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Tanskanen, Topias

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EXPECTATIONS OF A ROYAL MESSIAH IN THE BOOK OF *JUBILEES*? THE CASE OF JUDAH

Topias K.E. Tanskanen

1. *Introduction*

Professor Antti Laato's long-time interest has been the Messiah from many different perspectives. From his doctoral dissertation *Who is Immanuel?* (1988) up to the present with *Who is the Servant of the Lord?* (2013) professor Laato has studied not only the precursors of messianic expectations in Judaism, but also their reception history in Judaism and Christianity.¹ It is my privilege to contribute to this Festschrift in honour of my encouraging and always excited supervisor by reopening the case for messianic expectations in the book of *Jubilees*.

Messianism and messianic expectations in early Judaism were much discussed during the 1990s and 2000s. Several monographs and articles were written particularly about the Dead Sea Scrolls.² This is no surprise,

1. Antti Laato, *Who is Immanuel? The Rise and the Foundering of Isaiah's Messianic Expectations* (PhD diss., Åbo: Åbo Akademi Press, 1988); *idem*, *Josiah and David Redivivus: The Historical Josiah and the Messianic Expectations of Exilic and Postexilic Times* (ConBOT, 33; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1992); *idem*, *The Servant of YHWH and Cyrus: A Reinterpretation of the Exilic Messianic Programme in Isaiah 40–55* (ConBOT, 35; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1992); *idem*, *A Star Is Rising: The Historical Development of the Old Testament Royal Ideology and the Rise of the Jewish Messianic Expectations* (International Studies in Formative Christianity and Judaism; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997); *idem*, *Who is the Servant of the Lord? Jewish and Christian Interpretations on Isaiah 53 from Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (SRB, 4; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012).

2. See, e.g., Jacob Neusner, William S. Green and Ernest Frerichs (eds.), *Judaisms and their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Messiah: Developments in*

given that the scrolls finally became available for all scholars from the early 1990s on.

The book of *Jubilees* was discussed in some of the scholarly works during this period. Whereas in particular earlier research on *Jubilees* saw some traits of messianic expectations in the book,³ later scholars have been more careful in their considerations.⁴ Some have concluded

Earliest Judaism and Christianity (The First Princeton Symposium on Judaism and Christian Origins; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992); Craig A. Evans, *Jesus and his Contemporaries: Comparative Studies* (AGJU, 25; Leiden: Brill, 1995); James H. Charlesworth, Hermann Lichtenberger and Gerbern S. Oegema (eds.), *Qumran-Messianism: Studies on the Messianic Expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998); Laato, *Star is Rising*; Johannes Zimmermann, *Messianische Texte aus Qumran: Königliche, priesterliche und prophetische Messiasvorstellungen in den Schriftfunden von Qumran* (WUNT, 2.104; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998); Andrew Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation: Jewish Messianic and Visionary Traditions and New Testament Christology* (WUNT, 1.207; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); Stanley E. Porter (ed.), *The Messiah in the Old and New Testaments* (McMaster New Testament Studies; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007). An updated bibliography on the subject up to 2010 can be found in John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2nd edn, 2010), pp. 238-73. The first edition was published 1995. On the new phase in Qumran studies and messianism in the 1990s, see Zimmermann, *Messianische Texte*, pp. 13-15.

3. Roland H. Charles, *The Book of Jubilees or the Little Genesis* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1902), pp. lxxxvii, 188; *idem*, 'The Book of Jubilees', in Roland H. Charles (ed.), *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), II, pp. 1-82 (1, 9, 61); Sigmund Mowinckel, *He that Cometh* (trans. G. W. Anderson; New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), pp. 280, 286-88, 316, 323, who on one hand emphasizes that only the line of Levi inherits the messianic promises ('The book of Jubilees knows nothing of a future monarchy of the house of Judah, but only of the house of Levi', p. 287), but on the other hand uses *Jub.* 31.20 in his reconstruction of what happens when the messiah arrives (p. 316); Klaus Berger, *Das Buch der Jubiläen* (JSRZ, 2.3; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1981), p. 471; Marinus de Jonge, 'Messiah', in *ABD*, IV, pp. 777-88 (782).

4. Collins, *Scepter and Star*, pp. 95-96; James L. Kugel, *A Walk through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of its Creation* (JSJSup, 156; Leiden: Brill, 2012), p. 151; James C. VanderKam, *Jubilees: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2018), p. 859. Zimmermann, *Messianische Texte*, pp. 231-32, refers to Collins and agrees with him. See also James M. Scott, *On Earth as in Heaven: The Restoration of Sacred Time and Sacred Space in the Book of Jubilees* (JSJSup, 91; Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 173-77.

that such expectations cannot be discerned from *Jubilees*.⁵ A tendency in recent works seems to be to exclude *Jubilees* from discussion, mostly due methodological questions.⁶

However, in his *Star is Rising* (1997), Laato analysed *Jubilees* as a part of literature from the Hasmonean period, focusing on the portrait of Levi and Judah, and Isaac's blessing of them in *Jubilees* 30–32.⁷ According to Laato, the Davidical expectations were de-emphasized in *Jubilees*, but not nullified completely. He connects this tendency to the political situation of Judea, where Levite Maccabeans held the political power. Given that after Isaac's blessing of Levi and Judah Jacob states that he had 'eternal hope before God' (*Jub.* 31.32), it seems to Laato that these promises are regarded as eternally valid.⁸ He concludes:

[A]s in the Book of Ben Sira, so also in the Book of Jubilees the Old Testament promises given to the dynasty of David were too many and too strong to be eliminated. In lieu of elimination, attempts were made to downplay their applicability to the current situation.⁹

Laato's analysis of messianic expectations in *Jubilees* is connected to his reconstruction of downplayed expectations especially in Ben Sira from around the same period.¹⁰ In this contribution, however, it is impossible to delve deeply into the minefield of how widespread messianic expectations actually were during the Persian and Hellenistic period.

One shortfall in Laato's short evaluation of messianic (or Davidic) expectations in *Jubilees*, however, is that he focuses solely on chs. 30–32 and particularly on Isaac's blessing of Levi and Judah, which certainly

5. Gene Davenport, *The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees* (SPB, 20; Leiden: Brill, 1971); William Scott Green, 'Messiah in Judaism: Rethinking the Question', in Neusner, Green and Frerichs (eds.), *Judaisms and their Messiahs*, pp. 1-13 (2). Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, does not deal with *Jubilees* almost at all. Where he refers to *Jubilees*, his views on messianic expectations there remain somewhat ambiguous. Compare p. 275—where he refers to 'priestly hope' in *Jubilees* (alongside with royal?)—with p. 531: 'There is no messianic figure here [*Jub.* 23] or elsewhere in *Jubilees*'. Perhaps the choice not to see *Jubilees* as relevant for closer investigation indicates that Chester would answer negatively, too.

6. For example, *Jubilees* is also almost totally absent in the contributions of Charlesworth (ed.), *The Messiah*.

7. Laato, *Star is Rising*, pp. 269-75.

8. Laato, *Star is Rising*, pp. 274-75.

9. Laato, *Star is Rising*, p. 275.

10. Laato, *Star is Rising*, pp. 236-48.

remains the *crux interpretum*. A similar problem is also found in other contributions regarding messianic expectations in *Jubilees*.¹¹ What I argue, however, is that in order to understand the thrust of the author of *Jubilees*, it is important to see how the author depicts Judah (and Levi) in the whole work.

In this contribution, I will analyse the portrait of Judah in *Jubilees* and any possible messianic overtones there. The portrait of Levi is less in focus here, since considerable research has already been done regarding him in *Jubilees*, but there is far much less so regarding Judah.¹² Although Judah is the focus of this contribution, it should continuously be borne in mind that *Jubilees* 31, *inter alia*, clearly shows that Levi is the prominent one. It is portrayal of these two brothers that is at the fore when one discusses possible messianism in *Jubilees*.

First, however, what ‘messiah’ or ‘messianism’ means in this context must be defined. Different definitions of ‘messiah’ have been expounded, and have been helpfully organized by Andrew Chester.¹³ How these terms are defined also influences the view the scholar has on messianic expectations in general—and in *Jubilees* in particular.¹⁴ What I mean by

11. E.g. Collins, *Scepter and the Star*, pp. 93-96; Zimmermann, *Messianische Texte*, pp. 231-32; Eric F. Mason, ‘You Are a Priest Forever’: *Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (STDJ, 74; Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2008), pp. 124-27.

12. E.g. James L. Kugel, ‘Levi’s Elevation to the Priesthood in Second Temple Writings’, *HTR* 86 (1993), pp. 1-64; James C. VanderKam, ‘Jubilees and the Priestly Messiah of Qumran’, in VanderKam, *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (JSJSup, 62; Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 462-75; *idem*, ‘Jubilees’ Exegetical Creation of Levi the Priest’, in *From Revelation to Canon*, pp. 545-61; Robert A. Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest: The Levi-Priestly Tradition from Aramaic Levi to Testament of Levi* (EJL, 9; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996); Lotta Valve, *Early Modes of Exegesis: Ideal Figures in Malachi as a Test Case* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi University Press, 2014), pp. 63-89.

13. Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, pp. 193-205.

14. For example, James H. Charlesworth, ‘From Messianology to Christology: Problems and Prospects’, in Charlesworth (ed.), *The Messiah*, pp. 3-35, defines ‘messiah,’ and ‘messianology’ in such a way that only those texts which contain the term משיח or its equivalents in other languages are dealt with. When analysing messianic expectations in OT Pseudepigrapha, he therefore excludes *Jubilees* from discussion. This is the ‘minimalistic’ position criticised by Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, pp. 193-96. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, ‘Messianic Ideas in the Apocalyptic and Related Literature of Early Judaism’, in Porter (ed.), *The Messiah of Old and New Testaments*, pp. 90-113, also narrows his survey terminologically in reaction against

‘messiah’ in this contribution is an eschatological figure that has a role to play in those ‘last days’. The term ‘last days’ *per se* does not need to mean the end of the world, but can perhaps be seen as more of a time between two distinctive ages: the present one and the one to come.¹⁵ Thus, my definition resembles those proposed for example by Laato and Collins, and preferred by Chester.¹⁶

2. Judah in Jubilees

Judah is found in *Jubilees* in the following passages: 28.15, 17 (Judah’s birth); ch. 31 (Jacob, Levi and Judah visit Rebekah and Isaac); 33.22 (Jacob’s whole family visits Isaac and Rebekah); 34.5 (Judah along with Jacob, Levi and Joseph stay with the aged Isaac); 34.20 (Judah marries a Canaanite woman); 38.1, 5 (Judah as a warrior leader in Jacob’s defence against Esau and his sons); 41.1-18 (Judah and Tamar); and in chs. 42–44 in the Joseph Story. I will analyse these texts in order, other than leaving the analysis of ch. 31 to the end. The mention of Judah in *Jub.* 33.22 is irrelevant in this survey.

One important question related to the portrait of Judah in the work is also whether there are some redactions or not related to Isaac’s blessing of Levi and Judah.¹⁷ This is a question that I will tackle elsewhere. To

Charles’ interpretation of such passages where messiah is absent (e.g. *Jub.* 1.27-29 and 23.26-31) as messianic. I applaud this kind of approach, when one at the same time admits the methodological reduction, i.e., that the full picture can be, and in my opinion surely is, broader. This Stuckenbruck acknowledges (pp. 91-92).

15. Concerning the problem of defining ‘eschatology’, see Mark J. Boda, ‘Figuring the Future: The Prophets and Messiah’, in Porter (ed.), *The Messiah in Old and New Testaments*, pp. 35-74 (40-43); George W.E. Nickelsburg, ‘Eschatology (Early Jewish)’, in *ABD*, II, pp. 579-94 (esp. pp. 580, 591-93).

16. Laato, *Star is Rising*, pp. 2-4, who however highlights the roots to royal ideology and actually sees the messiah first and foremost as a *royal* figure; Collins, *Scepter and Star*, pp. 17-18: ‘a messiah is an eschatological figure who sometimes, but not necessarily always, is designated as משיח in the ancient sources’. Collins emphasizes that the figure does not need to be royal *per se*, but could also be priest or a prophet. Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, p. 201. Already Mowinckel, *He that Cometh*, pp. 3, 451-52, emphasized the eschatological nature of ‘messiah’ against, for example, Ivan Engnell.

17. Such questions are raised by, e.g., Davenport, *Eschatology of Jubilees*, and Christoph Berner, ‘Jacob or Levi—Who is the Officiating Priest in *Jubilees* 30–32?’, *JSP* 26 (2016), pp. 20-31.

express my view bluntly here, Isaac's Blessing of Levi and Judah has been part of the *Jubilees* from the very beginning.¹⁸

2.1. *Judah's Birth* (Jubilees 28)

The author of *Jubilees* added the chronological layout to the stories of Genesis–Exodus, where events are dated according to their jubilees, weeks (of years), years, and even months and days. Clearly, calendrical matters are important for him. In *Jubilees* 28, three of Jacob's sons get significant dates of birth: Levi, Judah and Joseph.¹⁹ Levi is born on the first day of the first month (28.14), Judah on the fifteenth day of the third month (28.15), and Joseph on the first day of the fourth month (28.24). The most important date in *Jubilees* is arguably fifteenth of the third month (15/3), when the Festival of Weeks is celebrated.²⁰ Given that Levi is the most important son of Jacob in *Jubilees* (*Jub.* 30–32, see below), VanderKam has pondered on why Levi is not given that very date, but that it is given to Judah.²¹ Pauline P. Buisch has argued, in my opinion convincingly, why Levi's birthday is 1/1 while that of Judah falls on 15/3.²²

Levi's birthday is clearly associated with cultic matters, such as sacrifices (*Jub.* 7.2-6; 24.21-23) and Bethel (27.19). Also, in the Hebrew Bible, this date is associated with the tabernacle (Exod. 40.2, 17) and the

18. Unless noted otherwise, the English translation of *Jubilees* used is that of VanderKam, *Jubilees*, which differs somewhat from his first translation in *idem*, *The Book of Jubilees* (CSCO, 511; SA, 88; Leuven: Peeters, 1989). The critical edition of the Ethiopic version of *Jubilees* used here is based on 27 manuscripts and edited by VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text* (CSCO, 510; SA, 87; Leuven: Peeters, 1989). Since 1980s, the number of Ethiopic manuscripts identified as containing *Jubilees* has increased, the number now being over 50. On the new manuscripts and their significance, see Ted Erho, 'New Ethiopic witnesses to some Old Testament pseudepigrapha', *Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 76.1 (2013), pp. 75-97; Matthew P. Monger, *4Q216: Rethinking Jubilees in the First Century BCE* (Oslo: MF Norwegian School of Theology, 2018), pp. 63-75; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, pp. 14-16.

19. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), p. 64; Kugel, *Walk through*, p. 140.

20. On the Festival of Weeks and its meaning in *Jubilees*, see Sejin Park, *Pentecost and Sinai: The Festival of Weeks as a Celebration of the Sinai Event* (LHBOTS, 342; London: T&T Clark, 2008), pp. 78-127.

21. VanderKam, *Guide to Jubilees*, p. 64.

22. Pauline P. Buisch, 'The Absence and Influence of Genesis 48 (the Blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh) in the *Book of Jubilees*', *JSP* 26 (2017), pp. 255-73.

temple (2 Chron. 29.17; Ezek. 45.18-19).²³ On the other hand, Judah's birthday (15/3) is the date on which the festival of the renewal of the covenant is celebrated according to Jubilees. Buisch argues that Judah is associated with Festival of Weeks because promises given to David are interpreted as a covenant (2 Chron. 7.18; 21.7; Ps. 89.3).²⁴ Thus, the birthday of Levi reveals his future as priest, while Judah's birthday is related to the Davidic covenant.

2.2. *Judah the Warrior (Jubilees 34 and 38)*

Jubilees 34.1-9 narrates a story that is not found in Genesis: it is an aggadic elaboration on a detail in Gen. 48.22, where Jacob says to Joseph that he had taken land from the Amorites with his 'bow and sword'. Whereas the 'bow' part happens later, namely in ch. 38, the 'sword' fight against the Amorites takes place in *Jub.* 34.1-9.²⁵

Jacob had sent his sons (excluding Levi, Judah and Joseph) to tend his sheep on the plains of Shechem, when seven Amorite kings ally together against them. Jacob, Levi and Judah remain at home with their aged Isaac and the youngest son, Benjamin (*Jub.* 34.1-3).²⁶ When Jacob hears of this plot, he and his three sons (Levi, Judah and Joseph) set out against them with servants and 6000 men, killing kings and requiring they pay tribute to him (34.4-9). The status of Levi and Judah is highlighted, as well as the status of Joseph.²⁷ This is similar to the three brothers' dates of birth.

23. Buisch, 'Absence and Influence', pp. 267-68; Hans A. Rapp, *Jakob in Bet-El: Gen 35,1-15 und die jüdische Literatur des 3. und 2. Jahrhunderts* (Herders Biblische Studien, 29; Freiburg: Herder, 2001), p. 203; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, pp. 784-85; Topias K.E. Tanskanen, "'He Established a Testimony in Jacob, He Set a Torah in Israel": Psalm 78 and the *Book of Jubilees*', in Erkki Koskenniemi and David Willgren Davage (eds.), *David, Messianism, and Eschatology: Ambiguity in the Reception History of the Book of Psalms in Judaism and Christianity* (SRB, 10; Åbo: Network for the Study of the Reception History of the Bible, 2020), pp. 71-119 (104 n. 112).

24. Buisch, 'Absence and Influence', p. 268; See also Tanskanen 'He Established', pp. 104-105, 107-108; Park, *Pentecost and Sinai*, pp. 122-25.

25. Atar Livneh, 'With My Sword and Bow: Jacob as Warrior in *Jubilees*', in Devorah Dimant and Reinhard G. Kratz (eds.), *Rewriting and Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: The Biblical Patriarchs in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (BZAW, 439; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2013), pp. 189-213.

26. Noteworthy is the addition 'Benjamin was the youngest and therefore also he remained with Isaac' (*Jub.* 34.3, own translation). Thus, the reason for Benjamin to stay at home is different.

27. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 921.

Judah's role as a warrior or leader is not highlighted here, but comes to the fore in chs. 37 and 38.²⁸

Chapters 37–38 tell of a war between Esau and Jacob after their father Isaac died. In ch. 37, the sons of Esau become angry at Jacob's family because they inherited everything owned by Abraham. Esau, his sons, and other nearby nations launch an assault against Jacob and his family who reside at Hebron. After some disbelief about what is actually taking place, Jacob orders his house to go up against the opposing force. It is in this situation that Judah takes the lead.

When Jacob finally gives the order to attack Esau and his companions (*Jub.* 37.25), Judah takes the lead and speaks to his father Jacob, encouraging him to bend his bow and kill Esau (38.1). When the sons of Jacob go out to battle against the army, they divide themselves into the four sides of the tower of Abraham (38.4). It is Judah who takes the lead here too: 'And Judah went out first and Naphtali and Gad were with him and fifty servants were with him on the southern side of the tower. And they killed all that they found in front of them and there were none that escaped from them' (38.5).²⁹ This introductory formula differs considerably from the formula used regarding the other brothers: 'And X and Y and Z went out on the A side of the tower and fifty were with them. And they killed...' (38.6-8).³⁰ The difference between these formulae is that Judah goes forth (*wad'a*) alone and Naphtali and Gad join him (*māslēhu*)—as do the fifty men (*māslēhu*)—whereas in the other cases there are three brothers going forth together (*wad'u*) and fifty men joining *them* (*māslēhomu*). This emphasizes the role of Judah as the one who takes the initiative and leads the brothers into battle.

VanderKam points out that the leaders of the four groups are: Judah ('first'), Levi, Reuben and Simeon.³¹ Judah and Levi take the most prominent places as elsewhere in *Jubilees*, but Judah is the leader. Reuben as the first-born comes only later and Simeon continues his military career here too (cf. *Jub.* 30).³²

28. Compare also with *T. Jud.* 3–7, where Judah takes the leading role in another version of the story.

29. My literal translation. 'First' *pro* 'in front' (*fəṣṣuma*) is evidenced by 4Q223–224 frg 2 iv, 21 (ראשון) and Latin (*primus*).

30. In *Jub.* 38.6, the predicate *wad'u* comes after the subjects, but otherwise it is similar to vv. 7-8.

31. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 996.

32. On Simeon, see John C. Endres, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (CBQMS, 18; Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1987), p. 182.

In his blessing of Judah, Isaac says, ‘May Jacob’s help be in you; May Israel’s safety be found in you’ (*Jub.* 31.19). This blessing becomes reality already in ch. 38.³³

Chapters 34 and 37–38 of *Jubilees* have also been important regarding the dating of the book. Some scholars have seen that the story mirrors or has allusions to the wars and conquests of Judas Maccabeus and/or John Hyrcanus during the Maccabean period. Especially the ending ‘The Edomites have not extricated themselves from the yoke of servitude that Jacob’s sons imposed on them until today’ (*Jub.* 38.14) has aroused interest.³⁴

As some scholars have noted since VanderKam’s study in 1977, the view that chs. 34 and 37–38 are connected to the Maccabean wars is problematic.³⁵ The main thrust of the narrative in chs. 37–38 is to be seen in the context of *Jubilees* and its story concerning Jacob and Esau. That ch. 34 is situated in Shechem is related to שכם in Gen. 48.22, as a pun, or as an actual interpretation of the word as a place name (LXX Σικιμα).³⁶ VanderKam himself has become much more cautious, although he does not totally reject the possibility that recent events influenced the author in his aggadic elaboration.³⁷

Regardless of whether there is any influence from historical events or not, the portrait of Judah resembles that of a leader at war, a defender of Jacob’s seed (i.e. Israel)—as Isaac had blessed and prophesied him to be (*Jub.* 31.19). The portrayal of Judah is influenced by what he resembles: leaders at war, the warrior kings.

33. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 992.

34. Charles, *Book of Jubilees*, pp. lxi-lxii; James C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), pp. 214-54.

35. E.g. George Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1981), pp. 78-79; Michael Segal, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology* (JSJSup, 117; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), pp. 36, 39.

36. Kugel, *Walk through*, p. 165 n. 295.

37. See already VanderKam, *Guide to Jubilees*, p. 20: ‘Although the evidence for the thesis is not overwhelming, it is not impossible that recent events shaped or affected the way our author told a story about ancient times’. He is much more cautious in *idem*, *Jubilees*, pp. 33-34, 926-28, 999-1001, and considers other functions much more important in this regard. Kugel, *Walk through*, p. 179, sees the ending sentence in 38.14 as a later addition after John Hyrcanus had conquered Idumea.

2.3. *Judah's Line Remains according to Another Lineage* (Jubilees 34.20; 41)

Jubilees 41.1-28 rewrites Gen. 38.6-30, which tells the story of Judah and Tamar. In the version of Genesis, the story is placed just before the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39), perhaps in order to highlight the bad example (Judah) and good example (Joseph) given regarding sexual purity and abstinence. In *Jubilees*, however, these two stories are separated. The incident between Joseph and Potiphar's wife (*Jub.* 39.5-11) is situated well before that of Judah and Tamar. Thus, the story of Judah and Tamar is detached from the story of Joseph and Potiphar, downplaying the tension and comparison found in Genesis.³⁸

Since this story is a rewriting of the story found in Genesis, and not an aggadic addition as *Jubilees* 34 and 37-38 above, I will deal with this material in a different way. The focus here is to see how the author of *Jubilees* changes the story. A synopsis similar to that which Jacques van Ruiten frequently uses would be the most usable option here,³⁹ however, the limited space does not allow us that luxury. Instead, I will merely highlight the most noteworthy changes in this context and urge the reader to compare *Jubilees* 41 with Genesis 38.

(1) Tamar's genealogy is identified and legitimized in *Jubilees*. She is a 'daughter of Aram' (*Jub.* 41.1). This is important, since Judah had married a Canaanite woman (*Jub.* 34.20). According to the theology of the author of *Jubilees*, the Canaanites were doomed to be uprooted and destroyed (*inter alia Jub.* 20.4, see below), but Tamar has become a descendant of Aram who is a descendant of Shem.

(2) Tamar is still a virgin when Judah sleeps with her. Although she is given to Er, it is stated that Er 'hated Tamar and did not sleep with her, because her mother was from the daughters of Canaan' (*Jub.* 41.2). In actual fact, Er would have wanted to have a Canaanite wife, but Judah did not allow it. At the same time, this addition explains the lack of reasoning

38. Buisch, 'Absence and Influence', p. 265; Betsy Halpern-Amaru, *The Empowerment of Women in the Book of Jubilees* (JSJSup, 60; Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 111-13; *contra* William Loader, *Enoch, Levi, and Jubilees on Sexuality: Attitudes towards Sexuality in the Early Enoch Literature, the Aramaic Levi Document, and the Book of Jubilees* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 178-79, who sees in *Jubilees* an emphasized contrast between Joseph as an ideal ruler, and Judah as a failed one.

39. Jacques T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees: The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26-25:10 in the Book of Jubilees 11:14-23:8* (JSJSup, 161; Leiden: Brill, 2012).

in Genesis as to why Er was deemed evil and God killed him (Gen. 38.7 // *Jub.* 41.3). Furthermore, it is not stated *expressis verbis* that Onan had intercourse with Tamar. Onan ‘went into the house of the wife of his brother and poured the semen into ground’ (*wa-bo’a bēta bə’sita ’aḥuhu wa-ka’awa zar’a wəsta mədr*; cf. Gen. 38.9 והיה אִם-בָּא אֶל-אִשְׁתּוֹ אַחִיו⁴⁰). The addition of *bēta* to the text of Genesis changes the meaning of the verb *bo’a*.⁴¹ Thus, the sexual connotation of *bo’a* is omitted.

(3) When Judah instructs Tamar to remain as a widow in her father’s house (*Jub.* 41.6), the author omits the motive behind Judah’s words ‘lest also he would die like his brothers’ (Gen. 38.11). Whereas the Genesis version seems to imply that Judah was deceiving Tamar and did not intend to allow Selah/Selom to marry her, *Jubilees* omits it. Instead, it is the Canaanite wife Bedsuel who prohibits Selah/Selom from taking Tamar as his wife: ‘The boy grew up, but Bedsuel, the wife of Judah, did not let Selom marry (her)’ (*Jub.* 41.7).

(4) Judah is not mentioned as mourning his wife (*Jub.* 41.8; cf. Gen. 38.12 וינחם), although he does go to shear his sheep in Timnah the year after his wife dies. Judah is not attached to his Canaanite wife.⁴²

(5) The motive for Tamar to cheat Judah is also omitted. In Gen. 38.14, it is stated that Selah/Selom had already grown up, but Tamar had understood that she would not be given to him as a wife.⁴³ This would imply, in contrast to *Jub.* 41.7, that Judah did not want Tamar to marry his son. As Michael Segal puts it, ‘Judah’s only mistake was marrying a Canaanite woman. From that point on, he acted fairly and righteously.’⁴⁴

40. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 1039, notes that the phrase והיה אִם-בָּא in Gen. 38.9 reflects frequentative action in the past (‘whenever he went’). This is lacking in *Jubilees*. See Paul Joüon and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Subsidia biblica, 14/II; Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1996), §166p, §167g.

41. Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, p. 114; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 1039.

42. Loader, *Enoch, Levi, and Jubilees*, p. 181. Compare how Jacob mourns Leah (the mother of Levi and Judah!) in *Jub.* 36.21-24 (not mentioned in Genesis, except Gen. 49.31). Mourning for Rachel is not explicitly mentioned in *Jub.* 32.34 (cf. Gen. 35.19-20).

43. The Ge’ez translation of the LXX Gen. 38.14 makes the implicit visible: ‘She saw that Selom had grown up, but that he did not want to give her to him so that she would be his wife’ (*rə’yat kama ləḥqa Sēlom wa-wə’ātu-sa ’i-faqada yahabā kiyāhā təkuno bə’sita*).

44. Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, p. 61.

(6) In the rewriting of Jubilees, the sexual intercourse between Judah and Tamar happens *before* the payment is discussed.⁴⁵ In comparison with Gen. 38.15-16, where the payment is discussed immediately, in *Jub.* 41.10, Tamar answers to Judah's plead, 'Come'. Then it is bluntly stated: 'And he came'. In his critical edition of the Ethiopic *Jubilees*, VanderKam has added a sentence *wa-hallo məslēhā* (*Jub.* 41.12). This phrase, however, is not found in any Ethiopic manuscripts. It is found in the Latin palimpsest and also in a similar tradition in the anonymous *Syriac Chronicles*. The *Syriac Chronicles*, however, do not contain the sentences that depict the intercourse between Judah and Tamar before the payment is discussed, while the Latin version has both. In my opinion, the simplest solution to these differences is that the Ethiopic version preserves the original text. The Latin version harmonizes the text with the version of Genesis 38 as does the *Syriac Chronicles*. It is to be kept in mind too that the *Syriac Chronicles* is not a direct textual witness to *Jubilees* but simply uses similar traditions that may be directly or indirectly connected to *Jubilees*.⁴⁶ James Kugel understands *Jubilees*' addition in 41.10 as an invitation to visit Tamar's house and refers to the usage of *bo'a* in 41.5.⁴⁷ The difference is, however, the lack of *bēt* in 41.10 (cf. change number 2 above).

Halpern-Amaru correctly points out here that the 'creative reworking separates conception of the progenitor of the Davidic line [Perez, the ancestor of King David] from even the pretense of prostitution'.⁴⁸

(7) The Adullamite shepherd of Judah seeks after a prostitute in general, not a temple prostitute. This omits any connotations to false worship.⁴⁹ The slight difference, however, can simply be lost in translation.⁵⁰

45. Cf. Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, p. 115; Loader, *Enoch, Levi, and Jubilees*, p. 181.

46. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 1043 n. 37, understands *wa-hallo məslēhā* as referring to what had happened earlier. Thus, also he understands the verses so that the sexual intercourse happened before the payment was discussed, even though he defends the addition.

47. Kugel, *Walk through*, p. 182.

48. Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, p. 115.

49. So Loader, *Enoch, Levi, and Jubilees*, pp. 181-82.

50. In the MT Gen. 38.22, the shepherd is seeking 'temple or cult prostitute' (קדשה), not a general prostitute. The LXX, however, translates it as πόρνη, which is then rendered in Ge'ez with *zammā*, meaning a prostitute in general (Vul has *meretrix*). In *Jub.* 41.10, the Ge'ez version has *zammāwīt* meaning a female fornicator or prostitute, and the Latin version *fornicaria*. However, the MT Gen 38.15 has קדשה, translated as πόρνη, *zammā*, and *meretrix* respectively.

(8) In Gen. 38.26, Judah says, ‘She is more righteous than I am, because (כִּי־עָלִיכֶן) I did not give her to my son Selah’. In *Jubilees*, however, the phrase כִּי־עָלִיכֶן is not understood as an utterance by Judah, but rather as a statement by the narrator, the Angel of Presence: ‘Because of this, she was not given to Selom’ (*wa-ba ’anta-zə ’i-tawəhbat la-Sēlom*, *Jub.* 41.20). Thus, the motive for Judah saying ‘she is more righteous than me’ is understood to refer to the fact that due his intercourse with Tamar, she was not given to Selah/Selom. This change is in accordance with the omission of such passages that would imply that Judah would not allow his son Selah/Selom to marry her (numbers 3 and 5 above).⁵¹

In addition to these minor omissions and changes, the author adds a section which deals with Judah’s regret and his plea to God over his transgression, namely that he slept with his daughter-in-law. The Angel of Presence also deals with halakic matters pertaining to such a transgression (41.23-28):

41.23 Judah knew that what he had done was evil because he had lain with his daughter-in-law. In his own view he considered it evil, and he knew that he had done wrong and erred, for he had uncovered his sons’ covering. He began to lament and plead before the Lord because of his sin. 41.24 We told him in a dream that it would be forgiven for him because he had pleaded very much and because he had lamented and did not do (it) again. 41.25 He had forgiveness because he turned from his sin and from his ignorance, for the sin was a great one before our God. Anyone who acts in this way— anyone who lies with his mother-in-law—is to be burned in fire so that he burns in it because impurity and contamination have come on them. They are to be burned.

41.26 Now you order the Israelites that there is to be no impurity among them, for anyone who lies with his daughter-in-law or his mother-in-law has done something that is impure. They are to burn the man who lay with her and the woman. Then he will make anger and punishment desist from Israel. 41.27 We told Judah that his two sons had not lain with her. For this reason his descendants were established according to another lineage⁵² and

51. So also Kugel, *Walk through*, p. 183. If read literally, the MT (and the LXX) version could be understood as referring to a retrospective utterance by Judah (‘for therefore / because of it I did not give her to Selom’). In *Jubilees*, the subject is changed from the 1st to 3rd person singular, making the interpretation explicit, not only a potentiality.

52. VanderKam translates ‘for another generation’. But the Ge’ez *nagad* means, according to Wolf Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge’ez (Classical Ethiopic): Ge’ez-English / English-Ge’ez with an index of the Semitic roots* (Wiesbaden: Otto

would not be uprooted. 41.28 For in his integrity he had gone and demanded punishment because Judah had wanted to burn her on the basis of the law which Abraham had commanded his children.

The halakic section is connected to other halakic sections in *Jubilees*, above all to the commandments that Abraham had given to his sons in chs. 20 and 22 pertaining to sexuality and marriage. The mention of Abraham's commandments in 41.28 is a direct reference to the commands Abraham gave in 20.3-6 (cf. 22.16-22):

20.3 that we should dismiss all uncleanness and sexual impurity from among us. 20.4 If any woman or girl among you commits a sexual offence, burn her in fire; they are not to commit sexual offences (by) following their eyes and their hearts so that they take wives for themselves from the Canaanite women, because the descendants of Canaan will be uprooted from the earth. 20.5 He told them about the punishment of the giants and the punishment of Sodom—how they were condemned because of their wickedness; because of the sexual impurity, uncleanness, and corruption among themselves they died in (their) sexual impurity. 20.6 Now you keep yourselves from all sexual impurity and uncleanness and from all the contamination of sin so that you do not make our name into a curse, your entire lives into a (reason for) hissing and all your children into something that is destroyed by the sword. Then you will be accursed like Sodom, and all who remain of you like the people of Gomorrah.

It is worth noting that the motive for Judah's demand is that Tamar had committed a sexual offence. Thus, the verdict that Judah gives is related to Tamar's general sexual offence, namely that instead of abstaining from sexual intercourse she had been found to be pregnant by 'whoredom' (*ba-zəmmut*, *Jub.* 41.16)⁵³ and had thus committed 'impure acts' (*rək^vsa*; *inmunditiam*) in Israel.

What is interesting in this connection is v. 41.27: 'We told Judah that his two sons had not lain with her. For this reason his seed was established according to another lineage and would not be uprooted' (*wa-la-Yəhudā-ni nagarnāhu kama 'i-sakabu məslēhā kəl'ēhomu daqiqu ba'ənta-zə qoma*

Harrassowitz, 1987), p. 391, *inter alia*, 'tribe, clan, lineage, family', having thus a connotation to a line, not a generation. This is also true in how the root is used in the Ethiopic OT. Thus, Judah's seed 'remained' (*qoma*) according to another lineage (*la-kālā' nagad*), that is not through the 'illegitimate' sons that he had begotten with the Canaanite Bedsuel, but rather through the sons he will have with the Aramite Tamar.

53. This detail is left out in Latin, which states only that *ecce thamar nurus tua in utero habet*.

zar'u la-kālā' nagad wa-'i-yāššērrawu). This is not related to Judah's sexual crime of sleeping with his daughter-in-law in particular. What is at stake here is both Judah and Tamar's integrity from Canaanite impurity.⁵⁴

First, if the only children from Judah had been the children to whom the Canaanite wife Bedsuel had given birth, they, and their offspring, would have been under the curse of Canaan and would have thus been uprooted. Actually, the same commandment by Abraham that is referred to in 41.28 mentions this: 'because the seed of Canaan will be uprooted from the earth' (*'āsma yāššērrō zar'a Kanā'an 'ām-mādr, Jub. 20.4*). *Second*, Tamar is also 'pure' from Canaanite seed, given that the sons of Judah did not have sexual intercourse with her. She remained a virgin. *Third*, in this sense the marriages were not actually consummated. Thus, Tamar, although being Judah's daughter-in-law, was not actually a real daughter-in-law.⁵⁵ Therefore, the sons she gives birth to are not technically under danger of being 'destroyed by the sword' due their parents' sexual impurity (*Jub. 20.6*).

The halakic discussion pertaining to the particular sexual transgression that is related to having intercourse with one's daughter-in-law or mother-in-law is also important in this regard. Someone could use Judah as an example *par excellence* that such a sexual offence could be tolerated: he had had sex with his daughter-in-law!⁵⁶ The author of *Jubilees*, however, sees this differently. *First*, Judah is not deceiving Tamar. *Second*, he had been going to give Tamar to his third son too, but his wife had prohibited it. *Third*, Tamar had not had sex with his sons, so she was not actually his daughter-in-law, but only seemed to be daughter-in-law (Judah did not know this before the angels revealed it to him).⁵⁷ Hence, Judah did

54. Although the verb *qoma* is used in *Jub. 41.27*, Judah is not fulfilling the Levirate duty here, which Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, pp. 62-63, argues. Er was a son of Canaanite Bedsuel, and had never consummated the marriage with sexual union. Perez is not reckoned as Er's descendant, but Judah's. Also, the parallel between *Jub. 41.4* and v. 27 proposed by Segal is not convincing, *anšā' zar'a la-aḥuka* (v. 4) vs. *qoma zar'u la-kālā' nagad* (v. 27). The alternative proposition on pp. 63-64, however, is similar to what is proposed here.

55. Although Tamar is called 'daughter-in-law' in the narrative, highlighted by VanderKam, *Jubilees*, pp. 1052-55, legally v. 27 makes it clear that this was not the case.

56. Similarly VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 1052.

57. Compare also Abraham's words to Jacob in *Jub. 22.14* 'May he purify you from all filthy pollution so that you may be pardoned for all the guilt of your sins of ignorance' (*'ām-k"āllu 'abbasā za-ba 'i-yā'mmāro gēgāyaka*), with that of 41.25, 'He had forgiveness because he turned from his sin and from his ignorance' (*wa-kona lotu saryat 'āsma tamayta 'ām-ḥaṭi'atu wa-'ām-'i-yā'mmārotu*). This is part of Abraham's

regret what he had done (i.e. having immoral sexual intercourse with what seemed to be his daughter-in-law), and pleaded to God for forgiveness, showing signs of repentance (not touching her again). He cannot, thus, be used as an example. Additionally, the angel prohibits such an interpretation. The door for such usage of the story is, thus, closed. This motive for halakic elaboration need not be in direct contradiction with how the author modified the actual story, there might actually just be two different axes to grind.⁵⁸ He wanted to (1) defend Judah and exclude any possibility of using Judah as a bad example, but also to (2) defend Judah's genealogy.

In the end, the most important thing for the author is to show how Judah's descendants can 'remain' (*qoma*) even though he had had a Canaanite wife. The sons begotten by him from the Canaanite Bedsuel died (and were also deemed evil), but his offspring 'remained according to another lineage' (41.27). That lineage was legitimate, since Tamar was not actually his daughter-in-law and since she was an Aramite. Er and Onan, and other descendants of Jacob who did not survive with him to Egypt, were placed (*tašayyamu*; ms. 12 *tasammayu*) among the 70 foreign nations (*Jub.* 44.34; cf. 16.17). The modifications thus rescue the Davidic lineage from sexual immorality.⁵⁹

2.4. *Judah in the Joseph Story (Jubilees 42–44)*

According to Buisch, Judah 'plays no expanded role in the Joseph story'.⁶⁰ This is partly true, although some hints might give a clue to an enhanced status of Judah. First and foremost, as Betsy Halpern-Amaru has noted,

testimony to Jacob in 22.10-24, where marrying Canaanites is prohibited and descendants of Canaan are meant to be uprooted (*la-šərrāwē*, 22.20). According to Kugel, this part does not stem from his proposed Interpolator. So the connection of 41.25 with 22.14 at least weakens Kugel's theory about the Interpolator. On the theory, see Kugel, *Walk through*.

58. *Contra* Kugel, *Walk through*, pp. 183-84; Segal, *Book of Jubilees*, pp. 65-72.

59. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 1045, portrays a miserable picture of Judah: 'His marriage to a Canaanite woman had been a predictable disaster, two of his sons and his wife were dead, he lacked a married male heir, he failed to keep his word regarding his third son (allowing his miserable wife to cancel out his promise to Tamar), and he was now guilty of sexual misconduct'. Perhaps so, but *in the limits of the known narrative in Gen. 38*, the rewriting shows a considerable apology for Judah, as shown above. The author played the cards given to him, and did so quite geniously, given that he could still place the blame on the Canaanite wife, defend Judah and Tamar's sexual integrity before their misconduct, and push the Canaanite descendants of Judah out of the picture, in the end legitimizing the Davidic lineage.

60. Buisch, 'Absence and Influence', p. 264.

Judah's special role in getting rid of Joseph in first place is omitted in *Jubilees* (*Jub.* 34.10-14; cf. *Gen.* 37.13-36).⁶¹

The enhanced status of Judah can also be seen when *Gen.* 43.1-15 and *Jub.* 42.15-20 are compared. In *Gen.* 43.1-15, when Jacob sends his sons to return to Egypt, Judah, on one hand, and the sons in plural on the other, all speak with him. However, in *Jub.* 42.15-20, it is Reuben who speaks first (*Jub.* 42.18; cf. *Gen.* 42.37-38 before Jacob is asking them to return to Egypt) but is rejected by Jacob. Then, immediately, Judah steps up (*qarba*) and takes on the leadership (as in Genesis), and is immediately accepted without another word from Jacob (*Jub.* 42.19-20; cf. *Gen.* 43.3-10). A contrast between Reuben and Judah as leader is thus created: Reuben is rejected, Judah accepted.

Joseph's favoritism of Benjamin is played down in *Jubilees*. Only *Jub.* 42.23 (the bigger portion of food) remains, while the favoritism shown in *Gen.* 45.23 (an extra portion of silver and clothes) is omitted in *Jub.* 43.21-22. Whereas in *Gen.* 46.28 Jacob sends Judah before him to Joseph, in *Jub.* 44.9 Judah is sent to Joseph in order to 'investigate' (*kama yāstahayəṣ*) the land of Goshen. The same verb *'astahayaṣa* is used when Joseph is accusing the brothers of spying (*Jub.* 42.5). This word choice can, at least in the Ge'ez layer, allude to Judah's role as a warrior, given that Jacob seems to be worried about coming to Egypt before God encourages him undertake the journey (*Jub.* 44.1-6).

Otherwise Judah's role remains as the leader of the remaining brothers, as in Genesis.

2.5. *Rebekah and Isaac bless Levi and Judah (Jubilees 31)*

After the detailed survey above, it is finally time to return to the question of Isaac's blessing. In *Jubilees* 31, Jacob is visiting his parents with Judah and Levi. As Jacob arrives with his sons, Rebekah comes out to greet them. When she sees Levi and Judah, she recognizes them and blesses them (*Jub.* 31.7):

Through you Abraham's seed will become famous. You will become a blessing on the earth. (*bəkəmu yəkabbər zar'a 'Abrəhām wa-'antəmu təkawwənu la-barakat ba-diba mədr*)

In *Jub.* 25.18, Rebekah blesses Jacob and says that Jacob's *whole* seed is to become blessed and holy. In ch. 22, Abraham makes it clear that Jacob is to take his place on earth and that all the blessings and promises God had

61. Halpern Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, p. 112.

blessed and given to Abraham would be Jacob's. The Abrahamic promise, however, is to be especially realized through both Judah and Levi. It is through them that Abraham's seed will become famous (*yakkabbār*), thus alluding to the promise that Abraham's name will become great. It is these two sons who are to become the blessing.⁶²

After Rebekah has blessed Levi and Judah, Jacob comes to Isaac, and Levi and Judah are introduced to the patriarch (*Jub.* 31.8-11). Subsequently, Isaac blesses Levi and Judah in a scene that has been highly influenced by Jacob's blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh in Genesis 48 (*Jub.* 31.12-20):⁶³

31.12 A spirit of prophecy descended into his mouth. He took Levi by his right hand and Judah by his left hand. 31.13 He turned to Levi first and began to bless him first. He said to him,

'May the Lord of everything—he is the Lord of all ages—bless you and your sons throughout all ages.

31.14 May the Lord give you and your seed greatness and honor;⁶⁴ may he make you and your seed (alone) out of all humanity approach him to serve in his temple like the angels of the presence and like the holy ones. The seed of your sons will be like them in honor, greatness, and holiness. May he make them great throughout all the ages.

31.15 They will be princes, judges, [and leaders]⁶⁵ of all the seed of Jacob's sons. (*wa-mak^wānnānta wa-masāfānta wa-malā'akta yakawwānu la-k^wallu zar'a wāluda Yā'qob*)

62. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 850: 'The covenant promises will continue and come to fruition through them'.

63. On the relationship between Gen. 48 and *Jub.* 31, see Buisch, 'Absence and Influence'.

64. In VanderKam's edition *wa-la-zar'aka 'abaya 'abāya la-kābur* ('to your seed great greatness for honour'), Latin *semini tuo magno intellegere gloriam eius* ('your great seed to know his honour') VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 845, reads the phrase according to ms. 21, *'abaya wa-kābra* ('greatness and honour'), and concludes: 'Perhaps it is safest to conclude that the text speaks about two gifts from the Lord to Levi and his descendants: greatness and honor'.

65. The Ge'ez *wa-malā'akta* 'and leaders' is not found in Latin which has only *et principes et iudices erunt omni semini iacob*. Although *wa-malā'akta* shows similarity to Levi's role in Mal. 2.7 (מלאך יהוה צבאות הוא), it might be a later addition. In the parallel passage in *ALD* 13.16 there is a Hebraism ראשין ושפטין according to Jonas C. Greenfield, Michael E. Stone, and Esther Eshel (eds.), *The Aramaic Levi Document: Edition, Translation, Commentary* (SVTP, 19; Leiden: Brill, 2004), p. 214. According to James Kugel, *The Ladder of Jacob: Ancient Interpretations of the Biblical Story of Jacob and his Children* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 253 n. 42, *ALD* is here influenced by the Hebrew text of *Jub.*

They will declare the word of the Lord justly
and will justly judge all his verdicts.
They will tell my ways to Jacob
and my paths to Israel.
The blessing of the Lord will be placed in their mouth,
so that they may bless all the seed of the beloved.

...

31.18 Then he said to Judah: ‘May the Lord give you the power and strength
to trample on all who hate you. (*yahabka ’ægzi ’abhēr hayla wa-ṣan’a kama
təkidomu la-k^wəllomu ’əlla yəšallə’uka*)

Be a prince—you and one of your sons—for Jacob’s sons. (*mak^wannən kun
’anta wa-’ahadu ’əmanna wəludəka la-wəluda Yā’qob*)

May your name and the name of your sons be one that goes and travels
around in the entire earth and the regions. (*səməka wa-səma wəludəka yəkun
za-yahawwər wa-za-yānsosu wəsta k^wəllā mədr wa-’ahgur*) (cf. *Jub.* 31.7)

Then the nations will be frightened before you; (*’amēhā yəfarrəhu ’ahzāb
’əm-qədma gaššəka*)

all the nations will be disturbed; (*wa-yəthawwaku k^wəllomu ’ahzāb*)

all peoples will be disturbed. (*wa-k^wəllu həzb yəthawwaku*)

31.19 May Jacob’s help be in you; (*bəka yəkun rad’ētu la-Yā’qob*)

May Israel’s safety be found in you. (*wa-bəka tətrakab madhānita ’əsrā’ēl*)

31.20 At the time when you sit on the honorable throne that is rightly yours,
(*wa-’ama ’əlata tənabbər wəsta manbara kəbra šədqəka*)

there will be great peace for all the seed of the beloved’s sons. (*təkawwən
’abāy salām la-k^wəllu zar’a wəludu la-fəqur*)

The one who blesses you will be blessed, (*za-yəbārrəkaka buruk*)

and all who hate and trouble you, (*wa-k^wəllomu ’əlla yəšallə’uka
wa-yəšaqəyuka*)

and those, too, who curse you (*wa-’əlla-hi yəraggəmuka*)

will be uprooted and destroyed from the earth (*yəššərrawu wa-yəthagg^wəlu
’əm-mədr*)

and are to be cursed’ (*wa-yəkunu rəgumāna*).

I have earlier analysed Isaac’s blessing of Judah elsewhere.⁶⁶ There I argued that the blessing of Judah alludes to many Davidic promises.

31.15. See also Kugel, *Walk through*, p. 362. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 845, opts for *parablepsis* in the Latin version. Both *mak^wannən* (see below) and *masfən* can either mean a judge, ruler or governor. See Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 287, 488. *Masfən* is used, e.g., in Eth. Gen. 36; Judges; 1 Sam. 18.29 (MT LXX 18.30); Ps. 67.27 (MT 68.28); Neh. 12.26.

66. Tanskanen, ‘He Established’, pp. 109-16. There I argued that although Ps. 78 is highly utilized by the author of *Jubilees* in many different ways, the author did not make use of the possibility that Ps. 78.70-72 could have given to his view on Judah

Jubilees 31.18 seems to have been inspired by Ps. 89.21-30 and Gen. 49.8-10. Common roots in the Ge'ez layer of Ps. 89.21-30 with *Jub.* 31.18 are *rd'* 'help' (Eth. Ps. 89.21), *sn'* 'strength, strengthen' (Eth. Ps. 89.21), and *sl'* 'enemy, hate' (Eth. Ps. 89.22-23). These are, of course, common roots, but the thematic link is otherwise clear.⁶⁷ In Ps. 89.21-30, God promises to strengthen David (cf. *Jub.* 31.18), and destroy his enemies (cf. *Jub.* 31.18). David's horn shall be exalted in God's name (cf. *Jub.* 31.18), and David's hand will be on the sea and rivers (cf. Judah's name travelling in *Jub.* 31.18). God will establish David's offspring forever and his throne as the days of the heavens (cf. *Jub.* 31.18, 20). Even though bad apples would appear in David's lineage, the throne will remain (Ps. 89.31-38). Enemies are mentioned in Gen. 49.8-10 too, as is the leadership status of Judah over his brothers.

Jubilees 31.18, 20 allude to 2 Sam. 7.8-11. In 2 Sam. 7.8, David will be נגיד over Israel. The term is translated as *mak^wannan* in Ethiopic 2 Sam. 7.8 (plural *mak^wānnanta* is used in 2 Sam. 7.11 rendering the LXX κριτὰς which rendered שפטים).⁶⁸ God will make David's name great (2 Sam. 7.9), as Judah's name will become the one that travels across the lands (*Jub.* 31.18). There will be a rest from their enemies (2 Sam. 7.11; cf.

as a *typos* for David or Davidic future king. For the following discussion, see also VanderKam, *Jubilees*, pp. 859-61, and Laato, *Star is Rising*, pp. 274-75, referred to in my article.

67. I do not propose that the translators of Ethiopic *Jubilees* looked to these other texts when translating (or vice versa). The use of same roots in two different translations might, however, reveal something of the original and strengthen the connection, even though it could be accidental.

68. The root *k^wnn* alludes to judging and ruling in general. In the Ethiopic OT, *mak^wannan* is used to render many different terms, for example נשיא (pl. in Exod. 16.22; 18.21; 34.31; Ezek. 21.17 [Eth. Ezek. 21.12]; 22.6), נגיד // ἡγούμενος (1 Sam. 25.30; 2 Sam. 6.21), שפט // δικαστής (1 Sam. 8.1); מלך // ἄρχων (Ezek. 37.24; the end of v. 25 is lacking in Ethiopic [Accordance modules]). In *Jubilees*, it is found at least in 5.16; 33.18 (God is righteous judge); 11.11; 17.16; 18.9, 12; 48.2, 12, 15 (Prince Mastema); 15.32 (God is solely Israel's ruler, not any angel); 23.19 (general political ruler, *cum eo qui potestatem exercet*); 30.2 (Hamor is the ruler of the land, *princeps*); 31.15 (Levi's sons become *mak^wānnanta*), 18 (see above); 40.8 (Joseph is ruler of the whole Egypt; cf. also pl. 'princes' in the same v.); 42.9 (ruler of Egypt). In the Latin version that has survived, 18.12; 30.2; 31.15, 18; 42.9 and 48.2 have *princeps* in singular or plural, whereas 23.19 *qui potestatem exercet*, and 40.8 *et accepit potestem ioseph in totam terram aegypti Et dilexerunt eum omnes principes*. Vulgata uses *princeps* in Ezek. 34-46. A possibility arises that the original Hebrew term could be either נשיא or נגיד. Since the allusions can be explained with 2 Sam. 7.8-11, נגיד remains the more probable option in the Hebrew *Vorlage* of *Jubilees*.

Jub. 31.20). Isaiah 9.7 mentions also ‘peace’ and the ‘throne of David’ together. These two themes are also found in *Jub.* 31.20. The great peace in *Jub.* 31.20 may also allude to the peace under Solomon’s reign (1 Kgs 4.25 [NRSV]). That peace is alluded to in Mic. 4.4 and Zech. 3.10 (cf. 1 Macc. 14.11-12), giving that motif some possible messianic overtones in later reception.

The great peace is also a theme in the clearly eschatological part of *Jubilees* (23.24-31). In the eschatological future, all the days of the covenant people will be peaceful and joyful (*wa-k^wallon mawā’alīhomu ba-salām wa-ba-fāššəḥā*, 23.29), God’s servants will rise and see ‘great peace’ (*salām ‘abiy*), and ‘his enemies’ (*ṣalā’to*)⁶⁹ will be punished (23.30). Although there is no human figure bringing this peace and healing—the agent is God—there is at least a possible connection to Isaac’s blessing of Judah. It should be noted, however, that primarily these verses are influenced by Psalms 90 and Isaiah 57, 65–66.⁷⁰

Both 2 Samuel 7 and Psalm 89 underline that the Davidic throne shall remain forever. This gave impetus for messianic expectations in early Judaism. 2 Samuel 7 was important in this regard, and recently Andrew Chester has shown how Psalm 89, which is connected to that tradition, might have been influential at Qumran.⁷¹

Regarding the two brothers, it is clear that Levi is the prominent one. This is certain because he is blessed first, with the right hand, as is the case for Ephraim, the prominent one, in Jacob’s blessing in Genesis 48. Levi’s descendants will become princes (*mak^wānnanta; principes*, *Jub.* 31.15) and judges too. There is, nevertheless, not one particular descendant of Levi who is specifically picked for the task, and even the terms behind the use of *mak^wānnan / princeps* might have varied in the Hebrew *Vorlage*, in v. 18 נגיד, in v. 15 ראשים.⁷² Most probably the hierarchy between the priests and the king is understood along the lines of the Deuteronomic law on the kings (Deut. 17.14-20), where the king is under the law that according to *Jubilees* is on Levites hands (*Jub.* 45.16).⁷³

69. Mss. 38, 42, 44, 47, 48, 58, and 63 have ‘their’.

70. James L. Kugel, ‘The Jubilees Apocalypse’, *DSD* 1.3 (1994), pp. 322-37; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, pp. 697-702.

71. Chester, *Messiah and Exaltation*, pp. 222-24, 247-49.

72. Especially so, if *ALD* 13.16 is dependent on *Jub.* 31.15, as Kugel proposes (see above), or even if they have used a similar tradition, as Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, pp. 146-55, argues. That v. 15 had ראש is also proposed by Rapp, *Jakob in Bet-El*, p. 216.

73. Scott, *On Earth as in Heaven*, pp. 176-77.

If the blessing of Levi concerns the office of the high priest (רִאשִׁים), the contrast with *Jub.* 31.18, mentioning one specific son of Judah, then becomes even more relevant. Some have interpreted it to mean one specific person in history, such as David, which is one possible option.⁷⁴ The idea of one son in its time only, however, should be excluded, because then the blessing of Levi would most likely have been formulated in a similar manner.⁷⁵

Given that *Jubilees* is an apocalyptic writing with a clear interest in the future, writing about the past in order to give right interpretation for the present and what is to come, I think the blessing of Judah (and Levi) should also be interpreted eschatologically.⁷⁶ *Jubilees* 31.20 mentions that Judah (or one of his sons) will take the throne that is rightly his. Even if this had happened in the past (David or Solomon?), this was not the actual reality in the present time of the author. A great peace which has eschatological overtones, will later become reality.⁷⁷ From the author's perspective, the sight is on the future.

Alternatively, if the blessing is first and foremost about the two eternal lines or institutions, as Eric Mason has proposed, the situation remains mostly the same.⁷⁸ Possibly the author has depicted the future with the help of those sociological models he is familiar with from history (e.g. Haggai–Zechariah): there should be a high priesthood along with Davidic kingship ruling Israel, through which the blessing of Abraham becomes reality for all Abraham's seed, that is Jacob (*Jub.* 31.7) too. Given the historical situation of the author, either before the Maccabean revolt or after it in the Hasmonean period in the second century BCE, that is not the reality.⁷⁹ Since the author emphasizes the eternity of these two lines or institutions, it affirms that the author is

74. Kugel, *Walk through*, p. 151; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 859.

75. *Contra* Kugel, *Walk through*, p. 151; Laato, *Star is Rising*, p. 274; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, p. 859.

76. *Contra* Collins, *Scepter and Star*, p. 96. On *Jubilees* as an apocalypse of sorts, see John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 3rd edn, 2016), pp. 99-106; *idem*, 'The Genre of the Book of *Jubilees*', in Eric F. Mason (ed.), *Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam* (JSJSup, 153; Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 737-55.

77. Cf. Berger, *Jubiläen*, p. 479, who refers to *Jub.* 23.30 and 25.20 and comments: 'Es handelt sich demnach um ein Attribut speziell der eschatologischen Heilszeit'.

78. Mason, 'You Are a Priest Forever', p. 127.

79. On different proposals on the date of *Jubilees*, see, e.g., VanderKam, *Jubilees*, pp. 25-38.

waiting for a future Davidic king. This emphasis is seen in how Jacob reacts to Isaac's blessing and what the Angel of Presence says to Moses after his narration (*Jub.* 31.31-32):

31.31 When Jacob recalled the prayer with which his father had blessed him and his two sons—Levi and Judah—he was very happy and blessed the God of his fathers Abraham and Isaac. 31.32 He said, “Now I know that I and my sons, too, have an eternal hope (*tasfā za-la-‘ālām*) before the God of all.” This is the way it is ordained regarding the two of them, and it is entered for them as an eternal testimony (*ba-səm‘ za-la-‘ālām*) on the heavenly tablets just as Isaac blessed them.

Given that the author is speaking—with very few exceptions—of only past events with the voice of the Angel of Presence to Moses, Mark Boda's observation regarding messianic expectations in the Old Testament becomes noteworthy.

Although references to ‘messianic’ figures may have referred to ‘present’ figures in their ‘original’ historical settings, they have been taken up to encourage future hope in a later era. Furthermore, when these texts establish the validity of ‘anointed’ figures in the past and note their enduring quality (especially references to *‘ōlām*), they are establishing something that has serious implications for future hope.⁸⁰

Jubilees 31.31-32 thus emphasize the eternality of both the Levite priesthood and Davidic kingship.

What makes *Jubilees* interesting in this regard is that the Davidic kingship is not omitted, even though *Jubilees* makes use of many priestly traditions (e.g. Malachi) and is very fond of the priestly stream of leadership. These traditions themselves are mostly silent about the royal stream of leadership.⁸¹ Noteworthy too, is that Isaac's blessing of Judah here is unique in comparison with *ALD*, which speaks only of Isaac blessing Levi. If *Jubilees* is using a common source with *ALD* or *ALD* itself, then the blessing of Judah clearly is an innovation by the author of *Jubilees*.⁸²

80. Boda, ‘Figuring the Future’, p. 40.

81. On Malachi and messianic expectations, see Boda, ‘Figuring the Future’, pp. 66-72. Concerning influence of Malachi on *Jubilees*, see Valve, *Early Modes of Exegesis*, pp. 63-89.

82. Cf Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, p. 152: ‘The blessing, though somewhat difficult to understand as a part of *Jubilees*, is at any rate an addition to the apocryphon and a stranger to the LPT [=Levi-Priestly Tradition]’. In *ALD*, many traits that in tradition often belong to Judah, are attributed to Levi. On this, see Greenfield, Stone

3. Conclusions

We shall return to the definition of ‘messiah’ offered at the beginning of this contribution: a messiah is an eschatological figure, who has a role to play in future. Does the author of *Jubilees* betray expectations concerning such a figure, royal or priestly?

The question might be answered either positively or negatively, depending on what is emphasized in the definition. My desire is to have demonstrated above that Judah is an important figure in *Jubilees*, although Levi (high priest) is the more prominent one. The author of *Jubilees* waited for the Davidic kingship to become reality in the future. The importance of the Davidic covenant is in the fore in both Judah’s date of birth and also in how the author changes the story of Judah and Tamar. Judah’s role as a warrior leader is emphasized in how Judah is depicted in chs. 34 and 38, and even in the rewritten Joseph story. The Davidic traditions in 2 Samuel 7, Psalm 89 and Genesis 49 are alluded to in Isaac’s blessing of Judah in 31.18-20.

The problem is, however, that neither priests nor kings are mentioned in those passages that are directly eschatological in nature, namely chs. 1 and 23.⁸³ How big of a role does the Levitical priesthood or Davidic kingship play in ‘those last days’? This remains somewhat ambiguous, and thus a scholar who does not see widespread messianic expectations during the Second Century BCE, and who emphasizes that the ‘messiah’ should have a distinct role in eschatology, might argue that there is no messianic expectations in *Jubilees*. On the other hand, if a scholar has a more positive view on the possibility that messianic expectations were more common during this period, then *Jubilees* presents yet one more text which cumulatively builds up that picture. Messianic expectations are not at the fore, but neither are they omitted. The Levitical priesthood and Davidic kingship are eternally valid. This is not, however, actualized during the author’s lifetime. Moreover, it is clear that the ‘messianology’ itself is not developed further.

The author of *Jubilees* did wait that a Davidic king would take his throne once again, and that a great peace (with eschatological overtones) would prevail. The question of why the author mentioned this, even

and Eshel, *Aramaic Levi*, pp. 35-38. Perhaps the prohibition given to Levi of ‘defiling seed’ with ‘harlots’ (זניאן) in *ALD* 6:4 also has an edge over the story of Judah and Tamar? Contrast this with the analysis above.

83. Unless the emphasis on studying the law and understanding the commandments on chs. 1 and 23 implicitly presume priests since their task is to teach the Torah.

though those expectations do not seem to be central to his view on the future, remains open. He could have omitted such references if he had wanted to. Instead, it remains as an eternal hope before God, and so it is engraved on the heavenly tablets (*Jub.* 31.32).

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