over" (ἐξιλάσκεσθαι ἐπί) the scapegoat.

[281] This likely alludes to the confession of sins over the scapegoat (Lev 16:21). In early Judaism, confession was often presented as central to the atoning ritual; see, e.g. TgPsJ Lev 16:6, 11, 16, 18, 20, 30, 33, which inserts "by confession" to each mention of atonement; cf. bYoma 40b; mYoma 3:8; 4:2; see the discussion in Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 51–54.

living[282] in our soul we refuse to give in, but facing them all we persist in repelling them with vigour, until we shall have fully ensured their complete removal." For Philo, then, Yom Kippur is less about a simple pardon of sins and more about ethical transformation.[283]

At times, Philo appears to be aware of apocalyptic and mythological accounts of Yom Kippur akin to those found in other Second Temple texts (e.g. 1 Enoch 10).[284] For example, in *On Planting*, he relates the Yom Kippur ritual of the two goats to the Lord's determination of the destinies of the seventy nations (Deut 32:7–9): The "Most High … set up boundaries of the nations corresponding to the number of the angels of God, and His people Israel became the portion of the Lord."[285] Here, the nations, which are placed under the power of the seventy angelic rulers, correspond to the scapegoat destined for Azazel, while Israel is the goat dedicated to YHWH.[286] Philo goes on to depict the goat for Azazel as a symbol of those who prefer the creation (γένεσις) to the creator, an apt description of the rebellious Watchers who, according to the Enochic tradition, abandon heaven in favor of earth and the daughters of men.[287] Intriguingly, Philo identifies those represented by the Azazel-goat as "children of the earth"[288] who are "driven from the most holy places,"[289] just as 1 En 15:3 describes the Watchers as those who abandoned their place in the heavenly temple in order to behave "like the children of the earth."[290]

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[282] This alludes to Lev 16:10, where the scapegoat is presented "alive" (ζῶν) before the Lord and sent out "alive."

[283] Cf. *Leg*. 3.174, where Philo depicts the individual's fast on Yom Kippur as the act that secures propitiation.

[284] See Stökl Ben Ezra, "Yom Kippur," 354; Matusova, "1 Enoch," 385–97. Wright, "Observations," holds that Philo was "aware of some form of the Fallen Angel tradition prevalent in Palestinian Judaism" (472), and notes several possible allusions in Philo's works to the Watcher tradition. Stuckenbruck, "Extent," does not believe that Philo necessarily knew the Enochic literature, but that he was familiar with the myth of the giants. He notes, especially, the difference in approach between *QG* 1.92 and *de Gigantibus*. Cf. Dillon, "Doctrine."

[285] *Plant*. 59–61.

[286] In *Plant*. 61, he calls the ritual of the two goats an illustration (δεῖγμα) of Deut 32:7–9. For the tradition of the seventy angels, see *Post*. 89–92; 1 En 89:59–90:27; Stuckenbruck, "Angels of the Nations."

[287] *Plant*. 61. Perhaps Philo also has the procreative activity of the Watchers in mind when he speaks of the desire for γένεσις.

[288] *Plant*. 60.

[289] *Plant*. 61.

[290] I am not claiming that Philo affirms the Watcher myth, just that he is aware of it and its associations with the Yom Kippur ritual. Indeed, he seems intent on demythologizing the Watcher myth in order to read it as an account of the human soul's experience. Cf. Wright, "Observations," 475.

4.12.3.6 The High Priest: Symbol of the Divine Sage

Earlier I noted that Philo portrays the Sabbath as the archetypal feast, enabling humans to share in the divine rest and participate in God's nature. Since the LXX describes Yom Kippur as a "Sabbath of Sabbaths,"[291] it is not surprising that Philo would stress the theme of participation in the divine on this holiest of days. To make this point, Philo draws on several texts that appear to him to attribute immortality and divinity to the high priest while he is in the inner sanctum. These then represent for him the way in which the sage participates in the divine nature and achieves spiritual immortality through his embrace of the contemplative life.

First, Philo adduces Lev 10:9, which prohibits (on threat of death) the high priest from entering the tent of meeting and drinking wine or strong drink: "Do not drink wine or strong drink, neither you nor your sons after you, when you come into the tent of meeting, so that that you may not die."[292] Philo, however, turns this threat into a promise. Perhaps relying on a Greek text where the Hebrew purpose clause ולא תמתו is translated οὐ μὴ ἀποθάνητε,[293] and noting further that the statute is described as "eternal" (αἰώνιος), Philo reads this verse as promising immortality to the high priest, and thus, symbolically, to the sage: "[Moses] says that the one who sacrifices in sobriety will not die [οὐδ᾽ ἀποθανεῖται]."[294]

Second, Philo quotes Lev 16:17, which prohibits anyone other than the high priest from entering the tabernacle while the high priest fulfills his duties on Yom Kippur: "No one shall be in the tent of meeting when he enters to make atonement in the sanctuary until he comes out."[295] Philo, however, cites the text as ἄνθρωπος οὐκ ἔσται … ἕως ἂν ἐξέλθη: "He [the high priest] will not be a human until he exits."[296] In other words, the high priest is superhuman or divine as

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[291] σάββατα σαββάτων (Lev 16:31; 23:32).

[292] My translation of MT.

[293] Thus A, B. It is also quite possible that Philo's citation in *Ebr*. 140 (λέγει δὲ ὅτι οὐδ᾽ ἀποθανεῖται) is in fact a verbatim quote from the text as he knows it, since οὐδ᾽ ἀποθανεῖται is a word-for-word translation of ולא תמתו.

[294] *Ebr*. 138–42 [my translation of 140]. See Wolfson, *Philo*, 130, on Philo's exegetical approach here.

[295] וכל־אדם לא־יהיה באהל מועד בבאו לכפר בקדש עד־צאתו

[296] *Her*. 84; cf. *Somn*. 2.189. LXX reads καὶ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος οὐκ ἔσται ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ, which would not support Philo's point. Philo's version shows up later in Origen, *Hom. Lev*. 9.11.1–11 and LevRab 21:12. It does not appear to be a Philonic novum, but a preexisting Jewish exegetical tradition; see Stewart, "Sinless." LevRab 21:12 relates several interesting

long as he is in the holy of holies. Philo explains that this divinity is not bodily, of course, but has to do with the soul or mind: "when the mind is ministering to God in purity, it is not human, but divine."[297] Elsewhere, he describes the high priest as bridging the gap or straddling the line between human and divine, much like Moses, whom Scripture calls a "god" in Exod 7:1.[298]

Third, Philo recounts Moses's ascent of Sinai in terms of the high priest's entrance into the holy of holies.[299] Sinai, like the tabernacle or temple, has three levels of access. The people remain at the base of the mountain, while the priests (Aaron and his sons) are allowed to ascend part of the way (Exod 24:1). Only Moses is permitted to go all the way to God (Exod 24:2). Philo reads this text (καὶ ἐγγιεῖ Μωυσῆς μόνος πρὸς τὸν θεόν) as indicating that as Moses approaches God, like the high priest entering the holy of holies, his dual nature (body and soul) is put aside and he becomes μόνος: "He who is resolved into the nature of unity is said to come near God in a kind of family relation, for having given up and left behind all mortal kinds, he is changed into the divine, so that such men become kin to God and truly divine."[300]

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traditions about Lev 16:17, including a) a story about Simeon the Righteous in which God himself accompanies Simeon into the holy of holies every year on Yom Kippur; b) a tradition that Phinehas was glorified, perhaps even divinized, when he entered the holy of holies, as "his face flamed like torches" (cf. Gen 15:17; Exod 20:14, 18; Ezek 1:13, where this is theophany language); c) an identification of the high priest as the "angel of the Lord of hosts" (via a link between Lev 16:17 and Mal 2:7). See the in-depth discussion in Finkel, "Guises." Pesiq. Rab. 47 interprets Lev 16:17 as "whenever he [Aaron] entered the Holy of Holies, the ministering angels would flee from his presence." This interpretation, notably, suggests a) that the holy of holies was considered to be the usual abode of angels, and b) that Aaron was superior to the angels when he entered the holy of holies, perhaps implying his temporary divinization.

[297] *Her*. 84. See the similar nuanced idea in *Spec*. 1.116 and *Somn*. 2.189; 2.231. Cf. Leonhardt-Balzer, "Priests," 140–41.

[298] *Somn*. 2.189. For Philo's discussion of Exod 7:1, see *Sacr*. 8–10; *Mos*. 1.158; *Prob*. 42–44; *Mut*. 19, 125–29; *Leg*. 1.40–41; *Migr*. *Abr*. 84; *Det*. 160–62; *QE* 2.6. Extensive comment may be found in Holladay, *Theios Aner*, 108–55; Meeks, "Agent"; Runia, "God," 64–65. Litwa, "Deification," especially, provides a compelling account of deification in Philo that balances Philo's concern for the ontological uniqueness of the one God with his broad use of the language of divinity to describe the heavenly/noetic world and its inhabitants. Thus, Moses (and the sage) is truly divinized, as pure mind, but never supplants or challenges the uniqueness of the highest God, who is the non-contingent source of all that is. Litwa uses the language of "primal deity" and "mediate deity" for this distinction ("Deification," 7).

[299] *QE* 2.28–29; cf. *Post*. 14. In *Post*. 173, Moses "does not … haunt the outer court of the Holy Place as one seeking initiation, but as a sacred Guide has his abode in the sanctuary."

[300] *QE* 2.29. Cf. also *Mos*. 2.288, which portrays Moses as being similarly divinized just prior to his death. In *Somn*. 2.227–229, Moses stands both "with God" (Deut 5:31) and between the Lord and the Israelites (Deut 5:5). These two descriptions suggest to Philo that the priest/sage is divinized (θεῷ μόνῳ προσκεκλήρωται) or at least exists on the "borderline" (μεθόριος) of divinity and humanity, "superior to men, but less than God" (*Somn*. 2.228–31).

Elsewhere, Philo draws on a variety of evidence to demonstrate that the high priest on Yom Kippur symbolizes the sage who participates in divinity. The high priest's prayer in the inner sanctum, for example, expresses the expectation of deification, as he asks God to "share with the creature a portion of his kind and merciful nature."[301] Philo also draws on Genesis 15, where Abraham receives a prophetic vision. Philo depicts this vision as an "out of body" experience in which the patriarch enters the realm of ideas and contemplates the invisible and heavenly noetic sanctuary, which Philo describes as the true holy of holies.[302] Abraham, notably, is known as the "friend of God," and Philo finds this a fitting description for the ideal high priest and the sage.[303] Deut 13:6 states that a friend is equal to one's soul,[304] while Plato's maxim declares that "friends have all things in common."[305] Therefore, God shares his divine nature with his friend, the priest/sage, who is divinized through his entrance into the holy of holies or noetic realm.[306]

4.12.3.7 Democratizing Yom Kippur

By interpreting the Levitical priest as the ideal or archetype of the contemplative person, Philo dramatically democratizes and detemporalizes Yom Kippur. He does not reject the literal meaning and significance of the holiday and its rituals, but they are not his focus. Rather, he emphasizes that Yom Kippur is a reality available every day to the wise. The one who loves God, no matter his tribal identity or physical proximity to the temple, can abide in the temple spiritually.[307] Indeed, as a true high priest, the sage enjoys better access to God every day than an unwise high priest in Jerusalem would have on Yom Kippur, the highest of holy days.[308] For

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[301] *Spec*. 1.97 [my translation]. Cf. *Legat*. 306 for a different summary of the prayer. mYoma 5:1 and bYoma 53b describe the "short prayer" of the high priest immediately after exiting the holy of holies.

[302] *Her*. 75; 81–85.

[303] *Her*. 83. This epithet for Abraham is widespread in Jewish tradition, likely drawn from 2 Chr 20:7; Isa 41:8. See Jub 19:9; 30:20; Philo, *Ebr*. 56; *Abr*. 273. Cf. *Mos*. 1.156 where Moses is also called a "friend of God."

[304] Cited by Philo, *Her*. 83.

[305] This maxim appears frequently in Plato, inter alia in *Leg*. 739c; *Crit*. 110c; *Lysis* 207c. See the discussion of this maxim throughout Konstan, *Friendship*.

[306] *Her*. 83–84.

[307] *Her*. 83.

[308] *Her*. 82–83.

Philo's diaspora audience, this is no doubt a powerful message. Yom Kippur shows the way: through fasting and abstinence "from all the things that characterize mortal nature" Philo's fellow Jews could spiritually enter the holy of holies, "see" God, and feast on the "better food of contemplation," the manna of God's word.[309]

4.13 Sukkot: A Thankful Return to the Simple Life

The final feast Philo deals with is Sukkot, also known as the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles.[310] In the LXX it is called by various names—ἑορτὴ σκηνῶν (Lev 23:34; Deut 16:13), ἑορτὴ τῆς σκηνοπηγίας (Deut 16:16; 31:10; Zech 14:16–19), ἑορτὴ συντελείας (Exod 23:16), or ἑορτὴ συναγωγῆς (Exod 34:22)—but Philo prefers σκηναί or ἡ [ἑορτὴ] τῶν σκηνῶν.[311] Philo asserts that Sukkot's prominence is highlighted by its duration; it is the only eight-day festival.[312] Reinforcing its status is its calendrical location. It occurs at both the autumnal equinox and the full moon (the fifteenth of the month according to a lunar calendar).[313] At the time of the full moon, the moon rises as the sun sets, producing unbroken light.[314] In terms of the agricultural calendar, Sukkot takes place at the end of the harvest, when the fruit of the vine and all of the tree-fruits have been gathered in.[315] For Philo, it is primarily an occasion for giving thanks to God, who is the cause of all these good things.[316]

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[309] *Mos*. 2.68–69; *Her*. 78–79.

[310] Philo discusses this feast in *Spec*. 2.204–214. In *Spec*. 1.189, he summarizes the sacrifices of Sukkot from Num 29:12–34 with no comment. Some think that the festival at Pharos (*Mos*. 2.41–44) is based on, or possibly occurs at the time of, Sukkot; see Klayman, *Sukkot*, 188–89; Leonhardt, *Worship*, 48. The only real connection is that some of the pilgrims dwell in tents, but Philo makes it clear this is not a necessary component of the festival as others opt to sleep in the open air. For discussion, cf. Birnbaum, "Pharos."

[311] *Spec*. 1.189; 2.41; 2.204. According to Rubenstein, *History*, 118, the simple name σκηναί is not attested outside of Philo. In the New Testament, John 7:2 uses ἡ σκηνοπηγία, which does not appear in Philo; it is also the default term in Josephus, *Ant*. 4.209; 8.100, 123, 225, et passim.

[312] *Decal*. 161; *Opif*. 116.

[313] *Spec*. 2.210; 1.189.

[314] *Spec*. 2.210. The theme of light was closely associated with Sukkot as far back as Amos 5:18–26 and Zech 14:7; mSukk 5:2–4 reinforces the link; cf. John 7:14; 8:12; MacRae, "Meaning," 269.

[315] *Decal*. 161; cf. *Opif*. 116. *Agr*. 152 likely speaks of Sukkot when it mentions the vintage festival.

[316] *Spec*. 2.204. Cf. *Spec*. 2.209 where Philo mentions the songs, acclamations, prayers, and sacrifices of the Sukkot liturgy. The dominant note is thanksgiving but Philo also depicts these as securing God's blessings for the future—perhaps reflecting the link between Sukkot and rainfall in Zech 14:16–19 and other early Jewish traditions; cf. MacRae, "Meaning," 269.

As with the other festivals, Philo tries to explain Sukkot's significance in terms that have a transcultural appeal. He hopes to make clear that the festival is not simply a national holiday particular to Israel, but a natural and universal observance that accords with rationality and the law of nature.

4.13.1 Numerological Features

As we have seen, one of Philo's primary strategies in universalizing the festivals is to analyze them numerologically to draw out their symbolic value. The number seven is an especially prominent feature of Sukkot and Philo finds great significance here. He notes that Sukkot takes place in the seventh month; this is appropriate, since the harvest is at that time brought to "completion," which the number seven symbolizes.[317] Likewise, the festival proper lasts seven days; this indicates to Philo that it is built on the cornerstone festival, the Sabbath, and is thus an expression of the natural law, inherent to creation.[318]

Of course, Sukkot actually includes an eighth day, known to Philo as ἐξόδιον.[319] It also has numerical significance. Philo observes that eight is the first cubic number (=2^3), and thus marks a sort of transition from "flat" to "three-dimensional" numbers, in geometric terms.[320] For Philo, this is a transition from the conceptual and incorporeal (νοητός/ἀσώματος) to the bodily and visible.[321] The festal season corresponds to the participation in the divine life of the noetic world, while "ordinary time" corresponds to the life of the body.[322] Thus, the eighth day of Sukkot is a fitting "complement and conclusion" (πλήρωμα καὶ συμπέρασμα) to the festal season, a transition from the festal season to ordinary time.[323]

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[317] *Opif*. 116.
[318] *Spec*. 2.214.
[319] Cf. the Greek text of Lev 23:36 and Num 29:35.
[320] Cf. *Opif*. 45–52, 92–98, for Philo's discussion of cubic numbers.
[321] *Spec*. 2.212.
[322] Contra Colson, *Philo* 7.438–439, and Rubenstein, *History*, 120, who take ἀσώματος here as a negative term and think στερεός speaks of the "higher category of solids." Rather, Philo always views the noetic and incorporeal (ἀσώματος) as superior to the bodily and solid.
[323] Notably, Philo never mentions Hanukkah or Purim, both of which occur later in the calendar year than Sukkot.

Philo also notes on several occasions that the animal sacrifices at Sukkot involve a total of seventy victims.[324] Seventy, Philo teaches, is a "holy and perfect"[325] (τέλειος) number that "represents the principle of intellectual [νοητός] apprehension, of seniority [πρεσβύτερος] and of incorruption."[326] He notes that once Jacob has "conquered" the irrational passions and is able to "see God," he receives the name Israel and is associated with the number seventy.[327] So also, there are seventy elders of Israel (πρεσβύτεροι) who see God on Sinai (Exod 24:9–11).[328] Seventy, then, is a fitting number for Sukkot, a harvest festival that symbolizes the ingathering of the "ripe [τέλειος] fruits of the soul."[329]

4.13.2 Dwelling in Tents as Training in Virtue

Apart from the sacrifices, the only Sukkot ritual Philo explicitly mentions is dwelling in tents.[330] He acknowledges that the Pentateuch links this ritual to Israel's history. According to Lev 23:43, the practice commemorates how the "forefathers" resided in tents on their long journey through the wilderness.[331] Philo quickly pivots, however, from the national particularity of this observance and finds a way to ascribe universal significance to the ritual.[332] After the

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[324] *Fug*. 186; *Spec*. 1.189; *Migr*. 202.

[325] *Migr*. 169.

[326] *Migr*. 199.

[327] *Migr*. 200–201, citing Deut 10:22. Philo points out that Exod 1:5 calls the patriarch "Jacob" and links him with the number seventy-five, not seventy. In *Fug*. 183–187, Philo comments on Exod 15:27, where Israel camps at Elim, with its seventy palm trees. Philo connects this to the seventy sacrifices of Sukkot and says that the seventy palm trees symbolize the prize of those who attain to "consummate virtue." His explanation reflects the centrality of the lulav rite (which featured palm fronds) to Sukkot and the frequent association of conquering motifs with the festival. See, e.g., Rev 7:9–17 where conquering saints celebrate a heavenly or eschatological Sukkot with palm branches and white robes. They dwell by "springs of water" and receive shelter from climatic harm. Similarly, Pesiq. Rab Kah. 27:2 portrays Sukkot and the associated lulav rite as a celebration of the victory of Israel in the divine courtroom; cf. LevRab 30:2; MidrPsalms 17:5 (on Ps 16:11).

[328] *Migr*. 201.

[329] *Migr*. 202.

[330] In *Flacc*. 116, Philo makes it clear that this was central to the diaspora observance of the festival.

[331] *Spec*. 2.207; cf. *QE* 2.83. In the Hebrew Bible, Israel dwells in tents (אהלים) in the wilderness, but Lev 23:43 refers to booths (סכות). The LXX spares Philo from this discrepancy, as it renders both with σκηναί. Intriguingly, he also connects the σκηναί of Israel to the Lord's own tent-dwelling (in the tabernacle) during the wilderness period (*QE* 2.83). Later rabbinic texts would make the same connection and interpret Sukkot as a celebration of God's dwelling with his people; cf. Rubenstein, "Symbolism," 371–87. Philo, however, offers no explicit statements along these lines.

[332] It is common to theorize that this ritual originated in the use of temporary field booths during the harvest. Notably, Philo does not explain the tent-dwelling in this way. Instead, he connects the dwelling with the time *after* the harvest. During the harvest itself, he says, one must stay outdoors to guard the fruit and crops, and perhaps sleep under the thick shade of the fruit trees—a partial protection from the elements at best. But, when the harvest is complete, one is

riches of the harvest come in, Israelites must dwell in tents because it is good "in wealth to remember your poverty."[333] Tent-dwelling, then, is a return to the rigors of the simple life and a reminder that the prosperity currently enjoyed may not be permanent. This both promotes joy and develops virtue by causing people to be thankful for their present blessedness and encouraging them to maintain a pious life lest they fall into poverty as a result of foolish profligacy.[334]

4.13.3 Festal Ideology: Equality and the Natural Life

Along these same universalizing lines, Philo portrays Sukkot as reinforcing the festal ideology valued by his Greek and Roman contemporaries. Sukkot's calendrical placement, at the autumnal equinox (ἰσημερία),[335] suggests to Philo that the festival symbolically teaches its celebrants to honor equality (ἰσότης), which is the "the source and fountain of justice."[336] The link between equality and justice is a Stoic commonplace frequently invoked by Philo.[337] Nature, with its proportional and balanced structure of elements, seasons, equinoxes, lunar waxing and waning, instructs the wise as to the excellence of equality and justice. The Therapeutae, for example, model the conjunction of justice and equality. In their pursuit of the contemplative life, they seek only "nature's wealth," i.e. they live off nature rather than the artificial wealth of the

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able to "seek a more weatherproof mode of life" and enjoy rest from one's labors (*Spec*. 2.206–207). Clearly, Philo's version of the sukkah differs substantially from the rabbinic conception of a temporary booth likely to fail in the rain (mSukk 2:9, e.g., allows evacuation of the sukkah in the case of rain).

[333] *Spec*. 2.208.

[334] *Spec*. 2.208–209.

[335] *Spec*. 2.204; cf. *Flacc*. 116. Philo may rely on Exod 34:22 LXX where Sukkot takes place "at mid-year" (ἑορτὴ συναγωγῆς μεσοῦντος τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ), but in *Spec*. 2.210, he places it at the full moon, on 7/15. The conjunction of the autumnal equinox and the full moon only occurs about once every nineteen years. The rabbinic tradition locates Sukkot at the first full moon *after* the autumnal equinox, and it is likely that Philo intends the same here, as Colson, *Philo* 10.438, suggests. Thus he should likely be understood as saying simply that Sukkot occurs around the time of the equinox. Cf. the connection between the full moon, vernal equinox, and Matzot in *Spec*. 2.155. For discussion, see Stern, *Calendar*, 53–54; Saulnier, *Calendrical*, 151–52; Rubenstein, *History*, 118.

[336] *Spec*. 2.204.

[337] *Her*. 141–206 is Philo's treatise on equality; cf. *Spec*. 4.230–238. Philo appears to use ἰσότης for geometric or proportional equality rather than arithmetic equality; cf. the same distinction in Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 5.3. See Brunt, *Studies*, 56; Bréhier, *Idées*, 86–90; Welborn, "Place," 545–48.

businessman. It is precisely the artifice of society that brings inequality and injustice, for nature has created all humans equal and free.[338]

Philo's representation of Sukkot would have resonated with a Hellenistic audience. As Burkert explains, Hellenistic festivals often provided an opportunity to return to the equality of the natural state: "the ancient way of life is imitated: a bed of twigs [στιβάδες][339] takes the place of seats or banqueting couches, and the house is replaced by an improvised hut [σκηνή]."[340] At the Thesmophoria, for example, σκηναί were erected for three days to celebrate the fall harvest, while the late Spartan Karnea, held in the late summer at the full moon, sought to emulate the life of the military camp by erecting canopies (σκιάδες) in which celebrants would dwell for eight days.[341] Philo, then, presents Sukkot as embodying these values in a similar manner, as it requires Israel, having gathered the harvest, to dwell alike in tents, living off the bounties of nature.

4.13.4 Flaccus's Arrest and a Diaspora Celebration of Sukkot

Philo's discussion of Sukkot in his festival catalog provides almost no information about the rituals observed by diaspora Jews at Sukkot. His narration of the crisis surrounding the Alexandrian riots, however, may yield more detail. In *Against Flaccus*, Philo tells how the Egyptian prefect Flaccus persecuted Alexandrian Jews and was subsequently removed from office and exiled. According to Philo's account, riots targeting the Alexandrian Jews take place in the summer of 38 CE and persecution continues until Sukkot. During this festival, Flaccus is arrested by messengers from Gaius Caligula.[342] The oppressive atmosphere hardly allows the

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[338] *Contempl*. 71.
[339] Cf. *Contempl*. 69, where the Therapeutae recline on στιβάδες.
[340] Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 107.
[341] Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 234, 242–46.
[342] *Flacc*. 116–119. See Gambetti, *Alexandrian*, for a detailed timeline and discussion.

Jews to celebrate the festival publicly, but when Flaccus's arrest is announced they make their way to the beach—their synagogues had been outlawed—for a grand celebration.

Philo likely understands this as an *ad hoc* celebration of Sukkot:[343] "with hands outstretched to heaven they sang hymns and led songs of triumph to God who watches over human affairs."[344] His account seems to highlight several themes and rituals of Sukkot. The songs celebrate the community's deliverance from danger, a theme closely tied to Sukkot in other Second Temple works: "we justly give thanks to Thee because Thou has taken pity and compassion on us and relieved our unbroken and ceaseless afflictions."[345] Furthermore, these songs went on "all night long," much like the hymns and celebrations that take place throughout the first night of Sukkot, according to the Mishnah.[346] In the Mishnah, these songs are followed at dawn by a procession through the east gate of the temple for the drawing of the water libation. Philo likely alludes to a similar observance in Alexandria when he depicts the people "at dawn pouring out through the gates, [and making] their way to the parts of the beach near at hand."[347] Is this simply a matter of convenience, or did Alexandrian Jews have their own diaspora version of the water libation ceremony?[348]

In his account, Philo emphasizes that God is the one who brings Flaccus to justice. This is notable because justice is the first and most prominent theme of Sukkot according to Philo.[349] Van der Horst observes, "It cannot be ruled out that Philo considers Flaccus' arrest on Sukkot as

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[343] So Leonhardt, *Worship*, 30; Falk, *Daily*, 197; van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 198, 204.

[344] *Flacc*. 121. Falk, *Daily*, 197, sees here a reference to the Hallel sung at Sukkot.

[345] *Flacc.* 121. In Jub 16:20, Abraham celebrates Sukkot by building an altar "for the Lord who had rescued him and who was making him so happy in the country where he resided as an alien." Jub 32:4–7 depicts Jacob, who celebrates Sukkot by "blessing and thanking the Lord who had delivered him out of all his tribulations." Likewise, in Rev 7:9–11, a multitude celebrates with palm branches and hymns their deliverance from great tribulation; cf. Draper, "Heavenly."

[346] mSukk 5:1–4; cf. the second-century CE papyrus, *CPJ* 452a (III:5–6), which records a παννυχίς τῆς σκηνοπηγίας— evidence "that diaspora communities practiced an all-night festival on Sukkot, probably an imitation of" the temple ritual (Rubenstein, *History*, 149).

[347] *Flacc*. 122.

[348] Favoring the presence of a water ritual is Philo's note that crowd "stood in the purest [καθαρώτατος] spot." Colson, *Philo* 9.369, translates καθαρώτατος as "most open," but van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 204, argues compellingly that purity is in view. Rubenstein, *History*, 121, 191, detects no liturgical actions here and argues that the celebration took place on the beach only because the synagogues had been desecrated during the riot.

[349] *Spec*. 2.204.

a proof of divine justice because in his view the equinox (ἰσημερία) indicates that we should honor ἰσότης (equality) as the source of δικαιοσύνη (justice)."[350] A final Sukkot motif appears in the prayers at this celebration. The Alexandrian Jews lament their homelessness both literal, due to the recent destruction of their property, and metaphorical, due to their marginalization in a foreign land.[351] But, they go on to express hope that the situation can be ameliorated. This theme is prominent in Philo's comments on Sukkot, where the tent-dwelling of the wilderness generation illustrates their temporary homelessness and their hope for a more stable life in the land.[352]

4.14 Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored and analyzed Philo's exposition of the Jewish festival calendar, both his systematic discussion of the "ten feasts" in *Spec.* 2.39–222 and his related comments in other treatises. While Philo makes conflicting statements about the annual calendar, he appears to value the idea of a calendar that is both septenary and fixed (much like that of the Enochic tradition)—as unworkable in reality as that may be. This fits his view of nature as stable, rational, and mathematically symmetrical, as well as his calendrical realism, which prioritizes synchrony with heaven and establishes the calendar on the structure of creation not the pragmatic decisions of a human court.

Philo's treatment of the Jewish festivals has a clear goal: he aims to show that the festivals—which appear to be specific to Israel, grounded in its national history, and full of arbitrary rituals—are in fact proper divine law, i.e. universal, natural and rational. To do so, he carefully interprets the Greek texts of the Pentateuch, employing an allegorical method and an arithmological framework. Allegory allows him to explain the festal rituals as pedagogical

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[350] Van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 198.
[351] *Flacc*. 123.
[352] *Spec*. 2.208.

symbols meant to inculcate virtue in their observers. His arithmological analysis enables him to discern a logical structure to the calendar that reflects the rationality of the cosmos, embedded in the creation order primarily in the form of the heptad. While Philo occasionally acknowledges that the festivals have a commemorative aspect for Israel, he uniformly emphasizes the connection of the festivals to the natural agricultural cycle of the year (i.e. the progress of the harvest) and the orderly movement of the heavenly bodies (the equinoxes). By doing this, Philo universalizes the festivals, demonstrating their validity and value for all, regardless of national identity. Moreover, he individualizes the festivals so that they are less about the history and identity of the nation of Israel and more about the individual person's progress in virtue and his/her participation in the divine life.

Philo's first festival, the feast of "every day" exemplifies his way of approaching the Torah, as he combines careful exegesis (noting that Numbers 28 includes the everyday Tamid in its festival list) with philosophical analysis. For those who follow wisdom, every day is a festival. This illustrates Philo's overarching tendency to downplay the external characteristics of the feasts—their rituals, their role in shaping civic identity and cohesion, their commemoration of national history—in favor of their "inner" reality. That is, while festivals in every time and place mark out certain days as special and different and by doing so foster group identity for the celebrants, Philo understands festivals as signs pointing to a deeper reality, namely the life of wisdom and virtue. The outer trappings are, for Philo, primarily pedagogical and therefore unnecessary for those who have already learned their lessons and have their minds trained in the way of the sage. For them, no day is different from any other, for their whole life is a festival in the sense that they pursue virtue and participate in the life of God, the very realities to which the festivals point.

Philo's second festival, the Sabbath, serves as the cornerstone for the entire festival calendar both in a mathematical sense—for him the calendar and all the feasts have a heptadic structure—and in an ideological sense. Philo's festal ideology, which he shares with much of his

ancient Mediterranean context, understands festivals to provide leisure and rest, to encourage civic virtues, to commemorate important historical events, and to allow humans to participate in the blessed life of the gods. The Sabbath, for Philo, does all these, commemorating the creation, affording a break from the labor of the week, and cultivating the virtues of fellowship, equality, simplicity and self-discipline. Most importantly, the Sabbath teaches humans to imitate God, who is himself the first keeper of the Sabbath.

We can well imagine Philo's Hellenistic interlocutors asking how the Sabbath could possibly be valid natural law given its apparent arbitrariness and lack of connection to any observable natural phenomenon. Philo's response is forceful: the Sabbath is grounded in the very order of creation (the creation week), the structure of creation (the heptad), and the behavior of God. It is thus universally valid (i.e. not restricted to Israel) and satisfies the criteria for divine/natural law.

Philo quickly passes over his third festival (the new month day), which would have been a familiar concept to his Hellenistic audience. He depicts the fourth festival, Passover, as a festival of crossing, or transition. On a literal level, it commemorates the liberation from Egypt, and encourages the civic virtue of unity as it binds together Israelites in a fellowship meal and a common priesthood. On a deeper level, however, its universal import emerges. Allegorically, Egypt represents the passions from which the soul must be liberated in order to cross over into the divine life.

Connected to Passover and linked to the vernal equinox is Matzot, the fifth festival. On a historical level, it commemorates Israel's hasty departure from Egypt, but Philo universalizes the festival by emphasizing its equinoctial timing, heptadic character, and pedagogically rich ritual. Eating unleavened bread lends Matzot an ascetic quality that aids participation in the divine. In Philo's hands the feast becomes a mimesis of the golden age, a back to nature festival that eschews the luxuriant and artificial life of pleasure. Likewise, the accent also falls on the universal in Philo's sixth festival, the Sheaf, which he portrays as a sacrifice of firstfruits offered

by Israel on behalf of all nations. Like the other festivals, the Sheaf is heptadic and inspires moral virtue; in this case it teaches gratitude to God and reverence for his honor.

Shavuot, or Philo's feast of "sevens," appropriately occupies the seventh place in Philo's festival catalog. Philo emphasizes its universality by focusing on its heptadic features and its agricultural character, both of which point to its validity as natural law. Notably, he does not link the festival with the Sinai event as Jubilees and others would. Instead, it is Rosh Hashanah, Philo's "feast of trumpets" which marks the fall New Year, that commemorates the giving of the law at Sinai. He does so by linking the feast of trumpets with the trumpet that heralded God's speaking of the ten words (a verbal link that does not exist in the Hebrew, but only in the LXX). Philo quickly universalizes this event so specific to Israel's history by claiming that the voice/trumpet of God at Sinai reached to the end of the earth. Further, he explains that this festival has a transcendent meaning, as it celebrates God's establishment of peace, harmony and stability in the natural world. This, along with its heptadic character (it is the first day of the *seventh* month), strengthens the argument that it meets the criteria for natural law.

The rituals of Philo's ninth festival, Yom Kippur, are a rich symbolic storehouse Philo draws on repeatedly throughout his corpus. In describing the temple rite of this holy day, Philo virtually ignores the bloody nature of the sacrifices, focusing instead on the high priest's entrance into the holy of holies, his incense offering and his intercessory prayer. It is the repentance of the people, not animal sacrifice, that effects forgiveness. While the priestly ritual is Jerusalem-centered, Philo argues for its universal significance. The high priest, he notes, prays on behalf of all humans, and on his clothing are symbols of the entire cosmos. But Philo much more extensively universalizes Yom Kippur through his allegorical interpretation. The high priest represents the wise man, who can spiritually enter the divine presence, see God, feast on the hidden manna, and present his own soul as a pleasing offering—in effect, achieving immortality through participation in the divine. Like the high priest, the sage must purify his soul, expel the scapegoat of evil passions, and progress from the outer world of appearances to

the inner holy of holies–the world of forms or ideas. Philo thereby not only universalizes the festival—ethnicity does not define the sage, who is a citizen of the cosmos—but also radically democratizes, individualizes, and detemporalizes it. At any time, on any day, any person who pursues wisdom, regardless of lineage, social status, or physical location can spiritually enter the divine presence and enjoy the reality to which the priestly ritual refers. Yom Kippur, in Philo's exposition, is less concerned with national forgiveness and has more to do with the individual ascent of the soul to the divine world of ideas.

The final festival, Sukkot, receives relatively short shrift from Philo, perhaps because it is the vintage harvest and seemed to outside observers more like a wine festival than a celebration of virtue. Indeed, Philo studiously avoids any discussion of wine, the lulav rite, or the connection with rain—all emphasized by his Jewish contemporaries. Philo instead focuses on the ritual of tent-dwelling. While the Pentateuch explained this as a commemoration of Israel's wilderness period, Philo depicts it as an ascetic discipline meant to train body and mind in virtue and to remind celebrants of the possibility of poverty. Sukkot's calendrical location, at the equinox, teaches the importance of equality and justice. Philo thus denationalizes the festival by emphasizing its universally applicable elements. In support of this, he highlights the feast's heptadic symbolism, as it occurs in the seventh month, lasts seven days, and requires seventy sacrifices.

In sum, Philo's exposition of the Jewish festivals presents them as universally applicable, once properly understood and appropriately allegorized. On the literal level—befitting their character as natural divine law—they reflect the rational mathematical structure of the cosmos, mark the key moments of the seasonal cycle and promote traditional civic goods such as equality, leisure, fellowship and unity. But, at a deeper level, understood allegorically, they have little to do with marking time on a corporate scale. Instead, they symbolize the philosophical virtues and the progress of the soul. Having been liberated from the passions, the soul cultivates the virtues, which ultimately yield a bountiful harvest: ascent to the world of ideas and

participation in the divine life. For Philo, this is the ultimate reality to which all the holy days point.

Chapter 5
"The Ways of Paradise": The Jewish Festivals in Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum

The Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (LAB), or Biblical Antiquities, is a retelling of the biblical narrative from Adam to Saul.[1] It is anonymous but was incorrectly attributed by scribes to Philo of Alexandria and transmitted along with his works. Thus, the author is now referred to as Pseudo-Philo. LAB is extant only in multiple Latin manuscripts, which date back to the 11th century and reveal a complicated textual history.[2] Most likely, the Latin is a translation from Greek, which was a translation from a Hebrew original.[3] The work is usually dated to the first century CE, ca. 70, though it is not clear whether it predates the destruction of the temple.[4] Scholarly consensus holds that it is Palestinian in provenance, given its original language, geographical knowledge, and theological interests.[5]

Pseudo-Philo is quite selective in retelling the biblical narrative.[6] He moves quickly through the Pentateuch, largely skipping the patriarchal narratives and greatly abbreviating the legal material in Exodus through Deuteronomy.[7] He chooses instead to focus on the Sinai narrative

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[1] For introductory issues, see Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," 297–303; Jacobson, *Commentary*, 195–280; Feldman, "Prolegomenon," ix–lxxxi. On its genre, see Fröhlich, "Historiographie."

[2] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 215–24, 259–73.

[3] Harrington, "Original." A critical edition of the Latin text can be found in the first volume of Harrington, *Pseudo-Philon*. Unless otherwise noted, quotes from the Latin text are taken from this edition.

[4] Perrot, *Pseudo-Philon*, 66–74; Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," 299. Jacobson, *Commentary*, 199–210, argues strongly for a post-70 date. Cf. also Wadsworth, "Pseudo-Philo," who critiques the case for a pre-70 date. Zeron, "Erwägungen," argues for a date after the Bar Kochba revolt. Most recently, see Safrai "Liber," 401, who holds that LAB "reflects an advanced stage in the struggle for hegemony between the sages and priests in the Tannaitic period"; cf. Farber, "Pseudo-Philo."

[5] Perrot, *Pseudo-Philon*, 65; Jacobson, *Commentary*, 210–11; Davila, *Provenance*, 157.

[6] See Murphy, *Rewriting*, 9–28; Fisk, *Remember*, 109–35; Jacobson, "Interpretation."

[7] Notable, however, are the out-of-sequence references to many of the events he passes over in his first narration. For example, though he does not mention the Akedah in his retelling of Genesis, it is cited at some length in the Balaam episode (18:4–6), in Deborah's song (32:1–4), and in the story of Jephthah's daughter (40:2); see Fisk, "Offering."

and the Book of Judges, as he apparently finds great explanatory value in the covenantal schema of deed-retribution and the historical pattern in Judges of sin-punishment-repentance-deliverance. Theologically, the author's main point has to do with Israel's status as God's elect people whose continued existence is guaranteed by God's covenant faithfulness.[8] This point is especially salient if the book was written after 70 CE, as Jacobson argues.[9] There is also a special emphasis on the leaders of Israel, whether good or bad, and their impact on the nation's prosperity.[10]

Unlike Jubilees, Pseudo-Philo shows little interest in halakic matters. He omits most of the legal material in the Pentateuch and never draws halakic conclusions from narrative material. For this very reason, the legal material he *does* include is all the more striking, as it focuses on Israel's cult and calendar, elements the author views as central to the nation's identity and the maintenance of the covenant.[11]

Pseudo-Philo includes numerous apocalyptic elements. Angels play a prominent role in many of the stories and Moses is depicted as undergoing multiple visionary ascents in which heavenly mysteries are revealed to him. Indeed, based on the "apocalyptic bent" of Pseudo-Philo's additions to the biblical narrative, K. Ruffato proposes that the author has intentionally transferred many motifs associated with Enoch (calendrical knowledge, heavenly ascent, cosmological tour, angelification) to Moses, thus focusing the readers' apocalyptic interest on the Sinai covenant as the primary revelatory event.[12]

In this chapter, I focus on LAB 11–13, where the author summarizes the events at Sinai and discusses the Mosaic legislation with a focus on the festivals. Along the way, I note and discuss

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[8] On the theological outlook of Pseudo-Philo, see Nickelsburg, "Leaders"; Murphy, *Rewriting*, 244–61; Murphy, "Covenant."

[9] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 199–210.

[10] Nickelsburg, "Leaders"; Endres, "Leaders."

[11] Hayward, *Temple*, 154–67; Zsengellér, "Worship"; cf. Safrai "Liber," on halakah in LAB in relation to rabbinic traditions.

[12] Ruffatto, "Ascents," 107. As Nickelsburg, "Leaders," 53, notes, LAB devotes chs. 10–19 to Moses—more space than any other figure.

other passages in the work that may allude to festivals or provide a more complete picture of the author's view of the cult, the calendar, and the role of angelic mediators in Israel's worship.

5.1 Apocalypse at Sinai (LAB 11–12)

Pseudo-Philo's rewriting of the Sinai narrative begins in ch. 11 by citing Exod 19:11, which places the events in the third month. The author appears to follow a traditional chronology that would place the revelation of the Law on the sixth day of the third month (3/6), i.e. Shavuot, although the festal setting is not made explicit here.[13] In LAB 11:4–13, the Lord speaks the Ten Commandments, accompanied by a host of spectacular theophanic phenomena indicating the cosmic importance of the event. Moses then spends forty days and nights on the mountain, where he receives instructions about the tabernacle and its accoutrements (11:15). Pseudo-Philo's summary here is extremely brief; just a few lines cover seven chapters (Exodus 25–31). Two aspects of the summary, however, are especially important for discerning Pseudo-Philo's understanding of the Sinai revelation.

5.1.1 Sinai and the Revelation of the Heavenly Tabernacle

First, according to Pseudo-Philo, Moses's ascent of Mt. Sinai is actually an ascent into heaven. He goes above the firmament and is "bathed with invisible light."[14] When he returns, he must "descend" to the "place where the light of the sun and moon are" (12:1). As a result, he is transfigured so that his "glorious" face shines brighter than the sun.[15] The explicit purpose of his heavenly journey is to learn about the tabernacle and the proper worship therein. God shows him the "likeness" and "pattern" of the sanctuary (LAB 11:15, quoting Exod 25:8–9; cf. 25:40).[16]

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[13] See below, pp. 216–220, however, for indications that LAB links Sinai and Shavuot.

[14] Unless otherwise noted, English quotations of LAB come from Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo."

[15] LAB relocates this event from the second ascent, where it occurs in the biblical narrative (Exod 34:29–35), to the first ascent; cf. DeutRab 3:12. For Jewish traditions of Moses's transfiguration, see Perrot, *Pseudo-Philon*, 114.

[16] See Pichon, "Moïse," for discussion of this episode in LAB.

In Second Temple Judaism, these terms were widely understood to refer to a tabernacle in heaven that Moses saw, i.e. the model upon which the earthly sanctuary would be built.[17] The implication is clear: Israel's tabernacle worship is modeled on the heavenly tabernacle and its angelic liturgy. By ascending to heaven and learning the "pattern," Moses brings the heavenly liturgy down to earth. Perhaps also implied is that, having become participants in the heavenly liturgy, Israel, like Moses, will be glorified.[18]

5.1.2 Sinai and Paradise Regained

Second, Pseudo-Philo tells how Moses is shown "the tree of life" (11:15) on his heavenly journey (strikingly, he identifies it with the tree Moses used to sweeten the waters of Marah in Exod 15:25).[19] The tree of life is in Eden or Paradise according to Gen 2:9 but by the Second Temple period Paradise was sometimes thought of as a heavenly locale.[20] For Pseudo-Philo, then, it seems that the Sinai revelation is a recapturing of Eden. Access to the tree of life, lost upon the first couple's exile from the garden, is regained in the cult.[21] Indeed, to make this point, he performs scribal gymnastics, dislodging the Marah episode from its pre-Sinai location in

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[17] Klawans, *Purity*, 111–44; Wilcox, "According"; Sulzbach, "Temples."

[18] Cf. LAB 12:7, where those innocent of sin in the golden calf episode are given shining faces. See Ruffato, "Ascents," 171–74, on the luminosity of the righteous in Pseudo-Philo and other Second Temple sources; cf. Begg, "Golden Calf," 586. For the tradition that Israel was angelomorphized at Sinai (usually drawing on Psalm 82), see PRE 47; LevRab 4:1 bShabb 88b; Pesiq. Rab. 20:4; NumRab 16:24; ExodRab 32:1, 7; discussion in Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, 169–70.

[19] This identification also appears in Philo, who says that the tree of life sweetens the embittered mind (*Migr*. 36–37; cf. Origen, *Hom. Exod*. 7:1; Mek. 15:25). See Kister, "Allegorical," 154–62, for a history of interpretation of Exod 15:22–26.

[20] Bauckham, "Paradise"; Tigchelaar, "Eden." Of course, Pseudo-Philo may simply imagine that only the tree of life, not Paradise as a whole, had been removed to heaven, but cf. LAB 13:9, 19:10, which portray Moses receiving a revelation of Paradise.

[21] Cf. TgPsJ Gen 3:24 and TgNeo Gen 3:24, both of which identify the Mosaic Law with the tree of life. See Lanfer, *Remembering*, 33–66, for a reception history of the tree of life. The same point is made by other early traditions which identified the tabernacle menorah with the Edenic tree of life; see C. Meyers, *Menorah*, 95–130; R. Hachlili, *Menorah*, 171–210. Elsewhere, e.g., in 2 Bar 59:8, Moses is shown Eden on Mt. Sinai, but LAB goes further, as Moses is not merely *shown* Eden, but is allowed to *make use* of its flora. Similarly, in LAB 26:13, the twelve precious stones of the high priest's breastplate come from Havilah, which Pseudo-Philo likely considers part of Eden (cf. Gen 2:11–12; Ezek 28:13; TgPsJ Exod 35:27; bYoma 75a; see Bauckham, "Paradise," 43–47). For another example of this idea, see LAE 29:3, where Adam takes the ingredients of the cultic incense from Eden (cf. 40:7). Similarly, in Jub 3:27 Adam burns the morning incense after his expulsion from the garden, though the author does not explain where the incense came from.

Exodus 15 and placing it at Sinai in a way that makes little narrative sense but highlights his desire to depict the Sinai covenant as Paradise regained.[22]

5.1.3 Israel's Cult as Axis Mundi

While Moses is on the mountain, the Lord informs him that the people below have sinned gravely. Moses rushes down the mountain, smashes the tablets of the Law, crushes the golden calf and judges the people with a trial by ordeal (12:1–7). He then ascends the mountain again to intercede with the Lord for the people. Moses's prayer (vv8–9) is an addition of Pseudo-Philo and thus contains important clues for discerning his viewpoint.[23]

The narrative context of the prayer is critical: the covenant has just been made, granting Israel access to heavenly tools, knowledge of heavenly secrets, and participation in a cult of heavenly nature and origin. The thrust of Moses's prayer, therefore, is not simply that God has made a covenant with his people and cannot reject them, but that God has established his "house" (12:9) among the people and has made Israel, especially its cult, the center of the cosmos.[24]

In his prayer, Moses depicts Israel as a vine with roots stretching from the abyss to the divine throne.[25] It is the *axis mundi*, with a cult that connects heaven to earth and provides Israel with access to God and the heavenly realm. Even more, the cult is "the unifying force in the created order.… should God destroy the vine, the link between abyss, earth, and heaven will cease to

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[22] Several textual stimuli may also have prompted LAB to link Marah and Sinai: 1) In Exod 15:25a, the Lord "shows" Moses a tree, perhaps leading LAB to associate this with the other special revelations of Sinai. 2) In 15:25b, immediately after showing Moses the tree, the Lord gives Israel a "statute and ordinance"; the similarity to what occurs at Sinai may have led LAB to link the two. 3) In Exod 15:26, the tree is linked to healing, which may have prompted LAB to see it as the tree of life (cf. Ezek 47:12; Rev 22:2, where the tree of life has healing properties).

[23] The biblical base text is Exod 32:32a, an extremely brief prayer: "But now, if you will only forgive their sin." Cf. Newman, "Staff," 140–43, on how Pseudo-Philo adapts the biblical narrative here.

[24] See Gruen, "Subversive," 473–86.

[25] For a thorough discussion of vine-imagery in the post-biblical era, see Streett, *Vine*, 115–58. As Jacobson, *Commentary*, 497, notes, ExodRab 43:9 and Pesiq. Rab Kah. 16 both introduce vine imagery in the context of Moses's prayer here, which suggests a rather early interpretive tradition. 1QH 14.14–19 depicts restored Israel as an "everlasting plantation" whose top reaches to the skies and its roots to the abyss. Hayward, "Vine," traces much of the vine imagery in LAB to the influence of Psalm 80, along with Isaiah 5. Psalm 80, especially, uses the symbol of the vine to emphasize God's commitment to the continued existence of Israel.

exist: everything will have been made for nothing, to no purpose."[26] This image is central to Pseudo-Philo's concept of Israel and the cult, as it recurs at several other points in his narrative. In 18:10, after his unsuccessful attempts to curse Israel, Balaam prophesies, "It is easier to take away the foundations and the topmost part of the earth and to extinguish the light of the sun and to darken the light of the moon than for anyone to uproot the planting of the Most Powerful or to destroy his vine."[27] Such axial imagery resembles later rabbinic descriptions of the *Eben Shetiyyah*, or foundation stone, in the holy of holies, which holds back the waters of the abyss.[28] Likewise, the channels under the altar are said to lead down to the abyss, and the holy of holies is thought to be directly opposite the heavenly throne.[29] As Pesiq. Rab. 40:6 puts it, "if it [Mt. Zion] were an arrow, [it] would shoot up through the heavens directly to the heavenly altar."[30]

In his prayer, Moses reminds God of the plans for the tabernacle: "For you are he who is all light; and you have adorned your house with precious stones and gold; and you have sprinkled your house with perfumes and spices and balsam wood and cinnamon and roots of myrrh and costum; and you have filled it with various foods and the sweetness of various drinks" (12:9). The items mentioned are all elements in the tabernacle cult: the light of the lampstand, the precious stones of the priestly breastplate (of much interest to Pseudo-Philo, see chs. 25–26), the gold of the furnishings, the various ingredients of the anointing oil and incense,[31] and the food and drink offerings.[32] As a result of Moses's prayer, God pardons the people and commissions

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[26] Hayward, *Temple*, 160.

[27] Cf. 23:12; 28:4; 30:4; 39:7.

[28] mYoma 5:2; tYoma 3:6; TgPsJ Exod 28:30; cf. Levenson, *Sinai*, 133–35; Fishbane, *Myth*, 210; Koltun-Fromm, "Rock." While these sources are later than LAB, the concept appears to be much older, dating back to ancient Mesopotamia. See Burrows, "Cosmological," 55.

[29] bSukk 49a; 53a.

[30] Braude, *Pesiqta Rabbati*, 715.

[31] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 501, notes that the "spices listed here appear by and large to derive from Exodus' recipe for the oil used to anoint the sanctuary" (see Exod 25:6; ch. 30; bKer 6a).

[32] Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," 320, takes the "house" of 12:9 to be the universe, but the items mentioned are all clearly related to the cult. Cf. LAB 11:15; 13:1; 26:12–15, for other lists of the tabernacle contents, and 2 Chron 3:6 for the language of "adorning the house with gold and precious stones" used of Solomon's temple. Cf. Hayward, *Temple*, 160; Zsengellér, "Worship," 374. Jacobson, *Commentary*, 499–500, agrees with Harrington that the "house" is the universe, but sees a secondary reference to the temple as a microcosm. Pichon, "Moïse," 175, considers the possibility that the reference is to Eden or the land of Israel.

Moses to produce a second set of tablets. Moses does so, then descends the mountain to construct and consecrate the tabernacle and all its elements as he had been commanded (13:1, summarizing Exod 35–40).

5.2 Cult and Covenant (LAB 13)

If the cultic ideology on display in LAB 11–12 depicts the tabernacle as the *axis mundi*, then ch. 13 is devoted to describing the *caerimoniae axis mundi*. LAB 13:2–10 summarizes Leviticus and its brevity highlights Pseudo-Philo's main interest: more than eighty percent of his *précis* deals with matters related to the festival calendar.

The summary begins with the "law of the altar" and a list of the proper animals for burnt offerings (cf. Lev 1:10, 14) then moves to the process for cleansing leprosy (cf. Lev 14:2–6). Remarkably, these are the only two items the author draws from the first twenty-two chapters of Leviticus. His reasons are not clear; perhaps he finds in Leviticus 1 a suitable introduction and in Leviticus 14 an illustrative sacrifice. Nevertheless, what is clear from ch. 13 is the centrality of the festivals to the author's vision of the covenant, as he devotes considerable space to rewriting Leviticus 23. His discussion of the festivals also includes numerous additions to the biblical material that provide insight into how he interprets the significance of those annual observances.

5.2.1 Preface (13:4a)

> *And when the times appointed for you come around, you will acknowledge me as holy on the festival day.*

In cataloging the festivals, Pseudo-Philo follows the order of Leviticus 23 and uses it as his base text. Festivals are times (*tempora*/מועדים)[33] set by the Lord at which Israel is to "acknowledge

[33] Cf. Lev 23:4, where מועדים is rendered in the Vulgate with both *feriae* and *tempora*.

as holy" or "sanctify" (*sanctificare*) the Lord.[34] Notably, LAB's festival list omits the Sabbath, with which Leviticus begins (Lev 23:3).[35] Elsewhere in LAB, the Sabbath receives no special focus, and is not identified as a festival. The fourth commandment is cited in LAB 11:8 and 44:6–7 but not singled out from the other covenant stipulations. Unlike some later Jewish texts, Pseudo-Philo shows no interest in depicting the patriarchs as Sabbath-observant,[36] nor does he attempt to demonstrate a connection between the Sabbath and the yearly calendar or festival system (as seen, e.g., in Philo's septenary analysis).[37]

5.2.2 Passover, Matzot and the Sheaf (13:4b)

> *Rejoice before me on the festival of the unleavened bread and set before me the bread, celebrating the festival as a memorial, because on that day you went forth from the land of Egypt.*

Pseudo-Philo's very brief treatment of the first festival is notable for the way it merges Passover and Matzot without comment. The close thematic and calendrical links between these two festivals made them almost indistinguishable to some early Jews, and Pseudo-Philo here closely follows Lev 23:5–7 which does not designate Passover as a festival but depicts it as an offering attached to the festival of Matzot.[38] LAB passes over many features of the festival (e.g. dates, lamb, seven-day length, pilgrimage, etc.) but adds two key elements.

First, Israel is to "rejoice before" the Lord at the festival. No biblical text commands joy at Passover/Matzot, but some Second Temple sources depict rejoicing as an integral part of Passover,[39] in keeping with widespread ancient festal ideology in which feasts are, by definition,

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[34] Unlike Philo (see above, p. 152), the author sees no special indication in Lev 23:2 that the Lord himself keeps festival. Rather, the feasts are for humans (viz., Israel).

[35] As we have seen, Jubilees and Philo both treat the Sabbath as a festival, but Leviticus is not clear. Lev 23:2–3 ("These are the appointed festivals of the Lord") does appear to refer to the Sabbath as a festival (v3), but immediately after speaking of the Sabbath, Leviticus confusingly provides a second introduction to its list of the annual feasts ("These are the appointed festivals of the Lord," 23:4). See Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 1956, who attributes the identification of the Sabbath as a festival in Lev 23:3 to H's redaction. Cf. Schwartz, "*Miqra'*," 20–21.

[36] See, e.g., GenRab 11:8; 16:8; 79:7; 92:4; NumRab 14.9; bYoma 28b; PRE 20.

[37] See above, p. 155.

[38] Cf. Hartley, *Leviticus*, 378.

[39] Jub 49:22; Ezra 6:22.

times of rejoicing. The emphasis in LAB, though, may be on the location of the rejoicing ("before me"), which requires a pilgrimage.

Second, the only ritual Pseudo-Philo mentions here is the presentation of bread before God. This has no clear parallel in the biblical festival laws. Perhaps textual corruption changed *Pascham* to *panem* or dittographically copied a line from 13:5,[40] but it is more likely that the Omer offering of Lev 23:10–11 is meant, as this follows the order of Leviticus 23 (Pseudo-Philo's base text in this section). Further, attaching the Omer offering to Passover/Matzot enables Pseudo-Philo to present all three of the major pilgrimage festivals as firstfruits offerings. In the case of Matzot, the firstfruits of barley are offered.[41] This is similar to the schema used by the Temple Scroll, which organizes the festival calendar into pentecontads demarcated by firstfruits festivals.[42]

For Pseudo-Philo, the festival memorializes the day Israel left Egypt.[43] Here he relies on Deut 16:3, "For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it—the bread of affliction—because you came out of the land of Egypt in great haste, so that all the days of your life you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt."

5.2.2.1 Phinehas Ascends at Passover (LAB 48:3)

Passover/Matzot is mentioned at least twice elsewhere in LAB. First, in LAB 48:3, the ascension of Phinehas occurs at Passover. Phinehas plays a much greater role in Pseudo-Philo and early Judaism than in the biblical narrative.[44] Pseudo-Philo identifies Phinehas with Elijah, and tells how—at 120 years of age—he was hidden away on a mountain, whence he would later

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[40] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 510–11. Jacobson also wonders if this refers to the daily Passover offerings mentioned in Num 28:24.

[41] Cf. Josephus, *Ant*. 3.10.5.

[42] See Swanson, *Temple Scroll*, 18–31; Baumgarten, "Pentecontad"; White, *Erstlingsgabe*, 17–68.

[43] For LAB 13:4, some texts read *festivitatem memorialem*, while others have *festivitatem in memoriale*, or *festivitatem immemoriale*. See Jacobson, *Commentary*, 511; Kisch, *Liber*, 150, for discussion. Passover is depicted as a perpetual ordinance in Exod 12:14,17,24, but the context here seems to suggest the idea of remembrance.

[44] See Hayward, "Phinehas"; Feldman, "Portrayal."

return as Elijah for his part in the eschatological denouement (48:1–2).[45] Some targums and midrashim also embrace this identification and embellish the tradition in various directions, emphasizing the zeal, continued life, and eschatological activity of Phinehas/Elijah.[46] Pseudo-Philo is the earliest extant witness to this tradition in its primitive form.

Pseudo-Philo inserts his Phinehas material into his retelling of Judges 21, which tells how the tribe of Benjamin procured wives at Shiloh. The event takes place at an unspecified "yearly festival" according to Judg 21:19. This could be any of the annual pilgrimage festivals, but the Hebrew phrase is used elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible only of Passover.[47] Based on this verbal link Pseudo-Philo identifies the festival as Passover. But why does Pseudo-Philo link Phinehas's ascension to this episode? The reason likely has nothing to do with the specific events of this episode (concerning the tribe of Benjamin) and everything to do with the festal marker in Judg 21:19. For Pseudo-Philo, as for many other early Jews, Passover was a feast that both celebrated Israel's past redemption and anticipated its future liberation from imperial dominance,[48] an eschatological scenario that prominently featured the return of Elijah.[49] Apparently, this connection between Phinehas, Elijah, and eschatological redemption at Passover motivates Pseudo-Philo to locate Phinehas's ascension and transformation into Elijah at Passover, and thus in the midst of the Benjaminite narrative.[50]

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[45] See Spiro, "Ascension," for extensive discussion of Phinehas traditions, especially in relation to Samaritan material. Spiro reasons that Josh 24:33, which refers to the "hill of Phinehas, which was given to him in mount Ephraim," may underlie the tradition that Phinehas was spirited away by the Lord to a mountain. The connection with Elijah likely came about because both were known for their "zeal."

[46] See, e.g. TgPsJ Num 25:12–13; PRE 29, 47; NumRab 21:4. Zeron, "Martyrdom," 99–100, suggests that Phinehas was thought to live forever based on a) Num 25:12–13, which promises him an eternal priesthood, and b) Phinehas's reappearance in Judg 20:28, almost three hundred years later.

[47] Cf. Exod 13:10 for the phrase מימים ימימה used of Passover. A similar exegetical link lies behind LAB 50:2.

[48] Jer 38:8 LXX, for example, envisions the return from exile occurring at Passover. On eschatological expectations linked to Passover, see Christopher, *Appropriation*, 21–65; Le Déaut, *Nuit*; Mézange, "Josèphe," 215; Pitre, *Jesus*, 375–88.

[49] The expectation was largely driven by Mal 4:1–6 (MT 3:19–24); cf. Sir 48:10; Mark 9:11–13 et pars.; John 1:21,25; ExodRab 18:9. Wiener, *Elijah*, 133 notes that the lectionary reading for the Sabbath before the Passover is Mal 3:4–24, which predicts Elijah's return. See the expansive overview of Jewish traditions on Elijah in Segal, *Elijah*.

[50] Hayward, "Phinehas," 28.

5.2.2.2 Hannah, Samuel and Passover (LAB 49–50)

According to LAB 49–50, in the wake of political chaos the Israelite leaders come together to request from the Lord a leader like Kenaz (49:1). They repeatedly cast lots, and eventually the lot falls on Elkanah, who refuses the assignment (49:2–5). The Lord then reveals that it is actually Elkanah's son, through Hannah, who will rule the people (49:6–8). In response to this revelation, the sons of Israel sacrifice peace offerings and rejoice festively (49:8).[51] LAB 50 continues the story, recounting Hannah's prayer (cf. 1 Sam 1:1–18), which Pseudo-Philo places "on the good day of Passover."[52]

What might have prompted Pseudo-Philo to link this narrative with Passover? Two elements in 1 Samuel 1 likely served as textual stimuli.[53] Most obvious is 1 Sam 1:3, 7, which states that Elkanah and Hannah went up to Shiloh "year by year" (מימים ימימה) to sacrifice at an unspecified annual pilgrimage festival.[54] Pseudo-Philo, however, takes the phrase to refer to Passover, likely because Exod 13:10 uses the same phrase in its Passover legislation.[55] Additionally, the account focuses on the birth and dedication of Hannah's *firstborn son*—a central motif in the Exodus Passover narrative and its accompanying legislation (see Exod 11:5; 12:12, 29; 13:1).[56]

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[51] Lat: *epulati sunt*. *Epulor* seems to have festal connotations, perhaps with a focus on the banqueting activities at such events; see 23:14 where it is used of festal activity.

[52] Koet "Holy," 50, notes that *die bono* reflects יום טוב, typically used to refer to a festival day in the rabbis. Cf. however Plautus, *Poen*. 497, who uses the phrase for the festival of Venus, which indicates that it may not be a Hebraism. See Cook, *Hannah's Desire*, 56–76, for discussion of the narrative in LAB.

[53] A later tradition (bRosh 11a–b; cf. Pesiq. Rab. 40:1) places Hannah's prayer at Rosh Hashanah. This is driven by the language of "remembrance" and "visitation" in 1 Sam 1:19; 2:21, which is linked to how God's "remembers" Rachel (i.e. when she conceives; Gen 30:2) and "visits" Sarah (when she gives birth; Gen 21:1). Lev 23:24 depicts Rosh Hashanah as a day of "remembrance." According to the sages, Rosh Hashanah is also when God decides who will be born and die in the coming year. bRosh 11a–b thus creates a close parallel between Isaac and Samuel, Sarah and Hannah. Both Isaac and Samuel are born after only seven months; both are conceived in Tishri and born at Passover. Pseudo-Philo is also aware of the tradition that Isaac was a seventh-month child (LAB 23:8); cf. van der Horst "Children."

[54] Commentators sometimes identify the setting as the autumn vintage festival (see Judg 21:19) that would later become Sukkot; cf. e.g. Cartledge, *1 Samuel*, 28. Eli's assumption that Hannah is drunk may imply a vintage festival.

[55] Cf. LAB 48:3. Aggadat Bereshit 29b, 51e makes the same connection. First Samuel 1 seems to describe a family festival where the sacrifice is shared in a family meal; this may also have influenced Pseudo-Philo's to place the scene at Passover.

[56] Pseudo-Philo has enhanced the association with Passover through his additions to the narrative. In 49:8, he places the prophecy of Samuel's birth at a festival that includes peace offerings. Passover may be intended, as the Passover sacrifice was often understood as a peace offering (see mPes 5:3–4, where Passover is a peace offering that is special only with regard to the day it is sacrificed and the identification made by the worshiper). Further, LAB depicts the significance of Samuel's birth in ways that evoke the Passover and exodus. For example, in 49:8 the birth is evidence that "God has remembered us so as to free us from the hand of those who hate us." This language draws on Ps 106:10, "So He saved them from the hand of the one who hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy," referring to

These textual stimuli led other interpreters to place the Hannah narrative at Passover, as well. bRosh 10b–11a suggests that a minority of rabbis may have located Hannah's prayer at Passover, not at Rosh Hashanah like the majority.[57] The tradition also surfaces in the medieval Aggadat Bereshit (ca. tenth century), which depicts Hannah praying at Passover and makes the same exegetical connections as Pseudo-Philo between 1 Samuel 1–2, Exod 13:10, and Psalm 106.[58]

5.2.3 Shavuot (13:5)

> *And on the festival of weeks you will set before me bread and make me an offering for your fruits.*

Pseudo-Philo's account barely touches on Shavuot in ch. 13. He condenses Lev 23:15–22 into one sentence and passes in silence over the counting of the Omer, the animal sacrifices, the required Sabbath convocation. Nor does he assign any memorial significance to the festival. The name "festival of weeks" (*festivitas ebdomadis*) does not appear in Leviticus but is borrowed from the other pentateuchal festival codes.[59] The only ritual mentioned is the elevation offering of two loaves—unique to Leviticus.[60] The command to make an "offering for your fruits" probably describes these loaves as firstfruits offered to God to ensure the bounty of the remaining grain harvest.[61]

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the deliverance from Egypt at Passover. Similarly, LAB 49:1 depicts the people as being in "distress" and in need of liberation (cf. 49:6). This, again, seems to draw on Psalm 106, which tells how the Lord "regarded their distress when he heard their cry" (v4; cf. Exod 3:7).

[57] It is unclear which event is being dated. Is it Hannah's prayer (perhaps at Passover) or Hannah's conception of Samuel (perhaps at Rosh Hashanah, based on לתקפות הימים; cf. Exod 34:22)?

[58] Aggadat Bereshit 29b.

[59] Exod 34:22; Num 28:26; Deut 16:9,10,16.

[60] Lev 23:17.

[61] Feldman, "Prolegomenon," xcviii, notes an intriguing rabbinic parallel: mRosh 1:2 describes Shavuot as the time of judgment on the fruit of the tree. bRosh 16a goes further, "Why did the Torah enjoin on us to bring two loaves on Pentecost? Because Pentecost is the season for fruit of the tree. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, said: Bring before Me two loaves on Pentecost so that the fruit of your trees may be blessed."

5.2.3.1 Shavuot and Sinai

As we have seen, both Jubilees and later rabbinic traditions place the Sinai event at Shavuot, but they disagree about the date.[62] Pseudo-Philo also seems to link Sinai and Shavuot, though he does so only implicitly. Two passages in LAB are relevant to the discussion: 19:6–7 and 23:1–14.

5.2.3.1.1 The Golden Calf and the Chronology of Sinai (LAB 19:6-7)

As God prepares Moses to die, he reveals Israel's future (19:6–7). The people will enter the promised land and establish God's sanctuary, but they will fall into idolatry and be exiled as foreigners destroy the temple. God compares the day of the destruction to the dark day when Israel worshiped the golden calf and the tablets of the law were smashed. Both covenant-threatening catastrophes, the text states, took place on the "seventeenth day of the fourth month" (4/17).[63] Later rabbinic texts, likewise, tie these two events together by means of their date.[64]

This information allows us to calculate LAB's date for the giving of the Law. Moses spends forty days on the mountain prior to the golden calf episode (LAB 11:15). His initial ascent, then, takes place on 3/6, which is the traditional rabbinic date for Shavuot and the giving of the Ten Commandments.[65] Thus, while Pseudo-Philo does not provide an exact date for Shavuot in his discussion of the festivals, this chronological data suggests that he celebrates the festival on 3/6 as a memorial of the giving of the law at Sinai. If so, he is the earliest witness to this tradition.[66]

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[62] See above, p. 82.

[63] See Jacobson, *Commentary*, 625, for discussion of the Latin here, which is less than clear. Feldman, "Epilegomenon," argues (unpersuasively in light of the rabbinic parallels) that LAB is dating the golden calf episode to 4/17, but not the destruction of the temple. It is interesting to note that Pseudo-Philo does not use the Babylonian month-names (e.g. Tammuz) here or elsewhere, but numbers the months.

[64] Seder Olam Rabbah 6; mTaan 4:6; bTaan 26a; bShabb 87a; bYoma 4b. Zech 8:19, which mentions a fast in the fourth month, may witness to the antiquity of the tradition linking the destruction of Solomon's temple to this date. Josephus gives the same date for Titus's breach of Jerusalem's walls and the cessation of the Tamid in 70 CE (*J.W.* 6.2.1). This leads some to detect in Pseudo-Philo an allusion to the destruction of the Second Temple, and thus a firm basis for dating the work post-70 CE; see Jacobson, *Commentary*, 202–6; James, *Antiquities*, 29–33.

[65] LAB 61:2 may also indicate that Pseudo-Philo placed the Sinai covenant at a festival. It states that Israel observed a feast for forty days when it received the law in the wilderness.

[66] Contra Park, *Pentecost*, 198–99; cf. Goudoever, *Calendars*, 95–123, though he cannot be followed in many particulars.

5.2.3.1.2 Shavuot and Joshua's Covenant Renewal (LAB 23)

> *And he sent and summoned all Israel in all their land, along with women and children, and he said to them, "Gather before the ark of the covenant of the LORD in Shiloh, and I will establish a covenant with you before I die." And on the sixteenth day of the third month all the people along with women and children gathered together before the Lord in Shiloh, and Joshua said to them, "Hear, O Israel. Behold I am establishing with you a covenant of this Law that the LORD established for your fathers on Horeb. And so wait here this night and see what God will say to me on your behalf."*

The link between Shavuot and the covenant is reinforced by a later episode in LAB 23, which draws from Joshua 23–24. Joshua, nearing death, summons all Israel to Shiloh to meet before the ark of the covenant and to renew the Mosaic covenant with a new generation.[67] Pseudo-Philo extensively supplements the biblical narrative.[68] Three additions especially merit attention, as they serve to link the narrative to Shavuot.

First, Pseudo-Philo adds a date to this story, placing the covenant on the sixteenth of the third month (3/16). Goudoever proposes that LAB here follows the calendar of Jubilees, in which the covenant at Sinai (and thus Shavuot) is cut on 3/15 and Moses's revelation from God takes place the next day (3/16).[69] This is possible, but as we have seen, Pseudo-Philo appears to assume the rabbinic date for Shavuot and the Sinai covenant (3/6). More likely, as Jacobson and others propose, textual corruption has changed 3/6 into 3/16.[70] In any case, the fact that Pseudo-Philo has supplied a date, when he so rarely does so, indicates a clear literary strategy here.

Second, Pseudo-Philo concludes the episode by stating that "all the people had a great feast that day and a renewal ceremony for twenty-eight days" (23:14).[71] Together with the date in 23:2,

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[67] That this is a renewal of the *Mosaic* covenant is not explicit in the biblical text, but LAB makes this clear in 23:2, "Behold I am establishing with you a covenant of this Law that the LORD established for your fathers on Horeb." Cf. also the language of "all Israel" (Deut 29:10; LAB 23:1).

[68] For an overview, see Begg, "Rewritings."

[69] *Calendars*, 116–18.

[70] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 711; cf. Farber, "Pseudo-Philo," 8. Some MSS read 'XVII,' instead of 'XVI,' clearly demonstrating the ease with which numerals could be corrupted. As Feldman, "Prolegomenon," cix, notes, the difference in the Latin or Greek would be only one letter. Farber, "Pseudo-Philo," 9, points out that the text could also have been corrupted from a sectarian date for Shavuot (3/15) by the addition of a single letter.

[71] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 729–30, objects that *et fecerunt epulationem* does not denote an actual feast, but simply rejoicing. However, abundant evidence from the Vulgate shows that *epulor/epulatio* was commonly used to translate

this suggests that Pseudo-Philo is not simply portraying a covenant renewal, but an annual pilgrimage festival with which his audience would have been quite familiar, namely Shavuot.[72] Indeed, this episode may even be intended to provide an etiology for the annual observance of the covenant renewal. The length of the festival (twenty-eight days) here is puzzling and may be due to textual corruption. Jacobson proposes that eight days, perhaps for rededicating the tabernacle or consecrating priests (see Leviticus 8–9), may be in view.[73] Otherwise, the point may be that at this first covenant renewal festival, the celebration lasted an entire month.[74]

Third, Pseudo-Philo adds both a vigil and visionary activity to the biblical narrative (LAB 23:2–3). Both were connected to Shavuot in some early Jewish traditions.[75] For example, in Jub 14:10–20, Abraham's covenant between the pieces (Genesis 15) is sealed on the night of Shavuot and accompanied by a prophetic dream-vision. This episode features prominently in Joshua's Shavuot speech in Pseudo-Philo (LAB 23:6–8).[76] Likewise, in Jubilees, both Jacob and Moses receive revelatory visions on the night of Shavuot that forecast Israel's covenantal history (Jubilees 1; 44). Along the same lines, Philo describes the Therapeutae's visionary activity during a night-long Shavuot vigil.[77] In other early traditions, Ezekiel's throne vision (Ezekiel 1) is linked to Shavuot and the Sinai revelation.[78] In sum, the combination of the date, the language of feasting, and the presence of a visionary vigil combine to make a strong case that Pseudo-Philo

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terms related to חג/ἑορτή. Those who see the festival as Shavuot include Perrot, "Pseudo-Philon," 144–45; Murphy, *Rewriting*, 108, 113; Stramara, *Timetable*, 21, 25, 101.

[72] Cf. 2 Chronicles 15, which depicts a great third-month pilgrimage festival at which the covenant is renewed. The Community Rule at Qumran shows that at least some Second Temple Jews saw Shavuot as a festival of covenant renewal (cf. 1QS 1:16–2:25a; 4Q266 11 16–18). Cf. Park, *Pentecost*, 59–61; Delcor, "Bundesfest," 188–204.

[73] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 730.

[74] Twenty-eight days could be meant to indicate one month, i.e. four weeks, or it might be taken in addition to the two previous days mentioned in the text, thus yielding a month of 30 days.

[75] Penner, *Patterns*, 165; Potin, *Fête*, 125.

[76] Joshua's summary of covenant history in LAB 24 also focuses on two other key events (Isaac's birth and the Sinai revelation) that Jubilees places at Shavuot. This may be a simple coincidence or it may point to an exegetical tradition that linked key covenant moments to Shavuot.

[77] *Contempl*. 82–84, 89. See above, p. 174.

[78] See Halperin, *Faces*, 17–19, who holds that the connection between Ezekiel 1, Exodus 19, and Shavuot was "very early and very widespread" (18).

intends to portray a celebration of Shavuot here, and to depict Shavuot as the festival of the covenant.

5.2.4 Rosh Hashanah (13:6a)

> *Now the feast of trumpets will be an offering for your watchers, because on that day I review creation so as to remember the whole earth. And at the beginning of the year, when you present yourselves, I will declare the number of those who are to die and who are to be born.*[79]

Pseudo-Philo now turns to the autumn festivals, which he treats in rapid succession. While his review of the spring festivals deviated little from the pentateuchal texts, Pseudo-Philo supplements his description of the fall feasts with substantial extrabiblical information. He begins with the "feast of trumpets," also known as the New Year or Rosh Hashanah. Pseudo-Philo draws its name from Lev 23:24 but does not mention the date (7/1) or rituals prescribed by Leviticus (rest, convocation, and trumpet blasts).[80] The rest of his description is difficult and highly contested, requiring a phrase-by-phrase examination.

5.2.4.1 An Offering for the Watchers?

Pseudo-Philo first explains that the feast "will be an offering for your watchers" (*in oblationem erit prospeculatoribus vestris*). How the feast is an offering is difficult to determine. He may be referring to a) the blowing of the shofar, b) the burnt offering required in Lev 23:25 (and perhaps the additional offerings in Num 29:1–6), or c) the sacrifices of Yom Kippur, which he seems to blend with Rosh Hashanah. The identity of the "watchers" or "observers" (*prospeculatores*) is even more problematic.[81] As Jacobson notes, the word *prospeculator* is not otherwise attested.[82]

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[79] Translation mine.

[80] Lev 23:24 does not call 7/1 a "festival" but a memorial (זכרון). It was not a pilgrimage festival (חג), though it was often closely associated with Sukkot, which did require pilgrimage. Cf. Num 29:1–6, which calls 7/1 the "day of a trumpet blast" (יום תרועה) and prescribes a Sabbath rest and additional offerings specific to Rosh Hashanah (burnt offerings, a grain offering, and a goat for a sin offering).

[81] James and Harrington translate the term as "watchers," while Jacobson opts for "watchmen."

[82] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 512.

This is somewhat immaterial, as *speculator* is a common word and the meaning of the simple compound would be clear enough. The term could refer to someone who foresees or foreknows, i.e. a prophet who makes predictions or a heavenly being who determines future events. Alternatively, it could simply denote someone who watches in order to protect or guard.[83]

Most commentators understand these "watchers" to be heavenly guardians of some sort,[84] in line with the role of some angels in the HB.[85] The difficulty, of course, is how the New Year offering is *to*, *for*, or *on behalf of* these heavenly beings. Other passages in LAB may shed light on this. For example, David sings about his angelic *custodes* ("guardians") who have protected him from death so that he might become king (59:4). Moses tells the Israelites not to bear false witness against their neighbors; otherwise, their angelic guardians will bear false witness against them (11:12).[86] Even more relevant for our purposes is LAB 15:5, where Israel's angelic custodians are depicted as priestly intercessors who plead for Israel when God judges his people: "I will command my angels who watch over [*custodiunt*] them not to plead for them."

Other Second Temple texts may also help identify these "watchers." The Book of the Watchers tells how a group of rebellious heavenly beings descended to earth and took human wives. These heavenly beings are called "watchers," but the term is not only applied to this rebellious group.[87] In 1 En 22:6, Raphael is identified as a "watcher," as are other archangels (20:1). The job description of the watchers includes, prominently, interceding before God on behalf of humans (1 En 15:2).[88] Other texts describe the watchers as judges. Daniel 4:17, for example, describes a decree of judgment on Nebuchadnezzar that comes from the "watchers"

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[83] James's solution, to read two words here (*pro speculatoribus*), yields basically the same meaning, since *speculator* also speaks of someone who guards, watches over, or examines. See James, *Antiquities*, 115; cf. *OLD*, s.v. "speculator."

[84] Dietzfelbinger, *Pseudo-Philo*, 137; Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," 301; Murphy, *Rewriting*, 74; contra Jacobson, *Commentary*, 513.

[85] E.g., Gen 19:1–22, where Lot is rescued by angels; Exod 23:20; 32:34; Ps 33:8; 91:11; perhaps Dan 3:25,28; 10:13. On this idea in Second Temple literature, see Hannah, "Guardian Angels."

[86] The idea that angels are tasked with keeping records of human actions (with a view to judgment) is present in Second Temple texts; cf. 1 En 90:13–27; Jub 19:9; 30:17, 20.

[87] See Collins, "Watcher," for a thorough treatment of the term, though he does not discuss Pseudo-Philo.

[88] This fits well with the portrait of the *Grigori* in 2 Enoch 18 where their task is to conduct the priestly liturgy of the fifth heaven. See the essays in Orlov, *New Perspectives*, for recent discussions on the dating of 2 Enoch.

(עירין) or "holy ones."[89] The king is told that he may be able to avoid being punished if he makes atonement (4:27). Similarly, in Jubilees's version of the myth of the watchers, these angels are sent by God to teach humanity, but most notably, to act as judges on the earth (4:15).[90] In short, Pseudo-Philo and other Second Temple works depict a group of intermediary angels described as "guardians," "observers," or "watchers," whose task it is to protect, intercede for and judge humans.[91]

Perhaps, then, LAB describes Rosh Hashanah (or Yom Kippur) as an offering that is mediated by Israel's guardian angels, who will intercede on Israel's behalf during this period of judgment. Alternatively, Hayward may be correct that Pseudo-Philo envisions an offering that is actually *to* these intermediaries, intended to gain their favor and induce them to obtain God's mercy on Israel for the coming year.[92] A later midrash (Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer) portrays the scapegoat of Yom Kippur as just such an offering or bribe meant to placate Sammael, the hostile accuser of Israel, so that he does not interfere in the judgment process and thwart God's mercy toward his people.[93] Likewise, TgPsJ Lev 9:3 explains the goat of the sin offering (which according to Num 29:5 was offered on Rosh Hashanah) as a sacrificial animal that resembles Satan and prevents him from slandering Israel.

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[89] Murray, "Origin," argues that עיר is best translated as "guardian," not "watcher," and that the Hebrew cognate is used elsewhere in the HB to describe angelic intermediaries who guard Israel. Also worthy of mention is a pseudepigraphon preserved in an Armenian fragment of Papias that portrays the watchers in a positive light, as mediators of the Law at Sinai and as warriors under Michael's command who aid humanity. Papias attributes this portrait of the watchers to Daniel. See Lourié, "Pseudepigraphon."

[90] Jub 4:15 as could be understood to say that the Watchers descended to "do what is just," i.e. "model righteous behavior" (so VanderKam, *Commentary*, 248–49), but the author appears to have crafted a wordplay on the names Dinah and Jared in Jub 4:15 so that the Watchers "descend" (ירד) in order to perform "judgment" (דין); cf. Rook, "Names," 109–10.

[91] As Murray, "Origin," argues, this concept is likely much more ancient than the Second Temple period; cf. e.g. the similar thought in Psalm 82, where the אלהים בני or אלהים act as judges and are rebuked by God for their injustice. Hesiod, *Op*. 252–53, says that Zeus has 30,000 mist-clothed spirits, "watchers [φύλακες] of mortal men" whose task is to preserve justice on earth.

[92] Hayward, *Temple*, 162–63; 185. LAB 34:2 tells of a Midianite magician who sacrificed to "angels who were in charge of magicians" in order to harness their power. On whether LAB 34:2 rules out all sacrifice to angels, see Stuckenbruck, *Angel*, 172–73, who notes that the text only condemns sacrifice to malevolent angels of sorcery. An intriguing parallel to our passage is PsSol 11:1, which speaks of a trumpet (σάλπιγξ) that is a "signal" (σημασία) to the "holy ones" (ἅγιοι) that heralds God's mercy during his visitation (ἐπισκοπή). The same term, σημασία, is used in Lev 23:24 and Num 29:1 to speak of Rosh Hashanah as a day/memorial of trumpets (זכרון/יום תרועה).

[93] PRE 46. The midrash is usually dated to the mid-eighth century but is widely acknowledged to preserve traditions from the Second Temple period; cf. Adelman, *Return*; Friedlander, *Pirke*, xxi-lii.

Even more relevant, perhaps, is TgPsJ Num 29:1, which explains that the trumpet blasts on Rosh Hashanah are meant "to confound, by the sound of your trumpetings, Satan who comes bringing charges against you."[94] This seems to extend the idea—already present in the biblical text—that the trumpet blasts rouse God to deliver Israel from their oppressors (Num 10:9–10). Another possible source is Leviticus 16, which describes one of the two Yom Kippur goats as a sacrifice "for Azazel" (לעזאזל). By the time of LAB, Azazel was sometimes understood as a leader of the rebellious antediluvian "watchers," so it would not be much of a leap to understand the Yom Kippur sacrifice as having something to do with the "watchers."[95] Again, it is important to remember that although Pseudo-Philo's description has to do with Rosh Hashanah, not Yom Kippur, these are so closely linked syntactically and conceptually in Pseudo-Philo's description that he may have viewed them as two parts of a single fall festival.

5.2.4.2 The New Year Judicial Review

The language of the next few phrases is quite difficult: *in eo quod prespexi creaturam [ut] memores sitis totius orbis*.[96] Some see here a reference to Rosh Hashanah as the anniversary of creation.[97] Thus, Harrington translates, "In as much as I watched over creation, may you also be mindful of all the earth."[98] This perhaps portrays God on the seventh day, as he rests and contemplates his creation. Israel, likewise, would celebrate the anniversary of creation by imitating God through mindfulness of the earth. This makes sense by itself but is less convincing given the immediate context.[99]

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[94] The same idea is present in TgPsJ Num 10:10. See Everson, "Angels," 334–35, 370. Cf. bRosh 16b.

[95] See above, p. 104. Pseudo-Philo likely knows and responds to Enochic traditions about the Watchers in LAB 34:2–3, which describes angels who transgressed by revealing magic and were therefore punished.

[96] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 513–14, proposes that *ut memores sitis* may come from corruption in the Hebrew *Vorlage*. It seems just as likely that it occurred at the Greek stage, perhaps through an ambiguous word like μνησθῆναι, which the Vulgate (2 Pet 3:2) renders with the same phrase used here in LAB (*ut memores sitis*).

[97] Cf. bRosh 10b–11a, 27a; GenRab 22:4.

[98] Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," 321.

[99] Another option is to take *ut memores sitis* to mean that the people should remember God's rulership over the entire world. This is a central aspect of the Rosh Hashanah liturgy in rabbinic Judaism.

Jacobson's analysis is more cogent: the phrase speaks of God's yearly review or examination of creation. He translates, "Because on it I review creation, so as to take note of the entire world."[100] This fits the context better, since the next sentence speaks of God determining who will be born and who will die during the coming year. Pseudo-Philo is the earliest text to assign this cosmic judicial significance explicitly to Rosh Hashanah, but the idea may be much older. Many Hebrew Bible scholars suggest that ancient Israel observed a pilgrimage festival at the autumn harvest that focused on themes of Yahweh's kingship, judgment, and determination of destiny.[101] This was later divided into three separate holidays (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot) each playing a distinct part in the annual drama of divine review, judgment, and blessing. By the second century BCE, Jubilees hints at this understanding of Rosh Hashanah when it identifies 7/1 as a "memorial day" and tells how Abraham observed the stars on that date to see the nature of the coming year.[102]

About a century after Pseudo-Philo, the Mishnah treats 1 Tishri as a New Year's Day on which the world is reviewed: "on New Year's Day all that come into the world pass before him like legions of soldiers, for it is written, *He that fashioneth the hearts of them all, that considereth all their works*."[103] This description quotes Ps 33:15, which tells how God judges deeds and determines destinies ("fashions hearts").[104] By the time of the Talmud, the mythology of Rosh Hashanah and its role in the autumn festival sequence is elaborately described and embellished,

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[100] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 513–14, reads *perspexi* instead of the rarer *praespexi*, but the general idea is the same: God surveys his creation in order to render judgment. This has both retrospective and prospective features, as God examines past actions in order to render judgment about future destinies. Thus "j'ai prévu" (Cazcaux, *Pseudo-Philon*, 135) is also reasonably accurate; cf. Feldman, "Prolegomenon," cxv, who also sees a yearly review. *Perspexi* may reflect an underlying text that read ἐπεσκεψάμην, which in turn translated פקדתי—misunderstood by the translator as having past (rather than present or future) reference.

[101] The classic statement is Mowinckel, *Psalmenstudien*. Though many of the details are open to dispute, the core of his theory is still widely accepted; cf. Roberts, "Enthronement."

[102] See above, p. 134.

[103] mRosh 1:1–2 (Danby's translation).

[104] Alternatively, the Psalm may be quoted because it links creation ("fashioning hearts") and judgment; thus the idea would be that God created humans on Rosh Hashanah and also judges them on that day. It is quite possible that this Psalm was originally designed for the liturgy of Rosh Hashanah, as it speaks of shouts/trumpets (v3; cf. Lev 23:24 where Rosh Hashanah is a "memorial of shouting/trumpets"), creation (vv6,9), the determination of the destiny of nations (vv10–11), and the judicial examination of all humans (vv13–16)

as well as linked to numerous biblical episodes,[105] but it appears from Pseudo-Philo that the basic idea of Rosh Hashanah as a day of judicial review was already current in the Second Temple period.

5.2.4.3 The Days of Awe

The thought that Rosh Hashanah entails an annual cosmic review continues in the next line: *per initia ostendentibus vobis agnoscam numerum mortuorum et natorum*. Again, the text is uncertain. Harrington, following ms Δ, which reads *per initia*, renders the thought, "At the beginning of those days, when you present yourselves…"[106] He detects here a reference to what later Judaism would call the "days of awe," i.e. the time from 1 Tishri to 10 Tishri (Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur) during which humans may repent of their sins and find mercy when God judges on Yom Kippur.[107] The Tosefta has the earliest explicit identification of these days: "All are judged on the New Year, and the decree is sealed on Yom Kippur."[108] Again, though, there is good reason to think that the ten-day sequence predates the Tannaim. The Akitu festival, observed at the New Year in ancient Babylon and Assyria, had a similar two-part sequence: the gods met at the beginning to determine the destinies for the coming year but ratified their decision several days later.[109]

Jacobson's solution, however, is more likely; he opts for the reading of ms π (*et in initium annorum*) explained as the confusion of an original ובראש השנה.[110] This yields the very simple, "And at the beginning of the year" or "And on Rosh Hashanah," which then adds little to the meaning of the text. Whatever the correct text, Harrington is nevertheless correct regarding the basic meaning: Pseudo-Philo presents a two-stage judgment linking a) Israel's self-presentation

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[105] See Bloch, *Biblical*, 13–26.
[106] Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," 321.
[107] See Bloch, *Biblical*, 13–38.
[108] tRosh 1:13; cf. bRosh 18a; bBer 12b.
[109] On the Akitu, see Roux, *Iraq*, 397–400; Pongratz-Leisten, "Neujahr(sfest)," 294–98; Bidmeade, *Akītu*. The Akitu was celebrated at both the spring and fall equinoxes.
[110] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 514.

on Rosh Hashanah, with b) a fast for mercy on Yom Kippur. In this way LAB certainly adumbrates the portrait of the holidays in the Mishnah and Tosefta.

The text continues with the agenda for the New Year: Israel will present itself and God will declare the number of those who will die or be born.[111] This, too, is the earliest witness to ideas found in fuller form in later rabbinic sources. As noted above, the Mishnah describes how at the New Year humans "pass before him [God] like legions of soldiers."[112] The Talmud elaborates, describing a scene in which books of judgment are opened. Some individuals are written for life, while others are written for death. A third category is not written in either book until Yom Kippur, thus allowing ten days to repent between the two holy days.[113] Rabbinic literature illustrates the understanding that one's lot is determined annually in the seventh month by dating key scriptural events to Tishri. Thus, the sages teach that it was in this month that the patriarchs died, that Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah were all "remembered" and thus conceived in Tishri, and that God decided on Rosh Hashanah to free his people from Egyptian slavery.[114]

5.2.4.4 Fall Festivals and Deborah's Feast (LAB 32)

Aside from ch. 13, Pseudo-Philo does not explicitly mention the fall festival cycle. A later episode may, however, portray Israel observing one or more of the fall festivals. In LAB 32, Israel celebrates the defeat of Sisera and his army, which Pseudo-Philo attributes to the Lord, who "disturbed the movement of his stars" so that "the stars went forth as had been commanded them and burned up their enemies" (31:2).

Israel's celebration, led by Deborah and Barak, includes numerous festal elements: a pilgrimage to the tabernacle at Shiloh, sacrifices and burnt offerings, and a lengthy hymn that

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[111] *ostendentibus vobis agnoscam numerum mortuorum et natorum*. The nature of this self-presentation is unclear. Perhaps it occurs on a mythical or spiritual level.

[112] mRosh 1:2.

[113] bRosh 6b; bHor 12a; cf. tRosh 1:13, where God inscribes his judgment on Rosh Hashanah but it is not sealed until Yom Kippur. For a full account of the New Year in later Jewish tradition, see Snaith, *New Year*.

[114] bRosh 10b–11a; cf. Seder Olam Rabbah 6; PRE 46.

recounts key moments in Israel's covenantal history.[115] Most notably, Pseudo-Philo specifies that Israel "sounded trumpets" so that Deborah said, "This will be as a testimony of trumpets between the stars and their Lord" (32:18).

The phrase "testimony of trumpets" (*testimonium psalphingarum*) may have originally spoken of the "feast of trumpets." *Testimonium* likely reflects μαρτυρία/μαρτύριον as a translation of מועד, the term commonly used in the Hebrew Bible for festival days[116] (the LXX often translates מועד with μαρτυρία/μαρτύριον).[117] Alternatively, it may derive from Lev 23:34, where Rosh Hashanah is called a "memorial of trumpets" (זכרון תרועה).

The identification of stars with angels was commonplace in early Judaism,[118] which brings Deborah's statement remarkably close to Pseudo-Philo's description of Rosh Hashanah as an offering for Israel's *speculatores* (13:6). Perhaps Pseudo-Philo is providing here a secondary etiology for Rosh Hashanah's trumpet blasts; they now take on a commemorative significance, recalling the victory over Sisera, a story that so clearly illustrates the role of the trumpets as a cultic offering that secures the protection of God (or the angelic guardians of Israel).[119]

Deborah's hymn (32:1–17) also contains other themes and motifs at home in the context of Rosh Hashanah. For example, she retells at length the story of the Akedah (which rabbinic traditions place at the New Year),[120] depicting Abraham's test as the result of angelic jealousy (32:1–4).[121] When Abraham passes the test, the Lord announces that this has "shut the mouths of those who are always speaking evil against you." This, again, is conceptually quite similar to the function of Rosh Hashanah in LAB 13:6, where the New Year offering protects Israel from malevolent angels.[122]

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[115] See Weitzman, "Revisiting," 27–30.

[116] Cf. Exod 23:15; 34:18; Lev 23:2; Num 29:39.

[117] Throughout the Pentateuch אהל מועד is rendered as σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου; cf. 1 Kings 9:24; 13:8,11; 20:35.

[118] See, e.g. 1 En 18:14; 21; 43:2; 88:1–3; 86:1; Rev 9:2. Cf. Robbins, "Pleiades"; Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien*, 173–84.

[119] bRosh 33b links the trumpet blasts of Rosh Hashanah to the story of Deborah and Sisera.

[120] bMeg 31a; bRosh 16a; GenRab 56:9; LevRab 23:24.

[121] On this narrative, see Livneh, "Deborah"; Horst, "Deborah"; Delling, "Morija"; Bohlinger, "Akeda."

[122] In LAB 13:7, the Lord responds to the fall festivals by commanding the stars and lightning bolts, just as in Deborah's song. While ch. 13's emphasis is on climatology, not warfare, the effect of proper cultic observance on the

Likewise, the conclusion of Deborah's song mentions the "time" (*tempus*) of God's "just judgments" and the "renewal of creation"—both central themes in the Second Temple *imaginaire* of Rosh Hashanah: "And then I will cease my hymn, for the time is readied for his just judgments. For I will sing a hymn to him in the renewal of creation. And the people will be mindful of this salvation, and it will be a testimony to it" (32:17).[123]

5.2.5 Yom Kippur (13:6b)

> *A fast of mercy you will fast for me for your own souls, so that the promises made to your fathers may be fulfilled.*

Syntactically, it is difficult to distinguish Pseudo-Philo's description of Yom Kippur from that of Rosh Hashanah.[124] As noted above, there is good reason to think that the offering for the *prospeculatores* that he attaches to Rosh Hashanah is actually the Yom Kippur sacrifice. If that is the case, he does not view Yom Kippur as a distinct festival, but as the terminus of a ten-day New Year sequence. Indeed, like Jubilees, he identifies Yom Kippur as a fast, not a festival.[125]

Pseudo-Philo describes the fast in three ways. First, it is a "fast of mercy." The term "mercy" was commonly attached to Yom Kippur in the Second Temple period, although it does not appear in the biblical festival texts. For example, Jub 5:18 uses God's sparing of Noah during the flood as an image of the mercy Israel receives on Yom Kippur.[126] Elsewhere in LAB, *misericordia* typically involves God's forgiveness of sins or leniency in judgment (12:9–10; 19:8–9,11; 22:7;

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heavenly bodies is strikingly present in both texts. In 32:14, the stars act as priests who, having been provoked to action by the trumpet blasts, form a "delegation to the Most High" on Israel's behalf; cf. 32:10, where Joshua says that the heavenly bodies are "servants [*ministri*] between the Most powerful and his sons."

[123] Translation mine. For *tempus*, see 13:4, where it used of the festivals.

[124] See Jacobson, *Commentary*, 515 for notes on the grammar and syntax.

[125] See above, p. 113. Contrast TgNeo Lev 23:27; Philo, *Spec*. 1.186; 2.193. The pentateuchal texts do not explicitly prescribe a fast for Yom Kippur, but their requirement that Israelites "afflict" themselves (cf. Lev 16:29–31; Num 29:7) was widely understood by Second Temple writers to refer to fasting; cf. Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact*, 34. Some texts refer to Yom Kippur simply as "the fast" (e.g., Isa 1:13–14LXX, Josephus, *Ant*. 17.165–66; 18.94; Philo, *Spec*. 1.168, 186; 1QpHab 11.7–8).

[126] Intriguingly, Pseudo-Philo also adds the language of "mercy" to the biblical text in his account of Noah's survival (LAB 3:4). Cf. also 4Q508 2 3 "the festival of your mercy"; Pss.Sol. 18:6 "day of Mercy"; bBer 29a the "day of mercy."

25:7; 28:5; 31:2; 39:6) and thus aptly describes Yom Kippur, when Israel seeks God's favor for the coming year.

Second, the fast is said to be "for your souls" (*pro animabus vestris*),[127] language that may draw on Lev 23:27–32, which commands the Israelites to afflict their "souls" on Yom Kippur and warns that any "soul" who does not observe the fast and its regulations will be cut off from the people and destroyed (vv29–30). For Pseudo-Philo, then, one fasts on Yom Kippur in order to preserve one's life. This fits well with his depiction of the fall festivals as the time when God determines who lives and dies. Here *in nuce* is what later rabbinic texts makes explicit: at the New Year, God initially determines who lives or dies, but that judgment is ratified only at Yom Kippur.

Third, the observance of Yom Kippur is "so that the promises of your fathers might be fulfilled" (*ut compleantur sponsiones patrum vestrorum*). The author's logic here is fairly clear and is on display at numerous other points in his work.[128] If God were to judge Israel without mercy, the nation would be utterly destroyed and the promises of God to the patriarchs would be in vain. To keep this from happening, God has established an annual day on which mercy is extended to his people and the covenant is maintained.

Notably, Pseudo-Philo does not focus on the temple ritual of Yom Kippur or depict priestly sacrifices that bring atonement and purgation.[129] Instead he portrays Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur as a two-part sequence whose primary context is the heavenly courtroom where God surveys his creation and determines the fates of all people for the coming year. An offering for the angelic guardians and an accompanying fast are the prescribed methods for surviving this supernal trial.

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[127] Cf. TgNeo Lev 16:31, "you shall fast in it for your souls"; in LAB 13:2 the altar of burnt offering is where Israel will "sacrifice to me and pray for your own souls."

[128] Cf. e.g. 12:8–9; 15:7; 36:2–3; 39:6–7.

[129] Vogel, "Tempel," notes that while Pseudo-Philo is quite interested in the sacrificial cult, he seems almost completely uninterested in any atoning function it may have.

5.2.6 Sukkot (13:7)

> *And celebrate for me the festival of the booth, and you will take for me the beautiful branch of the tree and the palm branch and the willow and the cedar and branches of myrtle. And I will remember the whole earth with rain, and the measure of the seasons will be established, and I will fix the stars and command the clouds, and the winds will resound, and lightning bolts will rush about, and there will be a thunderstorm. And this will be an everlasting sign; and the nights will yield dew, as I said after the flooding of the earth.*

Pseudo-Philo next addresses Sukkot, which he calls the "festival of tent-pitching" (*festivitas scenophegie*).[130] The Latin here transliterates a Greek name (σκηνοπηγία) for the festival used in the LXX and many other early Jewish sources.[131] The name calls attention to the primary ritual of the feast, i.e. the construction of a booth or a *sukkah*. Only two Pentateuchal texts (Lev 23:33 and Deut 16:13,16) describe Sukkot as a festival that involves booths or tents. In light of the information he goes on to supply about the festival (specifically, the presentation of the species), it appears that Pseudo-Philo continues to rely here on Leviticus 23 as the primary source text for his festival catalog.

5.2.6.1 The Offering of the Four Species

Lev 23:33–43 provides several details regarding Sukkot's date and rituals, but Pseudo-Philo focuses on only one element: the presentation of the species (Lev 23:40). He depicts this ritual in terms of a cultic offering or presentation.[132] As we noted above, the other pilgrimage festivals (Matzot and Shavuot) are portrayed primarily as firstfruits offerings, and it seems likely that LAB understands Sukkot in the same way. The species presented at Sukkot thus represent the bounty of the autumn harvest.[133]

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[130] On this section, see Klayman, *Sukkot*, 210–16; Jacobson, *Commentary*, 516–18.

[131] Deut 16:16; 31:10; 1 Macc 10:21; 2 Macc 1:9; 1:18; John 7:2; Acts 18:3. See Feldman, "Prolegomenon," xcviii.

[132] The phrase *afferte mihi et accipietis mihi* likely reflects the procedural vocabulary of the sacrificial instructions in Leviticus.

[133] See bTaan 2b; Rubenstein, *History*, 234–44.

Leviticus 23:40 prescribes four components to the offering: "the fruit of majestic trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook."[134] At first glance, LAB appears to list five: "beautiful tree," palm, willow, cedar, myrtle. "Cedar" (*cedrus*), however, almost certainly refers to the citron, usually thought to be included in Leviticus's "fruit of beautiful trees" (פרי עץ הדר).[135] It is thus likely added by Pseudo-Philo to clarify the text, not necessarily as a fifth species. Likewise, the myrtle branches in LAB's list reflect an interpretation of Leviticus's "boughs of leafy trees" (ענף עץ־עבת).[136] Most notably, LAB gives no hint that the four species are the materials from which the temporary living quarters (booths) are to be constructed, an idea to which the rabbinic tradition would later devote so much attention.[137]

5.2.6.2 Sukkot and Rain

There is a logic to firstfruits offerings in the ancient world: the worshiper dedicates the initial portion of the harvest to the god in order to ensure that the rest of the harvest, as well as future harvests, would be plentiful. For Pseudo-Philo this logic is likely at work in the lulav ritual, where the presentation of the four species seems intended as an appeal to the Lord to bless the earth with the rain and other conditions necessary for continued agricultural abundance. Thus, he says that the wave offering prompts God to "remember" the earth with rain and to maintain climatic stability.[138]

LAB is the first early Jewish text to make the connection between the lulav ritual and rain explicit, but the link between rain and Sukkot as a whole is already present in Zech 14:16–19.[139] There, the day of the Lord brings the defeat of Jerusalem's enemies and the exaltation of the city as a world leader. The nations make pilgrimage to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkot. If they refuse,

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[134] See Rubenstein, *History*, 316–17, for discussion of the four species tradition and its development.

[135] Jacobson, *Commentary*, 517.

[136] This understanding is also attested in the Targums.

[137] See Rubenstein, *History*, 493–524.

[138] Cf. the verbal parallels in Lev 26:42 (God "will remember the land/earth"); Ps 65:10 (God "visits the earth and waters it").

[139] See Klayman, *Sukkot*, 83–94; the connection is also implied in Solomon's Sukkot prayer of 1 Kings 8:35–36.

"there will be no rain upon them" (v17). Notably, as in LAB, the blessing of rain in Zechariah is for the whole world and not for the land of Israel only.[140]

Later texts elaborate on the rain-Sukkot link. For example, TgPsJ Lev 23:36 adds to Leviticus's Sukkot instructions: "You shall be assembled to pray for rain before the Lord." The Mishnah discusses when during Sukkot the prayers for rain should take place and explains that at Sukkot the world is "judged through water."[141] According to the Tosefta, R. Akiba considered the water libation a firstfruit offering that would ensure bountiful rain, while others attributed that function to the four species.[142] These thoughts are already present in LAB, albeit in extremely concise form.

For Pseudo-Philo, the rain blessing of Sukkot may be linked to the judgment sequence of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, thus forming an autumnal triad of festivals. Given the calendrical proximity of these festivals to one another, it was natural for early Jews to impose a plot structure on the sequence. If the New Year begins God's review of the world, and Yom Kippur seals his judgment, then Sukkot manifests its outworking in the form of natural blessings like rain and climatological stability. Pseudo-Philo accents the cohesion of the festal sequence by describing both Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot as times when God "remembers" the whole earth. At Sukkot, God's remembrance guarantees that the natural world will continue to operate in orderly fashion. Likewise, if Rosh Hashanah is indeed (for Pseudo-Philo) an offering to the angelic guardians, it may also have climatological significance, since some early Jewish traditions depict such heavenly beings as governing the meteorological phenomena that Pseudo-Philo mentions here: rain, thunder, the stars, clouds, winds, dew, etc.[143] Perhaps in Pseudo-Philo

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[140] The Latin, *totus terra*, likely reflects the Hebrew כל־הארץ, often used in the Hebrew Bible to refer to the whole land of Israel, not necessarily the entire earth. But, given the universal nature of the material that follows our passage, it seems probable that Pseudo-Philo intends the latter. Cf. bSukk 55b, which explains the seventy bulls offered over the course of Sukkot as representing and atoning for the seventy nations.

[141] mTaan 1:1–2; mRosh 1:2; cf. tRosh 1:13. See Rubenstein, *History*, 278–306.

[142] tRosh 1:12; cf. tSukk 3:18; bTaan 2b.

[143] See, e.g., Jub 2:2; 1 En 6:7; 8:3; 69:22–23 (in the Book of the Watchers many of the Watchers' names have meteorological meanings (e.g. lightning, thunder, rain, clouds, stars; see 1 En 6:7); see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 180–81. See above (p. 177) for Philo's own demythologized version of this motif with regard to Rosh Hashanah.

the angelic guardians of Israel are associated with these cosmological phenomena and are roused into action by Israel's supplications and offerings.

5.2.6.3 Sukkot and Noah

LAB seems to forge an intriguing connection between Sukkot and the figure of Noah. Not only will God send rain as a response to Sukkot observance, but he will "establish the measure of the seasons" (*constituetur modus temporum*), i.e. maintain the stability of the calendar year and the agricultural cycle. This clearly alludes to Gen 8:22, where the Lord promises after the deluge never again to curse the ground or destroy all living things: "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."[144]

Scholars have puzzled over why Pseudo-Philo associates the flood with Sukkot. Jacobson notes that according to the Talmud the flood began a few weeks after Sukkot, but this is a rather tenuous connection.[145] A simpler explanation is that rain plays a central role in both the flood narrative and the Sukkot liturgy. On the other hand, Pseudo-Philo may be saying here that it is proper observance of the entire festival system (not Sukkot alone) which guarantees climatic stability. Supporting this, he refers here not just to the rainy season in the aftermath of Sukkot, but to all the seasons.[146]

In Gen 8:22 God's promise appears to be unconditional; i.e. no human action is needed to ensure climatic stability. For Pseudo-Philo, however, climatic stability depends on Israel's maintenance of the cult, especially the festival calendar. By observing the festival calendar and cult, Israel upholds the order of the cosmos. This notion fits rather well with the axial vine imagery earlier in the work (12:9). It may also reflect a shared cosmology with other early Jewish

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[144] The presence of the allusion is confirmed by the last statement of LAB 13:7, "as I said after the flooding of the earth."

[145] bRosh 11b; Jacobson, *Commentary*, 518. In Josephus, *Ant*. 1.80–81, the flood begins in the eighth month, the usual beginning of the rainy season. Cf. Fisk, *Remember*, 281, who calls attention to Gen 8:4, where the ark comes to rest on 7/17 (i.e. in the middle of Sukkot, which runs from 7/15–22).

[146] Thus, he includes the promise of "dew," usually a blessing related to Passover in early Judaism. See Prosic, *Development*, 122–29; Hayward, *Targums*, 56; bTaan 4b; PRE 32; 1 En 60:20; TgPsJ Gen 27:1,16.

texts like Jubilees, where Israel's covenantal fidelity "will serve to establish heaven and to strengthen the earth and to renew all of the lights which are above the firmament" (Jub 19:25).[147] The same idea appears in Sirach 50, where the priestly service preserves the structure of the cosmos and the fecundity of the earth.[148]

What Pseudo-Philo omits in his description of Sukkot is striking. If we had only his brief summary, we would not know the festival's date or duration, the type of animal sacrifices to be offered, or the requirement to dwell in the sukkah. He evidently assumes his audience already knows this information and chooses instead to emphasize the significance of the festival. Here, however, he departs from the etiology of Lev 23:43, which explains how Israel lived in booths during the wilderness trek. Rather, for Pseudo-Philo Sukkot is the concluding act of the cosmic drama begun with Rosh Hashanah and brought to a climax on Yom Kippur. On this last of the fall festivals, God's merciful judgment on the world is manifested through his provision of rain and his maintenance of the natural order.[149]

5.2.7 The "Ways of Paradise" (13:8–9)

> *Then he gave him the command regarding the year of the lifetime of Noah, and he said to him, "These are the years that I ordained after the weeks in which I visited the city of men, at which time I showed them the place of creation and the serpent." And he said, "This is the place concerning which I taught the first man, saying, If you do not transgress what I have commanded you, all things will be subject to you.' But that man transgressed my ways and was persuaded by his wife; and she was deceived by the serpent. And then death was ordained for the generations of men." And the LORD continued to show him the ways of paradise and said to him, "These are the ways that men have lost by not walking in them, because they have sinned against me."*

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[147] Cf. God's "ordering" of the stars in LAB 13:7 in response to festal worship. Apart from Gen 8:22, many elements in the biblical tradition teach that God's provision of natural blessings such as rain and fertility are conditioned on obedience to the covenant (Lev 26:3–5; Deut 28:12; cf. LAB 23:12).

[148] See Hayward, "Sacrifice."

[149] This idea may also be present in the Parables of Enoch (roughly contemporaneous with LAB), where God reveals to Noah on 7/14 (the eve of Sukkot) that he will judge the world in a flood (1 En 60:1). In other words, the Parables may depict the flood as resulting from a failure of cultic maintenance.

Jacobson understandably characterizes LAB 13:8–9 as a "locus desperatus."[150] Textual corruption and layers of translation have almost certainly obscured the precise meaning of the passage. The main lines of thought, however, can be discerned when the text is read in the broader context of ancient calendrical, cultic and festal discourse, especially traditions which appeal to the stories of Adam and Noah as a foundation for the cult and calendar.

5.2.7.1 Noah's Calendar

Verse 8 invokes the figure of Noah and the events surrounding the flood, thus continuing the thought of v7, which alluded to God's promise of climatic stability after the deluge. God commands[151] Moses concerning the "year of the life of Noah" (*de anno vite Noe*). Many commentators link this to the 120-year limit on human lifespan (Gen 6:3), a special interest of Pseudo-Philo (he mentions it four times elsewhere).[152] But, this is hardly the most obvious way to refer to such an idea.

A better solution is to recognize that the phrase *anno vite Noe* is drawn verbatim from Gen 7:11, which speaks of the six hundredth year of Noah's life, i.e. the year of the deluge: בשנת שש־מאות שנה לחיי־נח.[153] The biblical account of the year-long flood is one of the only pentateuchal narratives to show any concern for calendrical matters, and was taken during the Second Temple period to be an archetype of the annual calendar.[154] In Jubilees, for example, the dates of key events in the flood narrative become the "memorial days" or seasonal markers of the eternal calendar revealed to Noah (and subsequently to Moses on Sinai).[155] It makes sense, then, that having just summarized the festival system, Pseudo-Philo connects the festivals to the flood-

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[150] *Commentary*, 519.

[151] *Praecipio* here likely reflects צוה and should be understood not simply as informing but commanding.

[152] 3:2; 9:7; 19:8; 48:1; cf. Hayward, *Targums*, 56; Murphy, *Rewriting*, 74.

[153] As far as I know, I am the first to suggest that the phrase depends on Gen 7:11.

[154] On the relation between flood and calendar, see Lim, "Chronology"; Najm, "Calendar"; Robbins, "Pleiades." The textual tradition of the flood narrative is full of variants indicating that the story was understood to provide a basis for the calendar. Cf. Philo, *QG* 2.17,31,33,45,47, where the events of the flood are linked to the key elements of the calendar.

[155] Jub 6:23–38. Cf. Dimant, "Noah," 142.

calendar, which he portrays as directly revealed by God at the time of the Noachian covenant. By doing so, he is participating in a form of calendrical discourse that is widespread during the Second Temple era and that emphasizes two concepts: a) the calendar is not ultimately the product of human observation but divine revelation, b) the calendar was not first revealed at Sinai but earlier to the patriarchs (Noah, Enoch, or even Adam).[156] Elsewhere in LAB, for example, the author expands Gen 15:5 to tell how Abraham receives a heavenly tour in which he is shown "the arrangements of all the stars," a revelation with clear calendrical import.[157]

5.2.7.2 The Weeks of Noah?

The Lord explains that this calendrical commandment was "ordained after the weeks in which I visited the city of men." The language of "ordaining" (*dispono*) likely refers to the Noachian covenant (Gen 8:20–9:17), in which God promises climatic stability and, according to many early traditions, reveals the proper calendar. Perhaps most puzzling is the statement that God established this ordinance "after the weeks in which I visited the city of men" and that it was accompanied by a revelatory journey or vision ("I showed them the place of creation and the serpent"). "Visiting the city of men" almost certainly speaks of God's judgment and ultimate preservation of humanity at the time of the flood.[158] But what could the "weeks" (*ebdomades*) possibly be? There are four possibilities:

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[156] In Jub 4:17–18, e.g., Enoch passes on calendrical information revealed to him by angels, an idea likely dependent on the Astronomical Book of Enoch (1 Enoch 72–82). Jub 6:23–38 has God reveal the calendar to Noah. In later literature Adam is the first to have such calendrical knowledge; cf. PRE 8, where God reveals the secrets of intercalation to Adam in Eden. The knowledge is then transmitted in a chain of tradition from Adam to Enoch, Noah, Shem, the patriarchs, and finally to Moses. Similarly, GenRab 16:5 says that Adam received knowledge of the Sabbath and festival sacrifices. The midrash establishes this via *gezerah shewah* based on the use of שמר in Gen 2:15 (for "keeping" the garden), Deut 5:12 (for "keeping" the Sabbath), and Num 28:2 (for "taking care" to offer festival sacrifices); cf. bSanh 38a.

[157] LAB 18:5. See, e.g., PssSol 18:10, where the Greek equivalent of *disponere* (διατάσσειν) is used: "Great is our God and glorious, dwelling in the highest. Who has established in their courses the lights of heaven for determining seasons from year to year, and they have not turned aside from the way that He appointed them."

[158] פקד, which likely underlies *visitare*, can have both positive and negative connotations in the Hebrew Bible. See, e.g., Gen 21:1; Job 35:15; Lam 4:22. In LAB 1:21 the term is used for the flood.

a) Dietzfelbinger tentatively proposes that Pseudo-Philo follows the tradition in Jubilees where the Noachian covenant is made at Shavuot (i.e. the Feast of Weeks).[159]

b) Jacobson suggests that underlying *ebdomades* is שבעות, which refers to the oaths made by God in the Noachian covenant.[160] This makes sense and is quite possible, since the oaths have to do with the climatic stability that underlies the calendar.

c) The biblical account of the deluge twice mentions seven-day periods (8:10, 12) at the end of the flood, just before Noah disembarks and receives the covenant from God. Pseudo-Philo's reference to the "weeks" may simply be nothing more than an exegetical marker meant to orient the reader.

d) Some traditions (e.g. 1QapGen 6.18; Jubilees) provide a chronological framework to the flood judgment that is structured according to "weeks" of years and jubilees. Pseudo-Philo may be referring to this chronology. This explanation, like Dietzfelbinger's, is conjectural, but it does have the benefit of linking Pseudo-Philo to traditions like the Genesis Apocryphon and Jubilees that would explain why Pseudo-Philo also attributes visionary activity to Noah.

Ultimately, this conundrum eludes certain explanation, but Jacobson's suggestion has an attractive parsimony.

5.2.7.3 The Revelation of Eden

More important, perhaps, is determining what visual revelation the author has in mind here. The text appears to state that after the deluge and Noachian covenant, God revealed two things to humans (or to Noah). The first, the "place of creation," (*locus generationis*) likely refers to Eden. This coheres well with the interest in paradise both in this section (see v9), and the work as a

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[159] *Pseudo-Philo*, 138.
[160] *Commentary*, 520.

whole.[161] It also fits the early Jewish interest in compiling "lists of revealed things"—usually cosmological and geographical secrets, including details about Eden/Paradise.[162]

The second revealed thing, "color" (*color*), is textually suspect. M.R. James conjecturally emended *colorem* to *colubrum*, "serpent," which commentators have since unanimously adopted.[163] This is certainly plausible, perhaps even likely, given that a) the serpent is a topic in the following lines, which describe its role in Eden, b) the serpent is sometimes included in revelation lists, often as Leviathan.[164]

However the text should be understood, the basic idea is clear, namely that after the flood God revealed certain prelapsarian realities to Noah.[165] That Noah received revelatory visions is already hinted at in LAB 3:10, where God makes his covenant with Noah and reveals to him the nature of the eschatological judgment. Likewise, several other early Jewish texts depict Noah as the recipient of visions.[166] In 1 Enoch 60, a tradition that may derive from the now-lost Book of Noah describes how Noah receives a throne vision (on 7/14, the eve of Sukkot) and is shown Leviathan and Eden, just as Pseudo-Philo claims.[167] Similarly, in the Genesis Apocryphon, Noah has a "vision of righteousness" and "walk[s] in the paths of the eternal truth."[168] Sometimes, Noah is linked more directly to Eden. For example, the Genesis Apocryphon likely depicts Noah's ark as landing upon what would become the Temple Mount, later described in terms of

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[161] See Bauckham, "Paradise.".

[162] See Stone, "Lists."; Pichon, "Moïse."

[163] James, *Antiquities*, 116. James does, however, consider the possibility that *color* refers to a revelation of the heavenly temple with its many-splendored hues. To this, I would add LAB's interest in the colored gemstones of the priestly cult, which he depicts as originating in Paradise or the heavenly temple. See Bauckham, "Paradise," 44–46; Hayward, "Pseudo-Philo"; Pichon, "Moïse," 173–74.

[164] Notably, in later texts like ApocAb 21:4–6, which pairs the revelation of Leviathan and Eden. Cf. 3 Bar 4:3.

[165] The Latin text (*ostendi eis*), likely corrupt, seems to indicate that the revelation is not limited to Noah alone, but Noah is nevertheless clearly the focus here.

[166] See Lewis, *Study*, 74–76

[167] See VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 233–35, for discussion of the emended text. All MSS read 'Enoch,' not Noah, but the content of the vision indicates that it was originally attributed to Noah (most importantly, the vision is said to take place in the seer's 500th year, while the biblical text only has Enoch live 365 years). On the Book of Noah see Stone, "Book(s)"; Dimant, "Fictions"; Stone, *Noah*.

[168] 1Q20 VI; see Peters, *Noah*, 110. N.b. the close similarity with LAB's description of how God revealed the "ways of paradise" to Noah or Moses.

"Eden" (XI,12).[169] A related tradition holds that the vine Noah planted came from Eden.[170] It was perhaps natural, then, to think of Noah as receiving a vision of Eden, especially since many of the stipulations of the Noachian covenant echo or develop elements of the creation account earlier in Genesis (*inter alia* fruitfulness/multiplication, cursed earth, dietary regulations).

5.2.7.4 The Ways of Paradise as the Cultic Law

LAB 13:8 continues the account of God's revelation to Moses by summarizing the first pair's transgression, which resulted in death for their offspring.[171] Our focus, however, falls on 13:9, where Moses is shown "the ways of paradise" (*viae paradysi*) to which humans lost access because of sin. The meaning of the phrase is disputed. Many take it to mean the literal footpaths of the garden of Eden, to which Adam and Eve lost access when they were expelled from paradise.[172]

The phrase is better understood as referring to "ways" of behaving. This is a common usage of דרך throughout the Hebrew Bible, especially legal and wisdom texts that stress the proper manner of life or "walking" (הלכה) in the ways of the Lord.[173] Especially important for our discussion is Exod 33:13, which very likely informs LAB's retelling. Here, Moses asks the Lord, "If I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways." In response, the Lord reveals the second set of tablets, which emphasize cultic matters, especially the three pilgrimage festivals (Exod 34:18–26).

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[169] Falk, "Door"; Peters, *Noah*, 137–138; cf. Bernstein, "Watchers."

[170] TgPsJ Gen 9:20; 3 Bar 4:8–15; PRE 23.

[171] The recipient of the revelation in 13:8–9 is not entirely clear. Does Moses alone receive this vision, or is God describing to Moses what he revealed in the past to Noah?

[172] See, e.g., Graham, *Church*, 26–28; Bauckham, "Paradise," 51; Jacobson, *Commentary*, 522. Cf. 4 Ezra 4:7, where the *exitus paradisi* are named in a list of revealed things. Ruffato, "Ascents," 123, 190, takes the language in LAB literally, though she admits the idea seems intrusive here. Scholars often see here an allusion to Gen 3:24, which speaks of the way to the tree of life. LAB, however, speaks of the "ways" plural, perhaps indicating that he has spiritualized the notion, an approach well attested in other early Jewish interpreters (see below on the Targums).

[173] See, e.g., Exod 18:20; Deut 8:6; 9:16; 11:28; 13:5; 30:16.

As to the phrase in LAB, four additional lines of evidence commend a figurative meaning. First, the immediate context in LAB makes the figurative meaning clear, as we are told that Adam "transgressed my ways" (13:8). Similarly, in 13:10, the Lord promises blessing for those who "walk in my ways" (i.e. keep the covenant), although he knows Israel will "make their ways corrupt."[174] For Pseudo-Philo to abruptly switch back and forth between the literal and figurative meanings in so short a span seems rather unlikely.

Second, LAB 13:9 states that the Lord "continued" (*adiecit*)[175] to show Moses the ways of paradise. This implies that the content of the revelation thus far—primarily the cult and festival calendar—is, indeed, "the ways of paradise." That is, the cultic law, especially the festivals, are Edenic in nature (and perhaps origin) for Pseudo-Philo. They allow Israel to recapture the life of Paradise. As R. Hayward explains, "the cult provides those *ways* of God which, should they be observed, might undo Adam's curse."[176]

Third, other passages in LAB also describe these "ways" in cultic terms. For example, in 9:7–8, the "ways" of the Lord are linked to his glorious presence in their midst,[177] the revelation of the heavenly sanctuary to Moses,[178] and the kindling of the "eternal light" (perhaps the tabernacle lampstand). Similarly, in 19:10, Moses is again shown "the ways of paradise," which are explained as "the measurements of the sanctuary and the number of sacrifices and the signs by which they are to interpret the heaven."[179] The language of "signs" draws on Gen 1:14, where

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[174] Elsewhere in LAB, the phrase is common (cf. e.g. 6:4; 9:7; 11:6; 16:5; 20:3; 30:2 etc.).

[175] Likely reflecting the common Hebrew ויסף.

[176] Hayward "Adam," 6. For this idea in rabbinic Judaism, see Kaminsky, "Paradise."

[177] See Jacobson, *Commentary*, 412, for notes on the grammar.

[178] Cf. Jacobson, *Commentary*, 414, who posits corruption from בית to ברית in the Hebrew to Greek stage.

[179] Cf. 2 Bar 4:3–7; 59:4–11 for similar lists of revealed things; cf. Newman, "Staff," 153–54. It is, of course, quite possible that "the paths of paradise [*semitae paradysi*]" in LAB 19:10 should be taken as physical paths. Notably, the translator here opted not to use *via* as in other passages. Does this reflect a difference in his Greek *Vorlage* (ὁδός/τρόπος vs. τρίβος), perhaps stemming from the Hebrew (דרך vs. ארח)? Just as plausible, however, is that the list of cultic realities in 19:10 is meant to explain what is meant by the "ways of paradise."

the heavenly lights are installed as signs (אתת) for seasons or festivals (מועדים).[180] Thus, calendar and cult constitute the ways of paradise.

Finally, other early Jewish traditions also portrayed the Sinai revelation as recapturing or even surpassing the way of Paradise. Thus, TgPsJ Gen 3:24: "The Law is better for him who toils in it than the fruit of the tree of life, (that Law) which the Memra of the Lord established to be kept so that people might endure and walk in the paths of the way of life in the world to come."[181] Like Pseudo-Philo, the targum envisions Eden as a temple, guarded by the cherubim: "he drove Adam out of (the place) where, from the beginning, he had caused the Glory of his Shekinah to dwell between the two cherubim."[182] So also, for the Targum, the Law re-establishes the cultic life of Eden and the benefits of the tree of life, ultimately leading to life in the world to come.[183]

5.2.7.5 Paradise Lost and Regained

According to Pseudo-Philo, the ways of Paradise were lost as a result of Adam's transgression. The idea may be that because Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden-temple, they lost proper cultic access to God. Or, it may simply be that their offspring neglected these ways and thus the truth was eventually lost; this seems to be the point in 13:9b ("These are the ways which men have lost by not walking in them, because they have sinned against me.").[184] The author's main concern, however, is to show that the Sinai revelation has restored knowledge of these ways to Israel.[185] Israel is now able to walk in them, eating the "bread of

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[180] Gen 1:14 ("for signs and for seasons") is widely understood in early Judaism to refer to the festival calendar. See, e.g. Jub 2:9; VanderKam, *Calendars*, 22; Rudolph, "Festivals." On this reading, the festival calendar is an intrinsic part of the original creation and thus, presumably, known to Adam. Cf. Smith, *Priestly*, 167–68, 278.

[181] Cf. Lanfer, *Remembering*, 48.

[182] TgPsJ Gen 3:24.

[183] Cf. TgNeo Gen 3:24: "the Law is a tree of life for everyone who toils in it and keeps the Commandments."

[184] If Noah is also seen as having received knowledge of the ways, then the same is true of his progeny: they lost the ways by not walking in them; cf. a similar thought in Jub 6:18.

[185] A secondary purpose may be apologetic. Perhaps LAB is attempting to account for the absence of explicit patriarchal law observance in the Pentateuch, despite his belief that the Mosaic Law is an eternal expression of God's will.

angels" (19:5) and experiencing the harmony of nature, the constancy of the seasons, and the dominion over creation originally promised to the protoplasts and later reiterated in the covenant with Noah (13:8). These ways have now become the exclusive privilege of Israel but are prohibited to the rest of humanity (19:10).

Pseudo-Philo reiterates this Eden-Sinai relationship several times elsewhere in his work, as he a) depicts Moses at Sinai receiving a branch from the Edenic tree of life (11:15), b) compares the adornment of the tabernacle with that of Eden (12:9), c) states that both the manna and the precious stones of the priesthood derive from Paradise (25:11),[186] and d) describes Torah as pre-existent in some sense: the Lord "brought them to Mount Sinai and brought forth for them the foundation of understanding that he had prepared from the creation of the world" (32:7) At Sinai, when the Torah was revealed, "Paradise gave off the scent of its fruit" (32:8).[187]

Finally, as we noted above, for Pseudo-Philo the festival system is intimately tied to the agricultural calendar. Each of the pilgrimage festivals entails a sacrifice of firstfruits meant to ensure an abundant harvest. Proper observance of cult and calendar leads to harmony with nature. Through the festal cult the Law restores the Edenic rhythms of life and thus maintains the stability and fertility of the cosmos. As the Lord promises, "If they will walk in my ways, I will not abandon them but will have mercy on them always and bless their seed; and the earth will quickly yield its fruit, and there will be rains for their advantage, and it will not be barren" (LAB 13:10).[188]

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[186] On the manna-Paradise connection, see Murphy, *Rewriting*, 93. For the precious stones, see Bauckham, "Paradise," 44–45.

[187] This likely has in view the tree of life. Cf. 1 En 24:1–4; 25:4–5, which emphasize the unique fragrance of the tree of life and depict its availability to the elect through the cult (likely via the incense offering).

[188] Elsewhere in LAB, covenant fidelity harnesses the power of nature and nature's angels on Israel's behalf in battle. See 15:2; 27:10–11; 31:2; 32:9–10, 15. The language in 13:10 of "walking in my ways" is strikingly similar to that of Zech 3:7, where the high priest is promised access to the heavenly council and heavenly temple if he walks in the ways of the Lord.

5.3 Conclusion

Pseudo-Philo presents a Palestinian perspective on the Jewish festivals from the late first century CE. In this chapter I have focused on LAB 11–13, which briefly summarizes the Sinai legislation and catalogs the Jewish festivals. On Sinai, according to LAB, Moses is given a tour of heaven in which he learns the heavenly liturgy and the architecture of heaven upon which the earthly cult will be based. With the heavenly liturgy brought down to earth, Israel becomes the *axis mundi*, a vine linking heaven and earth in liturgical synchrony. The centerpiece of the cult is the festivals, which receive far more attention than any other legal component in LAB's summary.

Unlike other traditions, Pseudo-Philo does not depict the patriarchs as observing the festivals. Instead, he identifies the festivals (and the cult in general) as the "ways of paradise." In the garden, Adam observed the heavenly liturgy and calendar in synchrony with heaven. When he was expelled from Eden, the ways were lost, only to be revealed again to Israel on Mt. Sinai. The covenant with Israel invites the people to walk once more in the ways of paradise and to regain the dominion over creation lost by the first couple. Thus, Pseudo-Philo provides a transcendent basis for the festivals. They are not human inventions that simply commemorate important events in a nation's history, but are the way of life intended for humans from the beginning.

Although Pseudo-Philo does not festalize the lives of the patriarchs, he does festalize several narratives in Israel's history subsequent to the Sinai revelation. It is at Passover that the zealous priest Phineas is taken up by God and hidden away until he would return as Elijah during the reign of Ahab and again in the last days. Similarly, Hannah's prayer for a son is placed at Passover, while Deborah's victory over Sisera takes place at Rosh Hashanah (and may provide a secondary etiology for that holiday). Perhaps most notably, in agreement with Jubilees, LAB seems to place the Sinai revelation (and subsequent renewal of the covenant under Joshua) at

Shavuot, though his date for the festival agrees with the mainstream calendar of the Jerusalem temple and the later rabbis.

Indeed, much of Pseudo-Philo's summary anticipates the rabbinic perspective attested later in the Mishnah and the Talmuds.[189] For example, he describes the autumn festivals as reflecting a threefold cosmic drama of judgment, verdict and reward/punishment. As in the rabbis, Rosh Hashanah begins a ten-day period of judgment for the coming year. God's verdict is revealed at Yom Kippur and enacted at Sukkot, where the stability of the climate and the strength of the rainy season manifest the divine decision. Pseudo-Philo is the earliest witness to such a view.

Notably, LAB downplays the commemorative aspect of the festivals (only Passover is described as memorializing an historical event). Instead, he highlights how they reflect and preserve the rhythms of the agricultural cycle and depicts the three central pilgrimage feasts as, essentially, occasions for offering firstfruits.[190] As the *axis mundi*, Israel's cult has universal significance: it is the glue that holds creation together. Through its synchrony with the natural cycle, the festival cult maintains the order of the cosmos and ensures the regularity and harmony of the natural order. This is especially illustrated by LAB's treatment of Sukkot. Leviticus explains the booths of Sukkot as recalling the temporary dwellings of the wilderness period. Pseudo-Philo ignores this etiology and portrays Sukkot instead as an offering of firstfruits and a festival of rain that exemplifies the role of the festival system in the maintaining cosmic order and climatic stability. One might even say that in Pseudo-Philo the festivals take on a theurgical tint, as they not only maintain natural order, but mobilize the angelic guardians of Israel to protect, aid, and intercede for the people during the perilous days of awe between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

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[189] Farber, "Pseudo-Philo," 28, calls LAB "proto-Rabbinic" and concludes that it "was part of the continuum, culturally and ideologically, of the move from Pharisaic Judaism to Rabbinic Judaism."

[190] This is perhaps part of his strategy to characterize the festivals as the ways of Paradise. Does he envision Adam making regular firstfruit offerings from the produce of the Garden?

Chapter 6
Conclusion

In the preceding chapters, I have examined the works of three ancient Jewish authors in order to discern how they interpreted the nature and significance of Israel's festivals. Faced with challenges from within and without, Jubilees, Philo of Alexandria, and Pseudo-Philo sought to make sense of their nation's festal traditions in relation to their own ideas about God, Israel's history, and the nature of law. By reading these authors in the context of wider Mediterranean festal discourse, we are able to further illuminate their festal ideology.

In particular I noted three primary (and one secondary) strategies employed by these authors to express the meaning and character of the Jewish festivals. The first strategy, *naturalization*, attempts to show how the festivals align with the created order. The goal, it seems, is to demonstrate that they are not, ultimately, arbitrary human constructions or national customs, but are integrally connected to the structure of the cosmos. Thus, Jubilees emphasizes that the festivals are eternal ordinances written on the same heavenly tablets that contain the laws of the entire created order. Both Jubilees and Philo highlight the sabbatical (septenary) principle at the heart of creation. Just as God created the world in seven days, so the annual calendar and the festivals both evince this septenary structure—in a sense they are logical extensions of the sabbath pattern with which God imprinted creation in the beginning. For Philo, this is part of his larger project to portray the Mosaic law as the law of nature. To do so, he a) uses arithmology to uncover the mathematical logic of the festivals, b) emphasizes the link between the festivals and the astronomical and agricultural cycles of the natural world (especially the equinoxes and harvests), allegorizes apparently arbitrary elements of the festivals to show that they actually

have a pedagogical purpose, namely the encouragement of virtue. In the same vein, LAB claims that the festivals are part of the original created order—the "ways of Paradise"—and accentuates their relationship to the agricultural cycle as well as their role in assuring the continued fecundity and stability of the natural world.

I have called the second strategy *transcendentalization*. This refers to the attempt to show that the Jewish festivals are not simply historical commemorations grounded in human customs, but rather have to do, primarily, with transcendent realities. Thus, in Jubilees, Passover secures protection from cosmic opponents and harnesses the power of the angel of the presence on Israel's behalf—the same angel that withstood Mastema at the Akedah and the flight from Egypt. On a more profound level, though, Jubilees claims that Shavuot, Sukkot, and the Sabbath were first observed in heaven by the highest angels. This makes it clear that the author conceives of human festival observance as participation in the angelic worship of the heavenly liturgy. The festivals, therefore, are a key component of an eternal covenant between God and the angels into which Israel is only subsequently invited. This allows Jubilees to insist that seemingly arbitrary halakot (e.g., circumcision, festal rituals, etc.) are actually *imitatio angelorum*, an embodiment of the purity that allows the highest angels access to God's presence.

Philo, along the same lines, reasons that if festivals are essentially times of rejoicing, and God alone has joy in the truest sense, then God is the true and ultimate festal celebrant. Philo finds support for this in the archetypal festival, the Sabbath, which was first observed by God in the beginning. Furthermore, two key Pentateuchal passages (Num 28:2; Lev 23:2) describe the annual observances as the Lord's own feasts. Human festival observance, therefore, has as both its rationale and goal the imitation of God and participation in the divine life. For Philo, such participation is facilitated by the festal practices prescribed in the law, practices that Philo interprets as encouraging ascetic discipline, philosophical contemplation, and training in the divine virtues. Philo's festal ideology interpretation dovetails rather nicely with that of the wider Greco-Roman world, which allows him to make sense of the Jewish festivals for himself and his

audience by minimizing their peculiarity and particularity and emphasizing their universal applicability.

While Pseudo-Philo does not explicitly describe any heavenly festival observance, his rewriting of the biblical narrative portrays Sinai as the site of an apocalyptic ascent into heaven, where Moses is provided with a tour of the heavenly sanctuary and cult that will serve as the model and archetype for the earthly. Indeed, Israel's cult is later depicted as a cosmic vine that connects heaven and earth, bringing the heavenly liturgy down to earth. The depiction of the cult, especially the festivals, as the "ways of paradise," reinforces this transcendentalizing understanding. The fall festivals, in particular, are explained with reference to the drama of the heavenly courtroom as it undertakes its annual review and judgment of all creation.

The third strategy, the *festalization of Scripture*, refers to the way that these authors, in their retelling of scriptural narratives, place key events at festivals. Jubilees is the most prominent example of this, as it imposes an extensive chronological framework on its scriptural base text and portrays the major pilgrimage festivals (Passover/Matzot, Shavuot, and Sukkot) as being observed in the patriarchal period. In Jubilees, almost without fail, major events in Israel's history take place on or around festivals. Philo, in contrast, shows almost no interest in festalizing the scriptures, though he does seem aware of it and likely alludes to at least two instances of it. Likewise, although it is not a central emphasis for Pseudo-Philo, he does place both the giving of the Law to Moses and the renewal of the covenant under Joshua at Shavuot. Other events that he festalizes include Hannah's prayer and Phineas/Elijah's ascension, both of which he locates at Passover, and the victory of Deborah over Sisera, which he retells in terms that suggest a setting at Rosh Hashanah. The main reason Pseudo-Philo does not portray the patriarchs as observing feasts is that the "ways of paradise" were lost to humanity when Adam transgressed and were not restored until much later at Sinai.

As I have shown in detail, the festalization of scripture in these authors was not done at random. Rather, there is clear evidence that they were responding to textual stimuli— themes,

terminology, temporal references—in the scriptural narratives that suggested a festal setting. In some cases, it seems, the goal of festalizing these narratives is to supply an etiology to holidays which had no "official" origin myth in Scripture (e.g., Yom Kippur and Shavuot). In most cases, however, it appears meant to provide a more ancient etiology than the one given in Scripture in order to demonstrate that the festivals were observed prior to Sinai. In Jubilees, particularly, festalization also has a halakic aim: the patriarchs become exemplars of the very practices that the author's opponents deny as illegitimate innovations.

Festalization creates a situation in which narrative and feast are mutually interpretive. On one hand, the narrative is reshaped so that festal motifs are added or highlighted, while on the other hand the festival's meaning is enhanced through its association with additional narratives. For example, when the Akedah is placed at Passover in Jubilees, it becomes a story that is no longer just about the protection of Isaac, but about the preservation of a *firstborn* son and the shaming of Mastema. In turn, the Passover feast is reimagined: it no longer simply remembers the angelic defense of Israel during its escape from Egypt, but also the safeguarding of Abraham's son and the covenant line.

Finally, I have noted a few occasions where these authors suggest that the eschatological redemption of Israel may occur at a festival or exhibit festal themes. Pseudo-Philo, for example, alludes to traditions about Elijah's return at Passover, while Jubilees looks forward to an eschatological Yom Kippur/Jubilee when all evil would be expelled from the land and a forgiven and purified Israel would again be restored to its ancestral inheritance. Clear eschatological interpretations of the festivals, however, are rare in these authors, indeed surprisingly so, given how amenable many of the festal motifs (e.g., redemption, purification, judgment) are to eschatological interpretation.

A Proposed Taxonomy of Festal Ideologies

Having thoroughly examined the reception of the festivals in these three early Jewish exemplars, we are now able to identify the key questions and decisions with which ancient interpreters of the festivals had to grapple. This allows for the development of a taxonomy of festal ideologies that can aid further study of other Jewish texts and traditions of antiquity:

1. *Identity*. How many festivals are there and how should they be identified (i.e. what terminology is used)? What are their proper names? Should fasts be counted as festivals (e.g. Yom Kippur)? Are some festivals connected or combined with others, e.g. Passover and Matzot, or Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur?
2. *Function and Purpose*. Is the purpose of festivals a) the worship of God, b) the procurement of blessings, such as safety, prosperity or climatic stability, c) historical commemoration, d) leisure and enjoyment, e) the inculcation of individual virtue, f) the production of national unity and cohesion, or g) some combination of these?
3. *Revelation or Innovation*. Is the number of festivals limited to those in the Pentateuch or can festivals be created and decreed by human authorities (e.g., Purim and Hanukkah)? That is, are festivals divine ordinances or human institutions (or both)?
4. *Festal Precedent and Historical Commemoration*. Are festivals meant to commemorate historical events? If so, what events, and are these events prior to Sinai? Are other scriptural narratives or historical events also linked to the festivals, and if so, how do these affect the meaning of the festivals? Do the events linked with the festivals provide an etiology for the festival as a whole or for aspects of the festival?
5. *Calendar and Feast*. Does the author hold to a fixed calendar, or one that employs intercalation? Is the calendar solar, lunar or lunisolar? How are months defined? Is the calendar the subject of divine revelation, or does it result from human empirical observation? Does the calendar aim to synchronize liturgical life on earth with the liturgy of heaven? Can festivals be delayed or postponed (e.g., Second Passover)?

6. *Rationale and Basis*. Does the festival system primarily reflect a) the agricultural cycle, b) the astronomical cycle (i.e. solstices, equinoxes, new moons), c) an ideal mathematical principle (e.g., a septenary or pentecontadal cycle), d) the eternal calendar of heaven, or e) some combination of these?
7. *Antiquity*. How ancient are the festivals? Did they exist before the giving of the Law at Sinai? Were they observed by the patriarchs? Are they eternal?
8. *National or Universal*. Are the festivals exclusive to Israel, or intended for universal observance? If they are exclusive, is that because a) they commemorate events in Israel's particular history, or b) they reflect the distinctive character of Israel's status or relationship with God? If they are not intended for universal observance, is there still some universal aspect to the festivals; e.g., do they involve sacrifices or other liturgical actions performed by Israel on behalf of the nations?
9. *Halakah and Halakic Rationale*. What behavior is required at a festival and why? Does the required behavior have to do with a) the agricultural season, b) the historical event commemorated by the festival, c) the behavior of angels or God, d) the development of moral virtue, or e) some combination of these?
10. *Eschatology*. Are the festivals characterized by hope for future acts of God on behalf of Israel? If so, how do these hopes relate to the other functions of the festival (e.g., are eschatological hopes tied to Passover because of the historical deliverance Passover is typically thought to commemorate)?

These questions and criteria will allow future analyses of early Jewish texts to produce a thicker description of the festal ideology at work in such traditions. Especially productive would be the application of such a taxonomy to Rabbinic and early Christian literature, where a variety of perspectives are represented (including, among some early Christians, the wholesale rejection of the festival system). Close attention to the way in which festal theory and praxis is legitimated—whether through the festalization of scriptural narratives or through appeals to

heavenly realities or the natural order—will undoubtedly yield rich insight into the vibrant intellectual and cultural life of Judaism and Christianity in antiquity.

Appendix: Shavuot Motifs in Jubilees

Text/Event	Initial Event on 3/1	Pilgrimage	Mountain	Oath/Covenant	Laws/Instructions	Sacrifice	Vision/ Revelation	Meal
Noah (Jub 6)	Leaves ark on 3/1 (6:1)		Mt. Lubar	Noachian Covenant (6:4), Oath of Noah and Sons (6:10)	Calendar (6:24), Blood prohibition (6:5–9)	Atoning sacrifice on 3/1? (6:2-4)		
Moses (Jub 1, 6:11)	Arrival in wilderness on 3/1 according to Exod 19:1	Travel to Sinai	Sinai	Covenant oath by Israel (6:11)	Blood prohibition (6:12–14), Calendar (6:32)	6:11	Vision on 3/16 (Jub 1:1)	Not in Jubilees (but see Exod 24:9–11)
Abraham's Covenant Between the Pieces (Gen 15/Jub 14)	Initial vision on 3/1 (14:1)			14:18, 20		14:11	Vision on 3/1 (14:1–6) Vision on 3/15 or 3/16 (14:13ff)	Possibly (see 14:19)
Circumcision Covenant (Gen 17/Jub 15)				Circumcision covenant in 15:3ff	8th-day Circumcision	Firstfruits offering	15:3ff	
Isaac's Birth (Jub 16:13)		Travel from Hebron to Beersheba (16:10–11)		16:14		Firstfruits offering		
Isaac's Weaning (Jub 17)				17:6				17:1
Abraham's Death (Jub 22)		Travel from Beersheba to Abraham (22:1)			22:16ff	22:3f		22:4
Laban and Jacob (Jub 29:1–8)		Travel to mountain of Gilead	"mountain of Gilead" (29:5)	29:7		Gen 31:54	29:6	29:7
Jacob (Jub 44:1)	Sets out for Beersheba on 3/1 (44:1)	Pilgrimage to shrine at Beersheba		Abrahamic covenant reiterated (44:5–6)	Travel to Egypt (44:5)	On 3/7 and 3/15	Vision on 3/16	

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