Chapter 1: Restructuring the Past: Remembering Genesis in the Book of Jubilees

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Discovery and Publication

In 1844 Heinrich Ewald published a description of an Ethiopian manuscript which had been preserved in Classical Ethiopic (Geʕez) under the title **መጽሐፈ ኩፋሌ** [*masḥafa kufālē*].[1] Because the name followed the common convention using a work's first few (key) words as its title (in this case, **ዝንቱ፡ ነገረ፡ ኩፋሌ** [*zentu nabara kufālē*]), Ewald suggested that this manuscript may have been a copy of the work known from antiquity as both τά ʾΙωβηλαϊα, "the Jubilee," and Λεπτὴ Γίνεσις, the "Little Genesis."[2] Although the work had been in continuous use within Ethiopian Christianity since antiquity, European scholarship only knew of the work through secondary references in a few classical sources.[3]

The work was published and supplemented by additional manuscripts by August

1. All translations are my own. Geʕez citations are from VanderKam's critical edition, *The Book of Jubilees,* 2 vols., CSCO 510-11; SA 87–88 (Leuven: Peeters, 1989).

2. Heinrich Ewald, "Ueber die Aethiopischen Handschriften zu Tübingen," *ZKM* 5 (1844): 164–201.

3. VanderKam offers a concise summary of the various late-antique citations and allusions in his commentary, most notably in the works of Epiphanius (*Panarion*, *Measures and*

Dillmann in 1859[4] and R. H. Charles in 1895.[5] More recently, VanderKam's 1989 edition utilized twenty-seven copies of the text[6] and since its publication over twenty more copies have been cataloged and imaged.[7]

Save for the rediscovery of the text itself, the most significant find for the study of Jubilees was the discovery of several Hebrew fragments of the work among the Dead Sea Scrolls which attest to the work's antiquity and likely original language of composition.

Weights) and Syncellus (*Chronography*). James C. VanderKam, *Jubilees: A Commentary,* 2 vols., Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2018), 1:10–14. See also Annette Yoshiko Reed, "Retelling Biblical Retellings: Epiphanius, the Pseudo-Clementines, and the Reception-History of Jubilees," in *Tradition, Transmission, and Transformation from Second Temple Literature through Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity,* ed. Menahem Kister et al., STDJ 113 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 304–21 and Anne Kreps, "From Jewish Apocrypha to Christian Tradition," *CH* 87.2 (2018): 345–70.

4. August Dillmann, *Maṣḥafa Kufālē sive Liber Jubilaeorum* (Keil: C.G.L. van Maak; London: Williiams & Norgate, 1859).

5. Robert Henry Charles, *Maṣḥafa Kufālē or the Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1895).

6. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees,* 1:xiv–xvi.

7. Ted Erho, "New Ethiopic Witnesses to Some Old Testament Pseudepigrapha," *BSOAS* 76 (2013): 75–97. VanderKam helpfully lists the twenty-seven manuscripts he used for his critical edition in the introduction of his commentary where he also notes the additional manuscripts photographed since its publication. See VanderKam, *Jubilees,* 1:14–16.

Although the Hebrew and Ethiopic versions are—to the degree that we can tell—very close to one another, the Ethiopic text appears to be a granddaughter translation of the Hebrew through a Greek daughter translation, though no such text has been found.[8] This fact was convincingly demonstrated by Dillmann who observed several Greek forms preserved as transliterations in the Ethiopic text.[9] By the end of the 19th century, partial copies of Jubilees had been uncovered in Latin translation which similarly appear to be daughter translations of the Greek text. Finally, although no manuscript evidence has been found, Jubilees scholars posit that a Syriac translation of Jubilees was made in antiquity based on what appeared to be a number of Syriac citations of Jubilees which lacked any apparent influence from Greek.[10] Despite all of these finds, however, the Ethiopic text remains the only tradition to preserve Jubilees in its entirety. Thus, in my treatment of Jubilees I will be relying primarily on the Ethiopic text and will be

8. See especially VanderKam's treatment of the textual history of Jubilees in *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees,* HSM 14 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), 1–18.

9. Specifically: δρῦς, βάλανος, λίψ, σχῖνος, and φάραγξ. August Dillmann, "Das Buch der Jubiläen oder die kleine Genesis," *ZBW* 3 (1850–1851): 1–96. Charles later added ἡλιου to the list. Robert Henry Charles, *The Book of Jubilees or the Little Genesis* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), xxx.

10. See especially E. Tisserant, "Fragments syriaques du Livre des Jubilés," *RB* 30 (1921): 55–86, 206–32 and Charles, *Book of Jubilees,* xxix but also A. M. Ceriani, *Monumenta Sacra et Profana,* 2 vols. (Milan: Bibliotheca Ambrosiana, 1861–1863), 2:ix–x and Charles, *Maṣḥafa Kufālē,* x.

supplementing from the Hebrew where available.

1.1.2 Content and Character

The book of Jubilees offers a rewriting of the book of Genesis and the first part of Exodus (Gen 1–Exod 12). The work is presented as a revelation from Yahweh given to Moses atop Mt. Sinai, framed by a brief prologue and epilogue.[11] The prologue gives a short description of the work as an account concerned with the division of time into units of years, weeks, and jubilees:

11. VanderKam, *Jubilees,* 1:17.

(Prologue) **ዝንቱ ፡ ነገረ ፡ ኩፋሌ ፡ መዋዕላተ ፡ ሕግ ፡ ወለስምዕ ፡ ለግብረ ፡ ዓመታት ፡ ለተሳብዖቶሙ ፡ ለኢዮቤልውሳቲሆሙ ፡ ውስተ ፡ ኩሉ ፡ ዓመታተ ፡ ዓለም ፡ በከመ ፡ ተናገሮ ፡ ለሙሴ ፡ በደብረ ፡ ሲና ፡ አመ ፡ ዐርገ ፡ ይንሣእ ፡ ጽላተ ፡ እብን ፡ ሕግ ፡ ወትእዛዝ ፡ በቃለ ፡ አግዚአብሔር ፡ በከመ ፡ ይቤሎ ፡ ይዕርግ ውስተ ፡ ርእሰ ፡ ደብር ።**

(Prologue) *zəntu nagara kufālē mawāʕəlāta [la-]ḥegg wa-la-səmʕ la-gəbra ʕāmatāt la-tasābəʕotomu la-ʔiyyobēləwəsātihomu wəsta kʷəllu ʕāmatāta ʕālam ba-kama tanāgaro la-Musē ba-dabra Sinā ʔama ʕarga yenšāʔ ṣəllāta ʔəbn—ḥəgg wa-təʔzāz—ba-qāla ʔagziʔabḥēr ba-kama yəbēlo yəʕrəg wəsta rəʔsa dabr.*

(Prologue) These are the words[12] of the division of the days for the law and for the testimony for the event[s] of the years; for their weeks, for their Jubilees in all the years of the world just as he spoke (them) to Moses on Mount Sinai when he went up to receive the tablets of stone—the law and the commandment—at the command of God, as he had said to him that he should ascend to the top of the mountain.

Following this prologue, the setting of the story is established as the during the "first year of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, in the third month, on the sixteenth of the month" when Yahweh called Moses atop Mt. Sinai.

The bulk of the work (Jubilees 2:1–50:13) is dedicated to the recounting of Jewish history, following the basic narrative provided by Gen 1–Exod 12, with special concern for halakhic matters and the division of time according to a 364 day calendrical system.[13] The particulars of the revelation are mediated by the "angel of the presence" (Eth. **መልአከ ገጽ**

12. Lit. "This is the word." I've chosen to follow VanderKam and others by rendering this construction in the plural based on the probable underlying Hebrew אלה הדברים. See VanderKam, *Jubilees,* 125

13. TODO: Reference

[*mal'aka gaṣṣ*]) who dictates its contents to Moses, the fastidious scribe. The treatment of Moses as a scribe places him within a chain of tradition—along with Enoch and Noah—which emphasizes writing and written works as essential sources of tradition and revelation.[14] The work closes with a terse statement declaring "Here the account of the division of time is ended" (Jubilees 50:13; Eth. ተፈጸመ ፡ በዝየ ፡ ነገር ፡ ዘኩፋሌ ፡ መዋዕል ። [*tafaṣṣama ba-zeyya nagar za-kufālē mawāʕel*]).

1.1.3 As RwB

1.1.4 Thesis on Memory

1.2 RESTRUCTURING THE PAST

One of the most notable features of the Book of Jubilees is its preoccupation with the correct division of time—both with respect to a 364 day year as well as longer units encompassing multiple years. Although neither the 364-day year nor the larger 7 and 49 year units ("weeks" of years and "jubilees," respectively) are unique to the book of Jubilees, the proper division of time is into these units provides the central organizing principle for the book's rewriting of Gen 1–Exod 12.

The author of Jubilees makes it very clear that the proper division of time through a 364 day year is an essential practice for the correct observation of religious feasts and other holidays throughout the year. The pattern and significance of this 364 day cycle is explained to Moses after the Angel of the Presence retells the events of the Flood. The Angel explains the

14. TODO: Get refs and say something here/

division of the year into four seasons, each beginning with a memorial day (Jubilees 6:23) and consisting of thirteen-weeks. The system as a whole yields a fifty-two week year (Jubilees. 6:29) and is presented as "inscribed and ordained on the tablets of heaven" (6:31; Eth. **ተቁርፀ ፡ ወተሠርዐ ፡ ውስተ ፡ ጽላተ ፡ ሰማይ** [*taqʷarḍa wa-tašarʕa wəsta ṣəllāta samāy*].

The 364 day year is considered "complete" (Eth. [*TODO:*]) by the Angel such that proper observance maintains synchrony year-over-year. In other words, adding or subtracting days from this calendar renders a "revolving" calendar vis-à-vis the absolute reference of the heavenly tablets.[15] By comparison, the Angel of the Presence warns against the use of a lunar calendar because the lunar year is too short. Jubilees 6:36–37 reads:

> (6:36) **ወይከውኑ ፡ እለ ፡ ያስተሐይጹ ፡ ወርኀ ፡ በሔያጼ ፡ ወርን ። ዕስመ ፡ ትማስን ፡ ይእቲ ፡ ጊዜያተ ፡ ወትቀድም ፡ እምዓመታት ፡ ለዓመት ፡ ዐሡረ ፡ ዕለተ ። (37) በእንተዝ ፡ ይመጽእ ፡ ዓመታተ ፡ ሎሙ ፡ እንዘ ፡ ያማስኑ ፡ ወይገብሩ ፡ ዕለተ ፡ ስምዕ ፡ ምንንተ ። ወዕለተ ፡ ርኵስተ ፡ በዓለ ፡ ወኵሉ ፡ ይደምር ፡ ወማዋዕላ ፡ ቅዱሳተ ፡ ርኩሰ ፡ ወዕለተ ፡ ርኵስተ ፡ ለዕለት ፡ ቅድስት ። ዕስመ ፡ ይስሕቱ ፡ አውራኀ ፡ ወሰንበታተ ወብዓላተ ፡ ወኢዩቤለ ።**
>
> (6:36) *wa-yekawwenu ʔella yāstaḥayyeṣu warḥa ba-ḥuyāṣē warḫ ʕesma temās(s)en yeʔeti gizēyāta wa-teqaddem ʔem-ʕāmatāt la-ʕāmat ʕašur ʕelata* (37) *ba-ʔenta-ze yemaṣeʔ ʕāmatāta lomu ʔenza yāmāsenu wa-yegabru ʕelata semʕ menent wa-ʕelata rekʷesta ba-ʕāla wa-kʷellu yedēmer wa-māwāʕelā qedusāta rekusā wa-ʕelata rekʷesta laʕlat qedust ʕesma yeseḥetu ʔawrāḫa wa-sanbatāta wa-beʕālāta wa-ʔiyobēla*
>
> (6:36) [36] VanderKam: There will be people who carefully observe the moon with lunar observations because it is corrupt (with respect to) the seasons and is early from year to year by ten days. (37) [37] Therefore years will come about for them when they will disturb (the year) and make a day of

15. TODO: citation for revolving calendar

> testimony something worthless and a profane day a festival. Everyone will join together the holy days with the profane and the profane day with the holy day, for they will err regarding the months, the sabbaths; the festivals, and the jubilee.

The contrast drawn to the lunar calendar combined with the fact that a 364 day calendar more closely approximates the actual period of Earth's orbit around the sun (approx. 365.24 days) led most early interpreters of Jubilees to call the 364 day calendar a "solar" calendar.[16] Because some of the early Israelite festivals were tied to the agricultural year (for example, *Shavuot* was celebrated after the wheat harvest, see Exod 34:22), a solar calendar would indeed keep the calendar from drifting backward every year. Because the lunar (synodic) month[17] averages approximately 29.5 days, a lunar year (twelve synodic months) lasts approximately 354 days. Without any intercalation the calendar would drift back 11.24 days per year (a so-called "revolving year"). Within a matter of only two-or-three years, the correlation between agricultural activity and cultic practice would break down.[18]

16. TODO: Get Charles, maybe?

17. The synodic month is derived from the length of time it takes the moon to process through its full cycle and is distinct from the period of the moon's *orbit*.

18. The major advantage of the lunar system is the ability for anybody to make reasonably accurate observations about when months begin and end. By contrast, the solar year requires a more subtle and long-term set of measurements. Most cultures which utilize a lunar calendar account for the discrepancy through the intercalation of an additional month every few years to bring the solar and lunar calendars into alignment. Most "lunar" calendars, therefore, are really lunisolar calendars, though exceptions (such as the Islamic calendar) do exist. See

Recent treatments of the 364-day calendar, however, have eschewed the "solar" label in most cases.[19] The rationale for doing so is two-fold: first, although a 364-day year is *close* to the actual period of Earth's orbit around the sun, the 1.24 day discrepancy is large enough that after fifty years, the calendar would have floated backward a full two-months.[20] In other words, although a 1.24 day drift may not be noticeable from one year to the next, the difference is significant *enough* to be noticeable within the average lifespan of an individual and would certainly conflict with agriculturally contingent festivals.[21] Second, while the Angel of the

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Uwe Glessmer, "Calendars in the Qumran Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assesment,* ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 213–78; Wayne Horowitz, "The 360 and 364 Day Year in Ancient Mesopotamia," *JANES* 24 (1996): 35–44.

19. Glessmer, "Calendars in the Qumran Scrolls," 231Jonathan Ben-Dov, "The 364-day Year at Qumran and in the Pseudepigrapha," in *Calendars and Years II: Astronomy and Time in the Ancient and Medieval World,* ed. John Steele (Oxford: Oxbow, 2011), 69–105; Helen R. Jacobus, "Calendars," in *T & T Clark Companion to the Dead Sea Scrolls,* ed. Greorge J. Brooke and Charlotte Hempel (London: T & T Clark, 2018), 435–48.

20. Specifically, 62 days. This would be the equivalent of celebrating the new year near Halloween.

21. Ben Zion Wacholder and Sholom Wacholder, "Patterns of Biblical Dates and Qumran 's Calendar: The Fallacy of Jaubert's Hypothesis," *HUCA* 66 (1995): 1–40. This assumes, of course, that the various festivals continued to be connected to the agricultural cycle and not a purely utopian construct as Wacholder and Wacholder suggest.

Presence expresses concern with the "corruption" of the yearly cycle, the rationale for the 364-day year is not explicitly connected to the solar year. In other words, when the Angel of the Presence decries the deficiencies of the lunar year, it does so with respect to the 364-day year and *not* with respect to the solar year. Instead, the problem with a 354-day (lunar) year, according to the Angel of the presence is that the holidays, months, sabbaths, festivals, and jubilees will fall on the wrong days *according to the 364-day calendar*. This rationale is, essentially, circular. The 364-day year is an absolute measure of a "year" according to the book of Jubilees—it is inscribed on the "heavenly tablets" as such—and is not contingent or defined with reference to the sun or the moon. Instead, the author of Jubilees seems more concerned with the proper and even division of *seasons* (defined as three months) and *weeks* (a so-called heptadic structure) without the need for intercalation.[22]

According to most reconstructions of Jubilees's 364-day calendar, the year was divided into four seasons consisting of exactly thirteen weeks (91 days). Each season was also divided into three months, though, because 91 does not divide evenly by 30, the third month in each season was counted as 31 days. Thus, each season was composed of two months of 30 days and one month of 31 days. Because these seasons' lengths divide evenly by seven, every season began on the same day of the week and followed an identical structure.[23] The advantage of

22. Jonathan Ben-Dov and Stéphane Saulnier, "Qumran Calendars: A Survey of Scholarship 1980–2007," *CurBR* 7.1 (2008): 124–68.

23. In other words, every season began on the same day of the week, and the "nth" day of any given season was the same day of the week as the nth day of any other season.

such a system is its consistency year-over-year. Because the whole year divides evenly by seven, every day of the year (in every year) implicitly referred to a particular day of the week. Thus any scheduled event would fall on the same day of the week the following year, preventing the undesirable situation where a holiday would accidentally fall on a Sabbath (such as the memorial feasts prescribed in Jubilees 6:23).[24]

Although the mechanics of this calendar are reasonably well understood, its purpose and antiquity remain matters of debate. The seminal work of Annie Jaubert (building on Barthélemy) during the mid-20th century, despite numerous criticisms, remains the *Ausganspunkt* for most discussions of the topic.[25] Her thesis took as its point of departure Barthélemy's theory that the Jewish 364-day year began on Wednesday, the day that the sun and moon were created, according to the Priestly creation account in Genesis 1:14–19.[26] To

24. John Sietze Bergsma, *The Jubilee from Leviticus to Qumran: A History of Interpretation,* VTSup 115 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 233. So, if a person were born on a Tuesday, every subsequent birthday would also fall on a Tuesday. Likewise, there would be no need to buy a new calendar every year, since every year is the same "shape." See esp. Annie Jaubert, "Le calendrier des Jubilés et de la secte de Qumrân: Ses origines bibliques," *VT* 3.3 (1953): 250–64.

25. See especially ibid., 250–64; idem, "Le calendrier des Jubilés et les jour liturgiques de la semaine," *VT* 7.1 (1957): 35–61; idem, *La date de la Cène: calendrier biblique et liturgie chrétienne* (Paris: Gabalda, 1957). The final work was translated into English as *The Date of the Last Supper,* trans. Isaac Rafferty (Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1965); trans. of *La date de la Cène: calendrier biblique et liturgie chrétienne* (Paris: Gabalda, 1957).

26. Dominique Barthélemy, "Notes en marge de publications récentes sur les manuscrits de

prove this idea, she began by noting that the book of Jubilees specifically prohibits beginning a journey on the sabbath (50:8, 12) and infers that, therefore, the various travel narratives in Jubilees ought to obey this rule, e.g, when Abram travelled, he would not have done so on the Sabbath according to Jubilees. She worked backwards through the descriptions of such journeys in Jubilees to confirm that, indeed, the only possible situation where the patriarchs would not have traveled on the sabbath, as described in Jubilees demands that the first day of the year be a Wednesday.[27] Jaubert further hypothesized that the 364-day calendar utilized by the author of Jubilees was, in fact, quite ancient and reflected the same views of the latest Priestly strata of the Hexateuch by applying the same method to the Hexateuch and yielding an identical result.[28] Thus, according to Jaubert, the 364-day calendar was the calendar of Second Temple Judaism and it was not until later—at the time of Ben Sira—that the lunar modifications known from the Rabbinic period were instituted.[29]

Jaubert's thesis has been challenged and modified over the past several decades, but the publication of a number of important calendrical texts from Qumran have—at least partially—served to support the broad strokes of her thesis that the 364 day calendar was in broad use during the late Second Temple period (though the more specific claims remain

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Qumrân," *RB* 59.2 (1952): 187–218; Jaubert, "Le calendrier des Jubilés," 250; idem, *Date of the Last Supper,* 24–25.

27. idem, "Le calendrier des Jubilés," 252–54; idem, *Date of the Last Supper,* 25–27.

28. idem, "Le calendrier des Jubilés," 258; idem, *Date of the Last Supper,* 33.

29. idem, "Le calendrier des Jubilés," 254–58, 262–64; idem, *Date of the Last Supper,* 47–51.

controversial).[30] What seems apparent from the more recently discovered evidence from Qumran is that the system of keeping time during the Second Temple period was not a monolith. As VanderKam notes, among the Qumran texts the festivals were generally dated based on the 364-day calendar but there still remain cases where 354-day "lunar" year was used for more general purposes.[31] And while the book of Jubilees clearly participates in a tradition which privileged the 364-day year, the particulars of the Jubilees calendar and its theological and ideological underpinnings do not necessarily align with other advocates for the 364-day

30. Early reactions to her thesis were mixed. In particular, she was critiqued by Baumgarten ("Hlwḥ šl spr hywblym whmqr?," *Tarbiz* 32 (1962): 317–28 translated into English as "The Calendar of the Book of Jubilees and the Bible," in *Studies In Qumran Law,* ed. Joseph M. Baumgarten, vol. 24, SJLA (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 101–14; trans. of "Hlwḥ šl spr hywblym whmqr?," *Tarbiz* 32 (1962): 317–28) and more recently by Wacholder & Wacholder ("Patterns of Biblical Dates," 1–40) and Ravid ("The Book of Jubilees and Its Calendar: A Reexamination," *DSD* 10.3 (2003): 371–94). Her thesis was adopted and slightly modified by Morgenstern (who made the first month of the quarter 31 days, rather than the last month; "The Calendar of the Book of Jubilees, Its Origin and Its Character," *VT* 5.1 (1955): 34–76), at least partially supported by VanderKam ("The Origin, Character, and Early History of the 364-Day Calendar: A Reassesment of Jaubert's Hypothesis," *CBQ* 41 (1979): 390–411) and still retains broad support generally, if at times (seemingly) by virtue of its ubiquity. See Ben-Dov and Saulnier, "Qumran Calendars," 142.

31. VanderKam, *Jubilees,* 1:45.

year (such as the Astronomical Book and the other calendrical texts from Qumran).[32] In other words, one of the major observations from the most recent scholarship on the 364-day calendar tradition is that their commonalities are complimented by significant variation. So, although the Astronomical Book (1 Enoch 72–82), the Aramaic Levi Document, the Temple Scroll, MMT, 4Q252 and other astronomical (e.g., 4Q317; 4Q318), liturgical (Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice; 11QPsalms[a]; 4Q503; 4Q334) and many formally calendrical texts[33] from Qumran tend to prefer a 364-day calendar, they do not all seem to agree on *why* they follow it.[34] This diversity leaves open the question of what the purpose and significance of the 364-day calendar was for the author of the book of Jubilees and raises new questions about its polemical underpinnings.

32. See Ben-Dov and Saulnier, "Qumran Calendars," 159. Although the calendar of Jubilees is distinct from other 364 day calendars inferred from the Qumran texts, many of the more general observations about their function apply to all such calendars and are frequently discussed together. The early discussions of Barthélemy and Jaubert mostly focused on Jubilees, as most of the Qumran scrolls had either not been discovered or not published at the time of writing. See Barthélemy, "Notes en marge," 187–218 and Jaubert, "Le calendrier des Jubilés," 35–61.

33. Ben Dov and Saulnier lists several dozen texts and fragments of these calendrical texts in their recent summary. See Ben-Dov and Saulnier, "Qumran Calendars," 132–33.

34. For a concise summary of the calendrical issues in these texts, see James C. VanderKam, *Calendars in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Measuring Time,* LDSS (London: Routledge, 1998); Glessmer, "Calendars in the Qumran Scrolls," 233–68; Ben-Dov and Saulnier, "Qumran Calendars," 127–35; and Jacobus, "Calendars," 435–48.

The larger super-annual chronological cycles which concern the author of Jubilees also follow a heptadic structure. Throughout the work, the author refers to "weeks" of years (a seven-year interval) and the length of time known as a "Jubilee" (seven "weeks" of years, or 49 years) both of which are heptadic units which reflect the same concern with sabbath cycles as the intra-annual divisions.[35] In fact, as VanderKam has observed, while the calendar (364-day year) is only mentioned in Jubilees 6, the chronological system (7-year "weeks" and jubilees) is a pervasive and first-order literary device for the author's adaptation of Israel's past.[36]

The heptadic quality of the entire system of Jubilees's calendar and chronological systems is rooted in the traditions surrounding the sabbath and slave laws, which themselves show considerable development within the Hebrew Bible itself. The Sabbath and Jubilee legislation of Leviticus 25 likely draws from and adapts the earlier slave and fallow laws from the Covenant Code (Exod 21:1–11 and 23:10–11, respectively) and bears similarities with other ancient Near Eastern practices such as the *mīšarum* and *andurārum* known from Mesopotamia.[37]

35. Indeed, as cited above in the prologue, the work is concerned with the "the testimony for the event[s] of the years; for their weeks, for their jubilees in all the years of the world."

36. James C. VanderKam, "Studies in the Chronology of the Book of Jubilees," in *Studies in the Chronology of the Book of Jubilees*, JSJSup 62 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 522–44. He credits Wiesenberg with this observation as well who writes, "His chronology, not his calendar, is the object of primary interest to the writer of the Book of Jubilees." See Ernest Wiesenberg, "The Jubilee of Jubilees," *RdQ* 3.1 (1961): 3–40.

37. For the ostensible antecedents of the biblical Jubilee see Bergsma, *Jubilee,* 1–51. Other major publications on the idea of the biblical Jubilee include Robert G. North, *Sociology of the*

At the core of the Jubilee tradition in Leviticus 25 is an abstraction of the idea of sabbath "rest" on the seventh day of the week to longer seven-year units of time: the manumission of slaves, the forgiveness of debts, reallocation of ancestral lands, and letting the land lie fallow all occur in the seventh year, just as people were to rest on the sabbath day. Seven sets of these "weeks" completed a full cycle, which was then followed by a Jubilee year (year 50).[38]

Within the book of Jubilees, however, the term Jubilee is used to delineate a period of 49 years, rather than to specify the 50th year.[39] Thus, when the author of Jubilees describes an event occurring in the *nth* jubilee, he is referring to the the event occurring within a particular 49-year span and not in the *nth* "jubilee year." The term "week" or "week of years," on the other hand, retains its traditional denotation.

1.2.1 Restructuring the Past

As I have alluded to, frameworks for ordering the past are not neutral and the use of particular systems bears on ones interpretation of the past and understanding of the present. In other words, chronological systems can have a profound impact on processes of memory. Thus, the ordering of time with respect to the 364-day year, sabbath and jubilee traditions should be

Biblical Jubilee, AnBib 4 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1954); Jeffrey A. Fager, *Land Tenure and the Biblical Jubilee: Uncovering Hebrew Ethics through the Sociology of Knowledge,* JSOTSup 155 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) and Jean-François Lefebvre, *le jubilé biblique: Lv 25—exégèse et théologie,* OBO 194 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003).

38. Bergsma, *Jubilee,* 85–92.

39. VanderKam, "Chronology," 524–25; Bergsma, *Jubilee,* 234.

understood as not simply as the alignment of the past with an idiosyncratic numbering system, but as a reinterpretation and commemoration of Israel's past within a discrete social and ideological framework.

The insistence of the author of Jubilees that the 364-day year be maintained and his sharp rebuke of those who "closely observe the moon" (Jubilees 6:36) point toward the likelihood that calendar conflicts were a point of contention between the author of Jubilees and some of his contemporaries. This apparently polemical tone used by the author has prompted speculation about the possible causes of such polemic. VanderKam, for example has suggested that the impetus for the calendar dispute was Antiochus IV Epiphanes' imposition of a Hellenistic luni-solar calendar in-or-around 167 BCE. According to VanderKam's theory the 364-day calendar was the calendar in use by the Jerusalem temple in the late Persian and early Second Temple periods (generally following the argument of Jaubert). As evidence for Antiochus IV's calendrical changes, VanderKam cites the numerous and infamous decrees made by Antiochus IV recounted in the books of Daniel and 1 & 2 Maccabees. Although he concedes that none of these texts demand a calendrical change (only that the decrees prohibited certain festivals) VanderKam reads Dan 7:25 to mean that the Seleucids did not only proscribe certain Jewish practices, but may have imposed a different calendar system.[40] Daniel 7:23–25 reads:

(Dan 7:23) כֵּן אֲמַר חֵיוְתָא רְבִיעָיְתָא מַלְכוּ רְבִיעָיָא תֶּהֱוֵא בְאַרְעָא דִּי תִשְׁנֵא מִן־כָּל־מַלְכָוָתָא
וְתֵאכֵל כָּל־אַרְעָא וּתְדוּשִׁנַּהּ וְתַדְּקִנַּהּ׃ (24) וְקַרְנַיָּא עֲשַׂר מִנַּהּ מַלְכוּתָה עַשְׂרָה
מַלְכִין יְקוּמוּן וְאָחֳרָן יְקוּם אַחֲרֵיהוֹן וְהוּא יִשְׁנֵא מִן־קַדְמָיֵא וּתְלָתָה מַלְכִין יְהַשְׁפֵּל׃

40. C. VanderKam James, "2 Maccabees 6, 7a and Calendrical Change in Jerusalem," *JSJ* 12 (1981): 52–74

(25) וּמִלִּין לְצַד עִלָּיָא יְמַלֵּל וּלְקַדִּישֵׁי עֶלְיוֹנִין יְבַלֵּא וְיִסְבַּר לְהַשְׁנָיָה זִמְנִין וְדָת
וְיִתְיַהֲבוּן בִּידֵהּ עַד־עִדָּן וְעִדָּנִין וּפְלַג עִדָּן׃

(Dan 7:23) Thus he said, "As for the fourth beast, there will be a fourth kingdom on the earth which will be different from all the other kingdoms and it will consume the whole earth and trample it and crush it. (24) As for the ten horns—from it [the kingdom] ten kings will rise up and another will rise up after them and that one will be different from the previous ones and will bring down three kings. (25) And he will speak words against the Most High and he will wear-out the Holy Ones of the Most High and he will try to change the times and the Law and they will be given into his hand for a time, two times, and half a time."

VanderKam suggests that the Aramaic term זִמְנִין in v. 25 may be equivalent to Hebrew מוֹעֲדִים or עִתִּים and thus may be referring to particular appointed times and festivals.[41] VanderKam further argues that 1 Macc 1:59 and 2 Macc 6:7a allude to the practice of celebrating the king's birthday with a sacrifice on a monthly basis (every *nth* day of the month) which would have demanded that the Jerusalem temple to adopt the Seleucid calendar. Thus, he reasons, this may be the time when the traditional 364-day calendar was replaced by the Hellenistic lunisolar calendar in the Jerusalem temple. When the Maccabees took power, however, they did not, apparently, revert back to the older calendar. The conservative "Essene" group which later formed the Qumran community opposed this innovation and separated themselves from the Jerusalem priesthood. Thus, VanderKam suggests that the calendar change/crisis may have been one of the major precipitating factors for the schism between the Qumran community and the Jerusalem temple authorities.[42] VanderKam's theory, however, has been met with some

41. VanderKam, "2 Maccabees," 59–60.

42. Ibid., 52.

resistance, particularly from scholars such as Philip Davies, Wacholder & Wacholder, and Stern.[43]

For our purposes, the putative calendrical conflict to which Jubilees alludes points toward the *significance* of such traditions for everyday practice. For the author of Jubilees (and, perhaps for the Qumran community) the calendar was not simply a mundane system for bookkeeping, but was intimately tied to liturgical and cosmological order. Such a system aligns with God's created order which takes the seven-day week as its fundamental unit (as described in Gen 1). Such a system, one presumes, ought to respect the sanctity of the sabbath and

43. Philip R. Davies, "Calendrical Change and Qumran Origins: An Assessment of VanderKam's Theory," *CBQ* 45.1 (1983): 80–89; Wacholder and Wacholder, "Patterns of Biblical Dates," 1–40; Sacha Stern, "Qumran Calendars: Theory and Practice," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context,* ed. Timothy Lim, with A. Graeme Auld, Larry W. Hurtado, and Alison Jack (London: T & T Clark, 2000), 179–86; idem, "The Babylonian Calendar at Elephantine," *ZPE* 130 (2000): 159–71; idem, *Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar, 2nd Century BCE to 10th Century CE* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), TODO:. The core of these criticisms boil down to the fact that VanderKam's theory is quite speculative and lacking in concrete *positive* evidence of his historical reconstruction. The theory provides a clean explanation for a pressing historical question, but is perhaps a bit over-simplified. Ben Dov and Saulnier observe that VanderKam's theory tends to be more popular among scholars who specifically study Essenes, while it is generally rejected by historians of the Second Temple period more generally. See Ben-Dov and Saulnier, "Qumran Calendars," 142.

prevent the overlap of holidays with the sabbath. The book of Jubilees does not appeal to observation or "science" but instead asserts the absolute fact of the 364-day year, as established by God and recorded on the heavenly tablets.

Although the book of Jubilees portrays the 364-day year as a principle *predicated on* a seven-day week and related numerical properties, in fact, from the perspective of memory construction and reinforcement, the opposite is the case. By insisting on the utilization of a calendar whose distinguishing characteristic is its protection of sabbath laws (i.e., that no holidays will ever conflict with the sabbath), and the consistently of memorial days vis-à-vis the day of the week, the calendar reinforces the practices of observing the sabbath and the other holidays. It is a system which (though not, perhaps, designed for the purpose) reinforces some of the fundamental practices of early Judaism.

The larger cycles of weeks and jubilees likewise carry significance beyond their simple numerical values.

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