THE CONTEXTUALIZED NOAH: THE DELUGE PATRIARCH IN GENESIS, 
JUBILEES, AND PSEUDO-PHILO

Thesis
Submitted to
The College of Arts and Sciences of the 
UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree of
Master of Arts in Theological Studies

By
James Culver Wykes
Dayton, Ohio
December, 2012

UNIVERSITY of
DAYTON
THE CONTEXTUALIZED NOAH: THE DELUGE PATRIARCH IN GENESIS,  

JUBILEES, AND PSEUDO-PHILO

Name: Wykes, James C.

APPROVED BY:

__________________________
Silviu N. Bunta, Ph.D.
Faculty Advisor

__________________________
Fred W. Jenkins, Ph.D.
Faculty Reader

__________________________
Pamela M. Thimmes, Ph.D.
Faculty Reader
THE CONTEXTUALIZED NOAH: THE DELUGE PATRIARCH IN GENESIS,
JUBILEES, AND PSEUDO-PHilo

Name: Wykes, James C.
University of Dayton

Advisor: Dr. Silviu N. Bunta

ABSTRACT

The figure of Noah—who appears in the biblical book of Genesis as well as this story’s retelling in Jubilees and Pseudo-Philo—consists of a complex set of characteristics. A number of them are malleable, meaning that each work adapts Noah for their specific purpose: Genesis uses him as an axis of history; Jubilees, a priest; and Pseudo-Philo, a prophet. However, despite their diversity, several qualities remain constant in all three texts, regardless of their particularities. This thesis enumerates which qualities retain their stability and which ones change, as well as attempting to explain what about this character might have served the uses of this varied group of authors.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................. iii

I. INTRODUCTION ...................................................................................................... 1
   Overview of Project ................................................................................................. 5
   Previous Research ................................................................................................. 8

II. THE BOOK OF GENESIS ......................................................................................... 12
   Analogues and Parallels ......................................................................................... 14
   Central Themes and Analysis ................................................................................ 16
   Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 28

III. THE BOOK OF JUBILEES ...................................................................................... 29
   Ancient Chronological Systems ............................................................................. 32
   Noah and the Flood in Jubilees ............................................................................. 34
   Conclusions .......................................................................................................... 53

IV. LIBER ANTIQUITATUM BIBLICARUM (LAB) / PSEUDO-PHILO ......................... 54
   Pseudo-Philo and Noah ......................................................................................... 55
   Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 74

V. ANALYSIS .............................................................................................................. 75
   Common Elements ............................................................................................... 80
   Why Noah? .......................................................................................................... 82

VI. CONCLUSION ...................................................................................................... 89

BIBLIOGRAPHY ......................................................................................................... 93
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Literature surrounding the figure of Noah is not as numerous as that surrounding the biblically-enigmatic Enoch or the Law-dispensing Moses. However, the combination of his role in wiping clean the slate of creation and his participation in the flood facilitated his numerous appearances in a diverse cross-section of second Temple literature. In addition, several mysterious and seemingly contradictory elements of his life—his description as “righteous,” his drunkenness, and his curse upon Ham—prompted explanation.

Two texts, Jubilees and Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (also known as Pseudo-Philo) attempt to provide explanation of the biblical text in a unique way: by altering the actual text itself\(^1\). This method of exegesis has received some surface attention, but has not been analyzed comprehensively\(^2\). In these texts, Noah is presented as exemplifying a particular set of characteristics that find their origins in the gaps of the biblical text.

While it is true that Jubilees and Pseudo-Philo must be viewed in light of the biblical text, it is also apparent that the pseudepigraphic texts must be seen as independent narratives. Many of their changes and omissions are prompted by

---

\(^1\) That is to say, these texts expand, paraphrase, and ignore particular elements of the text they wish to explain.

\(^2\) David Instone Brewer, Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE (Tubingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1992), 177.
overarching concerns, so they are not merely repositories of traditions. James Bowley and John Reeves note the problem with the use of “biblical” as a benchmark for analysis:

Our descriptive language must be altered […]; instead of biblical ‘expansions’ or ‘rewritings,’ we should perhaps speak of ‘biblically allied,’ ‘biblically affiliated,’ or ‘biblically related’ literatures in order to avoid imposing uncritical notions of priority. Moreover, our accustomed way of perceiving and categorizing how ‘Bible’ interacted with these ‘parallel’ literary corpora will require a serious overhaul. Instead of measuring all biblically allied or affiliated literatures against ‘the Bible’ and then assigning labels like ‘expanded Bible,’ ‘rewritten Bible,’ paraphrased Bible,’ ‘distorted Bible,’ and the like to those renditions which depart textually and/or thematically from ‘the Bible’ of the Masoretes, we should rather consider the bulk of this material, both biblical and non-biblical, as a single culturally variegated literary continuum which juxtaposes a number of alternative or parallel ways of recounting a particular story or tradition.

Thus, the analysis of narrative units in Jubilees and Pseudo-Philo must be kept in view of the unique prerogatives of each text without appealing solely to preconceptions regarding its relationship to biblical canon(s).

This is not to say that the deviations from the base (biblical) text are unimportant. On the contrary, these can act as indicators, insights into the author’s purposes. Far from being a static document, the biblical text was to be kept constantly relevant; the modern notion of textual purity was not operative within these contexts. The entire venture can be seen as the movement of ideas from sub-textual (implied) to textual (stated). Changes were often prompted by a variety of concerns by the author (or authors). Sometimes these changes emerged from a concern for self-justification. For communities ostensibly based on particular aspects of the biblical text, the foundation of the community’s own practices in a sacred era predating their own provides a powerful validation. Other

---

4 Due to the complicated textual situation of some of these texts, it is possible that some—if not all—of these texts have multiple authors. Despite this, the writer(s) of these texts will generally be referenced in the singular, “author,” for the sake of linguistic clarity.
changes reflect an understanding of the world that had changed in various ways. Genesis reflects a belief in a pattern of human behavior redeemed by key individuals. Jubilees senses the Temple practices underlying the Genesis narrative and places them in the foreground to promote its sacral calendar based around Temple worship, schematizing time liturgically from its very beginnings. Pseudo-Philo extends Genesis’ pattern of human behavior to the final judgment and apocalypse. Still other changes are merely exegetical in character, explaining difficult passages. These explanations are sometimes systematic, stemming from the overall ideas of the community, but others are stated in passing, implying that they had been formulated prior to the writing of the specific text. A small number of these “fix” the biblical text, with the most famous example being Noah’s name: incorrectly given in Genesis as being derived from “comfort,” both Pseudo-Philo and Jubilees, along with many other extra-biblical texts, correct the derivation to “rest.”

Yet interwoven with these local concerns are global narrative concerns. These changes cannot always be read independently of the text in which they are found. The author’s goals are accomplished progressively and through a pattern of tendencies. Pseudo-Philo’s abridgment of history—completely omitting vast units— as well as its preoccupation with the book of Judges, is symptomatic of the author’s desire to be read alongside the biblical text rather than replacing it, seeing the stories as background to the Judges narrative instead of independent stories to be explored at-length. This is vastly different from Jubilees, which takes the opposite approach: its technique tends to be one of expansion and re-statement. These concerns can only be sensed when seen within a particular narrative context.
While these two texts are not precisely identical and thus cannot be superimposed upon one another, the texts can be brought into conversation with each other. Even though they are texts that can be studied in isolation from one another, they are both manifestations of a common desire to understand and to explicate an often difficult set of stories; they are glimpses into the conversations of antiquity that revolved around common figures. Characters and stories bind the original biblical text, *Jubilees*, and *Pseudo-Philo* together. This thesis is thus concerned with the uses of Noah and the flood narrative as seen in three particular texts, rather than all Noah traditions in antiquity; conversely, this thesis does not seek to concern itself with every story in these three texts, but only with the context and (narrative) ramifications the Noah story has within the texts on the whole. The focus will be on the text, but not to the exclusion of the world behind the text.

In the varied milieu of Noachic literature, these three texts stand out as particularly noteworthy because of their narrative contextualization of the character of Noah. In other words, the texts as they exist today are not solely focused on Noah himself but rather on the recording and remembrance of salvation history on the whole; conversely, there is enough time spent on Noah to reasonably infer his importance in the scheme of history. Other texts are fragmentary, particularly Qumran literature, thus making a fully contextual study difficult. Some texts, while wholly extant, spend little space on the patriarch. *Jubilees, Pseudo-Philo*, and *Genesis* balance the two extremes.
Overview of Project

The first half of this project deals with exploring the flood story at length independently in each of these three texts—Genesis, Jubilees, and Pseudo-Philo.

The foundational narrative, the Genesis account, will be explored first. Since Genesis predates the other two texts, with one strata dating to roughly the 6th century BCE, many themes expanded by the other texts are present in their prototypical form here. Because of the strong parallels with other ancient near eastern literature, and largely due to their influence on the central character of the story, there will be some discussion of the flood motif in other non-Judahite literature. After this comes the actual discussion of the text itself. Thematically, the general picture of Noah that is drawn in the Genesis flood story is as a “second Adam” or a “restart” of history. Several elements highlight this particular interpretation: his naming, God’s treatment of him, the flood description itself, the covenant, and the offspring with which Noah’s sons are blessed. For Genesis, without Noah, there would likely be no creation.

Dating from roughly the 2nd century BCE, Jubilees rewrites Genesis completely and includes parts of Exodus, omitting and adding details as it interprets the text. Throughout this reworking of the biblical text, the author enforces a rigid calendar, schematizing history in order to align it with his sacral calendar, a calendar that holds some affinities with Qumran calendars and may emerge from earlier Enochic literature. In this sacred history, Noah is seen as the paradigmatic priest, both in his proper action and his chronological placement. This is reflected throughout the book’s portrayal of him. The Watchers myth, originating in 1 Enoch and repeated in Jubilees in order to explain the origin of evil in the world, in which a group of angels deviates from their mission and
spreads sin, provides the backdrop for Noah’s complete obedience. Furthermore, he ends up offering sacrifices in a proper fashion. In response, God makes promises about blood rules that reflect a priestly concern with purity. Finally, toward the end of his life, Noah founds several festivals that are essential to the calendar and continues to provide guidance to his sons as they deal with demons and continued evil. Throughout this tale, Noah is continually loyal to God and faithful to the course of his life; included in this is proper ritual behavior, which reflects a priestly concern.

_Pseudo-Philo_, as a mid-2\textsuperscript{nd} century CE text, reflects yet another set of concerns that differ from the other two texts. More akin to an extended midrash than a full retelling, it tends to summarize and omit rather than expand upon stories and details. Unusual to this text, in the midst of the flood story there is a relatively lengthy addition providing an apocalyptic glimpse into the future, a foretaste of the end of the world. In the story, Noah becomes prepared to see this and also acts as a model of behavior following the vision. His destiny is stated with his name at his birth. God shows mercy to him, allowing him to live. After the vision, the problematic story of Noah’s drunkenness is omitted, keeping his image untainted. Finally, he is blessed with a long line of descendants. _Pseudo-Philo_’s concern hinges on the covenant: without Noah, there could be no future covenants; without future covenants, humanity is does not merit salvation.

This separate exploration of each text prepares for the final synthesis, in which the texts are brought into dialogue with one another. Several points of continuity are drawn out. All three texts see Noah’s exceptionality; any imitation of him is inherently good. Noah is unquestioningly faithful. His role as the first covenant-maker affords him an even greater importance in the scheme of history. His descendants, recounted in all three
stories, underscore his special status with God. Several other factors raise him to a point of prominence. Compared to the other patriarchs, he is one of the earliest. The texts allow for his righteousness to be assumed; there is little concern with his acquisition of his special status. His survival in the flood justifies his exemplary status; his recognition of the fact with a post-flood sacrifice acts as further justification. Closing his list of credentials is his covenant-making and numerous descendants. While the texts are not identical with one another, their points of contact paint a complex picture of the deluge patriarch.

The discontinuities between these texts are also important for the full exploration of the character of Noah. Were he rigidly identical in all literature, it would be more difficult to discern his unique characteristics that might make him an exemplar for the communities behind each text. One example would be his sacrifice at the altar: in Genesis, Noah sacrifices to give thanks to God; in Jubilees, Noah’s sacrifice is seen as liturgical; in Pseudo-Philo, it prompts the prophetic revelation. Each of these differences points toward something unique about the concerns of each text, pieces that fit together as a presentation of their prerogatives. Without these pieces, these differences, no such conclusions could be drawn, since it would remain a static text. Thus, not only the similarities, but also the differences, will be noted throughout this thesis, particularly because of their role in defining Noah.
Previous Research

Concerning the figure of Noah, much previous research has been conducted, though scholarship is uneven. Several comprehensive Noah studies exist. Of primary importance is Dorothy Peters’ *Noah Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Conversations and Controversies of Antiquity*\(^5\), which looks in-depth at the numerous traditions about Noah found scattered throughout the Dead Sea Scrolls. Jack Lewis’ *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature*\(^6\) is a broader study, focused not merely on the Dead Sea Scrolls but on ancient Jewish and Christian exegesis of the story. Michael Stone’s *Noah and His Book(s)*\(^7\) performs much the same task.

It must first be acknowledged that there is much more research than can be recounted here or used in the thesis itself. The Genesis story has attracted much attention, particularly historical-critical as well as its connection with similar flood myths. Two full-length studies that have proven remarkably useful, though slightly dated, are Hermann Gunkel’s commentary on Genesis\(^8\) and Claus Westermann’s commentary on the first eleven chapters of the same\(^9\). Two newer commentaries, equally helpful, are Susan Brayford’s commentary on the Septuagint version of Genesis\(^10\) and Robert Alter’s translation of the Hebrew with extensive commentary\(^11\). Specifically concerning the flood

---

\(^7\) Michael E. Stone, Aryeh Amihay, and Vered Hillel, eds., *Noah and His Book(s)* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010).
story, Michael Stone’s article, “The Axis of History at Qumran”12, has provided the frame through which much of the data has been analyzed. Numerous other articles have been written about the concept of covenant, too many to be mentioned here.


Literature regarding *Pseudo-Philo*, particularly literature focused on the figure of Noah, is less widespread. Howard Jacobson’s translation and commentary provided a solid beginning to the research\(^{23}\), in addition to the D.J. Harrington’s translation and commentary in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*\(^ {24}\). Frederick Murphy’s *Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible*\(^ {25}\) offers one of the only full-length studies of this understudied text. Most specific scholarship focuses on *Pseudo-Philo’s* fascination with the book of Judges, though even these are useful in seeing the text as a thematic whole, such as George W.E. Nickelsburg’s “Good and Bad Leaders in *Pseudo-Philo’s Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*”\(^ {26}\).

The argument within this thesis builds upon this research in a number of ways. Perhaps most importantly, the individual narratives themselves have been studied to a great extent. This research has given great insight into the ways in which the individual pieces of the story have been strung together. Additionally, the details of the stories have been explored and traced through other, similar literature. Many of these micro-narratives have given vital clues regarding their importance in the overall character of Noah. This literature has also provided the broader academic context for these discussions, particularly the debates and conclusions regarding the genres of these stories. Without all this previous research, this thesis could not have begun, much less progressed to any major conclusions.


However, this thesis cannot be seen merely as a restatement of all prior research. To my knowledge, there has not been any literature that brings together these three diverse texts into direct dialogue with one another. Furthermore, while much research implies the characteristics of the Noah story that lead to his use within these texts, they have not been enumerated in any conclusive or concise manner. My interest lies in his use as a literary figure by looking at his use in these particular texts, rather than looking at the historical progression of his character from the beginning. Because of this, I also choose to move away from overly contextualizing these texts, as a great number of studies begin with the community producing the text and work outward; I attempt to reverse this process, by beginning with the text and moving outward to the hypothetical community. I am thus not looking at Noah solely in the Qumran community or other such groups, but rather examining their usage of him to glean characteristics that make him an appealing character.
CHAPTER II

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

The difficulty inherent in any analysis of the flood story is its composite nature. In its present form, it is the combination of two quite separate flood stories from two different authors, traditionally identified as P and JE, stitched together by the hand of a redactor (or multiple redactors), creating a “divine symphony” of “many voices”\(^\text{27}\).

Further compounding the issue is the repetition of the stories—the authors drew upon a common source, perhaps even on one another\(^\text{28}\).

The “P” (Priestly) strata of the story are, for the most part, relatively uncontroversial. As its name implies, the author was a priest, “or at least someone who was representing the Aaronid priests’ interests”\(^\text{29}\). He\(^\text{30}\) emerges from the 6\(^\text{th}\) century BCE, likely prior to the Babylonian Exile in 587 BCE, considering his preoccupation with the Temple\(^\text{31}\).

This P narrative provides the framework for the whole of the Pentateuch:

---

\(^{28}\) Richard Elliott Friedman confidently asserts that “[the Priestly author] was someone who knew the JE text, in its combined form, intimately. An investigator […] showed that P […] was following JE. It was telling the same or similar stories, and in almost the same order” (Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* [New York: Summit Books, 1987], 188). Admittedly, he states that caution regarding the authorship of the books is “responsible” (189).
\(^{29}\) Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?*, 188.
\(^{30}\) Assuming the author was a priest, there would be no reason to doubt that he was male. Additionally, though P can also be seen as a collective term for authors with similar concerns, it will be referenced in the singular.
\(^{31}\) Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?*, 188.
The P narrative which arose in this way later became the literary basis of the Pentateuchal narrative. Contrary to the usual view, the “redactor” responsible for this literary process did not understand it to be his task to combine two formerly separate narratives […] by simply adding them to one another […] but instead […] made the P narrative the basis of his work and enriched it by suitably inserting here and there parts of the other narrative.32

There were also several concerns of P that appear throughout the stories. The first was validating the Aaronid priesthood. References to Aaron abound, as do Temple practices. Another concern, dovetailing with the priestly office, was of cosmos and order: P’s God is “the cosmic God of a great, ordered universe”33. In terms of quantity, P’s concern with law overshadows the others, constituting “half of Exodus, half of Numbers, [and] nearly all of Leviticus”34. Later biblical stories and books show an indebtedness to P’s cosmology35.

Other sources in Genesis are less clear. Originally labeled “J” (Yahwist), the author was thought to have predated the P source and to have been contemporaneous with an “E” (Elohist) source36. They were dated within the time period in which the northern and southern kingdoms, Israel and Judah, coexisted (10th century to 8th century BCE)37.

Yet much of this paradigm of J/E/P/JE has been challenged, if not eliminated: “[T]here is no room […] for the idea of the ‘Yahwist’ as a theologian. There is no such person”38. Instead, the most plausible approach to the J/E/JE stories is one of theological

33 Friedman, Who Wrote the Bible?, 192.
34 Friedman, Who Wrote the Bible?, 205.
36 Friedman, Who Wrote the Bible?, 49.
37 Friedman, Who Wrote the Bible?, 49.
and thematic continuity tracing back through several hands and several schools; the stories “were joined together not in a single literary step but in several stages, and that this fusion took place at a late period.”

For the purposes of this study, when necessary, the labels “P” and “J” will be used, for largely the same reason outlined by H.H. Schmid (in reference to the J source): to avoid “sever[ing] completely the links with previous Pentateuchal study.”

**Analogues and Parallels**

Studies of the flood and Noah cannot ignore the story’s heavy parallels with other ancient Near-East literature. As David Damrosch notes, “[t]he creation-flood narrative was a major and long-established genre [surviving…] in Sumerian and Akkadian.” The central text for comparison is the Gilgamesh epic found on Tablet XI, which has been

---

39 For a detailed analysis of the hypotheses surrounding the creation of the Pentateuch, see R.N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994). For this paper, his conclusion is worth quoting: “The Pentateuch, then, it may be suggested, is an outstanding but characteristic example of the work of an ancient historian: a history of the origins of the people of Israel, prefaced by an account of the origins of the world. The author may have intended it as a supplement (i.e. a prologue) to the work of the Deuteronomistic Historian, which dealt with the more recent period of the national history. He had at his disposal a mass of material, most of which may have been of quite recent origin and had not necessarily formed part of any ancient Israelite tradition. Following the canons of the historiography of his time, he radically reworked this material, probably with substantial additions of his own invention, making no attempt to produce a smooth narrative free from inconsistencies, contradictions and unevennesses. Judged by the standards of ancient historiography, his work stands out as a literary masterpiece” (242). See also Rolf Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990).

40 Christoph Levin, “The Yahwist: The Earliest Editor in the Pentateuch,” *JBL* 126.2 (Summer, 2007), 209.


42 The framework behind this list, and the subsequent discussion, is drawn from Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 401-406.

dated to roughly the 13th century BCE44; others include the Atrahasis (17th century BCE)45 and the Sumerian flood account46.

Several dominant themes within these stories are important for the discussion of the biblical story, due to their strong parallels. First, the flood is irrevocably linked to “primeval themes” such as “the creation of humans” (the most common), “the origin of civilization, the genealogy of the ancestors, [and] the motif of the sons of the gods and the giants,” among others47. Thus, the flood story serves as another explanation of human origins and tendencies—one that “sets the stage” for the ensuing course of human history. Second, there is a reflection on the relationship between the god(s) and humanity. Rather than the “stark event of the flood,” the biblical story reflects a reflection on its significance48. Third, if a reason behind the flood is given, it generally falls upon the actions of humankind. This provides the context for the salvation of the central character of the narrative; in the case of Noah, it is his righteousness that makes God wish to save him. Fourth, the main character usually builds that which saves him—such as an ark. Fifth, there is a conclusion replete with joy, following the tension of the deluge. Other, smaller details also find parallels in other narratives, such as the use of birds to survey the land49, the post-salvation sacrifice, and the loading of animals into the ship.

What should be stated from the outset is the similarities between Genesis and the Gilgamesh epic need not imply either “a chance occurrence […] or] a sign of direct

46 Dating of this text is uncertain, but it apparently originates no “earlier than Late Old Babylonian,” or the 17th century BCE (Lambert, Atra-Hasis, 138).
47 Westermann, Genesis I-11, 402.
48 Westermann, Genesis I-11, 402.
49 Westermann calls this detail “[t]he most amazing of all motifs […] It is utterly decisive for the tradition history of the story” (Genesis I-11, 403).
dependence of one tradition on another, but is a natural feature, perhaps almost an inevitable feature, of the self-definition of historical epic as it separates itself from the trans-historical pattern of myth”\textsuperscript{50}. Despite the shared elements, it is the sequence of the story that makes the Genesis narrative unique, despite the possibly late character of this sequence. These parallels to other ancient myths do not devalue the Noah story as found in scripture but only illuminate the context from which the stories emerged. These ancient versions will rarely emerge in the conversation below because there is more focus on the text as it is preserved in the bible and its later influence, not the flood narrative as it manifests elsewhere.

**Central Themes and Analysis**

In recounting the flood and the various stories of Noah, the primary purpose of the author is to “reset” history, providing a new starting point for the story of the Israelites. As Michael Stone states:

[T]he axis from Enoch to the Flood and Noah, from the fall of the Watchers to the re-seeding of the earth by Noah, is the crucial axis for the creation of the present world state. The actions preceding, indeed precipitating, the Flood and the subsequent re-creation are mythical and play the role that Adam and Eve’s actions did in other contexts\textsuperscript{51}.

In effect, the events leading up to Noah are essential for history, but the ultimate turning point—the ultimate origin—of the world is the story of Noah and the “second creation.” This “resetting” of history is worked into the narrative at several points:

1) Noah’s naming and mission (5:28-29)

2) God’s regret and Noah’s favor (6:5-8; 9-13)

\textsuperscript{50} Damrosch, “Gilgamesh and Genesis,” 195.
\textsuperscript{51} Stone, “The Axis of History at Qumran,” 75.
3) The description of the flood (7:1-8:5)

4) God’s promise to, and covenant with, Noah (8:20-9:17)

5) The table of nations (chapter 10)

Noah’s naming and destiny (Gen. 5:28-29)

Prior to any account of the sons of God and flood itself is the brief explanation of the birth of Noah by Lamech and the name given to him: “When Lamech had lived one hundred eighty-two years, he became the father of a son; he named him Noah (נָחָה), saying, ‘Out of the ground that the LORd has cursed (אררה this one shall bring forth relief (יָנָחְמוּ) from our work and from the toil (ומעצבון of our hands’” (Gen. 5:28-29)52.

The name’s etymology (given in the MT as a derivation of “relief”) is incorrect, a fact noticed by even the rabbis53. The Septuagint’s rendering at Genesis 5:29 (διαναπάλοσει, “he [Noah] will provide rest”) is the more accurate of the two, through either correction or a better source text54. Textual problems aside, what is of importance are the elements of the prophecy: the “cursed” earth and the “toil of our hands.” This is not merely a comment on everyday life; it is a deliberate reminder of the punishment given to Adam earlier in Genesis 3:17: “Because you [Adam] have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed (אררה is the ground because of you; in toil (מעצבון you shall eat of it all the days of your life.” This connection with the Adam-Eve narrative is further reinforced by the scarcity of this form of the word for “pain” (עצבון): “[This form] appears only three

52 This and subsequent translations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).
53 See, for example, Gen. Rabbah, XXV:2.
54 Brayford, Genesis, 260.
times in the Bible (other nominal forms of the root being relatively common)—first for Eve, then for Adam, and [finally] for Noah”. Consequently, “Noah’s fate would seem to mitigate the severity of the man’s punishment”\textsuperscript{56}. Additionally, the relief lies not in the flood itself but afterward, in reference to the vineyard Noah establishes—turning the cursed earth into a bounteous harvest\textsuperscript{57}.

From the very beginning, then, Noah’s story is tied in with the original story of creation, as an undoing and a redoing of the entire process. Humanity continues on through Noah’s character.

\textit{God’s regret and Noah’s favor (6:5-8; 9, 11-13, 17-18)}

After the enigmatic (though narratively unconnected) story of the sons of God and the daughters of men, there are two explanations given for God’s subsequent action, the flood. The first (6:5-8) continues with the theme of the fall of Adam and Eve: despite the fact that humanity is perpetually evil (6:5), the consequence involves “people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air” (6:7). The connection of this evaluation of creation to the beginning of the world is three-fold. First, the animals mentioned are those that also appear in the original creation account, though admittedly not exclusively. Second, the punishment is directly correlated to the dominion that humankind is given over the animals: as humanity is responsible for the flourishing of nature, so too are they responsible for its downfall, corruption, and destruction. Third, mankind is seen as continually evil, contrasting with the original state of creation in which everything is “good”; in fact, the term used for “wicked,” רעה, “describes a state,\textsuperscript{55} Alter, \textit{Genesis}, 25. \textsuperscript{56} Brayford, \textit{Genesis}, 260. \textsuperscript{57} Gunkel, \textit{Genesis}, 55
…] not […] a wicked action, but […] a state of wickedness that is humanity’s”58. For unspecified reasons, Noah finds favor “in the sight of the L ORD”59. Much like Adam’s role as a representative human in the story of creation, Noah acts as a representative of uncorrupted humanity—humanity untouched by evil, in a state of blamelessness.

The second account of God’s choice (vv. 9, 11-13) contains much the same emphasis in general. Instead of the focus on nature and being, however, the brief story puts action and choice in the conversation. The central cause of God’s grief is the “violence” (v. 11) and the fact that “all flesh had corrupted its ways” (v. 12). In direct contrast, Noah was “righteous”60 and “blameless” and, more significantly, “walked with God” (v. 9)61. Also unlike the previous narrative aside, Noah is a slightly more central character; while the term תולדת (“lineage/descendant”) ostensibly introduces Noah’s sons, the term can reasonably be translated as “story,” thus introducing the entire flood account as one of Noah’s actions and obedience62. In this way, the ties with creation, especially the disobedience of Adam, are reversed.

At work in this paradigm is the difference between the separation of Adam from God and the separation of Noah from humanity prior to the flood. Up until Noah, the

58 Claus Westermann, Genesis 1-11, 410.
59 Gordon R. Clark (The Word Hesed in the Hebrew Bible [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993]) determines that “[t]his basic expression—‘to look favourably on’—is used 24 times; in 19 passages the patient stands in deference before the agent” (206). In this instance, “Yahweh looks favourably on Noah, doubtless because Noah is righteous, blameless, and walks with God. Yahweh, the agent, is clearly superior in status” (206).
60 “One who is צדיק is legally and thus morally ‘right’ before God” (Brayford, Genesis, 262). Concerning tsaddiq, J.G. McConville writes that “[i]t occurs relatively infrequently, but at significant moments,” noting its use falls in continuity with descriptions of other patriarchs, most significantly Abraham (God and Earthly Power: An Old Testament Political Theology, Genesis-Kings [New York: T&T Clark International, 2006], 42ff). See also Ahuva Ho, Sedeq and Sedaqah in the Hebrew Bible (New York: Lang, 1991).
62 Alter, Genesis, 28.
general trend for humanity is “separation from God”\textsuperscript{63}. That is, there is a constant move away from the order of creation. This move is so drastic that, by the beginning of the flood story, creation is nearly entirely evil, opposed to the “very good” nature of the created order. Noah shifts the tone of God’s relationship with humanity: “[T]he exclusion of Noah from the rest of humanity transforms the theme […] operating in the Primeval cycle to […] separation for God”\textsuperscript{64}. God chooses a person (or, eventually, people) to stand as an example that contrasts with the contemporary state of the world. This underlies all of God’s later decisions in the patriarchal stories. Noah, then, is not only the pattern of all humanity in his action, but the pattern for all its subsequent leaders, even if traditional interpretation has raised other leaders, such as Abraham, to a greater place of prominence.

Having set Noah up as a paradigmatic human, God promises a covenant with him and all those associated with him in 6:17-18. He spares what is good and obedient and destroys that which is evil and disobedient. At the close of the story, Noah’s compliance once again returns: “Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him” (6:22).

\textit{The description of the flood (7:1-8:5)}

Along with general commonalities with the Gilgamesh epics previously described, throughout the retelling of the flood, in both versions, there is a marked parallel with themes from creation. Indeed, a reader “should not read Genesis 1 apart


\textsuperscript{64} Moye, “In the Beginning.” 586.
from its continuation, the story of the fall as well as that of the flood, and finally that of
the covenant after the flood”, since they form an inclusio, a framework⁶⁵.

Aside from use of seven pairs clean animals (7:2)—a number highlighting the
importance of a clean earth in contrast with the old earth⁶⁶—P relates that the flood
waters came seven days following Noah’s preparation (7:10). Thus, as creation was
finished in seven days using primeval materials, creation would be undone in seven days,
returning to a primordial state.

Furthermore, the way in which the flood occurs draws verbal parallels to God’s
creative actions at the beginning of Genesis: “[W]hat God separated at Creation, the
waters and above and below, rush together again now. […] The old world was created
from water. Through water it was destroyed”⁶⁷. Where the water and the land were
separated in creation, the “fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the
heavens were opened”⁶⁸ (7:11), rendering all into “a negative element, shapelessness”⁶⁹.
As the water rises, the ark is seen as “floating on the face of the waters” (7:18), as the
spirit “hovers on the face of the waters” prior to creation⁷⁰. The highest points of dry
land, mountains, are slowly covered where they had previously been slowly revealed—a
continuity with the creation story’s desire to paint the majesty of God⁷¹. While humanity
enjoyed a unique place in creation of the world, having been created separately, the

---

⁶⁵ Rolf Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept in Genesis and Exodus,” JBL 108.3 (Autumn, 1989), 388.
⁶⁶ Westermann, Genesis 1-11, 427.
⁶⁷ Gunkel, Genesis, 146.
⁶⁸ In Hebrew, “tehom [deep] also stands in an ‘antonymous’ relationship to shamayim [heaven]” (David
Toshio Tsumura, The Earth and the Waters in Genesis 1 and 2: A Linguistic Investigation [Sheffield: Sheffield
⁶⁹ Westermann, Genesis 1-11, 433. Gunkel notes that the flood is thus “a kind of Chaos—the supra- and
subterranean waters, united in Chaos and separated in the Creation, flow[ing] together in the Flood”
(Genesis, 78).
⁷⁰ Westermann, Genesis 1-11, 438.
⁷¹ Westermann, Genesis 1-11, 438.
punishment of the flood destroys both humans and beasts equally\textsuperscript{72}. Also, the close connection and peaceful relationship between humanity and nature, represented by the harmony in the garden, is severed as God prepares the earth for a new creation, one without the old order of humanity\textsuperscript{73}. Ending with “[o]nly Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark” emphasizes the completion of the flood and the enormity of the act\textsuperscript{74}. The difference in size is not one of comfort, but of scale: only a speck, a tiny ark, of humanity remains.

The turning point of the narrative comes with the beginning of chapter 8. The purpose behind the recording of this event is remembrance. Reflected in the opening phrase of the eighth chapter: “God remembered Noah” (8:1a), remembrance is not merely an act of cogitation but one of action, “bridging the internal and the external”\textsuperscript{75}. The destructive anger of God is juxtaposed with the mercy of salvation\textsuperscript{76}. Following this, God halts his destruction of the world and instead begins an abridged re-creation: “God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, and the waters gradually receded from the earth” (8:1b-3). Noah precedes this creation and is the driving force behind its continuation. Not only is he the new Adam, he has knowledge and obedience that Adam lacked.

\textsuperscript{73} Van Wolde, “A Text-Semantic Study,” 23.
\textsuperscript{74} Westermann, \textit{Genesis I-II}, 440.
\textsuperscript{75} Westermann, \textit{Genesis I-II}, 441. Van Wolde’s assertion that “[h]e [God] is forgetful, not once but twice: in 8:1 he has to remind himself of Noah and his boat, and in 9:15-16 the rainbow has to remind him not to forget his covenant with the human beings” (“A Text-Semantic Study,” 23) is not tenable.
\textsuperscript{76} Westermann, \textit{Genesis I-II}, 441.
God's promise to, and covenant with, Noah (8:20-9:17)

After ascertaining the presence of dry land, Noah and his family exit the ark. Noah makes a proper sacrifice, continuing the story’s trend of Noah being only known through his actions, for he has not uttered a single phrase on his own behalf. Instead of the disobedience of Adam and Eve, Noah acknowledges his creator through the sacrificial act, one that pleases God77. Because of the obedience of Noah, God makes a promise to “never again curse the ground because of humankind” (8:21), recalling the origin of Noah’s name. This promise is eternal78. In an ironic reversal, it is tied to the agrarian lifestyle, which had originally been envisioned as a curse upon Adam: “As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease” (8:22).

After this promise, God establishes the promised covenant, “the first covenant referenced in Scripture”79. This covenant has several parts to it. First is the repopulation of the earth. Noah is the true father of humankind and, in contrast with the parallel myths, does not contain the “post-flood decree of sterility in Atrahasis so as to avoid the

77 While distinctly anthropomorphic, the crucial difference between the pleasure of God and the pleasure of the gods in parallel literature is that God is not dependent upon the sacrifice for food (Alter, Genesis, 36). Westermann reinforces this: “All that is meant is that God has graciously acknowledged Noah’s sacrifice” (Genesis 1-11, 454).
78 Irvin A. Busenit notes that “[t]he promise is spoken of as an ‘everlasting covenant’ […] and] can speak of ‘time without end’ (i.e., eternity), but it is not always so intended” (“Introduction to the Biblical Covenants: The Noahic Covenant and the Priestly Covenant,” The Master’s Seminary Journal 10.2 [Fall 1999], 186-187). In other words, the covenant is sustained through future covenants, but can be freely expanded by the original author, God.
79 Busenit, “Introduction to Biblical Covenants,” 184. It is interesting to note that the term used by the LXX to speak of Noah’s ark, κιβωτος, is the same word that references the Ark (κιβωτος) of the Covenant. (See the chart on page 41 of M. Harl’s “Le Nom de l’arche de Noé dans la Septante,” in Alexandrina: hellénisme, judaïsme et christianisme à Alexandrie: mélanges offerts au P. Claude Mondésert [Paris: Éd. du Cerf, 1987]: 15-41.)
overpopulation problem that resulted in the flood”\textsuperscript{80}. This is also a call-back to the creation story, “reconfirm[ing] his blessing of fertility”\textsuperscript{81}.

Second, human dominion over the earth is re-established, with stronger language than the original decree in the creation story\textsuperscript{82}. This dominion, however, is neither absolute nor unqualified\textsuperscript{83}. While the animals are inspired by fear of humanity, there is an increased emphasis on the consequences for disobeying. The Noahide blood laws are established, using language that recalls the creation of humanity: “Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person’s blood be shed; for in his own image God made humankind” (9:6)\textsuperscript{84}. At this point, Genesis engages in some additional intertextuality, though instead of projecting backward (to creation), it projects forward (to the Mosaic covenant)\textsuperscript{85}. The injunction regarding blood in 9:4 reads: “[Y]ou shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.” Compare to Leviticus 7:26-27: “You must not eat any blood whatever, either of bird or of animal, in any of your settlements. Any one of you who eats any blood shall be cut off from your kin.” The covenant with Noah determines later covenantal formulae and content: The permission to kill animals, and the special law about the shedding of blood, opens up the way for the sacrificial system and

\textsuperscript{80} Brayford, Genesis, 271.
\textsuperscript{81} Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept,” 387.
\textsuperscript{82} “Vegetarian man of the Garden is allowed a carnivore’s diet (this might conceivably be intended as an outlet for his violent impulses), and in consonance with that change, man does not merely rule over the animal kingdom but inspires it with fear” (Alter, Genesis, 38).
\textsuperscript{83} Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept,” 387.
\textsuperscript{84} As will also be seen in Jubilees, the blood laws loom large in the consciousness of Israelites (Gunkel, Genesis, 149).
\textsuperscript{85} Barton, The Pentateuch, 65.
prepares for the symbolic significance of blood”\textsuperscript{86}. Third, as stated in previous verses, this covenant is established eternally, “with you and your descendants after you” (9:9)\textsuperscript{87}. Outside of its content, Noah’s covenant sets the structure and themes for later biblical covenants in two primary elements, turning points in the narrative: remembrance and sign\textsuperscript{88}. The narrative turns to remembrance after the flood and during the covenant:

When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow\textsuperscript{89} is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh […] When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth (9:14-16).

As with the “remembrance of Noah” previously in the story, God’s remembrance is not a passive act, the mere recollection of a particular event, but always has the consequence of fulfillment, the promise that “he will do (in this case: not [destroy the earth]) what he has promised”\textsuperscript{90}. Part of this serves a function for the reader as well, since the term “remember” (זכור) is a narrative connection to the turning point of the flood\textsuperscript{91}. The covenant (ברית) is always tied to action. The sign, meanwhile, is a physical manifestation of God’s remembrance, a perpetual symbol outside of the text that acts as a referent to the tale itself. Thus the covenant is effective on two levels simultaneously: the “real world” of the reader and the “ideal world” of the story\textsuperscript{92}.

\textsuperscript{87} Westermann, \textit{in The Promises to the Fathers}, notes that “[f]or P there can be only be the two covenants with Noah and with Abraham, because there are only two partners with which God can establish his covenant: humankind (Genesis 9) and God’s people (Genesis 17)” (Claus Westermann, \textit{The Promises to the Fathers: Studies on the Patriarchal Narratives}, trans. David E. Green [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980], 159-160).
\textsuperscript{88} Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept,” 387-388.
\textsuperscript{89} This is not, as might be supposed, the bow of a warrior, but rather a rainbow. See discussion in Westermann, \textit{Genesis 1-11}, 473.
\textsuperscript{90} Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept,” 387.
\textsuperscript{91} Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept,” 387.
\textsuperscript{92} Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept,” 388.
This same pattern—gift, sin, promise of destruction, actions of one man, and finally renewal—can be noted in the Sinai narrative, chapters 19 through 34 of Exodus particularly\textsuperscript{93}. Announcing the covenant in chapter 19, it comes to fruition in chapter 24 “with the blood ceremony and the solemn establishing of the covenant”\textsuperscript{94}. However, while Moses is up on the mountain (thus away from the people), the people build the golden calf; the covenant is broken, represented by Moses breaking the tablets (Ex. 32:19). God also determines to destroy the Israelites as well: “Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them” (Ex. 32:10). His threat is magnified through the use of terms that bring to mind the previous covenants as well: “[A]nd of you I will make a great nation” (32:10), similar to the preservation of Noah from the flood and the abundance of Abraham. Moses, like Noah and Abraham before him, goes forth to intercede for the people; he is successful, and the covenant is renewed, symbolized by the creation of new tablets.

In both of these stories, the basic similarities can be seen. God first provides a gift to the people—in Noah’s case, creation is the original gift, while Moses’ gift is the covenant. Soon after, though, that gift is either corrupted or forgotten, leading to the people turning to sin and evil. Consequently, God promises to destroy the people. One individual, however, is chosen to act on behalf of the people—to allow creation to continue forth. After the event, whether merely promised (as with Moses) or completely enacted (Noah), a new covenant is established. Arguably, then, Noah’s covenant provides the model by which later covenants are made. It is the Noah narrative, not the creation

\textsuperscript{93} Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept,” 389.
\textsuperscript{94} Rendtorff, “‘Covenant’ as a Structuring Concept,” 389.
story, that later covenants seek to recall in their formulation; the Israelites can thus trace their sacral history back to Noah.\footnote{William L. Holladay (“The Covenant with the Patriarchs Overturned: Jeremiah’s Intention in ‘Terror on Every Side’ (Jer 20:1-6),” \textit{JBL} 91.3 [Sep., 1972]: 305-320) sees covenant—especially pre-Sinai covenants like Noah’s—as a central part of some of Jeremiah’s warnings to the people.}

\textit{The table of nations (chapter 10)}

Following the oddly enigmatic story of Noah’s drunkenness, there comes a list of “the descendants of Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth […] after the flood” (10:1).

Notably, this tablature of nations “appears to be quite unique: no comparable ancient texts exist.”\footnote{Barton, \textit{The Pentateuch}, 65.} As Robert Alter explains:

As elsewhere, genealogy is adopted as a means of schematizing complex historical evolution, and thus the terms “father of” and “begot” are essentially metaphors for historical concatenation. The total number of figures in the Table of Nations (excluding Nimrod) comes to seventy, the biblical formulaic number for sizeable and complete contingent of any sort. It should be observed that representing the origins of nations as a genealogical scheme preserves a thematic continuity with the divine injunction after Creation to be fruitful and multiply and sets the stage for the history of the one people whose propagation is repeatedly promised but continually threatened.\footnote{Alter, \textit{Genesis}, 42.}

The divine command to “be fruitful and multiply” is obeyed. Also emphasized are the “interrelationships between the peoples” by “describ[ing] the relationship of their patriarchs,” which are not merely fathers of individuals but fathers of entire nations.\footnote{Gunkel, \textit{Genesis}, 86. See also 87-88 for the continuation of the discussion.}

God’s promise to never destroy the inhabitants of the earth is reciprocally observed. Further proof that this lineage is representative of a filled earth comes at the final verse of the chapter (10:32): “These are the families of Noah’s sons, according to their genealogies, in their nations; and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.” While it does seem to set the stage for the following episode (the tower of
Babel), the faithful fulfillment of the divine command is a fitting end to the Noah narrative\textsuperscript{99}.

**Conclusion**

In the Genesis narrative, Noah is the new Adam. He provides a second starting point for creation. Like Adam, Noah is created for a purpose. While Adam’s original purpose was subverted by sinful disobedience, Noah’s purpose—inherent in his name—was fulfilled. The world following Adam was one of evil—mankind was both disobedient and unnatural—hardly worthy of salvation, but Noah and his family act as a beacon of hope and obedience. When the flood itself occurs, it parallels (and undoes) creation; afterward, creation is rebuilt. The only individuals left alive are Noah and his family, just as Adam was the only creation in the new world. With these survivors, God promises never to destroy creation again. The earth is once again repopulated, providing a new starting point back to which all people can trace their ancestry. In effect, Noah in the bible is a new origin story for the stories that follow, erasing the previous beginning.

CHAPTER III

THE BOOK OF JUBILEES

While the history of the book of Jubilees is not fully known, there are two primary facts that can be stated with a reasonable amount of certainty regarding its composition: it likely originates in the early 2nd century B.C.E., and it was originally written in Hebrew. Though translated into a variety of other languages, its Greek translation provided the base from which most other versions—Latin and Ethiopian—derived.

As for its status, the book clearly sees itself as authoritative, though labeling the work as “canonical” is anachronistic. The prologue of the book states:

\[\text{Most scholars follow James VanderKam’s statement that “Jubilees was almost certainly written between 161 and 140 BC and probably between 161 and 152 BC” (Textual and Historical Studies, 284), with minor variances in exact dates. Gene Davenport, in The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees (Leiden: Brill, 1971), states that “we must speak of three dates and of at least three “authors’” (18). Michael Segal disagrees with the strength of Davenport’s method and approach, but agrees in complicating the dating situation: “[O]ne cannot speak of one date for all the material in the work, but rather the date of each particular source or stratum” (The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology [Leiden: Brill, 2007], 40). Despite their developed arguments, which will prove useful in other areas, I disagree with the conclusions that they draw regarding the dating of Jubilees as it relates to the authorship: the use of multiple sources from different eras does not imply an equally disparate textual situation.}

\[\text{So James VanderKam, “The Manuscript Tradition of Jubilees.” As Sidnie White Crawford states: “It was long suspected [...] that Jubilees was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic, a suspicion confirmed by the discovery of at least 14 and possibly 15 Hebrew manuscripts of Jubilees at Qumran” (Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008], 60).}


\[\text{In “Rethinking the Concept of ‘Bible’,” James E. Bowley and John C. Reeves describe the present state of canon discussion: “Summarily dividing the Qumran literature between ‘canonical’ and ‘non-canonical’}
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\textsuperscript{104}.

Later communities regarded \textit{Jubilees} as an inspired piece of scripture, at least equal with other writings, if not superseding them\textsuperscript{105}. The earliest group in which \textit{Jubilees} finds extensive use is the sectarian Qumran community\textsuperscript{106}, its later placement in the canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church ensured its continued survival\textsuperscript{107}.

\textit{Jubilees} is not a list of rules and statements, however. The unique way in which it conveys its concerns has prompted much scholarly discussion, retelling the books of Genesis (wholly) and Exodus (partially), omitting and adding details from various sources\textsuperscript{108}. The book opens on Mount Sinai at the giving of the commandments to Moses. In order to ensure the loyalty of the people to the covenant, the angel of the presence is told to “[d]ictate to Moses (starting) from the beginning of the creation until the time when my temple is built among them throughout the ages of eternity” (1:27)\textsuperscript{109}.

Following the chronological structure of the jubilee\textsuperscript{110}, the book begins at the creation

\par

---

\textsuperscript{104} VanderKam, \textit{The Book of Jubilees}, 1.


\textsuperscript{106} VanderKam, \textit{Textual and Historical Studies}, 255.

\textsuperscript{107} “It was preserved especially in the Abyssinian (Ethiopian) Orthodox Church, in which it is part of their canon” (Crawford, \textit{Rewriting Scripture}, 60).

\textsuperscript{108} VanderKam, \textit{Textual and Historical Studies}, 104.


\textsuperscript{110} That is, a cycle of fifty years, after which the fiftieth year was to be hallowed, as found in Leviticus 25:10-12: “And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, or reap the
story in Genesis and ends in the midst of Exodus, in the wilderness of Sinai. During the course of this narrative, *Jubilees* recasts the events of the biblical text: “*Jubilees* uses the Pentateuchal books of Genesis and Exodus as a base text to create a new composition […] but] is still closely tied to Genesis and Exodus, in narrative sequence, characters, and content”\(^{111}\).

Though often given the name “rewritten Bible,” I do not find this term adequate for defining the realities of the text\(^{112}\). What is overlooked in the simplistic label is the framing device: the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. Thus, it not only retells the biblical narrative, but actually attempts to *participate in* the biblical event as a text, since it is the text of *Jubilees* that is given at Sinai.\(^{113}\) *Jubilees* is thus best described as a “divine pseudepigraphon”\(^{114}\).

---

\(^{111}\) Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture*, 62.

\(^{112}\) Scholars have been mystified in attempting to classify this (and similar) works; the various studies on the book are broadly recounted by VanderKam, “The Origins and Purposes of the Book of *Jubilees*.” Even the term “rewritten Bible” is unclear: Erkki Koskenniemi and Pekka Lindqvist accurately state that “[t]he term ‗rewritten Bible‘ is ambiguous and clearly needs a more conventional definition” (“Rewritten Bible, Rewritten Stories: Methodological Aspects,” in *Rewritten Bible Reconsidered: Proceedings of the Conference in Karkku, Finland, August 24-26 2006*, eds. Antti Laato and Jacques van Ruiten [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008], 39). James Bowley and John Reeves argue that “[s]urely one must first have a ‘Bible’ before one can ‗rewrite‘ it: the taxonomic category presupposes and subtly endorses both a chronological sequence and an intertextual relationship, neither of which is demonstrably the case” (“Rethinking the Concept of ‗Bible,’ 7).


\(^{114}\) Lawrence H. Schiffman, in “The Temple Scroll and Halakhic Pseudepigrapha” (In *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, eds. by Esther G. Chazon and Michael Stone [Leiden: Brill, 1999]: 121-131) applies this term to the *Temple Scroll* rather than *Jubilees*, calling the latter merely a “pseudo-God text [where] Moses is never portrayed as the author, only as the recipient and bearer of revelation” (127). Nonetheless, since the book of *Jubilees* is itself the revelation from God, I find the most pragmatic terminology to be “divine pseudepigraphon.”
Ancient Chronological Systems

The most striking aspect of Jubilees is its view of the passage of time. While most speak of the Jubilees “calendar,” or the schematization of time, Jonathan Ben-Dov sees the author’s concern as one focusing on “chronology,” or the passage of time. For the author, in order to combat the inconsistency of the lunar calendar, time was to move in perfect cycles:

[T]he calendar was divided into twelve non-lunar months of thirty days each for a total of 360 days [and to reach] 364 days, the year was divided into four seasons of three months each with an extra day inserted between each of the four seasons but not counted within any month.

A result of this consistency is the symmetry and parallelism between events.

Building upon this system of the year, the author divides time into “weeks,” or seven year periods; seven weeks (forty-nine years total) are a jubilee.

Before continuing on to the discussion of Noah in the flood story, some space must be given to the emergence and significance of the calendrical system in the historical context, along with (briefly) its use in later Judaism, especially the Qumran sect.

In the Second Temple period, the closest analogue to an absolute calendrical system is found in The Book of the Luminaries (chapters 72-82 of 1 Enoch). “One of the

117 The significance of the number seven is not peculiar to Jubilees alone: “The number 7 has fascinated humankind since time immemorial” (Annemarie Schimmel, The Mystery of Numbers [New York: Oxford University Press, 1993], 127). Further: “In Judaism, the seventh day became the day of divine rest, thus sacred: the previous, negative injunction against work was transformed into a positive order” (130).
118 Wintermute, “Jubilees,” 39. Wintermute, following Testuz, also theorizes that taking the system one step further—forty-nine jubilees—brings the author’s conception to its fullest conception: “Testuz has suggested that the period of forty-nine jubilees represents a complete era in world history […which could imply that] a new era had begun with the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai” (39).
the oldest sections of the collection, dating back at least well into the third century B.C.E.,” the Book of the Luminaries sets forth an explanation of the movement of time. As in Jubilees, the calendar is not merely a useful shorthand for designating the passage of time, but is a celestial peek into the inner workings of the universe. Possibly the inspiration for the opening of Jubilees is found in the book’s opening lines:

[The book in which is recorded] each [luminary] according to their names and their places of origin and according to their months, which Uriel, the holy angel who was with me, and who (also) is their guide, showed me—just as he showed me all their treatises and the nature of the years of the world unto eternity, till the new creation which abides forever is created (72:1).

Like the Angel of the Presence on Sinai in Jubilees, Uriel provides a calendrical revelation from God, including books (akin to Jubilees’ tablets). Also like Jubilees, the Book of the Luminaries “diverge[s] from the lunisolar calendar current in Judaism at that time”.

However, the differences of the progression of the calendar in the Book of the Luminaries must be noted. While Uriel’s books provide a facile analogy to the heavenly tablets, they are most certainly not the same thing: the Book of the Luminaries’ dependence upon the calendar is “remarkably cool and scientific, and nowhere are its radical implications for religious observance explicitly drawn out” while Jubilees contains “the crusading spirit of religious reform”.

So crusading is Jubilees calendar that “[t]he adoption of the Enochic calendar [as expressed in Jubilees] may have been one of the most important factors in defining the

122 Alexander, “From Son of Adam to Second God,” 98.
Qumran community as a sect within Israel”123. In the article “Jubilees, Qumran, and the Essenes”124, Eyal Regev discusses the basic points of comparison between the two groups reflected especially in *Jubilees*:

Jubilees and the Qumran sects (or rather, the Community Rule and the Damascus Document) share a belief in predestination and the immortality of the soul, the concept of holy and evil angels and spirits and the struggle between them, a 364-day calendar, the association of sin and moral impurity in the pursuit of atonement, holiness and eternal bliss. One may also add Sabbath interdictions common to Jubilees and the Damascus Document 10-11, as well as specific sacrificial laws common to Jubilees, the Temple Scroll, and MMT125.

Thus, much of its focus on reforming the existing system, especially the calendar, was taken as a true call to change, a call that did not lie dead but was used (and altered by) the Qumran community.

**Noah and the Flood in *Jubilees***

The Noah narrative spans from his birth in 4:28 to his burial in 10:17. *Jubilees* contains the “earliest extended post-biblical development of the Noah story,” acting as a model for later treatments126.

*Jubilees’* concerns focus around obeying Torah. The failure of Adam and Eve, and then of Cain, and finally the Watchers sets the stage for a paradigm of human obedience to the statutes of God: “[Noah] behaves in ways that prefigure Torah

---

123 Alexander, “From Son of Adam to Second God,” 99.
126 James C. VanderKam, “The Righteousness of Noah,” 15. Of interest as well is the fact that “[t]he only major tradition […] not [found] in Jubilees is the legend about Noah’s birth” (16). As he suggests later, this tale has more relevance in the hero cycle rather than the righteousness cycle (VanderKam, “The Birth of Noah,” 213-231).
obedience, thus providing a ‘new Adam’ archetype for Jews needing to understand their identity as Jews”\textsuperscript{127}.

More importantly, however, is the focus on Noah as an ideal priest prior to the Levitical priesthood\textsuperscript{128}. Many of the actions performed by Noah echo, either directly or indirectly, the later actions that the biblical narrative had placed in the context of the priesthood. Furthermore, their placement within the revelation on Sinai points toward not just continuity with the Levite priesthood but the inspiration for the priesthood\textsuperscript{129}.

There are several key episodes in the \textit{Jubilees} Noah cycle that are worth exploring for their relation to the idea of the Noachic origins of later biblical events, relating to the person, actions, or situation of Noah:

1) The marriage of Noah (4:33)

2) The fall of the Watchers (4:15, 21-24; 5:1-19; 7:20-25)

3) Noah’s sacrifices on the mountain (6:1-4, 7:1-6)

4) Further blood stipulations (6:10-14, 7:28-33)

5) Festivals (6:15-38)

6) Dealings with demons (10:1-14)

This study will analyze each episode at length in order to explain its connection to the overall portrayal and mission of Noah in the book of \textit{Jubilees}.

\textsuperscript{127} Peters, \textit{Noah Traditions}, 63-64.

\textsuperscript{128} Stone, “The Axis of History at Qumran,” 69. \textit{Jubilees} does not, as could be assumed, contain an anti-Levite tendency; it merely aims to use Noah as a “bridge over the Flood […]A second Adam for the new, post-diluvian world order” (69).

\textsuperscript{129} VanderKam, “The Righteousness of Noah,” 20.
The marriage of Noah (Jubilees 4:33)

Jubilees 4:33 relates the person to whom Noah is married: “In the twenty-fifth jubilee Noah married a woman whose name was Emzara, the daughter of Rakiel, the daughter of his father’s brother”\(^\text{130}\). Though a seemingly insignificant event, it reflects two concerns: one, as already discussed, the calendrical paradigm; and second, purity.

This is not the first appearance of the calendar in Jubilees, nor is it the most important; it will thus suffice to mention it is one event among many that illustrate the author’s concern with the proper ordering of creation and events of the bible\(^\text{131}\). What is more important is the detail that his marriage is “to the daughter of his father’s brother.” Whereas Genesis seems relatively unconcerned about the line of Noah’s wife\(^\text{132}\), Jubilees evidently feels that the purity of the Noachic line must be preserved\(^\text{133}\). Lutz Doering also argues that “the main focus in matters of sexual impurity [in Jubilees] is the issue of intermarriage,” though the explicit warnings against intermarriage only “begin with Abraham”\(^\text{134}\).

The Noachic reference is certainly too subtle to act as a direct warning, but it also prepares the reader for the actions of Noah and the actions of the other patriarchs in their choice of wives. In fact, as the following story shows, sexual purity and impurity are overarching concerns for Jubilees. Noah’s marriage, given immediately before the

---

\(^{130}\) VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 31. Emphasis original. VanderKam notes the problems in the verse, but also acknowledges they likely arose in the process of textual transmission. Wintemute’s translation follows VanderKam.

\(^{131}\) Van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted*, 178.

\(^{132}\) Notably, however, the same subtle concern is shown for Isaac’s wife, Rebekah (“born to Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham’s brother,” Gen. 24:25), and Jacob’s wife, Rachel (“daughter of his mother’s brother Laban,” Gen. 29:9).

\(^{133}\) VanderKam, “The Righteousness of Noah,” 16.

\(^{134}\) Lutz Doering, “Purity and Impurity in the Book of Jubilees,” in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of Jubilees*, eds. Gabriele Boccaccini and Giovanni Ibba (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 271
wanton sexual conduct of the Watchers, surely exists as a preparation for the more overt
warnings and stipulations given later in the book.

The story of the Watchers (Jubilees 4:15, 21-24; 5:1-19; 7:20-25)

The myth of the Watchers, as present in Jubilees, parallels relatively closely its
antecedent from 1 Enoch 6-11\textsuperscript{135}. The story as found in 1 Enoch is a synthesis of two
narratives, each centered around a figure: Shemihazah and Asael. The story begins as an
exegesis of Genesis 6:1-4, in which angels from heaven dwell among the people on the
earth. From these scant details, 1 Enoch expands upon the story. According to 1 Enoch,
though they originally only arrive to teach humanity, the angels end up procreating with
humans, creating giants; these giants cause widespread destruction upon the earth.
Plagued by violence, the earth pleads with heaven, at which point angels are sent by God
to bind the leaders of the rebellion and destroy the giants\textsuperscript{136}.

As the 1 Enoch tale takes liberties with the biblical text (Gen. 6:1-4), so too does
Jubilees alter the narrative for its own purposes, which spans from Enoch to Noah to
Ham, Shem, and Japheth. This story introduces themes that have consequences for the
entire story. Furthermore, Noah’s interpretation of this story is uniquely related in Jub.
7:20-39 in his testament to his sons—this cannot be separated from the original story to
fully explain its place in Jubilees.

\textsuperscript{135} For a fuller discussion of the narrative, see Siam Bhayro, \textit{The Shemihazah and Asael Narrative of 1
Enoch 6-11: Introduction, Text, Translation and Commentary with Reference to Ancient Near Eastern and
Biblical Antecedents} (Munster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2005). It is possible as well that these stories possess some
relationship with similar Greek myths—these parallels are, regrettably, outside the scope of this thesis.
Note, however, the similarity to the punishment of the Titans and the actions of Prometheus.

First, the actual narrative of the Watchers is taken primarily from *1 Enoch*, as noted previously. The points of correspondence are as follows, including the underlying purpose:

1) The Genesis “sons of God” who come down to illicitly mate with human women are equivalent to the Watchers.

2) The secondary role of the Watchers was that of teaching skills to mankind.

3) The offspring of the human women and Watchers, the giants, are directly linked to the flood punishment, though they are not the *entire* cause of this punishment.

4) Enoch witnesses and condemns the Watchers and the giants.

5) The Watchers are chained for eternity and the giants kill each other off; yet demons still persist after the dead giants.

6) Demons become problematic for Noah and his sons after the Flood.

This entire episode attempts to explain the origin and persistence of evil in the world.

It begins with the actual descent of the Watchers themselves. Malalael is said to have “named [his son] Jared because during his lifetime the angels of the Lord who were called Watchers descended to earth to teach mankind and to do what is just and upright upon the earth” (4:15). Though the correlation between “to descend” (ירד) and “Jared” (ירה) is present in *1 Enoch*, here it is treated along with the character of the Watchers.

Unlike the Watchers of *1 Enoch*, they come down onto the earth in order to fulfill a noble mission—to “teach mankind to do what is just and upright on the earth.” This eliminates...

---

137 This list is taken from John S. Bergma’s “The Relationship between Jubilees and the Early Enochic Books,” in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of Jubilees*, eds. Gabriele Boccaccini and Giovanni Ibba (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 46-47.
heaven as the place from which evil originated: “‘Heaven’ is still the place where the God of Israel reigns”\(^{139}\). Thus, the justice of heaven is preserved, as is the justice of God’s subsequent actions.

The first to pass judgment on the Watchers is Enoch: “He [Enoch] testified to the Watchers who had sinned with the daughters of men because these had begun to mix with earthly women so that they became defiled. Enoch testified against all of them” (4:22-23)\(^{140}\). This judgment from Enoch takes place before the actual episode is presented in the text; in doing so, the author of Jubilees “reveals […] his knowledge] of many of the early traditions which surrounded Enoch”\(^{141}\), such as that of the heavenly scribe given special status in heaven. Because these statements echo several later ones made by Noah, they prepare the reader for Noah’s special authority\(^{142}\). Enoch does not, however, play any further role in the narrative; the author has “transformed this [Enochic] material to suit his own goals,” which is focused toward the tablets themselves\(^{143}\).

*Jubilees* 5:1-5 is a rough parallel to Genesis 6:1-12, with the exclusion of Gen. 6:3. In Jubilees, the Watchers (euphemistically referred to as “angels of the Lord” [“sons of God”\(^{144}\)]) see the beauty of the “daughters of men,” marry them and procreate; this is followed by the spread of wickedness. The Lord sees this spread and resolves to destroy

\(^{141}\) van Ruiten, *Primeval History Interpreted*, 177.
\(^{143}\) van Ruiten, *Primeval History Interpreted*, 177.
\(^{144}\) As van Ruiten notes, this line of interpretation—making the “sons of God” into “angels of God”—“reflects the oldest interpretation of Gen 6:2, 4” (“The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1-12 in *Jubilees* 5:1-19,” in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, eds. Matthias Albani, Jorg Frey, and Armin Lange [Tubingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1997], 66.)
all flesh—but not before declaring Noah righteous. Between the spread of mankind (“When mankind began to multiply on the surface of the entire earth…”) and the reaction of the angels of the Lord (“[they] saw that they were beautiful to look at”), the author inserts a typical comment on calendar, that this takes place “in a certain (year) of this jubilee” (5:1). In addition, Jubilees’ concern with purity and impurity is further apparent in its expansion of the corruption on the earth. Responsibility and corruption lies not merely with man but with “all animate beings” (5:2), a proper prelude to the punishment—“all flesh is corrupted its way […] so God obliterates people and all flesh”\(^{145}\). Especially important for the author of Jubilees are proper order (“prescribed course”) and the consequences for breaking that order. In this case, the consequence is cannibalism, leading to further corruption\(^{146}\). Aside from moving Genesis 6:3, the following verses (5:3-5) act as more or less direct quotations with minimal changes: 5:3 quotes Gen. 6:12; 5:4, Gen. 6:7; and 5:5, Gen. 6:8\(^{147}\). One important change, however, lies in the end of the final verse. While in both versions Noah is found pleasing to God, only in Jubilees is it noted that he was pleased with Noah alone. Considering the displeasure with which God views the created world, and the reasons for his displeasure, it can be inferred that Noah has continued on his “prescribed path.”

The lengthy insertion from 5:6 to 5:19 is a mixture of original material and Enochic material. 5:6-12 is an abridged retelling of the Shemihazah-Asael stories in 1 Enoch 6-11. In general, despite the omission of the names of the angels involved, the

---


\(^{146}\) Segal explains that the specific charge of cannibalism comes out of the 1 Enoch narrative: giants consumed the food of the crops of mankind, eventually turning to eating men when the crops are exhausted. Because man must be responsible for their own corruption, however, the actions are moved to mankind itself (Segal, The Book of Jubilees, 118).

\(^{147}\) van Ruiten, Primeval History Interpreted, 191.
flow of the story is the same. Genesis 6:3 is relocated in this story, thus giving
interpretive clarification to the ambiguous biblical statement: the judgment regarding
lifespans applies only to the generation prior to the flood. 5:12 indicates the triumph of
heavenly justice, stated much more strongly than the same general ideas in 1 Enoch.

*Jubilees* 5:13-19 is relatively unique material. Emphasized once again is the
eternal nature of the heavenly tablets and the ordination thereof, finding the past in
continuity with the present and (by extension) the future. It ends with an explanation of
Noah’s righteousness: “[H]is mind was righteous in all his ways, as it had been
commanded concerning him. He did not transgress from anything that had been ordained
for him” (5:19). The eternity of the heavenly tablets makes this a remark on Noah’s moral
state: both prior to the flood and following the flood his behavior was entirely upright
(moral purity).

In conveying his testament later on in *Jubilees* (7:20ff), Noah reinterprets the
story of the Watchers. The stipulations given in the beginning of the section serve as a
further reinforcement of the status of Noah—in action, he is the paradigmatic priest; in
teaching, he is the paradigmatic leader, one who teaches Moses himself. It also makes
explicit *Jubilees’* ideas of sinful versus righteous action. Five positive commands are
given by Noah to his sons: “to do what is right, cover the shame of their bodies, bless
the one who had created them, honor father and mother, [and] love one another” (7:20).
While similar to many other Biblical testaments, it also holds a number of similarities

---

149 This is further discussed by Cana Werman in “‘The Engraved on the Tablets,” *DSD*,
150 “The Watchers story is emphasized more than any other story or commandment in the list, both in its
conspicuous length […] and also in the anchoring of the specific commandments in the story itself” (Segal,
The Book of Jubilees, 148).
151 As suggested by my thesis reader Dr. Fred Jenkins, it is possible that such a reference is a reaction to the
general Greek practice of exercising naked.
with the ten commandments of Moses. Keeping in mind the setting for *Jubilees* is that very same Sinai theophany, it is more likely meant to foreshadow and anticipate the Decalogue. The continuity of the heavenly tablets is an overriding concern for the author, and so the teachings have been in place from the beginning, continue through this story, and will eventually be revealed to Moses on Sinai.

These injunctions by Noah are followed by three negative ones: “keep [yourselves] from fornication, uncleanness, and from all injustice” (7:20). Close behind these are their interpretations, making explicit the themes connect to the Watchers’ story: fornication by the Watchers lead to intermixed marriage, which is, by definition, unclean for the Jubilees author; this uncleanliness led to unjust actions committed by the children of the Watchers. *Jubilees* illustrates its continued concern with proper action and the consequences of straying from the path of the heavenly tablets. Because they strayed from the path prescribed to them, the Watchers were bound and the giants and their offspring were destroyed in the flood.

While the story of the Watchers and the origins of the flood are not directly witnessed by Noah, they have been accordingly reoriented highlighting his special status in the eyes of the author of *Jubilees*. Despite his limited direct role in the narrative until the flood event, Noah’s justice can only be understood in light of the concerns and reasons motivating God’s flood.

---

152 “[The Watchers] fathered (as their) sons the Nephilim […and] were all dissimilar (from one another) and would devour one another: the giant killed the Naphil; the Naphil killed the Elyo; the Elyo mankind; and the people their fellows” (*Jub.* 7:22) (VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 47).

153 This story sets up the later dealings with the demons: “[Even] after the Flood, humanity remains under the threat of bloodshed, because of the influence of the demons” (van Ruiten, *Primeval History Interpreted*, 305).
Noah’s sacrifices on the mountain (6:1-4, 7:3-5)

Most of the details of Noah’s sacrifices upon the altar are the creation of the author of Jubilees; they have no parallel in the Genesis narrative, though Noah’s first sacrificial act is mentioned briefly in scripture. The implications of his priestly nature and role become explicit. In fact, “the author sketches a portrait of a priestly Noah whose righteousness consists in obedience to sacerdotal legislation some of which originated with him and much of which now appears in the [P]entateuch”154.

After the flood subsides, Noah goes out onto mount “Lubar, one of the mountains of Ararat” (5:28) and constructs an altar. His acts are recounted in detail (6:2-3):

2He appeared on the earth, took a kid, and atoned with its blood for all the sins of the earth because everything that was on it had been obliterated except those who were in the ark with Noah. 3He placed the fat on the altar. Then he took a bull, a ram, a sheep, goats, salt, a turtledove, and a dove and offered (them as) a burnt offering on the altar. He poured on them an offering mixed with oil, sprinkled wine, and put frankincense on everything. He sent a pleasant fragrance that was pleasing before the Lord. The Lord smelled the pleasant fragrance and made a covenant with him that there would be no flood waters which would destroy the earth; (that) throughout all the days of the earth seedtime and harvest would not cease; (that) cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night would not change their prescribed pattern and would never cease155.

As implied above, Noah’s ritual imports many elements from later Pentateuchal tradition; in Jubilees, “Noah […] acts specifically like an Aaronid priest of the Bible’s P stratum”156, providing “the first account of animal sacrifice in the book”157.

The first change from the biblical text is the expansion regarding the land.

William Gilders notes that “the earth itself required and received expiation,”158 which provides the key that links the flood with Noah’s role, interpreting the actions that have

just been recounted and opening the door for *Jubilees’* fixation with blood stipulations.\(^{159}\)

*Jubilees’* concern for the land is taken from later statements in the Pentateuch, absent from the early patriarchal narratives. Numbers 35:33-34 bluntly states

> [y]ou shall not pollute the land in which you live; for blood pollutes the land, and no expiation can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of one who shed it. You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also dwell; for I the Lord dwell among the Israelites (Num. 35:33-34).

*Jubilees* seeks to correct the absence of a biblical ritual by which to purify the earth with Noah’s actions.

More important are the details about what is included in the sacrifice. While there seems to be no direct precedent for the kid,\(^{160}\) all others correspond with Levitical practices. Fat was included in many sacrificial acts in general,\(^{161}\) as were bulls, rams, sheep, and goats.\(^{162}\) Salt seems to have a double meaning in this context: “On the one hand it is one of the requirements of all future offerings. On the other hand, it anticipates the Covenant [because of its frequent mention in connection to the Covenant].”\(^{163}\)

“Turtledoves and doves” are mentioned in conjunction with purity rituals:

> When the days for her purification are completed […] she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb […] and a pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering. […] If she cannot afford a sheep, she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement on her behalf, and she shall be clean (Lev. 12:6-8)

It is tempting to connect the various strands of this ritual and make it parallel the event which has just occurred: not only is Noah making a blood offering, but he also is atoning for the sin of the earth, which has experienced the birth-pangs of a new creation. Atop

\(^{159}\) “What is at this juncture only implicit will become fully explicit” (Gilders, “Blood and Covenant,” 88).

\(^{160}\) van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted*, 225.

\(^{161}\) See, for example, Ex. 29:13.

\(^{162}\) See Lev. 8:14-29.

\(^{163}\) van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted*, 228.
these burnt offerings, Noah pours oil, wine, and frankincense. These are commonly associated with priestly rituals\textsuperscript{164}.

The pleasing odor and the Lord’s reaction to it serve a twofold purpose. Ostensibly, there is a clear connection to the Genesis narrative (and related stories), where God smells the “pleasing odor” and makes a promise regarding his future actions. Because of the careful attention to detail, however, \textit{Jubilees} most likely seeks to recall priestly passages that aim for the same end: “[Y]ou shall offer a burnt offering, a pleasing odor to the Lord […] a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the Lord” (Num. 29: 2,6). Whereas the actions by God in Genesis seem more motivated by guilt and sadness, his actions in \textit{Jubilees} seem prompted by Noah’s priestly actions—precisely the hope of sacrifice by the priests in later times.

\textit{Jubilees} 7:3-5 describes an additional sacrificial act by Noah similar to the one described earlier after planting his vineyard:

\begin{quote}
3 He made a burnt offering for the Lord – one young bull, one ram, seven sheep each a year old, and one kid – to make atonement through it for himself and for his sons. 4 First he prepared the kid. He put some of its blood on [the horns of] the altar\textsuperscript{165} which he had made. He offered all the fat on the altar where he made the burnt offering along with the bull, the ram, and the sheep. He offered all their meat on the altar. 5 On it he placed their entire sacrifice mixed with oil. Afterwards he sprinkled wine in the fire that had been on that altar beforehand. He put frankincense on the altar and offered a pleasant fragrance that was pleasing before the Lord his God\textsuperscript{166}.
\end{quote}

Many of the elements in this sacrifice are identical to the prior one. It also takes place on Mount Lubar, and thus the same altar on which he made the other sacrifice; he begins the

\textsuperscript{164} See Ex. 29:40; Lev. 2:1-3, 23:13; Num. 15:4-10
\textsuperscript{165} In “Where Did Noah Place the Blood?: A Textual Note on Jubilees 7:4” (\textit{Journal of Biblical Literature}, 124[4] (2005): 745-749), William Gilders argues that the blood is placed upon the horns of the altar, not the flesh sitting upon the altar. Thus, it “simply indicate[s], quite unremarkably, that the kid’s blood was applied to the horns of the altar,” which is precisely what is expected for this type of offering (749). Thus, I have emended VanderKam’s translation to reflect this.
\textsuperscript{166} VanderKam, \textit{The Book of Jubilees}, 43-44.
ritual with a kid; he offers the fat, a bull, a ram, sheep; and mixes oil, wine, and frankincense. Once again, Noah “officiates as priest over an atoning sacrifice”\(^{167}\).

The concern with proper sacrifices—twice by Noah on the same altar—is not only due to the requirement to purify the land. It is part of the larger mission of \textit{Jubilees}, one in which Noah plays a vital role: “[R]ead[ing] the sacrificial practice and festivals of the temple back into the world of the patriarchs”\(^{168}\).

\textit{Festivals (6:15-38)}

In addition to the projection of temple \textit{practices} to the world of the patriarchs, \textit{Jubilees} also displays a vested interest in placing \textit{festivals} there as well. Both are part of the mission to involve Noah in the “important priestly function[s…] in the sacral calendar”\(^{169}\).

In the midst of the blood stipulations, \textit{Jubilees} states:

\(^{10}\)Noah and his sons swore an oath not to consume any blood that was in any animate being. During this month he made a covenant before the Lord God forever throughout all the history of the earth. \(^{11}\)For this reason he told you, too, to make a covenant — accompanied by an oath — with the Israelites during this month on the mountain and to sprinkle blood on them because of all the words of the covenant which the Lord was making with them for all times (6:10-11)\(^{170}\).

This action seeks to explain the ratification of the covenant seen in Exodus 24:1-8:

Then [Moses] took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” Moses took the blood and dashed it on the people, and said, “See the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words” (Ex. 24:7-8).


While Moses is not necessarily a priest, he is a consecrated individual, since it is said that
“Moses alone shall come near the Lord; but the others shall not come near, and the
people shall not come up with him” (Ex. 24:1).

This festival is expanded several verses later. *Jubilees* retains the traditional post-
flood sign of the covenant, the rainbow. However, it is not enough for this to stand on its
own, but is considered the origin for *Shavuot*, the Festival of Weeks, a festival of
harvest. While “the author of *Jubilees* does not refer to these texts explicitly, they are
there in the background”. It begins with a sketch of its history:

17 For this reason it has been ordained and written on the heavenly tablets that they
should celebrate the festival of weeks during this month — once a year — to
renew the covenant each and every year. 18 This entire festival had been celebrated
in heaven from the time of creation until the lifetime of Noah — for 26 jubilees
and five weeks of years [= 1309 years]. Then Noah and his sons kept it for seven
jubilees and one week of years until Noah's death [= 350 years]. From the day of
Noah's death his sons corrupted (it) until Abraham’s lifetime and were eating
blood. 19 Abraham alone kept (it), and his sons Isaac and Jacob kept it until your
lifetime. During your lifetime the Israelites had forgotten (it) until I renewed (it)
for them at this mountain. (6:17-19)

The festival is, unsurprisingly, not merely temporal, but is connected to an eternal
commandment found on the heavenly tablets. Noah’s complete dedication to its
celebration underscores his unswerving loyalty to the path prescribed by God. The fault
for its corruption lies not with Noah but with his sons. This also seems to establish a
pattern followed by others: remembrance by the patriarchs, forgetfulness by the common
people. The remembrance of the patriarchs carries the primary importance, though, since

---

171 So referred to in 6:21 as well as elsewhere in *Jubilees*: 15:1, 16:13, 22:1, 44:4. In *Jubilees*, though, it is
not merely a festival of harvest but a “festival of the renewal of the Covenant” (van Ruiten, 249).
“[a]ll the festivals of the Covenant in the book of Jubilees take place on the same day of the year”\textsuperscript{174}.

What follows the establishment of this festival is remarkable in its uniqueness.

Four days are set aside:

\begin{enumerate}
\item On the first of the first month, the first of the fourth month, the first of the seventh month, and the first of the tenth month are memorial days and days of the seasons. They are written down and ordained at the four divisions of the year as an eternal testimony. \textsuperscript{24}Noah ordained them as festivals for himself throughout the history of eternity with the result that through them he had a reminder. \textsuperscript{25}On the first of the first month he was told to make the ark, and on it the earth became dry, he opened (it), and saw the earth. \textsuperscript{26}On the first of the fourth month the openings of the depths of the abyss below were closed. On the first of the seventh month all the openings of the earth’s depths were opened, and the water began to go down into them. \textsuperscript{27}On the first of the tenth month the summits of the mountains became visible, and Noah was very happy (6:23-27)\textsuperscript{175}.
\end{enumerate}

Rather than God establishing a festival in memory of the covenant, Noah “ordains them as festivals for himself throughout the history of eternity”! No longer is Noah a passive agent; instead, he is given the power and authority to ordain celebrations on the heavenly tablets. Furthermore, these festivals are intimately connected to the deluge. In this way, then, “the essentials of the 364-day calendar are traced to Noah, and violation of it, it is claimed, would result in that confusion of sacred and profane that is anathema to the priestly mentality”\textsuperscript{176}.

\textsuperscript{174} van Ruiten, Primaeval History Interpreted, 249. The sacrifices to be offered are not laid out explicitly in Noah’s time, but later on, surprisingly, they are “not completely in agreement with the biblical prescriptions” (249).

\textsuperscript{175} VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 40-41.

\textsuperscript{176} VanderKam, “Righteousness of Noah,” 21-22.
Further blood stipulations (6:12, 7:27-33)

As in the Genesis story upon which it is based, following the flood and the sacrifices, but prior to the official covenant, Jubilees contains a set of blood-rules. While the primary tenets of the agreement remain intact, there is a brief addition at the end:

This testimony has been written regarding you to keep it for all times so that you may not at any time eat any blood of animals or birds throughout all the days of the earth. (As for) the person who has eaten the blood of an animal, of cattle, or of birds during all the days of the earth — he and his descendants will be uprooted from the earth (6:12).

As with most of Jubilees, there is an intertwining of several themes. The severity of the consequences for failure—being “uprooted from the earth”—is typical of deviation from the heavenly tablets, as has been previously seen. These blood laws come to a full culmination much later, nested in Noah’s warnings to his sons.

27 For I myself see that the demons have begun to lead you and your children astray; and now I fear regarding you that after I have died you will shed human blood on the earth and (that) you yourselves will be obliterated from the surface of the earth. […]

31 Do not be one who eats (meat) with the blood; exert yourselves so that blood is not consumed in your presence. Cover the blood because so was I ordered to testify to you and your children together with all humanity.

32 Do not eat the life with the meat so that your blood, your life, may not be required from every person who sheds (blood) on the earth. 33 For the earth will not be purified of the blood which has been shed on it; but by the blood of the one who shed it the earth will be purified in all its generations (7:27, 31-33).

Three primary pieces are evident. First, Noah continues to uphold the heavenly decrees and tablets. Second, there is a call to purify the earth. Finally, there is a continued advisory role in guiding his sons. All of these have been shown to be hallmarks of Jubilees’ treatment of Noah.

177 VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 39.
Dealings with demons (Jub. 10:1-14)

As Devorah Dimant notes: “It is perhaps fitting that the author of Jubilees finishes Noah’s biography with a section on demons, a major concern of Jubilees […] Noah’s legacy […] thus includes a] means to combat demons”\(^{179}\). The episode demonstrates the primacy of Noah, continues reinforcing his priestly function, and shows how his legacy is passed on.

Immediately after the division of the earth by Noah, “[d]uring the third week of this jubilee impure demons began to mislead Noah’s grandchildren, to make them act foolishly, and to destroy them” (10:1). In some ways, this serves as a mirror to the Watchers story, an intermixing of divine and human with disastrous consequences. Indeed, Noah himself makes the connection in verse 5, in which he notes that the “fathers of these spirits” are the Watchers\(^{180}\). Because God promises never to destroy the earth by a flood again, the logical extension is that evil must be dealt with in other ways. Noah demonstrates one such way in the story that follows.

Noah responds to his grandsons’ request with a prayer:

3 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. 4 Now you bless me and my children so that we may increase, become numerous, and fill the earth. 5 You know how your Watchers, the fathers of these spirits, have acted during my lifetime. As for the spirits who have remained alive, imprison them and hold them captive in the place


\(^{180}\) “Both traditions [1 Enoch and Jubilees] share the view that the giants became disembodied spirits as a consequence of their destruction of one another” (Stuckenbruck, “The Book of Jubilees and the Origin of Evil,” 302.)
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. 6May they not rule the spirits of the living for you alone know their punishment; and may they not have the power over the sons of the righteous from now and forevermore (10:3-6). As Jacques van Ruiten notes, the structure of this prayer is formulaic. It begins with the praise of God and his actions, moves to a remembrance of his blessings, and concludes with a request. This structure reflects Noah’s consciousness of his proper place—knowledge and desire to “adhere flawlessly to the Lord’s will.” He accords proper blessings to God and frames his prayer as a request. It is not a command but “hymnic exorcism.” The punishment Noah requests for these demons is identical to that given to the Watchers at the conclusion of their rebellion. At the conclusion, the prayer is immediately granted: “Then our God told us to tie up each one” (10:7).

Mastema, the leader of the demons, approaches God, asking him to withhold some of the punishment upon the spirits (10:8):

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.

Mastema’s prayer of petition is curious, but in the context of the previous prayer its inclusion bolsters Noah’s image. Prayer and requests indicate humility and recognition of one’s place. The generation that produced these evil spirits did not seek to conform to the

182 van Ruiten, Primaevae History Interpreted, 339. My structure differs from van Ruiten’s.
184 van Ruiten, Primaevae History Interpreted, 339.
185 That is, the angels.
186 “Syncellus uses ὁ διάβολος for this leader of the spirits”—a generalized reference, perhaps alluding to the continual problems humans will continue to face even after Noah (VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees, 59, note in loc.).
will of God, but rather sowed uncleanness and impurity on the earth, which led to the flood. About to be destroyed again, Mastema presumably sees the model of Noah’s prayer and attempts one of his own. Noah’s prayer, then, acts as a guide for both future humanity and even demons—an incredible authority indeed. However, since the author of Jubilees must explain the continued presence of evil amongst humanity, Mastema’s prayer is granted, revealing that “[t]he writer of Jubilees thus attempts to steer a fine line between human responsibility, on the one hand, and demonic cause, on the other”\textsuperscript{188}. Evil is never attributed to God. One-tenth of the demons are left alive, while the remainder is sent to dwell with their fathers, bound in the “place of judgment.”

Invoking the beginning of the myth of the Watchers, the entire episode ends with Noah being taught medicines and other cures, writing them down in a book that he hands on to his son Shem. That Noah is the one given this knowledge cements his role as a priest, since “in Israel as in the Ancient Near East generally priests bore a number of medical responsibilities such as identifying illnesses and excluding people with contagious diseases from society”\textsuperscript{189}. It is conceivable, too, that the author of Jubilees wishes to validate these responsibilities in light of their non-biblical roots, to “authorize the use of medicine by herbal means, even if it contradicts biblical thought”\textsuperscript{190}. Jubilees’ author implies as well that the priestly practices of his own time have their roots with Noah, since Noah writes down and transmits the knowledge. Thus the use of this knowledge has been redeemed solely through its contact with Noah.

\textsuperscript{189} VanderKam, “The Righteousness of Noah,” 22-23.
\textsuperscript{190} van Ruiten, Primaeval History Interpreted, 340. This also serves to act as a reversal of the Watchers story: the Watchers originally came down to teach humankind this same type of knowledge, but became distracted from their proper way.
Conclusions

While the character of Noah in the biblical flood story is one in a line of patriarchs, the Noah of Jubilees commands a much more central location. His actions are replete with priestly markers: his lineage is pure; he is the only man of his generation to follow the commands of God; he performs proper sacrifice in order to appease God; he establishes festivals; and petitions God in a humble way.

More important, however, is the framing device for the story. All (or nearly all) the elements of his life are pulled from later biblical tradition regarding priestly behavior. As the Levitical priesthood is chronologically established in the biblical story on Sinai, Jubilees implies that all priestly behavior begins with Noah, rather than Aaron. The revelation of these facts to Moses establishes the Levitical priesthood. Thus, it can be said that Noah is not only paradigmatically righteous, but also that he is foundationally priestly.
The *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, also known as *Pseudo-Philo*, is an enigmatic text. Lacking the more complete scholarship and interest of *Jubilees*, it nonetheless has begun to gain some attention.

Despite its presence among the collected writings of Philo Judaeus of Alexandria, there are numerous problems with Philonic authorship. Among these reasons is the original language, since “Philo wrote in Greek (how much Hebrew he knew is debatable), but our author apparently wrote in Hebrew.” Pseudo-Philo’s underlying Hebrew text was, at one point, translated into Greek, and finally translated into Latin, the language in which all extant copies are written. The location, Palestine, is less debated.

Less clear is the dating of *Pseudo-Philo*. There is no agreement on whether it was written pre- or post-70 CE based on vague references to the Temple. Howard Jacobson asserts that “there are no cogent arguments in support of a pre-70 date, while the arguments for a post-70 date seem to me overwhelming,” causing him to settle for a date

---

191 See the overview in Howard Jacobson’s *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo’s Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, 195-199. D.J. Harrington (“Pseudo-Philo,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 297-377) sums up further concerns: “The manner of dealing with the biblical text is very different from Philo’s allegorizing […] and there are several points at which Pseudo-Philo explicitly contradicts the views of Philo” (300).
not “much later than the middle of the second century”\textsuperscript{196}. This seems to be the most convincing, and thus the date and background that will be assumed throughout the chapter.

As for its content, \textit{Pseudo-Philo} “retells the Hebrew Bible from Adam to the death of Saul”\textsuperscript{197}. It tends toward shortening the biblical text; it “paraphrases, condenses, summarizes, [and] omits material, and adds much that has little or no corresponding material in the Bible […] tak[ing] the form of speeches, prayers, and conversations among the characters”\textsuperscript{198}. Though often classified under the genre of ‘rewritten Bible,’ “\textit{LAB} is closer to Midrash in method, particularly in its propensity to quote verses from other portions of the Bible while expounding and expanding on a given passage”\textsuperscript{199}. Further setting it apart from other texts that “rewrite the bible,” \textit{Pseudo-Philo} was arguably \textit{not} meant to replace the biblical text; rather, it was a relatively extensive commentary, explicating some passages and ignoring others\textsuperscript{200}.

\textbf{Pseudo-Philo and Noah}

\textit{Pseudo-Philo}’s changes to the flood story are, on the whole, relatively minor, but the author’s approach in this particular segment is uncharacteristic compared to other parts. Frederick Murphy categorizes it as the type of passage that “depend[s] heavily upon quotations of biblical passages in which Pseudo-Philo’s interpretation depends upon

\textsuperscript{196} Jacobson, \textit{Commentary}, 209.
\textsuperscript{197} Murphy, \textit{Rewriting the Bible}, 3.
\textsuperscript{198} Murphy, \textit{Rewriting the Bible}, 3.
\textsuperscript{199} Feldman, \textit{Studies}, 60.
small-scale changes in the text”\textsuperscript{201}. Indeed, the very presence of the story suggests importance to the author of \textit{Pseudo-Philo}, since deletion is the primary mode by which the author expresses his opinion, rather than narrative expansion\textsuperscript{202}.

One of the most important segments in understanding \textit{Pseudo-Philo}’s perception of the flood story is the lengthy insertion of an apocalyptic vision to Noah. The scale of the apocalypse is unparalleled elsewhere in the text, as well: “It is noteworthy that, with the exception of this last example [3:8-10], \textit{Pseudo-Philo} does not simply insert such revelations into the biblical history”\textsuperscript{203}.

The author’s concern with Noah is less priestly and legalistic than \textit{Jubilees}. \textit{Pseudo-Philo}, rather than looking to an immediate future, looks instead at the distant future: the fulfillment of the covenant.

Several key episodes underlie Noah’s appropriateness and role.

1) The birth and naming of Noah (1:20)
2) God’s reasoning behind the establishment of a covenant (3:4)
3) The eschatological vision God offers (3:10)
4) The omission of Noah’s drunkenness
5) Noah’s descendants (4:1-5:8)

\textit{The birth and naming of Noah (1:20)}

In a structure that parallels \textit{Jubilees} more than the original biblical narrative, \textit{Pseudo-Philo} places Noah’s birth before the genealogy of Cain. The segment reads:

\textsuperscript{201} Murphy, \textit{Rewriting the Bible}, 20.
\textsuperscript{202} George W.E. Nickelsburg notes the deletions: “Gen 1-3; all but a summary of Gen 12-50; Exod 3-13 and all the legal material in Exodus except chapter 20; most of Leviticus; all the legal material in Numbers; Deut 1-30; and parts of 1 Samuel” (“Good and Bad Leaders,” 49). Its preoccupation with (and minimal abridgement of) the book of Judges, by contrast, is well-attested.
\textsuperscript{203} Bauckham, “Midrash,” 40.
Lamech lived 182 years and begot a son and called him, in accord with the time of his birth (secundum nativitatem suam), “Noah,” saying, “This one will give rest to us (requiem dabit nobis) and to the earth from those who dwell on it (ab his que sunt in ea), upon whom punishment will be brought on account of the wickedness of their evil deeds” (1:20).204

As the first appearance of Noah in the text, it establishes several facts that hold great importance for understanding his later roles.

The phrase “in accord with the time of his birth” (secundum nativitatem suam) is relatively unclear. Jacobson admits that the text does not support the most “welcome” interpretation, like “‘according to his fate’ or ‘according to his character’”205. However, while secundum nativitatem suam does not strictly translate to “in accord with the time of his birth,” Jacobson notes that “[n]ativitas is sometimes used in later Latin in astrological contexts as a ‘technical term’ to mean the ‘time of birth’.”206 Thus, Pseudo-Philo could imply an astrological component to Noah’s birth, applying a righteous destiny to Noah; this destiny is made more explicit within the verse immediately following.

Pseudo-Philo proceeds to correct the biblical text. While Genesis provides the root of Noah’s name as חנן (comfort, console), Pseudo-Philo seems to go with the more logical חנן (rest)207. In addition to providing a more reasonable etymology, “rest” is thematically appropriate. Since “the world is an often-hostile place […] rest is needed and desired”208. Noah, then, “is the first human through whom God works to effect rest”209, as opposed to the work imposed on Adam. Unlike the original story, “LAB 1:20 offers relief from the sinners themselves,”210 an interpretation found nowhere else211. The effect is not

204 Jacobson, Commentary, 90.
205 Jacobson, Commentary, 290.
206 Jacobson, Commentary, 290.
207 Jacobson, Commentary, 290.
208 Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 30.
209 Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 30.
210 Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 31.
merely local, either: his destiny is seen in view of the future as well, since “us” also incorporates the readers\textsuperscript{212}.

Sin, as noted in the quotation, is effected by individuals, rather than an inherent quality of humankind, as opposed to the redemption effected by God’s hand. Rather than “relief or comfort brought to man from the hard labor of daily existence,” as in the bible, “LAB modifies [the biblical text] so as to provide a moral statement that stresses the difference between Noah and his contemporaries”\textsuperscript{213}. Along with the negative view of humankind, “[t]he reference to God’s visit is characteristic of Pseudo-Philo’s emphasis on eschatological judgment”\textsuperscript{214}. Judgment is assured, for “[n]othing is promised or predicted that does not in fact occur, and no contradictions exist either within the text or between the text and later historical circumstances known to the author”\textsuperscript{215}.

\textit{God promises to establish a covenant (3:4)}

Prior to the flood, God chooses Noah:

But Noah found favor and mercy (\textit{gratiam et misericordiam}) before the Lord, and these are his generations. Noah, who was a righteous man and blameless (\textit{homo iustus et inmaculatus}) in his generation, walked with the Lord. God said to him, “The end of all men who dwell upon the earth has arrived, for their deeds are wicked. [...] You will go into the ark, you, your wife, your sons and the wives of your sons with you, and I will establish my covenant\textsuperscript{216} (\textit{testamentum meum}) with you, so that I may destroy all the inhabitants of the earth (3:4)\textsuperscript{217}.

\textsuperscript{211} Lewis, \textit{A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood}, 77.
\textsuperscript{212} Murphy, \textit{Rewriting the Bible}, 31.
\textsuperscript{213} Jacobson, \textit{Commentary}, 291.
\textsuperscript{214} Murphy, \textit{Rewriting the Bible}, 30-31.
\textsuperscript{216} “One notes finally that LAB regularly renders ‘covenant’ i.e. בְּרִית as \textit{testamentum}. This is the regular way Latin texts render ‘covenant’ in translations from the Greek (διαθήκη), unlike the Vulgate which regularly uses \textit{pactum}” (\textit{Commentary}, 1:224).
\textsuperscript{217} Jacobson, \textit{Commentary}, 92.
The dual action of God vis-à-vis Noah (“Noah found favor and mercy…”) does have attestation elsewhere, though in the Genesis account Noah only finds favor with God\textsuperscript{218}. More importantly, however, the addition of “mercy” (gratiam) is thematic as well\textsuperscript{219}. God has promised to show no mercy to those who on earth performing evil deeds; he brings punishment and judgment. For God to show mercy is exceptional.

This exceptionality of Noah is further emphasized by the way in which the covenantal promise is phrased. Of primary importance is the fact that this is the first occurrence of the word “covenant” (testamentum) in Pseudo-Philo\textsuperscript{220}, which grows into a relatively important theme as the book continues. There is also a reversal of Genesis 6:18; while the biblical text states that God commands to them to enter the ark before his promise to establish a covenant, Pseudo-Philo places the command after the promise to establish the covenant\textsuperscript{221}. This turns a possible oversight into a much more calculated statement: the text implies a causal relationship between the covenant and the destruction of all people upon the earth\textsuperscript{222}. Mercy is, thus, a rarity, and the promise “supplant[s] tones of preservation and promise with the overwhelming threat of universal destruction – save for a very few”\textsuperscript{223}. This is a theme that will be further underscored by the threatening apocalyptic vision in 3:10.

\textsuperscript{218} Jacobson notes that “[while the] MT has חָנוֹן [...] Neofiti represents the single noun with two: חָנוֹן וַחָסֶד” like Pseudo-Philo (Commentary, 313).
\textsuperscript{219} Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 33.
\textsuperscript{221} Jacobson, Commentary, 315.
\textsuperscript{222} Harrington’s rendition, “I will establish my covenant with you, to destroy all those inhabiting the earth” (“Pseudo-Philo,” 306), is misleading, since it would strain credibility to assume that “the substance of God’s covenant with Noah is to destroy mankind” (Jacobson, Commentary, 315).
\textsuperscript{223} Levison, “Torah and Covenant,” 112.
God’s eschatological vision (3:9-10)

Following the flood, which is glossed over relatively quickly, and after the sacrifice on the altar, God begins to offer his speech of regret as found in the biblical account, but quickly adds far more dire imagery as a warning (and is considered part of the covenant):

But when the inhabitants of the earth sin, I will judge them by famine or by the sword or by fire or by pestilence (*in fame sive in gladio, sive in igne, sive in morte*); there will be earthquakes, and they will be scattered to uninhabited places. However, I will not again destroy the earth by the water of the flood (*non adiciam corrumpere aqua diluvii*). […] 16 But when the years of the world will be complete, then the light will cease (*quiescent lumen*) and the darkness will be extinguished (*extinguentur tenebre*), and I will bring the dead to life and raise up from the earth those who are sleeping (*erigam dormientes de terra*). The underworld will pay back its debt, and the place of perdition will return its deposit (*perditum restituet partem suam*) so that I will render to each according to his works and according to the fruits of his own deeds, until I judge between soul and flesh. And the world will be at rest (*requiescet seculum*), and death will be extinguished (*extinguetur mors*), and the underworld will close its mouth (*infernus claudet os suum*). The earth will not be without issue or sterile for those who dwell in it (*nec sterilis habitantibus in se*); and no one who has been vindicated by me will be polluted. There will be another earth and another heaven (*erit terra alia, et celum aliud*), an everlasting dwelling place (*habitaculum sempiternum*) (3:9-10)224.

For Pseudo-Philo, Noah is clearly the herald of both immediate punishment—the flood—and the final judgment. Despite its relatively brief nature, it contains many of the hallmarks of the apocalyptic genre. The definition of apocalyptic literature is understandably complex, but is generally defined as “a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural

Apocalyptic literature is primarily communicated through “visions and otherworldly journeys, supplemented by discourse or dialogue and occasionally by a heavenly book.” Several elements of this apocalyptic vision hold parallels with other writings. One subset of apocalyptic interprets history, either past or present, as a revelation of divine knowledge: “[T]here are two strands of tradition in the Jewish apocalypses, one of which is characterized by visions, with an interest in the development of history.” Pseudo-Philo’s use of Genesis 8:21 falls into this category by stating that “although the earth will not be cursed again, all human sins will be punished in this life.” Others of this type include 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra, with which Pseudo-Philo holds the most affinity. The punishments also utilize common motifs and imagery, specifically “[f]amine, sword, fire, death, earthquakes, and exile to uninhabited places.”

The imagery can thus be analyzed for a more complete picture of its importance to the whole of Pseudo-Philo. God’s statement begins with a reminder of the consequences of sin: as the flood was the consequence of sin, so too will the judgments found within this apocalyptic vision pertain to the future sins of all peoples. The phrasing is a relatively narrow interpretation of God’s promise to never destroy the earth again with a flood. Instead of implying no further destruction, the phrase is construed in the most exclusive way: only the flood will no longer be used as an instrument, but

---

225 Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre, ed. John J. Collins. (Semeia 14; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 9. Outside of those mentioned here, the more specific hallmarks of the apocalyptic genre can be found throughout the work.
228 Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 34.
230 Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 35.
231 Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 34.
everything else is possible, including “famine or by the sword or by fire or by pestilence; there will be earthquakes, and they will be scattered to uninhabited places” (3:9)\textsuperscript{232}. This further serves to emphasize the rarity of God’s mercy and thus the prototypical exclusivity of Noah.

The “scattering” to uninhabited places comes to a greater importance in view of later information. 5:2 provides the information that the census “was done while Noah was yet alive, even that all men should be gathered together: and they lived at one with each other, and the earth was at peace.” Not only is the success of the nations a consequence of Noah’s presence, but they are \textit{united} rather than divided. Thus, for Pseudo-Philo, the division of the earth is a judgment of sin by God rather than a “positive” state of living.

While the first half of the vision is concentrated on temporal punishments—punishments for the generations while they are still spreading across the land—the second half focuses on the last judgment, “when the years are complete,” and the apocalyptic elements gain greater prominence. First, it is said that “light will cease and the darkness will be extinguished” (3:10), a reversal of “God's creation of light and darkness in Genesis 1”\textsuperscript{233}. As Murphy notes, this holds parallels with other biblical apocalypses\textsuperscript{234}. Matthew 24:29 states that “[i]mmEDIATELY after the suffering of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light”; so too does Revelation 21:23 in which the heavenly city “has no need of sun or moon to shine on it.”

Following this, \textit{Pseudo-Philo} proclaims that God “will bring the dead to life and raise up from the earth those who are sleeping” (3:10); this eschatology can also be found in other

\begin{footnotes}
\item[232] Jacobson, \textit{Commentary}, 322. It “represents one side in a major debate over what the essence of God’s oath and covenant are here in Genesis (8:21-22; 9:11, 15)” (322).
\item[233] Murphy, \textit{Rewriting the Bible}, 34.
\item[234] Murphy, \textit{Rewriting the Bible}, 35.
\end{footnotes}
sources, “and so probably reflects common thought in first-century Palestinian Judaism.”\(^{235}\) The imagery of hell paying back its debt and then shutting up its mouth is more unique, but is also found in 2 Baruch 21:23: “Therefore, rebuke the angel of death, and let your glory appear, and let the greatness of your beauty be known, and let Sheol be sealed so that from now on it may not receive the dead, and let the treasuries of souls restore those who are enclosed in them”\(^{236}\). For *Pseudo-Philo*, “[a]fter a set period of time, the regular phenomena of nature will cease [and…] God will resurrect all the dead and judge them”\(^{237}\). In judging each by “the fruits of his own deeds,” there is a further repetition of the culpability of human action and (by contrast) proper behavior as seen in Noah.

After this judgment, “the world will be at rest,” another play on Noah’s name\(^{238}\). Once the world is at peace, there is no further death, either as a phenomenon (“death will be extinguished,” 3:10) or an end (“the underworld will close its mouth,” 3:10). Death, then, is temporary because it is tied into the presence of sinners: once sinners have been eliminated from the earth, only the righteous remain. As this is the ostensible end of the flood in *Pseudo-Philo*, Noah is a founder of a new paradise; his mission and righteousness are temporal representations of the new world. This new world is “not without issue” and those who live on it will no longer be sterile. The placement of the

---


\(^{236}\) Daniel M. Gurtner, *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text – With Greek and Latin Fragments, English Translation, Introduction, and Concordances* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group Inc, 2009), 57. This is also reflected in 2 Bar. 50:2: “For the earth will surely, at that time, give back the dead which it now receives” (89).

\(^{237}\) Jacobson, *Commentary*, 327.

\(^{238}\) Understanding the text as meaning “‘the world will cease’ […] may be right, but there is no obvious reason why the text should not mean, ‘the world will rest, be at peace’ […] which suits the context well” (Jacobson, 325). Also, 2 Baruch 11:4: “Our fathers went to rest without grief and, behold, the righteous sleep in the earth in peace” (Gurtner, *Second Baruch*, 65)
divine command to multiply across the face of the earth in the post-apocalyptic world, rather than merely the post-flood world, sanctifies the command to Noah.

Furthermore, there is a promise of God to protect those whom he has vindicated (\textit{justificatus est, 3:10})\textsuperscript{239}. While the command to multiply requires action on the part of humanity, humans are passive in being vindicated by God. It can be reasonably inferred that justification for \textit{Pseudo-Philo} is granted to those who act according to the command of God, particularly since the context of this remark occurs after the purification of the earth from sinners. In that view, then, Noah is once again a prefiguration of the post-apocalypse world. The beginning of the tale related how God found “grace and mercy before the Lord” (3:4)—he was recognized by the Lord as an individual worthy of salvation from the corrupt world, essentially vindicating him.

The end of the vision relates that “[t]here will be another earth and another heaven.” As previously mentioned, this is another connection to the flood event. Having completely destroyed the first earth, a second one is created, and humanity begins anew with Noah. However, the flood only anticipates the final judgment imperfectly. Since the final judgment will be more complete than the judgment of the flood, the renewal is more complete in its scope as well, rebuilding both heaven and earth. Noah’s actions in the flood—the first judgment—provide the reader with an understanding of proper behavior in surviving the final judgment. At this point all judgment of any sort will cease and the earth can never again be renewed, creating an “everlasting dwelling place” (3:10). The heavenly equivalent of the post-flood world is no longer subject to destruction, a threat

\textsuperscript{239} See also 2 Baruch 29:2: “For at that time I will protect only those who are found in those very days in this land” (Gurtner, \textit{Second Baruch}, 65).
that continues to loom over the descendants of Noah and, by extension, the world of the ideal reader.

The placement of this particular eschatological account is no coincidence. In the bible, the flood ends one world and begins another one; Noah’s destiny applies to both the righteous and the wicked, since both experience a form of rest. The new creation is an eternal world of fruition and bounty, as the final lines of the vision indicate.

Omission of the drunkenness of Noah

Without exception, at no point in the Pseudo-Philo narrative does Noah make a statement on his own behalf. Indeed, in the biblical narrative, the same is true until he pronounces a curse upon Canaan, which is prompted by his (Noah’s) drunkenness. The episode is problematic in the original text for numerous reasons: the ambiguity what transpires; the harsh sentence passed by Noah; and the seemingly unbecoming behavior of Noah himself.

Pseudo-Philo deals with these problems through complete omission. Nickelsburg, in his analysis of leadership in Pseudo-Philo, gives several characteristics of good leaders. One of them explains the motivation behind skipping the event: “Although Pseudo-Philo is clearly concerned with Israel’s covenantal obedience and disobedience, his narrative is focused mainly on Israel’s leaders and their good and bad characteristics.” Thus, for Pseudo-Philo, a leader cannot perform actions that contradict righteous behavior.

---

240 Nickelsburg, “Good and Bad Leaders,” 60.
In order to understand the importance of this exclusion, it is briefly necessary to outline the event in later Jewish thought. Contrasting with the positive image painted in texts such as *Pseudo-Philo* and *Jubilees*, rabbinic thought was much more divided. The rabbis emphasized three major ideas: his righteousness, his drunkenness, and his sexuality. The latter two are important in the scheme of the entire story of his drunkenness.

While it was certainly more difficult to qualify his righteousness, the rabbis “ruthlessly assess Noah’s drunken behavior negatively.” This episode is connected to his profession as a farmer: as Genesis notes, “Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard” (9:20). *Jubilees* exalts this fact and *Pseudo-Philo* ignores it. In the context of Genesis, this is a positive sociological remark, “a step forward in relation to agriculture.” The rabbis, however, saw vine-growing as “a degrading and useless occupation,” emphasizing that he should have instead planted “something more useful like a fig tree or olive tree.” This vain pursuit, they reasoned, illustrated a selfish tendency, “someone whose focus is downward instead of upward, and not a man of

---

243 Koltun-Fromm, “Aphrahat and the Rabbis,” 64.
244 Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 487. The “Noah-as-farmer” tradition likely emerges from a different location than the Noah flood narrative: “The tradition of ‘Noah, the farmer’ is independent of the other in which the first man was already destined to farm the field and in which Cain was already a farmer” (Gunkel, *Genesis*, 79).
245 Koltun-Fromm, “Aphrahat and the Rabbis,” 64.
At least one critique draws a connection between the nation of Israel and Noah: “[H]is drunkenness is the source and cause of all the destruction of Israel and Judah, […] recount[ing] the Israelites’ debauchery in God’s vineyard, where they bear wild grapes for God by turning to worship others”\(^{247}\). Though the offensiveness of the event is alleviated somewhat by the fact that “it happened in the tent, at least not in public”\(^{248}\), drunkenness—more specifically, its subsequent effects, such as nudity—was “something disgraceful”\(^{249}\).

The next event (9:22-24) in the narrative is quite enigmatic. After falling asleep, his son Ham enters the tent, sees his father, and tells his brothers outside; after the latter two remove him (without seeing his nakedness\(^{250}\)), Noah awakes, and immediately “knew what his youngest son had done to him,” leading to a series of curses. No additional elaboration is given. Among the explanations proffered by the rabbis: Ham castrated Noah\(^{251}\). In being castrated, “he cannot even fulfill the divine commandment to be fruitful and multiply, a commandment specifically repeated to Noah and his sons after the flood”\(^{252}\). By degrading Noah, the rabbis are able to offer forth a more qualified candidate: “The divine blessings given after the flood apply equally to Noah and his sons. Shem, as the direct ancestor of Abraham, can take over his father’s sacral duties”\(^{253}\).

\(^{246}\) Koltun-Fromm, “Aphrahat and the Rabbis,”64. Missing from their critique is Cohen’s suggestion that Noah’s occupation and action “resulted from his need to increase his procreative power and not from a weakness for alcohol or from any ignorance of the effects of alcohol” (12), throwing his claim into doubt.


\(^{248}\) Gunkel, Genesis, 80.

\(^{249}\) Westermann, Genesis 1-11, 488. He explains that “[d]runkenness as such was not regarded as reprehensible in antiquity. If a person became drunk at a celebration, it was always good for a story, but no judgment was passed” (487).

\(^{250}\) The physical state of nakedness alone, however, was not enough to warrant his condemnation. (See Michael L. Satlow, “Jewish Constructions of Nakedness in Late Antiquity,” JBL 116.3 [Autumn, 1997]: 429-454.)


other words, much of their rhetoric was polemical. The events following Noah’s planting of a vineyard serve as the greatest lens through which one could justify degrading Noah. He becomes “no longer righteous, a drunk farmer, and unsuitable for offering sacrifices to God”\textsuperscript{254}.

With regard to this event, it is possible that “[the author] is disturbed by the idea that Noah, the perfect man, could have descended to such a low level as to become drunk and to have cursed not the person who saw him naked but the latter’s son, who was apparently innocent”\textsuperscript{255}. It is possible that any reinterpretation of this event by the author of Pseudo-Philo would have been inadequate. Depending upon the date at which \textit{Pseudo-Philo} was written, he may have also been aware of its vigorous usage among the rabbis. Its omission seems satisfactory for the author for two primary reasons. First, Noah remains an instrument of God, rather than a free-standing voice; throughout the flood, Noah has only acted, but he has not stated a single word. In addition, Noah’s dialogue as it appears in Genesis is a judgment, which would likely be at odds with the righteous eschatological judgment promised by God. Second, Noah’s righteousness remains intact. His reputation remains unblemished in an absolute way, for there is no possibility of misunderstanding or misconstruction of the event. Noah, as prophet \textit{par excellence}, is completely oriented toward his final destiny, as well as that of the world.

\textit{Noah’s descendants (4:1-5:8)}

In contrast with the single chapter devoted to the flood, nearly two full chapters are devoted to the descendants of Noah, with the occasional non-genealogical

\textsuperscript{254} Koltun-Fromm, “Aphrahat and the Rabbis,” 67.
interjection. The names that permeate the list are occasionally “appropriated from elsewhere in the Bible,” but overall, “LAB presents names of children where the Bible has nothing.”

These genealogical lists and their side-stories show that the promise given to Noah continues to guide the people of Israel, renewed by righteous leaders as time passes: “God saves this people throughout its existence by virtue of the covenants with their ancestors.” It seems to represent a variety of experiences: proper behavior, wicked behavior, and destiny.

At the conclusion of Japheth’s list (3:5), a drought occurs; the inhabitants of the land cry out to the Lord, who provides rain. In this raincloud is a bow, which serves as the sign of the covenant established with Noah. Murphy notes that “[t]his passage sets the stage for the rest of the Biblical Antiquities, showing how things should be.” In addition, the rain motif is appropriate: since it has been used for destructive purposes (that is, for the flood) as well as beneficially (for the crops), it shows the use of nature as a tool rather than possessing an inherent quality. Murphy notes that

Rain symbolizes God's nourishing the earth and its inhabitants and depends on humanity's obedience to God. Rain makes its first appearance in the Biblical Antiquities in a negative way, as part of the destruction of the earth by water (3:5). It is later seen as a reward for obedience and proper worship (4:5; 11:9; 13:7, 10; 23:12). It is under God's control (21:2), and the sin of lying before God will result in its being withheld.

---

257 Jacobson, *Commentary*, 331.
259 An already considerably-expanded list, adding “the sons of Gomer and Javan and refers to the names of the sons of Gomer” (Guido Kisch, *Pseudo-Philo’s Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* [Notre Dame: Publications in Medieval Studies, 1949], 7).
260 Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 36.
261 Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 36.
262 Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 36.
Highlighting the multiple uses of water, especially in the context of human behavior, allows *Pseudo-Philo* to make a statement about nature. Only Japheth’s generations provide a safely neutral location in which to make such a statement; no other son would be appropriate, as Ham’s descendants are “depicted negatively in 4:6-8 and in Jewish tradition generally” and “[t]here is no place for it in the enumeration of the sons of Shem, for there the prediction of the election of Abraham is in the foreground”\(^{263}\).

Since *Pseudo-Philo* contains a “pessimistic view of humanity in general and Ham in particular”\(^{264}\), the author strengthens the negative portrayal of Ham and his descendants. One way in which this is accomplished is emphasizing Ham’s city-building, an enterprise undertaken also by Cain previously, perhaps reflecting “a nostalgia for simpler days when cities were not the focus of life”\(^{265}\). Among the cities that find their origin among Ham’s descendants are Sodom and Gomorrah\(^{266}\). Nimrod also is found in the list; unlike Noah, who was said to have found favor and mercy before the Lord, Nimrod “began to be arrogant [*superbus*] before the Lord”\(^{267}\). The Shemites, in contrast to the other two tribes, are blessed by their adherence to the divine law, since they follow the covenantal stipulation in 3:11 commanding them to “fill the earth and multiply,” as seen at the end of 4:10\(^{268}\).

In the midst of Shem’s list is a prophecy regarding the rise of Abraham (4:11)\(^{269}\). In doing this, *Pseudo-Philo* creates continuity between Noah and Abraham—and even

---

\(^{263}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 36.

\(^{264}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 37.

\(^{265}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 37.

\(^{266}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 36.

\(^{267}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 36.

\(^{268}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 37.

\(^{269}\) “In chapter 6, Joktan plays a major role in a narrative crafted completely by Pseudo-Philo. In that story the Shemites are set in opposition to the other divisions of humanity, and it is integral to the narrative of
though the latter is glorified more highly than Noah, many of the points of the prophecy build upon characteristics of Noah. The prophecy given by “Melcha, daughter of Ruth” upon the birth of her son Serug states:

From this one there will be born in the fourth generation one who will set his dwelling on high (habitationem super excelsa) and will be called perfect (perfectus) and blameless (immaculatus); and he will be the father of nations, and his covenant will not be broken, and his seed will be multiplied forever (semen eius in seculum multiplicabitur)” (4:11)270.

Five elements are of importance in this prophecy, especially in how many of them relate to Noah271. The first concerns the phrase “set[ting] his dwelling on high”. While the precise meaning is uncertain, one possibility is Abraham’s later elevation above the firmament recounted in 18:5 in order to “show him the ordering of the stars”272. This contrasts with the statement about humanity in 4:16: “Then those who inhabited the earth began to gaze at the stars and started to prognosticate by them and to perform divination and to pass their sons and daughters through the fire. But Serug and his sons did not walk in accord with them”273. Noah’s behavior is reflected also in Abraham’s behavior: as Noah refused to follow the evil actions of men in his own day, following the commands of God instead, the Shemites resist the temptation to follow astrology because they would later be given knowledge of the stars through Abraham. For Pseudo-Philo, proper knowledge is given by God and proper behavior stems from obedience to the commands of God. Additionally, “set[ting] his dwelling on high” is reminiscent of the earlier claim closing the vision given to Noah, which calls the new earth and new heaven an

chapter 6 that Joktan and Abraham belong to the same tribe. Thus, 4:10-11 prepares for chapter 6” (Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 37).
270 Jacobson, Commentary, 95.
271 Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 37-39.
272 Murphy, Rewriting the Bible, 38.
273 Jacobson, Commentary, 95-96. This may also reflect a rejection of Abraham emerging from a tribe of idolators and astrologers. See Frederick J. Murphy, “Retelling the Bible: Idolatry in Pseudo-Philo,” JBL 107.2 (Jun., 1988): 275-287.
everlasting dwelling place (*habitaculum*, 3:10). Since the knowledge that Abraham receives is heavenly knowledge, it is instrumental in attaining favor with, and justification by, God himself, in both the immediate judgments and the final judgment.

In the prediction, Abraham is called perfect (*perfectus*) and blameless (*immaculatus*). While the claim to perfection is Abraham’s alone, both Noah and Abraham are the only individuals called “blameless”\(^{274}\). Narratively, these also both take place prior to any record of their actions. This label is heightened in importance because of the just-completed flood story; Noah once again acts as a model through which subsequent stories should be viewed.

The promise that “he will be the father of nations” returns to the idea of genealogy\(^ {275}\). As Noah’s sons are blessed with many offspring, forming both good nations and bad nations, so too is Abraham blessed. Clearly based on the biblical story, its placement in *Pseudo-Philo*—in the genealogical list of Noah’s sons—strengthens the connections between Noah’s family line (specifically the Shemites) and Abraham’s. The later stories of Abraham’s prominence as the father of the Israelites are also subtly alluded to, “emphasizing the distance between Israel and the nations,” most of which are developing from Noah’s sons at this point in the narrative\(^ {276}\).

Because of the eternality of the Noachic covenant, made “with you [Noah] and with your seed after you” (3:11), God’s promise regarding Abraham (“his covenant shall not be broken”) serves a two-fold purpose. First is a reassurance to the reader: “[B]y stating in clear terms that God's covenant with Abraham will never fail[,] readers can

\(^{274}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 38.

\(^{275}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 38.

\(^{276}\) Murphy, *Rewriting the Bible*, 38.
experience the rest of the story with that assurance in mind\textsuperscript{277}. The second, and more important, aspect is the continuity drawn between the vision of the final days and the covenant made with Noah. While the two are initially linked by the context of the post-flood covenant, this makes the immediate covenant linked with the judgment. The single covenant of Noah is renewed and sustained by his offspring until the end\textsuperscript{278}.

The conclusion of the prophecy, in which it is promised that “his [Abraham’s] seed will be multiplied forever” connects to the the divine injunction to “multiply upon the earth” given to Noah in 3:8. No longer is this command given for the human race to follow on its own; instead, it is a divine blessing. Through Noah’s descendants comes Abraham and through Abraham’s descendants comes the entire nation of Israelites. Without the obedience of Noah, there could be no later covenant.

Though the prophecy explicitly concerns another patriarch with a completely different set of stories, the two are brought into contact with one another more directly in this prophecy. Without Noah, there could be no Abraham, but the stories of Abraham shed light on a proper understanding of Noah as well. These figures provide a context in which to discuss the important themes for Pseudo-Philo: covenant, action, destiny, and prophecy. Lacking these individuals, the author’s narrative makes little sense, but once properly analyzed, the changes and alterations to the biblical text make much greater sense.

\textsuperscript{277} Murphy, \textit{Rewriting the Bible}, 38.
\textsuperscript{278} Referring to the particular phrasing \textit{non dissolvetur testamentum}, Jacobson notes that, in the bible, this phrase “is used of those who reject circumcision” (Commentary, 344).
Conclusion

In *Pseude-Philo*, then, Noah’s role is tied into the eschatological message from God, and because this message relates to proper behavior, Noah must be seen as a flawless individual. His destiny is set from the beginning with his name, a destiny both immediate (following the flood) and future (with the coming of the new world). God’s mercy is demonstrated in his covenant with Noah. After this covenant, Noah receives the vision of the future. The one flaw in his character—his drunkenness—is entirely omitted in lieu of this special revelation. Closing the story of Noah is a repopulation of the earth, following God’s command to humankind.

From these pieces a larger picture may be drawn. In keeping with the other pseudepigrapha, Noah is obedient to the command of God; unlike many others, however, there is rarely an attempt to explain, only attempts to ignore. The covenant created with this perfect individual is not merely temporary, but eternal—it ties into the ultimate end of the world. Until that end, though, God’s commandment to be fruitful and multiply is in full effect and properly obeyed by Noah and his descendants.
The figure of Noah has manifested in different ways throughout Jewish tradition. Three texts in particular present Noah in ways that betray their interests in both the flood story and Noah himself.

Though the Genesis account is the origin story for the flood story in Jewish (and later Judeo-Christian) mythology, it too is a reworking, although of mythological tales that originated elsewhere rather than explicitly scriptural stories. These stories provide the general framework and themes instrumental to the core message of the story. First, the flood is linked to human origins, tendencies, growth, and other primeval themes that guide the course of human history. Second, the story discusses the relationship between gods and humanity. Third, there is a focus on human disobedience—and the obedience of one individual. Fourth, the main character usually provides his own method of salvation. Fifth, there is a positive completion of the story. Furthermore, the story as present in Genesis is a composite of at least two different, if not antagonistic, traditions.

Overall, the purpose of the original narrative is to provide an “axis of history,” acting as a crux that links the present state of the world with the primordial origins. This explains why Noah’s story acts to reset history without completely severing ties to the past. Five primary ideas emphasize this unique position of Noah: Noah’s naming and destiny; God’s evaluation of the world and of Noah; the description of the flood given in
the text; the covenant between God and Noah; and finally the table of nations closing the narrative.

Upon his birth, Noah’s name is tied to the concept of “relief,” despite its shaky etymological basis. This hearkens back to the curse visited upon humanity with Adam’s sin. The flood purifies the ground and Noah becomes a farmer.

God soon notices the evil rampant throughout the world, caused by the sinfulness of humanity. Stewards of creation, their fall prompts the fall of everything else. Among the corrupted humans, however, one individual stands “righteous” and “blameless,” walking with God. God chooses to preserve him, signaling the beginning of the patriarchs. The ark-building performed by Noah acts as a concrete demonstration of his obedience.

The description of the flood includes an intentional un-creation/re-creation motif. Without the original creation story, the story would lose much of the depth it contains. First, creation is reduced to a primitive state: there is no division between the water and the land. The land goes from shaped to shapeless. Though water previously formed the world, it acts now as a destructive tool. Mountains that previously towered above creation are submerged. Both mankind and beasts perish, undifferentiated. With the remembrance of Noah by God, the earth is created anew.

Having destroyed the earth, God chooses Noah as a partner in the covenant. This covenant ushers in a new era of human history. The earth is repopulated, humanity becomes dominant again, the sanctity of human life is reiterated. Blood laws are promulgated, laws that would be of primary importance in Jewish history. Even the overall structure of the covenant becomes a model for later covenants.
The story ends with an appropriate gesture, the repopulation of the earth. In doing this, Noah is fulfilling the call to “be fruitful and multiply.” This list acts as a brief schematic of history, connecting the narrative to the whole course of history. History now continues forth from a new beginning, on the course intended it by God.

*Jubilees* is based explicitly on the biblical text, constituting a complex reworking of the original stories. The multiple layers of the rewritten narrative provide an insight into the author’s conceptions and purpose. Written to be a text given by God to Moses on Sinai, *Jubilees* advocates an intricate chronological system, likely inspired by *1 Enoch*, that not only looks to establish a structure of behavior for readers but also organizes past historical events according to this same system; the force of these pronouncements makes it unique even among other so-called “calendrical” texts.

Unlike the original Noachic narrative, *Jubilees* sets Noah up as a priestly figure—more specifically, according to the text, he is the priestly figure to whom all other priests traced their authority. Filled with priestly imagery, there are nonetheless several definitive moments that are important for understanding the character of Noah and the importance of the flood.

The seeds of Noah’s role as a priest come with his marriage to a relative, Emzara. This keeps the Noachic line pure; it acts as a subtle warning against intermarriage, a concern that grows with future patriarchs.

Outside of Noah, the event that establishes the major conflict of the Noah narrative is the fall of the Watchers. Adapted from a story originating in *1 Enoch* that seeks to explain Genesis 6:1-4, the Watchers myth as presented in *Jubilees* tells the story of angels who deviate from their original purposes and illicitly mate with human women,
whose offspring are the giants that ultimately bring the world to ruin. While the original central character in *I Enoch* is the titular Enoch, here the story only serves to segue into the flood, explaining the origin of evil in the world. Furthermore, it sets up the central idea of sin for *Jubilees*: transgression of boundaries and deviation from the “heavenly tablets”. Noah’s favor in God’s eyes cannot be understood apart from these concepts. After the flood, Noah uses this story to explain proper and improper behavior to his sons, solidifying the Watchers myth as an archetype of evil behavior.

If the Watchers myth highlights the difference between good and evil, Noah’s post-flood mountain sacrifices illustrate proper Temple ritual. Where the Genesis narrative had scant details, *Jubilees* inserts a plethora of sacrificial actions, most of which hold parallels with later biblical material: the animals and objects involved in the sacrifice, the concern for the land, and the direct correlation between the sacrifice and God’s promise. Moreover, another sacrifice is performed after Noah plants his vineyard. These careful descriptions of the sacrifices imply that these practices originate with Noah, not just Sinai.

Another element of the priestly life that *Jubilees* places in Noah’s life is the festivals. The sacral calendar, so integral to *Jubilees*’ conception of history, contained a number of days upon which particular celebrations were to be observed. Noah celebrates them properly until he dies. More strikingly, a number of festivals are established by Noah himself and revolve around the events of the flood. The primary structure of the priestly calendar thus revolves around Noah.

Along with the sacrificial actions comes an increase in the ritual concerns. The original blood-centered promise in Genesis becomes a primary tenant of God’s covenant.
The land has become impure due to blood and so must be cleansed by the flood and followed by those following Noah.

*Jubilees*’ final addition to the life of Noah is his encounter—and combat—with the demons. These demons attempt to distract Noah’s descendants from their proper behavior, subtly paralleling the original Watchers myth. Noah offers a model of prayer (imitated by even Mastema) and teaches knowledge, both of which fulfill the original mission of the Watchers themselves. The narrative thus comes full circle, ending where it began.

The final text in this study is *Pseudo-Philo*. Different in approach from *Jubilees*, *Pseudo-Philo* tends to make its points through omission rather than addition. In the Noah story, however, it makes one primary addition that frames the discussion of Noah as a prophet, tied into the eschatology of the world.

As with the Genesis narrative, Noah’s destiny is signaled by his birth and his naming. More so than Genesis, though, his destiny is much more assured and direct, uniquely providing even an interpretation of relief from the sinners themselves. Sin becomes, like *Jubilees*, a quality of action rather than an inherent quality of humankind.

God’s choice to spare Noah and make a covenant with him is made even more exceptional in *Pseudo-Philo*. Mercy is more often withheld in the entire text; God exercising mercy with Noah, then, makes him even more worthy. Because of this mercy, God promises to establish a covenant with him, and the covenant signals the destruction of sinners.

The eschatological vision following the flood is an important element of *Pseudo-Philo*’s view and use of Noah. God’s promise to never again destroy the earth with a
flood becomes extremely narrowly interpreted, avoiding an overly merciful God. Apocalyptic imagery drives the content of the vision, and salvation is portrayed as being quite exclusive. Noah represents these righteous individuals, since the new (post-apocalyptic) world is explicitly reminiscent of the post-flood world.

While not an “event” in *Pseudo-Philo*, the drunkenness of Noah is conspicuously absent. Considering the way in which the event was seen in later Judaism, *Pseudo-Philo’s* goals in explaining the biblical text cannot include any imperfection of Noah.

The generations of Noah play a much larger role in *Pseudo-Philo* than in the other two. Proper behavior with respect to God and the covenant is illustrated by Japheth’s descendants. Shem’s genealogy more strongly connects Abraham and Noah, seeing the latter as an archetype for the former, exerting an essential influence on the development of later history. This influence from Noah is projected not only through immediate history but through until the final judgment.

While each of these texts presents a different portrait of Noah, aligned with particular purposes, there are a number of similarities between the three of them that seem to explain the rationale behind choosing Noah. In addition, there are several other texts outside of these three that take the same approach.

**Common Elements**

While these three portraits of Noah differ in several key ways, there are several commonalities in their portrayal of Noah. These traits are identifiably Noachic—they are central to the conception of Noah as a character.
The first detail is that they all three see Noah as an exceptional individual. His righteousness is a core aspect of his character. In Genesis, he is called “righteous” without any explicit reason given. Jubilees, expanding on the concept of “righteousness,” ties Noah explicitly into the overall conception of sinful and correct behavior, seeking to explain the reasoning behind the description given in Genesis. Pseudo-Philo, on the other hand, eliminates any situation in which Noah’s justified character could be called into question. In none of the three is he anything less than deserving of the role he plays in the flood story.

The flood story explains that the origin of the Israelite nation is good. Instead of tracing the lineage of the human race back to the sinful Adam, this story presents a bottleneck that starts humanity anew from the righteous Noah; this generational origin is a theological one as well, since it is also with him that God formulates the original covenant. Depending on the portrayal, the righteousness of Noah acts as an example of correct living (Jubilees) or on the divine promise to guide and protect the world (Genesis and Pseudo-Philo).

Despite the sometimes-passive role (and primarily mute character) of Noah, there is always some element of proper choice in his story. On the heavier end of the spectrum is Jubilees, in which Noah’s life never deviates from the divine tablets. The implicit suggestion is that Noah could have turned away from God as the Watchers did; instead, he devotes his life to proper living and absolute obedience. Further down on the spectrum (though present to a limited degree in Jubilees as well) is that which is seen in Genesis and Pseudo-Philo. In these texts, the most obedient action is the building of the ark and following all the commands accompanying it. Though seemingly minor, the narrative
portrays these actions as absolutely obedient. All three texts display an unhesitating and faithful Noah—while he is not given his own dialogue, only a list of commandments, he follows all of them.

The post-flood covenant is considered another identifying element of the Noah story; it thus stands relatively unaltered by both Jubilees and Pseudo-Philo. Since the concept of “covenant” is an important one in the biblical tradition, especially the later covenant on Sinai, the impact of this covenant only grows in the biblical retellings rather than diminished. More significantly, the Noachide covenant is seen as being in full continuity with those covenants that follow, rather than being replaced by them. Pseudo-Philo takes the opportunity to transmit an eschatological message to underscore the consequences of deviation; Jubilees seeks to place the inspiration for the Sinai covenant pre-Moses.

Finally, all three end with a list of the descendants of Noah. The flood is a second creation, and so the command to “be fruitful and multiply” given after the flood drives the continued flourishing of humanity. Despite the continued failings of humanity further in the future—dealt with differently by each author—there is a firm foundation from which to continue and a divine promise to never again destroy humanity.

**Why Noah?**

Certainly, these elements are centrally “Noachic,” hallmarks of the Noah story. The question remains, however: what behind those elements drew the attention of the later authors? What gaps did they seek to explain, and why was Noah chosen to exemplify their own beliefs? Some of these questions have been answered in one form or
another throughout this study, but it will be helpful to answer them again in a more systematic manner here.

Noah is early in the Genesis narrative

One reason for the interest in Noah is his placement among the biblical patriarchs. Indeed, the creation-flood-recreation motif is an encapsulated narrative that cannot be fully understood without all of its constituent parts. The Adam and Eve story is one that explains the human condition, and sets up the trajectory of human history. Cain and Abel encapsulate themes that set up the flood story, death and sin. The mysterious description of Enoch prompted many explanations, but he plays a much different role in the later tradition. It is reasonable to suppose, then, that the dependence upon Noah lies upon his temporal location precisely between creation and Abraham. This is also found, sometimes more strongly, in other texts. For example, the Apocalypse of Weeks in 1 Enoch presents the first “week” of history heralded by Enoch, but the second “week” begun by Noah, and the Aramaic Levi Document places the origins of the line of Levi onto Noah. Jubilees seeks to harmonize the older patriarchal material (the stories of Noah and the other patriarchs) with the absolute Law on Sinai in order to express more continuity between the events of the past and the future of the Israelite nation. Polemical interests also drove the prominence of Noah in the ancient conversations: “Jubilees […]

---

279 This is not to say that the two traditions did not intermix or communicate. For an investigation of the underlying conflicts, see Andrei Orlov’s articles: “‘Noah's Younger Brother’: Anti-Noachic Polemics in 2 Enoch,” Henoch 22.2 (2000): 259-273, and “Noah’s Younger Brother Revisted: Anti-Noachic Polemics and the Date of 2 (Slavonic) Enoch,” in Scrinium, Tome 3: The Theophaneia School: Jewish Roots of Eastern Christian Mysticism (Byzantinorossica: Saint- Pétersbourg, 2007): 464-480.
280 The Encyclopaedia Judaica states that “[i]n the genealogical lists of the biblical Patriarchs given in Genesis 5 and 11, Noah occupies a position midway between Adam and Abraham. He is also tenth in the line of antediluvian Patriarchs. […] In the biblical material dealing with the Patriarchs there is an extension of the use of the number ten, or numbers based on ten” (Encyclopaedia Judaica, 2nd edition, “Noah”).
281 Peters, Noah Traditions, 40. History is divided into ten “weeks” total, each of which has a separate theme.
282 Peters, Noah Traditions, 53.
would domesticate and subordinate the earliest Enochic traditions[,] grafting them much more securely to the Mosaic Torah\(^\text{283}\). Enoch, who in the eyes of some groups was the answer to the sinfulness of Adam, was himself diminished in importance by other texts, leaving Noah in the prime location, “providing a ‘new Adam’ archetype for Jews needing to understand their identity as Jews and how to be ‘rightly planted’ in the land\(^\text{284}\). Some traditions even saw Noah as a writer, displacing the writer-identity of Enoch\(^\text{285}\). The interest of \textit{Pseudo-Philo} is more obtuse and not as antagonistic toward other traditions. However, the interests of this text lay on consequences for disobeying rather than the authority of the one from whom these statements came. These consequences are placed early in the text in order to reiterate their importance as well as stress their absolute and unchanging nature.

\textit{Noah’s obedience is unquestioned}

While his pre-flood actions—and thus his righteousness—are ambiguous in the Genesis story (even the retellings leave this fact unexplored, preferring instead to merely describe him as righteous from the beginning), his flood-related actions, primarily building of the ark, are a central facet of the narrative. Without an ark, there would be no way in which Noah could be saved from the flood, a fact that Noah seems to recognize by following God’s command. This was taken to be representative of Noah’s attitude towards divine command. Because of his silence in Genesis, he begins as a flat character. Later texts used him to provide a context for speaking of sin, transgression, and other topics. In \textit{1 Enoch}, for example,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item Peters, \textit{Noah Traditions}, 61.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Noah (as a whole) [...] fill[s] in the negative spaces around him and [those spaces] bring him into sharper focus. Noah was not a transgressor, not a murderer, he did not eat blood, and neither was he violent nor deceitful nor wicked, words that also became technical terms by which certain groups were labeled. He did not accept instruction from the wrong sort of angel. Therefore, he managed, perhaps by default and not necessarily because of his righteousness, to survive the flood.\(^{286}\)

This ability to define through negation is present more strongly in some texts than others, but through this, his use within the narratives of antiquity was expanded. *Pseudo-Philo*’s method remains closest to this style of affirmation through silence. It retains many of the details of the ark’s structure, but for much the same purpose as the original Genesis story: showing absolute obedience in all ways despite his lack of dialogue. Later in the bible, in the book of Ezekiel (14:13-23), “[t]he righteousness of Noah, Daniel, and Job is questioned but simply assumed”\(^{287}\). *Jubilees* is less quiescent with regards to Noah, dispensing with some of the more involved descriptions illustrating his character, such as the account of the ark’s construction, apparently finding those details unimportant to the narrative. (Its expansion of other details, such as the sacrificial altar, indicates that this omission was most likely intentional.) Nonetheless, it does not introduce any ambiguity into Noah’s obedience, choosing instead to make that obedience vocal, fulfilling much the same purpose as a silent Noah.

*Noah’s isolation*

As stated in the Sibylline Oracles—“A certain Noah came, a solitary fugitive from all men”\(^{288}\)—one of the more salient points that can be drawn from the flood story is the literal solitude of Noah in the world of the flood. The flood event itself does not

\(^{286}\) Peters, *Noah Traditions*, 52.


explain the continued presence of humanity and nature, since they are destroyed; there must be some sort of re-creation, be it an entirely new creation or a reforming of the old one. However, God provides continuity with the old creation through Noah—a single boat of humanity and animals—and bridges the gap between the original creation and the new one. In Genesis, the choice of God seems to be a decision prompted by regret, and thus a change of God’s mind; both Pseudo-Philo and Jubilees, however, see the evil of the creatures as a deviation from the divine plan and thus the flood as a necessary outcome of that wickedness. In contrast, the righteous are to be saved because of their adherence to the statutes of the divine tablets. Noah becomes a father of creation simply because he is left alive. This special status is magnified in other texts. In the Animal Apocalypse of the Ethiopic 1 Enoch, Noah is one of two figures to be transformed into men (representing an angelic transformation)\(^{289}\); Ben Sira “presents Noah as a survivor who kept the race alive but does not attribute to him any priestly or law-keeping roles”\(^{290}\).

The Genesis Apocryphon sees Noah as a “seed”\(^{291}\). Elsewhere, he is described as a “remnant” of the cleansing that was to take place through the flood\(^{292}\). Often, this exultation stems from imitable actions, making him a figure worthy of emulation by the community behind the text\(^{293}\). Thus, in Jubilees, his salvation is a result of his adherence to the statutes of the heavenly tablets, a theme sustained throughout the book, as well as his role as a high priest. Pseudo-Philo seems to take much the same approach, though the text chooses to see him as a prophet instead.

**Noah’s sacrifice**

\(^{289}\) Peters, Noah Traditions, 39. The other figure is Moses.
\(^{290}\) Peters, Noah Traditions, 68.
\(^{291}\) Peters, Noah Traditions, 108.
\(^{292}\) Peters, Noah Traditions, 43, 70.
\(^{293}\) Sometimes, though, the preferred flood survivor was Enoch rather than Noah (Peters, Noah Traditions, 46-49).
In addition to the proper behavior of Noah prior to and during the flood, the authors find in Noah the proper attitude toward God after the deluge. The construction of the altar on the mountain portrays humility: the recognition of God’s role in his salvation. Some texts see the later powers and parameters of the priest as having their origins in Noah’s post-flood sacrifice rather than in other places, particularly Leviticus. For Jubilees, this is the defining moment of Noah’s career, since it establishes him explicitly as the prototypical priest, in which “[t]he Genesis flood chronology was […] fashioned into a priestly calendar featuring Noah as the originator and celebrator of its festivals known from the Torah”\(^\text{294}\). The motif of Noah-as-priest is not unique to Jubilees, since it appears in other texts of antiquity. This strand is also found prominently in the Aramaic Levi Document\(^\text{295}\). The Genesis Apocryphon relates that the altar is built on the ark in order to connect it with the later location of the Temple\(^\text{296}\). Some early liturgies incorporated Noah’s name, raising his importance in the priestly context\(^\text{297}\). Others subtly point toward Noah in characterizing some revelations as coming from somewhere outside of the Torah\(^\text{298}\). Pseudo-Philo is much tamer in comparison, but it still places the sacrifice after the flood and uses it as a location for heavenly revelation. Even Genesis changes the tone of its source narrative: whereas the pagan stories used the sacrifice as food for the gods, Noah’s sacrifice is one of thanksgiving, rather than divine sustenance.

*The covenant*

---

296 Peters, *Noah Traditions*, 112.
The Noachide covenant, while not as central in Jewish tradition as the Sinai covenant, is seen as a precedent to God’s later behavior regarding the Jewish people, in particular covenant-making. First, there is a call to remember through means of a sign. *Jubilees* sees this remembrance as determinative—since Moses is directly told about the covenant God makes with Noah, it is implied that Noah’s covenant inspires (and perhaps even models) the Sinai covenant. *Pseudo-Philo*’s use of the covenant is both short- and long-term: it reappears in the lists of Noah’s ancestors as an immediate response to the proper behavior of the people, while it is also inextricably tied with the apocalyptic interlude that follows the covenant, previewing the end of the world. Second, it participates in later covenants. The Sinai covenant is modeled after Noah’s covenant in *Jubilees*, making Noah “the first to participate in the making of a covenant that Moses was to renew every year”; *Genesis* uses it as a culmination of the first cycle of sin of the people and redemption by the patriarchs; and it is the first covenant of many in *Pseudo-Philo*, all of which have deeply eschatological ramifications. Thirdly, it is prescriptive. Blood laws hold sway in much of later Judaism, and they have their beginnings in the Noachide laws. Themes of purity and corruption, peace and violence, and life and death are buried within these profound laws, drawn out by later writers, including those of *Pseudo-Philo* and *Jubilees*.

---

299 The covenant was evidently more important in the Hebrew Dead Sea scrolls than the Aramaic (Peters, *Noah Traditions*, 185).

300 Peters, *Noah Traditions*, 181.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

These pieces of literature do not merely exist as random repositories of tradition, nor do they fail to utilize Noah in a way that reflects their particular ideologies. In juxtaposing these pieces of literature, the various characteristics of Noah are enumerated. These characteristics emerge not only from their similarities but also their numerous differences. In addition, their continuities with and disjunction from other texts give an additional insight into these features.

One such feature is Noah’s exultation as righteous, considering his placement in the biblical narrative amongst other characters. Polemic with the Enochic corpus prompted the exultation of another character. Due to his description as “righteous,” his proximity to creation and to the second great patriarch, Abraham, and other reasons, fulfilled this role. Other texts, such as the Apocalypse of Weeks and the Aramaic Levi Document take this same approach, even choosing to begin history with Noah. Jubilees minimizes Enoch and makes Noah more prominent, while Pseudo-Philo originates particular narrative themes with Noah.

Further reinforcing the righteousness of Noah is his silence. Noah’s original demonstration of his admirable character came not only through what he does, but also from what he chooses not to do. This mode of obedience is utilized by all three texts to a greater or lesser degree, due to the attention paid to his actions. Thus, the narratives never
seem to question the obedience of Noah, simply because they never give a moment in which such doubt is possible.

Moreover, within the overall story of the flood, Noah’s status goes from relative to absolute: he and those with him are the only humans left alive in the world. Without this exclusivity, there would be no connection between the old creation and the new creation, and more specifically, there would be no connection between the creation as recounted in the text and the world of the readers. Noah thus represents a new stage in human behavior and status. Sometimes this point is as mild as Noah’s sheer existence, as with Genesis’ resetting of creation; other texts, such as *Jubilees* and the Animal Apocalypse, attribute an almost divine perfection to Noah.

The diversity of the portrayals of Noah’s post-flood sacrifice upon the mountain represents its importance to the writers. In its biblical context in Genesis, the altar conveys proper respect and recognition for the salvation of the flood. Other texts prioritize this moment; particularly popular is the connection to the priestly line, an interpretation heavily favored by *Jubilees*, along with the *Aramaic Levi Document*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, early liturgies, and others. *Pseudo-Philo* uses the opportunity to convey divine information to Noah.

Equally important is the post-flood covenant, which is certainly one of the more decisive elements of the story. In every text, the covenant is tied, either implicitly or explicitly, to the long-term trajectory of the Israelite people. Both in pattern and in content, the covenant acts as a model for the later patriarchs. Furthermore, themes from this covenant become tied into the overall concerns of the Israelite people.
Overall, Genesis, Jubilees, and Pseudo-Philo all present varied views of Noah, changing his story to suit their purposes. This choice, however, was not random; rather, it was deliberate. Key moments in the story of Noah provided ample impetus to insert, alter, or expand points that the authors saw as necessary for the readers to understand. Though based on roughly identical stories, the narrative unity of each text offers a unique glimpse into the views and interests of ancient authors as well as the reception history of the narratives found in the biblical text.

Finally, it is clear that his list of numerous descendants provides adequate space in which to explain the origins of the diversity and size of humankind. Sometimes, the genealogy is merely a list, but other texts use it to discuss future events or connect later humanity to the guidance of Noah. While present as a phenomenon (i.e. a list of Noah’s descendants), its details vary greatly. This indicates that the authors attempt to navigate between the role of Noah in repopulating the earth and the trajectory of history as they choose to explain it in the rest of the book.

Throughout this thesis, the details and elements of the Noah story have been kept in view of the overall context of each narrative. Even small details, such as the naming of Noah, are pieces of a greater whole. Because of this, they have been evaluated according to their role in the story, not merely according to the individual idiosyncrasies of the particular manifestation of a tradition. Once established, however, the role’s details have given insight into the author’s perception and understanding of Noah. In this way, the overall thesis has been able to discuss the general hallmarks of Noah’s character that have made him useful for the specific purposes of each author. Noah, then, is to be seen as both a universal and particular character: universal because of his traits as a character that
makes him appeal to a variety of authors, but particular in that his presentation within these texts is not entirely uniform, without abandoning the recognition of him as Noah, the flood patriarch.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Werman, Cana. “‘The Engraved on the Tablets.’” *DSD*, 9.1 [2002]: 75-103.


