

Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible

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Jubilees translation:

J. C. VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, CSCO, 511 (Lovanii: Peeters, 1989).

Prologue

These are the words regarding the divisions of the times of the law and of the testimony, of the events of the years, of the weeks of their jubilees throughout all the years of eternity as he related (them) to Moses on Mt. Sinai when he went up to receive the stone tablets — the law and the commandments — on the Lord's orders as he had told him that he should come up to the summit of the mountain.

Introduction

1:1 During the first year of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, in the third month — on the sixteenth of the month — the Lord said to Moses: “Come up to me on the mountain. I will give you the two stone tablets of the law and the commandments which I have written so that you may teach them”. 1:2 So Moses went up the mountain of the Lord. The glory of the Lord took up residence on Mt. Sinai, and a cloud covered it for six days. 1:3 When he summoned Moses into the cloud on the seventh day, he saw the glory of the Lord like a fire blazing on the summit of the mountain. 1:4 Moses remained on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights while the Lord showed him what (had happened) beforehand as well as what was to come. He related to him the divisions of all the times — both of the law and of the testimony. 1:5 He said to him: “Pay attention to all the words which I tell you on this mountain. Write (them) in a book so that their offspring may see that I have not abandoned them because of all the evil they have done in *straying from* the covenant between me and you which I am making today on Mt. Sinai for their offspring. 1:6 So it will be that when all of these things befall them they will recognize that I have been more faithful than they in all their judgments and in all their actions.

They will recognize that I have indeed been with them.

1:7 “Now you write this entire message which I am telling you today, because I know their defiance and their stubbornness (even) before I bring them into the land which I promised by oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: 'To your posterity I will give the land which flows with milk and honey'. When they eat and are full, 1:8 they will turn to foreign gods — to ones which will not save them from any of their afflictions. Then this testimony will serve as evidence. 1:9 For they will forget all my commandments — everything that I command them — and will follow the nations, their impurities, and their shame.

They will serve their gods, and (this) will prove an obstacle for them — an affliction, a pain, and a trap.

... 1:15 “After this they will return to me from among the nations with all their minds, all their souls, and all their strength. Then I will gather them from among all the nations, and they will search for me so that I may be found by them when they have searched for me with all their minds and with all their souls. I will rightly disclose to them abundant peace. 1:16 I will transform them into a righteous plant with all my

mind and with all my soul. They will become a blessing, not a curse; they will become the head, not the tail. 1:17 I will build my temple among them and will live with them; I will become their God and they will become my true and righteous people. 1:18 I will neither abandon them nor become alienated from them, for I am the Lord their God”.

1:19 Then Moses fell prostrate and prayed and said: “Lord my God, do not allow your people and your heritage to go along in the error of their minds, and do not deliver them into the control of the nations with the result that they rule over them lest they make them sin against you. 1:20 May your mercy, Lord, be lifted over your people. Create for them a just spirit. May the spirit of Belial not rule them so as to bring charges against them before you and to trap them away from every proper path so that they may be destroyed from your presence.

1:21 They are your people and your heritage whom you have rescued from Egyptian control by your great power. Create for them a pure mind and a holy spirit. May they not be trapped in their sins from now to eternity”.

... 1:25 All of them will be called children of the living God. Every angel and every spirit will know them. They will know that they are my children and that I am their father in a just and proper way and that I love them.

...

1:29 The angel of the presence, who was going along in front of the Israelite camp, took the tablets (which told) of the divisions of the years from the time the law and the testimony were created — for the weeks of their jubilees, year by year in their full number, and their jubilees from [the time of the creation until] the time of the new creation when the heavens, the earth, and all their creatures will be renewed like the powers of the sky and like all the creatures of the earth, until the time when the temple of the Lord will be created in Jerusalem on Mt. Zion.

All the luminaries will be renewed for (the purposes of healing, health, and blessing for all the elect ones of Israel and so that it may remain this way from that time throughout all the days of the earth.

Creation

2:1 On the Lord's orders the angel of the presence said to Moses: “Write all the words about the creation — how in six days the Lord God completed all his works, everything that he had created, and kept sabbath on the seventh day. He sanctified it for all ages and set it as a sign for all his works. 2:2 For on the first day he created the heavens that are above, the earth, the waters, and all the spirits who serve before him, namely: the angels of the presence; the angels of holiness; the angels of the spirits of fire; the angels of the spirits of the winds; the angels of the spirits of the clouds, of darkness, *snow*, hail, and frost; the angels of the sounds, the thunders, and the lightnings; and the angels of the spirits of cold and heat, of winter, spring, autumn, and summer, and of all the spirits of his creatures which are in the heavens, on earth, and in every (place). [There were also] the depths, darkness and light, dawn and evening which he prepared in the knowledge of his heart. 2:3 Then we saw his works and blessed him. We offered praise before him regarding all his works because he had made seven great works on the first day...

2:17 He gave us the sabbath day as a great sign so that we should perform work for six days and that we should keep sabbath from all work on the seventh day. 2:18 He told us — all the angels of the presence and all the angels of holiness (these two great kinds) — to keep sabbath with him in heaven and on earth. 2:19 He said to us: I will now separate a people for myself from among my nations. They, too, will keep sabbath. I will sanctify the people for myself and will bless them as I sanctified the sabbath day. I will sanctify them for myself; in this way I will bless them. They will become my people and I will become their God. 2:20 I have chosen the descendants of Jacob among all of those whom I have seen. I have recorded them as my first-born son and have sanctified them for myself throughout the ages of eternity. I will tell them about the sabbath days so that they may keep sabbath from all work on them'. 2:21 In this way he made a sign on it by which they, too, would keep sabbath with us on the seventh day to eat, drink, and bless the creator of all as he had blessed them and sanctified them for himself as a noteworthy people out of all the nations; and to keep sabbath together with us.

2:22 He made his commands rise as a fine fragrance which is acceptable in his presence for all times.

3:8 In the first week Adam and his wife — the rib — were created, and in the second week he showed her to him. Therefore, a commandment was given to keep (women) in their defilement seven days for a male (child) and for a female two (units) of seven days. 3:9 After 40 days had come to an end for Adam in the land where he had been created, we brought him into the Garden of Eden to work and keep it.

His wife was brought (there) on the eightieth day. After this she entered the Garden of Eden. 3:10 For this reason a commandment was written in the heavenly tablets for the one who gives birth to a child: if she gives birth to a male, she is to remain in her impurity for seven days like the first seven days; then for 33 days she is to remain in the blood of purification. She is not to touch any sacred thing nor to enter the sanctuary until she completes these days for a male. 3:11 As for a female she is to remain in her impurity for two weeks of days like the first two weeks and 66 days in the blood of purification. Their total is 80 days.

Mastema and the Watchers

10:1 During the third week of this jubilee [1583-89] impure demons began to mislead Noah's grandchildren, to make them act foolishly, to and to destroy them. 10:2 Then Noah's sons came to their father Noah and told him about the demons who were misleading, blinding, and killing his grandchildren.

10:3 He prayed before the Lord his God and said: 'God of the spirits which are in all animate beings — you who have shown kindness to me, saved me and my sons from the flood waters, and did not make me perish as you did to the people (meant for) destruction — because your mercy for me has been large and your kindness to me has been great: may your mercy be lifted over the children of your children; and may the wicked spirits not rule them in order to destroy them from the earth. 10:4 Now you bless me and my children so that we may increase, become numerous, and fill the earth.

10:5 You know how your Watchers, the fathers of these spirits, have acted during my lifetime. As for these spirits who have remained alive, imprison them and hold them captive in the place of judgment. May they not cause destruction among your servant's sons, my God, for they are savage and were created for the purpose of destroying.

10:6 May they not rule the spirits of the living for you alone know their punishment; and may they not have power over the sons of the righteous from now and forevermore'. 10:7 Then our God told us to tie up each one.

10:8 When Mastema, the leader of the spirits, came, he said: 'Lord creator, leave some of them before me; let them listen to me and do everything that I tell them, because if none of them is left for me I shall not be able to exercise the authority of my will among mankind. For they are meant for (the purposes of) destroying and misleading before my punishment because the evil of mankind is great'. 10:9 Then he said that a tenth of them should be left before him, while he would make nine parts descend to the place of judgment. 10:10 He told one of us that we should teach Noah all their medicines because he knew that they would neither conduct themselves properly nor fight fairly.

10:11 We acted in accord with his entire command. All of the evil ones who were savage we tied up in the place of judgment, while we left a tenth of them to exercise power on the earth before the satan. 10:12 We told Noah all the medicines for their diseases with their deceptions so that he could cure (them) by means of the earth's plants. 10:13 Noah wrote down in a book everything (just) as we had taught him regarding all the kinds of medicine, and the evil spirits were precluded from pursuing Noah's children. 10:14 He gave all the books that he had written to his oldest son Shem because he loved him much more than to all his sons.

Shavuot/Bikurim

15:1 During the fifth year of the fourth week of this jubilee [1986] — in the third month, in the middle of the month — Abram celebrated the festival of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest. 15:2 He offered as a new sacrifice on the altar the firstfruits of the food for the Lord — a bull, a ram, and a sheep; (he offered them) on the altar as a sacrifice to the Lord together with their (cereal) offerings and their libations. He offered everything on the altar with frankincense. 15:3 The Lord appeared to him, and the Lord said to Abram: 'I am the God of Shaddai. Please me and be perfect, 15:4 I will place my covenant between me and you. I will increase you greatly'. 15:5 Then Abram fell prostrate. The Lord spoke with him and said: 15:6 'My pact is now with you. I will make you the father of many nations. 15:7 You will no longer be called Abram; your name from now to eternity is to be Abraham because I have designated you the father of many nations.

15:8 I will make you very great. I will make you into nations, and kings shall emerge from you. 15:9 I will place my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations and as an eternal pact so that I may be God to you and to your descendants to after you. 15:10 [To you and your descendants after you I will give] the land where you have resided as an alien — the land of Canaan which you will rule forever. I will be their God'.

15:11 Then the Lord said to Abraham: 'As for you, keep my covenant — you and your descendants after you. Circumcise all your males; circumcise your foreskins.

More Mastema

The Sacrifice of Isaac

17:15 During the seventh week, in the first year during the first month — on the twelfth of this month — in this jubilee [2003], there were voices in heaven regarding Abraham, that he was faithful in everything that he told him, (that) the Lord loved him, and (that) in every difficulty he was faithful. 17:16 Then Prince Mastema came and said before God: 'Abraham does indeed love his son Isaac and finds him more pleasing than anyone else. Tell him to offer him as a sacrifice on an altar. Then you will see whether he performs this order and will know whether he is faithful in everything through which you test him'.

The Bloody Bridegroom

48:1 During the sixth year of the third week of the forty-ninth jubilee [2372], you went and lived there for five weeks and one year [= 36 years]. Then you returned to Egypt in the second week, during the second year in the fiftieth jubilee [2410]. 48:2 You know who spoke to you at Mt. Sinai and what the prince of Mastema wanted to do to you while you were returning to Egypt — on the way at the shady fir tree.

48:3 Did he not wish with all his strength to kill you and to save the Egyptians from your power because he saw that you were sent to carry out punishment and revenge on the Egyptians? 48:4 I rescued you from his power.

In Egypt

48:9 The prince of Mastema would stand up against you and wish to make you fall into the pharaoh's power. He would help the Egyptian magicians and they would oppose (you) and perform in front of you. 48:10 We permitted them to do evil things, but we would not allow healings to be performed by them. 48:11 When the Lord struck them with bad sores, they were unable to oppose (you) because we deprived them of (their ability) to perform a single sign. 48:12 Despite all the signs and miracles, the prince of Mastema was not put to shame until he gained strength and cried out to the Egyptians to pursue you with all the Egyptian army — with their chariots, their horses — and with all the throng of the Egyptian people.

48:15 On the fourteenth day, the fifteenth, the sixteenth, the seventeenth, and the eighteenth the prince of Mastema was bound and locked up behind the Israelites so that he could not accuse them.

48:16 On the nineteenth day we released them so that they could help the Egyptians and pursue the Israelites. 48:17 He stiffened their resolve and made them stubborn.

48:18 On the fourteenth day we bound him so that he could not accuse the Israelites on the day when they were requesting utensils and clothing from the Egyptians — utensils of silver, utensils of gold, and utensils of bronze; and so that they could plunder the Egyptians in return for the fact that they were made to work when they enslaved them by force. 48:19 We did not bring the Israelites out of Egypt empty-handed.