I. Introduction

After the full text of Jubilees became available for western scholarly consumption in the mid-nineteenth century, it soon became the object of sundry comparative studies. The earliest estimates of its date placed it in the first century CE (Dillmann, for one), but later R.H. Charles made the classic case for dating the book to the end of the second century BCE.¹ Whichever of these dates one preferred, it was obvious to all that Jubilees postdated the Hebrew version of Genesis-Exodus and predated the earliest rabbinic and patristic exegetical works. Thus, the book stood at an ancient point in the history of interpreting Genesis-Exodus. It embodied both unique exegetical stands and hermeneutical moves that were familiar from later texts. Unlike most later commentaries, however, Jubilees bills itself, not merely as an explication of the divinely given words to Moses, but as revelation: its words come from the tablets of heaven and are mediated to Moses by an angel of the presence (1:29-2:1). The evidence from Qumran helps us to see how one group considered Jubilees authoritative: not only have remnants of 14 or 15 copies of the book been found there,² but the Damascus Document certainly cites it as an authority, and 4Q228³ probably does as well.

From the point of view of scriptural exegesis, one of the more interesting passages for comparative purposes is the creation account in Jubilees 2. It is obviously based upon Genesis 1-2, but

---

¹ For a survey of earlier proposals regarding the date of Jubilees, see J.C. VanderKam, Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees (HSM 14; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977) 207-13. For Charles’s arguments, see his The Book of Jubilees or the Little Genesis (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1902) lviii-lxvi.
² The totals are these: two copies from cave 1 (1Q17-18), two from cave 2 (2Q19-20), one from cave 3 (3Q5), eight or nine from cave 4 (4Q176 19-21 [possibly from two copies]; 216, 218-23/24]), and one from cave 11.
³ 4Q228 is to be published in DJD 13. It refers to הָתְנָה הָיְתָה (1 i 2) and possibly a second time (1 i 9-10); this is the Hebrew title of Jubilees.
it reissues that material in a noticeably and purposefully different form. The standard approach in the scholarly literature has been to adduce a stream of parallels to items in Jubilees’ version of the creation—an approach exemplified in B. Beer’s early work *Das Buch der Jubiläen und sein Verhältnis zu den Midraschim*⁴ and in most translations made since then. All of these studies have been based on the assumption that the author had the text of Genesis 1-2 as we know it before him and that he responded to it. The particular way in which he read the text and the reason(s) for his perspective were usually not investigated, except in the case of the fourth day of creation. The writer’s blatant removal of the moon from calendrical functions over which the sun alone reigned was recognized as tendentious and related to his defence of a 364-day solar calendar.

In recent times several scholars have employed Jubilees’ creation story for a different purpose, and their efforts spurred O.H. Steck to write the only detailed study of Jubilees 2.⁵ F. Stier⁶ and J.B. Bauer⁷ had argued that, though Jubilees was written after Genesis 1, it preserves an older version of the creation story that was used as a source by P. Genesis 1, of course, does not speak of a single method by which God created the universe. Rather, in some cases it says that God created by a commanding word (e.g. 1:3) and in others that he actually made or constructed phenomena (e.g. 1:7). Thus, in Genesis 1 we see word-creation and deed-creation mixed together. According to the reigning academic fashion, this has been taken as a telltale sign that sources lurk behind the finished product. Stier and Bauer maintained that, while the text of Genesis itself makes this evident, there is external proof as well that there once existed two separate versions of the creation story: Jubilees 2 is a witness to the deed-creation version, while 4 Ezra 6 gives testimony to the word-creation version. P took

---