The question of the degree to which Hellenistic culture influenced those inhabitants of the land of Israel who worshipped the God of Israel has yet to be settled.\textsuperscript{1} As two scholars suggest, any discussion of this issue must distinguish between Hellenism as a movement advocating deliberate public adoption of customs and cults from the Hellenistic world and Hellenization as a process whereby such customs and cults are assimilated and adopted, sometimes unconsciously,\textsuperscript{2} with a resultant reshaping of the local culture, religion, or language.\textsuperscript{3} Hellenism as a movement certainly existed in Herodian Palestine.\textsuperscript{4} Recent research also indicates that members of the Hasmonean family


consciously adopted Hellenistic culture. More difficult, however, is the task of determining the intensity of the process of Hellenization. Martin Hengel’s attempt to identify Hellenistic influence in all Jewish literary-cultural strata from the third to the first century B.C.E. has not won scholarly acceptance. Yet, whereas the majority of Greek Hellenistic Jewish literature—strongly influenced by Greek literature and philosophy—was composed outside the land of Israel, we cannot rule out the possibility that some small part was written there and not in the Hellenistic Diaspora. Nor can we ignore the potential existence of Hellenistic influence on Hebrew and Aramaic works written in the land of Israel during the centuries in question. Accordingly, additional research is called for. This paper examines the familiarity of Jubilees, written in Hebrew, in the land of Israel, with the Hellenistic world and with Hellenistic Jewish literature. I hope to make a contribution to the discussion of the broader issue outlined above.

The date of Jubilees’ composition remains a matter of scholarly debate. Some attribute its composition to as far back as the beginning of the second century B.C.E.; others to the time of Antiochus IV’s edicts and the Hasmonean Revolt; and still others even later, to the


7 See Levine, Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity, 29–30.

8 Preserved in full only in Ge’ez, Jubilees was unquestionably written in Hebrew as attested by fragments found at Qumran, written or copied, on paleographic evidence, in the early first century B.C.E.


late second or early first century B.C.E.\(^\text{12}\) However, even the earliest date proposed for the book places it during the Hellenistic period. Indeed, two outstanding features of the book are related to the Hellenistic period. *Jubilees*’ author calculates and dates events according to jubilees, weeks, years, and months from Creation. Interest in chronology is a definitive characteristic of the Hellenistic age, which explains the efforts by the author of *Jubilees* (or by his predecessors) to calculate epochs and years.\(^\text{13}\) In addition, the text stresses the sanctity and importance of the Hebrew language (Jub. 12:25–27). The choice of Hebrew testifies to an intercultural struggle during the formative period, between the concepts of Judaism and Hellenism.\(^\text{14}\) Thus, while there is evidence that *Jubilees*’ author was familiar with and used works written in Aramaic, such as the Ethiopic book(s) of Enoch, the Genesis Apocryphon,\(^\text{15}\) and the Aramaic Levi Document,\(^\text{16}\) he deliberately chose to write in Hebrew. In this paper I point to additional features and details that would not have been included had this work been written earlier. Two broad areas will be addressed here: *Jubilees*’ knowledge of Hellenistic science, as evidenced by its map of the world, and of Hellenistic literature, particularly historiographical and philosophical works. Ultimately, I shall attempt to show how *Jubilees* utilized its familiarity with Hellenizing trends in order to rebut them.


I. Jubilees and Hellenistic Science

The chapters of *Jubilees* devoted to the story of the period from Noah to Abraham attest to its author’s acquaintance with Hellenistic science. In its description of the division of territory among Noah’s sons, the text reveals knowledge of the Ionic map of the world, widely used in the Hellenistic world. This map envisaged the world as a flat disk with its “navel” (*omphalos*) at Delphi, and three continents—Asia, Europe and Africa—in the center, surrounded by the ocean. With a few exceptions, the educated Greek world adhered to this map for an extended period. *Jubilees* utilizes an updated version of the map (that of Dicaearchus, fl. 326–296 B.C.E.), in which the “equator” passes through the Pillars of Hercules (the Straits of Gibraltar), the Taurus Mountains, and the Himalayas. However, the author of *Jubilees*, who views the map from a Jewish, and biblical, standpoint, describes this line as passing through “the mouth of the Great Sea,” that is, Gadir (present-day Cadiz, at the Straits of Gibraltar), to Mount Zion, and thence to the Garden of Eden, on the map’s eastern side. According to *Jubilees*, the omphalos is not Delphi but rather Mount Zion. The biblical outlook is particularly prominent in *Jubilees*’ identification of the continents given to each of Noah’s sons.

There is a fragmentary description of the division of the world among Noah’s sons in the *Genesis Apocryphon*, with instructive parallels to *Jubilees*. The following table sets out the two texts:

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19 Alexander, “Imago Mundi,” 204.
20 Alexander, “Imago Mundi,” 204, according to *Jub.* 8:19.
[ ] the tongue that is between them up to the Tina River and [ ] all the land of the north till it reaches [ ] (about 23 letters)

and this boundary passes (through) the waters of the Great Sea till it reaches [ ] (2 words)

he apportioned to Japheth and to his sons to inherit as an eternal inheritance

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**Genesis Apocryphon**

For Japheth there emerged a third share on the other side of the Tina River toward the north of the mouth of its waters. It goes toward the northeast, toward the whole area of Gog and all that is east of them. It goes due north and goes toward the mountains of Qelt, to the north and toward the Mauq Sea. It comes to the east of Gadir as far as the edge of the sea waters. It goes until it reaches the west of Fara. Then it goes back toward Aferag and goes eastward toward the water of the Me'at Sea. And it goes to the edge of the Tina River toward the northeast until it reaches the bank of its waters toward the mountain range of Rafa. It goes around to the north. This is the land that emerged for Japheth and his children as his hereditary share which he would occupy for himself and his children throughout their generations forever: five large islands and a large land in the north. (8:25–29)

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**Notes:**

22 Jub. 9:7–13. This is a slightly revised version of the translation in J. C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (CSCO 511; Scriptores Aethiopici 88. Louvain: Peeters, 1989).

23 The Tina River is the Don and marks the border between Europe and Asia. It rises in the Rafa Mountains (that is, the Greeks’ Ρίπαι) in the northeastern part of the ocean and flows into the Great Sea, which lies in the center of the map’s western part. On its way to the Great Sea the Tina River passes through the Sea of Me’at (the Greek’s Ἡ Αἰγίς Ἡ Μαυμάρτ), namely, the Azov Sea.

24 According to Ezek 39:2, Gog comes from the far north.

25 The mountains of Qelt are the Alps or the Pyrenees, so called because of their location in the Celtic region.

26 The Mauq Sea is the northwestern part of the ocean. Its name derives from Hebrew mei ok[ianos], “the waters of the ocean.”

27 Fara and Aferag are probably different parts of Africa.

28 See note 23.
Table (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genesis Apocryphon</th>
<th>Jubilees</th>
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<tr>
<td>[Now] <strong>Shem my son divided</strong></td>
<td><strong>Shem, too, divided</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>his share amongst his sons, and first fell to [E]lam in the north by the waters of the Tigris, until it reaches the R[e][S]ea to its sources that in the north,</td>
<td>(his share) among his sons. There emerged a first share for Elam and his children to the east of the Tigris River until it reaches the east of the entire land of India, in Erythrea(^{29}) on its border, the waters of the Dedan,(^{30}) all the mountains of Mebri and Eila,(^{31}) all of the land of Susan, and everything on the border of Farnak as far as the Erythrean Sea and the Tina River.(^{32}) For <strong>Asshur</strong> there emerged as the second share the whole land of Asshur, Nineveh, Shinar, and Sak(^{33}) as far as the vicinity of India (where) the Wadafa River rises (9:2–3).</td>
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<tr>
<td>and turns to the west to <strong>Ashur</strong> till it reaches the Tigris</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Japhet also divided</strong> between his sons. First, he gave to Gomer, in the north up to the Tina River,</td>
<td><strong>Japheth, too, divided</strong> the land among his sons as an inheritance. There emerged for Gomer a first share eastward from the north side as far as the Tina River. North of him there emerged (as a share) for <strong>Magog</strong> all the central parts of the north until it reaches the M[ac] Sea. For <strong>Madai</strong> there emerged a share for him to occupy on the west of his two brothers as far as the islands and the shores of the islands.(^{34})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and after him to <strong>Magog</strong>,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and after him to <strong>Madai</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

\(^{29}\) The Erythrean (ἡ Ἑρυθρός Ὁλλοςσα) or the Red Sea is the Indian Ocean and the modern Red Sea.
\(^{30}\) Dedan is Abraham’s grandson, the son of Yokhan, and brother of Sheva (Gen 25:3). In Jeremiah (25:23) and Ezekiel (38:13) he is listed among the tribes located in Arabia. Thus, we can speculate that *Jubilees* refers here either to the Arabian or the Red Sea.
\(^{31}\) These mountains are difficult to identify but refer to the Iranian plateau. Perhaps the name Eila is a misspelling for Elam, located in the vicinity of Susan mentioned in the same verse. Indeed, Eila replaces Ela in one manuscript of *Jubilees* (MS 12). This manuscript, however, is influenced by the Ethiopic translation of the Bible; VanderKam, *Jubilees*, xix–xx).
\(^{32}\) This sentence summarizes the dimensions of Shem’s lot, which ranges from the Tina River in the north to the Erythrean Sea in the south.
\(^{33}\) This is apparently Scythia. See VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 56.
\(^{34}\) These are the British Isles.
This comparison illustrates at a glance the considerable similarity between the account of the division of the earth among Noah’s sons in the Genesis Apocryphon and in Jubilees. Nonetheless, there are significant differences. The account in Jubilees is longer and more detailed, including many details unknown to the author of the Genesis Apocryphon, which predates it. In the Apocryphon the description of the northern region of Japheth’s portion is extremely brief: “All the land to the north.” In contrast, Jubilees provides a detailed description of the region. Because of the fragment’s poor preservation, one line in the Apocryphon is illegible and may have included these details. However, in listing the division of Japheth’s portion among his sons Magog and Madai, Jubilees provides geographical details, whereas the Apocryphon, here well preserved, omits them, laconically stating, “And after that to Magog, and after that to Madai, and after that to Javan…” It is also noteworthy that Meshech’s portion in Jubilees extends as far as Gadir—a detail apparently lacking in the Genesis Apocryphon. The three or four undecipherable words in this line are not sufficient to describe the “tongues” in Meshech’s portion or to refer to Gadir.

35 The three tongues are Greece, Italy, and Spain.
36 The four large islands are Corsica, Sicily, Sardinia and Crete.
Another section in which geographical details found in *Jubilees* are lacking in the *Genesis Apocryphon* is the southern part of Japheth’s portion. Japheth’s boundary is extremely detailed in *Jubilees*, whereas the *Apocryphon* mentions only the Great Sea. The Me’at Sea and the mountains of Rafa, mentioned because of *Jubilees*’ familiarity with Greek geographical science, are missing from the *Apocryphon*. Similarly, the portions for the sons of Shem are far more specific in *Jubilees* than they are in the *Apocryphon*.

As noted earlier, comparison of additional chapters in *Jubilees* with their parallels in the *Genesis Apocryphon* suggests that *Jubilees*’ author was familiar with, and reworked, the *Genesis Apocryphon* for his own purposes.37 If so, *Jubilees*’ account of the division of the earth can be regarded as a revised, expanded version of the account found in the *Genesis Apocryphon*. I argue that the manner in which he reworked and expanded his material, by introducing Hellenistic-scientific additions to the description of the division of the world,38 clearly indicates that he was fully conversant with Hellenistic science.

Based on these additions, it seems likely that the author of *Jubilees* had a detailed, presumably written, description of the Ionic map at his disposal. His use of that literature, however, was quite selective, for his primary purpose was to reject its influence. The map enabled the author of *Jubilees* to ignore the dozens of nations listed in Genesis 10, providing him with the means to enhance Shem’s standing. Shem receives the “ideal” continent, and the most fertile region in that continent falls into the hands of Abraham’s ancestor Arpachshad.39 This region also contains the *omphalos* of the world, Mount Zion. The rulers of Asia, Greece and Rome violate the oath sworn by the sons of Noah not to encroach on one another’s territory and are consequently doomed.40 Seeking to erect a barrier between the Jewish people and a foreign (in his view, idolatrous) culture, and to combat that culture, *Jubilees* borrowed a weapon from Hellenistic culture itself: “It is remarkable how

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37 See note 15.
38 *Jub* 8:9, which informs us of Noah’s sons’ failure to divide the world among themselves without Noah’s help, can now be clarified. To my mind, in explaining why the division in *Jubilees* is the right one, *Jubilees*’ author evidently alludes to the division narrated in the *Genesis Apocryphon*.
energetically and independently the Jews turned Greek ideas on their heads,” as Momigliano says of the book of Judith; Schmidt shows, rightly, that the same is true of Jubilees.41

II. Jubilees and Hellenistic Jewish Literature

As with science, I propose that the author of Jubilees was also acquainted with other Hellenistic literary works, namely, with Hellenistic Jewish literature, and that the book was written to combat certain tendencies of the latter. It was Victor Tcherikover who first noted that most Hellenistic Jewish literature was not addressed to a gentile audience, and should therefore not be interpreted in an apologetic vein.42 Written for a Jewish audience, one of its main purposes was to resolve the conflict that plagued Jews living in the Hellenistic world: how to remain faithful to Judaism while living in an environment that offered the attraction of the glittering culture of Hellenism, in which the Torah’s laws and narratives had no meaning and were not held in high regard.43 Hellenistic Jewish literature was concerned, therefore, with the affirmation of both Hellenism and Judaism,44 attempting to combine or at least to


harmonize them.\textsuperscript{45} Efforts toward that goal are evident throughout all genres of Hellenistic Jewish literature. I focus first on works similar in nature to \textit{Jubilees}, that is, historiographic works.\textsuperscript{46}

\textbf{II.A. Jubilees and Hellenistic Jewish Historiography}

The main thrust of Hellenistic Jewish historiography is to emphasize the Jewish contribution to Hellenistic culture,\textsuperscript{47} and to confirm the Jews’ participation in the relevant cultural frameworks without arousing a sense of conflict.\textsuperscript{48} Historians achieved this end through two means: 1) through identification of biblical figures with familiar figures from Greek mythology and historiography, and 2) by designation of Jewish culture heroes.

\textsuperscript{45} Thus, there are two criteria for designating a work as belonging to the Hellenistic Jewish corpus: it must be written in Greek, and it must have a positive attitude toward assimilation of features of the Hellenistic world. M. D. Herr offers different criteria: language and place of composition; “The End of the Jewish Hellenistic Literature: When and Why?” in \textit{The Jews in the Hellenistic-Roman World}, 361–78 (367) (Hebrew). Note, however, that it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a particular work was composed in the Hellenistic Diaspora or in the land of Israel. In such cases we are left with the criterion of language alone.

\textsuperscript{46} On the writings that relate to the period in close proximity to their own day and their effort to emphasize the importance of Judaism in Egypt, see, for example, B. Bar-Kochva, \textit{Pseudo-Hecataeus, “On the Jews”: Legitimizing the Jewish Diaspora} (Hellenistic Culture and Society 21; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); E. Gruen, \textit{“Fact and Fiction,”} 78–84; D. Gera, \textit{“The Tobiads: Fiction and History,”} \textit{Judaism and Mediterranean Politics, 219 to 161 B.C.E.} (Brill’s Series in Jewish Studies 8; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 36–58; D.R. Schwartz, \textit{“Diodorus Siculus 40.3: Hecataeus or Pseudo-Hecataeus?” in Jews and Gentiles in the Holy Land} (ed. Menahem Mor et al.; Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2003), 181–97.

\textsuperscript{47} The name of the series in which the writings referred to here were published—\textit{Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors} (ed. C. R. Holladay; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983)—testifies to the fragmentary nature of the extant texts. One can claim that the preserved fragments do not represent Hellenistic Jewish literature as a whole. If this is indeed the case, my description of Hellenistic Jewish writings fits only part of the corpus. Comparison of these fragments to the Hellenistic Jewish literature preserved in the Septuagint (Second Maccabees, \textit{Wisdom of Solomon}), to Philo, to the \textit{Letter of Aristeas}, and to \textit{Joseph and Aseneth} shows, however, that they also display openness toward Hellenism. I follow Holladay’s edition, the most up-to-date one.

\textsuperscript{48} The one exception among Hellenistic Jewish writers is Theodotus. As J. J. Collins notes, the universalism we find in the other writings is missing from Theodotus: Abraham’s sons are defined by covenant and by marriage to their own people; \textit{Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora} (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 48. Theodotus, however, can be included in the Hellenistic Jewish corpus since he wrote in Greek and used a Hellenistic style (he bestows an epic mode on biblical narration) to convey the biblical story. By so doing he blurs the difference between the Bible and Hellenistic literature in an effort to incorporate the Bible into the Hellenistic tradition.
II.A.1. Identification of Biblical Figures with Greek Ones

“Pseudo-Eupolemus” is the scholarly designation for a Samaritan who lived and wrote in Palestine and Egypt, and who, based upon his acquaintance with the Temple of Onias, lived no earlier than the mid-second century B.C.E.49 Because he takes the Bible as his point of departure, his work has been classified as Hellenistic Jewish literature.50 Pseudo-Eupolemus identifies biblical figures from the dawn of human history with gods familiar from the Hellenistic and Babylonian traditions. Enoch, who learned astrology from the angels, is Atlas (credited in the Hellenistic world with teaching mankind astrology); Noah is Bel and Cronos (because he was associated with giants like Cronos).51 Shem is also Bel (as he bears his father’s name). Bel, the creator of the world according to Berossus, and Cronos, father of Zeus, are thus human beings known to us from the Bible,52 making mythology not a religion, but rather part of human history. Pseudo-Eupolemus defends the authenticity of biblical tradition and averts a possible clash between the Bible and foreign literature, between the Jewish faith and the religion of the Hellenistic world.

II.A.2. Culture Heroes

Another means of mediating between Judaism and Hellenism was to claim that biblical characters were culture heroes responsible for such significant inventions as astrology, agriculture, and philosophy. The concept of the culture hero, as it developed in the Hellenistic world, played a role in the important debate over which was the oldest nation of the world. “As to the antiquity of the human race,” Diodorus Siculus tells us, “not only the Greeks make their claim, but the barbarians as well; they all believe that they are the autochthonous people, the first to discover things of importance to life; and that the events experienced by their

52 As Hengel states: “This is demythologizing euhemerism,” Judaism and Hellenism, 1:89.
people were the earliest events worthy of being told.\footnote{Diodorus Siculus 1.9.3. See the discussion by A. J. Droge, *Homer or Moses? Early Christian Interpretations of the History of Culture* (Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie 26; Tübingen: Mohr, 1989), 1–11; and a short survey by Sterling, *Historiography*, 163–5.} Greece, Egypt, Babylonia and Phoenicia each claimed the crown of antecedence,\footnote{The chronographer-savant Demetrius (Text: Holladay, *Fragments*, 1:62–79) was apparently familiar with this debate. Using the tools developed in Egypt by such Hellenistic chronographers as Eratosthenes in the third century B.C.E. (see P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1972], 1:693–4), he proved the antiquity of the Jewish people by calculating the number of years between biblical events (e.g., the destruction of Samaria and the destruction of Jerusalem) and his own time.} each argued that the most important culture heroes (Kulturbringer) came in larger numbers from its nation.\footnote{A. Momigliano, “Origins of Universal History,” 37–9.}

Pseudo-Eupolemus mentions such a culture hero in his attempt to interpret the works of Berossus, a Babylonian author who translated and rewrote Babylonian history in terms of Greek language and concepts. Berossus refers to a righteous man who lived in the tenth postdiluvian generation and who was proficient in Chaldean science. Pseudo-Eupolemus identifies this individual as Abraham.\footnote{Holladay, *Fragments*, 1:170–7.} Abraham was adept at astrology, in which he instructed the Phoenicians and the Egyptians. Aware of the above-mentioned international competition, Pseudo-Eupolemus points to the Phoenicians as the victors: they, not the Egyptians, were the first to learn Chaldean science. But the prime victor was the Jewish people, for the Chaldean sage came from their ranks.

Pseudo-Eupolemus’ argument that this culture hero was a Jew illustrates his desire to include the Jewish people among the most ancient and important nations, and provides a solution to the problem of the conflict between Judaism and Hellenism. Since these culture heroes were Jews, it follows that the Hellenistic culture that they created is not problematic for the Jewish people.

A similar approach was taken by Artapanus,\footnote{Text: Holladay, *Fragments*, 1:204–25, and a broad discussion by Sterling, *Historiography*, 167–86. See also Gruen, “Facts and Fiction,” 84–7. Artapanus (a dating of the early second century B.C.E. is probable) lived and wrote in Egypt. This can be deduced not only from his education—his writing points to a deep knowledge of Egyptian traditions—but also from his arguments. See below.} who depicts the three biblical heroes who lived in Egypt—Abraham, Joseph, and Moses—as the founders of Egyptian culture and religion. Abraham taught the
Egyptians astrology; Joseph introduced agricultural reform and invented a system of measurements; and Moses invented ships, stone-lifting machines, Egyptian weapons, water pumps, military lore, and philosophy. Furthermore, Moses is identified with Hermes (another example of the above-cited category of identification), who taught the goddess Isis. Moses is also identified with Musaeus, who (according to Artapanus) taught Orpheus. While tradition has it that Musaeus was Orpheus’ pupil rather than his teacher, Artapanus inverts the chronological order, and by means of this inversion is able to argue that Greek culture and wisdom, as represented by Orpheus, originated with the Jew Moses (Musaeus). In other words, Artapanus claims that the Jews are the best and most talented nation, the proof being Hellenism itself.58

Artapanus’ works were perhaps a response to the anti-Jewish propaganda in the work of Manetho, the Egyptian priest who rewrote Egyptian history in a Greek context in the early third century B.C.E.59 Artapanus’ primary goal was, however, to resolve the conflict of his Jewish contemporaries living in Egypt. The ancient Jewish heroes were not only heroes of the Jewish nation, but also the creators of Hellenistic culture; hence any Jew who adopts that culture is not betraying his national traditions but simply enjoying the fruits of his ancestors’ works.60

The emphasis by both Artapanus and Pseudo-Eupolemus on the national aspect of Judaism is striking.61 Because the past heroes of the Jewish people were heroes of humanity as a whole, therefore, in the present, Jews may take pride in their national identity.62 Neither author, however, addresses the problem of the meaning of the Torah’s laws in the world of Hellenistic culture.63 Neither is this tackled in the

58 Artapanus’ argument is not so far-fetched because there were Greeks who believed that their culture was a branch of Egyptian culture; see the brief discussion by Droge, *Homer or Moses*, 4. Artapanus’ contribution is the claim that the culture hero is not simply Egyptian but an Egyptian Jew.
60 Like Pseudo-Eupolemus, Artapanus displays a euhemeristic attitude toward the gods. Artapanus does not hesitate to claim that Moses founded the Egyptian cult, an artificial religion with no real gods. Its laws and cult were produced by a human being (a Jew) for the benefit of the Egyptian nation. Consequently, the Jews need not view the Egyptian cult as idolatry and can adopt some of its customs.
63 Furthermore, in describing biblical characters Artapanus does not rely on the Bible (Collins, *Athens*, 36). His fidelity is to the Jewish nation and not to its holy book. Conzelmann argues that parts of Hellenistic Jewish literature indeed relate to Jewish
work of Eupolemus, a Jerusalem priest with Hellenistic education, who lived around the time of the Hasmonean Revolt. His main goal was to emphasize the centrality of the Jewish people and its leaders to the surrounding world. In the form of a letter, he tells the story of King Solomon and his relations with Tyre and Egypt during the construction of the Jerusalem Temple, portraying Solomon as the strongest figure in the land of Israel and the neighboring kingdoms. Eupolemus writes of Moses as a culture hero who invented writing, which thus originated in the land of Israel and not in Greece; he was also the first wise man and the first legislator. Mosaic law, however, has no meaning outside the confines of the Jewish people. Jewish identity is innately linked to the Jewish nation, and its center of gravity is the Temple. On the other hand, Eupolemus does not reject the religions or laws of other nations, even relating that Solomon sent the king of Tyre a gold pillar, which now stands in Zeus' temple in that city.

II.A.3. Jubilees’ Use of Identifications

Jubilees reveals a calculated use of these two tools to achieve a diametrically opposite goal. This is clear in Jubilees 10, which tells the story of the Tower of Babel, whose destruction caused the nations to scatter to all corners of the earth, to their assigned territories according to the division of the earth by lot. The story goes on to describe Canaan’s invasion of the land of Israel as a grave violation of the oath sworn by Noah’s sons not to invade one another’s territories (end of chap. 10). It then describes humanity’s gradual decline:

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64 On Eupolemus’ identity, see Sterling, Historiography, 207. There is a debate concerning his origin. Hengel (Judaism, 1:90–5) assumes that Eupolemus lived in the land of Israel and that his writings are another proof for the diffusion of the Hellenistic culture there. M. Stern, wishing to invalidate such Hellenistic diffusion, argues for Egyptian or Cyprian origin; “Yahadut ve-yavnut be-erez israel ba-me’ot ha-shelishit ve-ha-sheniyah li-nei ha-seifirah,” in Acculturation and Assimilation: Continuity and Change in the Cultures of Israel and the Nations: Collected Essays (ed. Y. Kaplan and M. Stern; Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1989), 56 (Hebrew). See also n. 113 below.

65 Sterling, Historiography, 217.

66 The depiction of Moses as a lawgiver is also an outcome of the Hellenistic worldview. See Schwartz, Jewish Background, 18.

67 Sterling, Historiography, 221–2.

68 Collins, Athens, 42.
During this jubilee Noah's children began to fight one another, to take captives, and to kill one another; to shed human blood on the earth, to consume blood; to build fortified cities, walls, and towers; men [began] to elevate themselves over peoples, to set up the first kingdoms; to go to war—people against people, nations against nations, city against city; and everyone to do evil, to acquire weapons, and to teach warfare to their sons. City began to capture city and to sell male and female slaves. (11:2)

This censorious description is essential to subsequent developments described in the text. Abraham is presented as the antithesis of sinning humanity, thus justifying his election. Note, however, the nature of the accusations leveled against humanity in Jubilees: appointing a king, going to war, and making various conquests. What made the author specify these particular offenses? Why does he mention the crowning of a king, and why are the offenses imputed to that act not the traditional ones of enslaving and exploiting the people (see 1 Sam 8:11–17), but rather the king’s preoccupation with war and conquest?

It is possible that these representations implicitly reference the figure of Nimrod, otherwise not mentioned explicitly in Jubilees, who is to be located, chronologically speaking, at that very juncture in history. Biblical Nimrod is a king: “And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur and builded Nineveh, and Rehoboth-ir, and Calah....” (Gen 10:10–11; 1917 JPS). The biblical phrase reshit mamlakhto, “the beginning of his kingdom,” seems to be interpreted in Jubilees as “the first kingdom/kingship,” the foundation of the institution of monarchy, and perhaps the first existence of a kingdom in the sense of empire.

This is not the only possible interpretation of the biblical phrase, and I would like to suggest a reason for its adoption by the author of Jubilees. Greek historiography recounts that Ninus, king of Assyria and Babylonia, was the first ruler of the First Empire. His reign

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69 Many early commentators link Nimrod, King of Babel, to the Tower of Babel. See Kugel, Traditions, 229–31. I believe that Jubilees refers to Nimrod in this verse for another reason: the sin of consuming blood. Nimrod was a “mighty hunter before the Lord” (Gen 10:9) and hunting allows neither the proper slaughtering nor the proper handling of the animal’s blood.

70 According to M. Weinfield this is indeed the primary meaning in Genesis, Hamishah Hameshe Torah in Perach Hadash, vol. 1: Bereshit u-Shemot (Tel Aviv: S. L. Gordon, 1975), ad loc. Nimrod represents the beginning of territorial conquest and of political centers.

71 This claim is made by Castias who, in Posica, points to Assyria as the oldest civilization. Although there was some doubt in the ancient world concerning this claim, for which see W. Adler, Time Immemorial: Archaic History and its Sources in Christian Chronography.
also marked the first wars of expansion. Diodorus Siculus, relying on Ctesias, relates that Ninus was a lover of war who trained his men for battle, concluded a pact with the king of Arabia and conquered Babylonia, whose inhabitants knew nothing of war (II, 4, 1–7). Ninus then conquered Armenia, Medea, and all the land between the Nile and the Don (II, 1, 8–2, 4), and after these wars Nineveh (II, 1, 3–4). The series of accusations—captive taking, enslavement, waging war—is directly associated with Ninus’ generation. Its appearance in Jubilees may be explained by the identification of Nimrod, the king of Babylonia and Assyria and builder of Nineveh, with Ninus, king of Assyria and Babylonia, the builder of Nineveh, in the generation of the first wars. If Jubilees’ description of the division of the world among the sons of Noah shows knowledge of Hellenistic geography, the identification of Nimrod with Ninus points to acquaintance with Hellenistic historiography.

Although it seems likely that the author of Jubilees read the history books himself, it is possible that he encountered the identification in a now-lost literary source. Jubilees exhibits striking similarities with the text we know as the third book of the Sybiline Oracles. Before embarking on its admonitions to the nations of the world, Sib. III describes the three kingdoms of postdiluvian period, those of Cronos, Titan, and Iapetus, who had divided the world among themselves by lot. Having sworn an oath, at first they lived in peace (110–115), but after their father’s death the oath was violated, and the three brothers fought one another, each desiring to rule humanity (117–121). They finally reached an agreement that Cronos would rule over all, but would beget no children, so that Titan would succeed him after his death. Cronos, however, did have children, one of whom was Zeus. Upon hearing of

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73 It is probable that both Nimrod and Ninus denote one figure: King Tukulti-Ninurta. See E. A. Speiser, “In Search of Nimrod,” Eretz Israel 5 (1958): 32–6 (English section). Tukulti-Ninurta was not the first king but the founder of the first empire. He ruled both Babylonia and Assyria in the thirteenth century B.C.E. (1246–1206). Because of his importance, his fame spread outside the borders of Babylonia: to Genesis, where he was designated Nimrod, and to Greek historiography, where he was named Ninus.

74 See J. J. Collins, The Sybiline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1974), 43. The book perceives the Ptolemaic regime as an ideal one, and claims that the messianic dream will be fulfilled in its day.
this, the children of Titan attacked Cronos and Rhea and took them captive (151). Their sons, however, came to the rescue, and a great war ensued (147–153). At this point, the Sibyl sums up, saying: “This is the beginning of war for all mortals” (154–155), and also the beginning of the rule of empires in the world (158–161). Thus, Sib. III, like Jubilees, describes the division of the world (Jub. 8:10–9:13; Sib. III, 114–115); the oath sworn by Noah’s sons (Jub. 8:14–15; Sib. III, 116); Noah’s death (Jub. 8:15–17; Sib. III, 117–118); violation of the oath (Jub. 10:28–33 [referring to Canaan]; Sib. III, 118–121); the desire to rule the entire world, the first war, and the taking of prisoners of war (Jub. 11:2; Sib. III, 120–161).75

I suggest that these passages in the Sibylline Oracles, like those in Jubilees, are based upon the identification of Ninus with Nimrod. In Sib. III, the empire begins in the second and third generations after the Flood. This brings us to the generation of Nimrod, grandson of Ham, who lived in the third generation after the Flood. The Sibyl also associates the beginning of the empire with the first wars and the capture of prisoners, as in the description of the first empire in the time of Ninus in Greek historiography.

There are, however, differences between the accounts. In Jubilees we have a detailed account of the division of the earth among Noah’s sons, whereas Sib. III describes the division in one terse sentence; Jubilees mentions the desire for empires and wars in a single verse, while Sib. III is quite detailed, with (euhemeristic) use of Hesiod’s Theogony (421–424, 629–638). Such differences suggest that the author of Jubilees was most likely not directly acquainted with Book III of the Sibylline Oracles. Presumably, both works made use of the same historiographic work—some Hellenistic Jewish work identifying biblical figures with familiar figures from mythology and historiography. I surmise that this unknown work identifies Nimrod with Ninus and incorporates the tradition of empire and wars.76 If correct, this conjecture implies that

75 This similarity was noted by J. M. Scott, Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul’s Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians (WUNT 84. Tübingen: Mohr, 1995), 36–41.

76 Indeed, this Hellenistic Jewish work was not preserved and the statement that Nimrod is Nimrod occurs only in a relatively late work, the Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions. Book 4, ch. 29 reads: “inter quos primus magica nihilominus arte quasi corusco ad eum delato ex appellatur quidam Nebroth, quem et ipsum Graeci Ninum vocaverant, ex cuius nomine Ninive civitas vocabulum sumpsit,” B. Rehm, Pseudoklementinen II: Rekognitionen in Rufus Übersetzung (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994), 160. Nevertheless, it seems that this identification was known to Hellenistic Jews. Philo, in mentioning Nimrod, refers explicitly to wars. See Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesis, II.81–2.
the author of *Jubilees* employed a Hellenistic Jewish work to create a barrier between Abraham and the rest of humanity.

II.A.4. *Jubilees’ Use of Culture Heroes*

Above I suggested that the concept of the culture hero, so central to Hellenistic Jewish historiography, was a major tool in the effort to promote the integration of Jews and Judaism into the Hellenistic world. It can, however, be argued that *Jubilees’* familiarity with this concept is not necessarily an outgrowth of acquaintance with Hellenism, but rather a reflection of the culture heroes that appear in the book of Genesis, which *Jubilees* rewrites. Thus, we read in Genesis of Jabal, “the ancestor of those who dwell in tents and amidst herds” (4:20); of Jubal, “the ancestor of all who play the lyre and the pipe” (v. 21); and of Tubal-Cain, “who forged all implements of copper and iron” (v. 22). However, *Jubilees’* awareness and deliberate use of the concept of culture hero goes beyond this to take part in what I identify as the book’s polemic against Hellenistic Jewish literature.

From its portrayal of Abraham, it is clear that *Jubilees* is aware of the Hellenistic Jewish tradition, found both in Artapanus and Pseudo-Euopelemus, of Abraham as the father of astrology. Because *Jubilees’* author considered astrology a forbidden subject, he deprived Abraham of his role as a culture hero in that realm. *Jubilees* 12 describes Abraham looking at the stars, but as refusing to learn the future from them (vv. 16–18).

The story in *Jubilees* (end of chap. 11) about Abraham’s battle with the crows reinstates Abraham as a culture hero. As Brock has shown, this departure from the biblical chain of events draws on an earlier tradition.  

Comparing this tradition (preserved in Syriac) with *Jubilees* reveals the addition of an important detail—Abraham’s invention of a plow that buries seeds deep in the earth, making them inaccessible to crows. This addition, stressing Abraham’s contribution in a neutral area—agriculture—is meant to compensate Abraham for his loss of the title in the field of astrology.

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78 Both in *Catena Severi* (Severus was a monk who assembled the *Catena* c. 861) and in a letter sent to Jacob of Edessa.
80 In Babylonian literature the discovery of the plow is attributed to Enlil; see B. Landsberger, “Corrections to the Article, ‘An Old Babylonian Charm against Merihu’,”
The concept of culture hero is also implicit in Jubilees 10, which tells of demons that lead Noah’s children and grandchildren astray, of Noah’s prayer, and of God’s response to it. God imprisons nine-tenths of the evil demons, and then sends Noah angels to teach him how to mislead the remaining ones. As I have argued elsewhere, this chapter is a reworked version of an ancient tale preserved in a later work—the introduction to Sefer Assaf ha-Rofé. In that version, the emphasis is on disease-causing demons, and Noah and his sons are taught different remedies. Noah appears there as a culture hero, the father of medicine. In Jubilees, however, the emphasis is on sin rather than disease, on prayers to mislead the demons and not on remedies extracted from “medicinal trees with all their grasses and herbs and seeds” (introduction to Sefer Assaf ha-Rofé). This shift from medicines to prayers obscures the purpose for which the introduction to Assaf ha-Rofé was written, i.e., the dispensation to prepare mixtures of plants and herbs, based on the notion of medicine as God’s gift to Noah. Conceivably, Jubilees employs the idea of the culture hero as a tool to prohibit the use of such practices and sciences as astrology and medicine, which had developed and become popular in the Hellenistic world. Thus, whereas Hellenistic Jewry utilized culture heroes as a means of bridging the cultural distance between Judaism and Hellenism, Jubilees deliberately uses them to amplify this distance.

II.B. Jubilees and Hellenistic Jewish Philosophy

The main theme that structures Jubilees reflects a response to trends prevalent in the Hellenistic Jewish world. Hellenistic Jewish historians resolved their conflict by portraying Hellenism as being of Jewish origin,
a solution that highlights Judaism’s national aspect. Yet, as I pointed out earlier, neither Artapanus nor Eupolemus attempts to explain the meaning of biblical law in a Hellenistic context. Another approach to the problem of biblical law was to indicate attributes shared by Judaism and the Hellenistic world. This was the approach of the Hellenistic Jewish philosophers, who tried to emphasize those features of Judaism acceptable to the educated non-Jewish public, namely, its philosophical aspects. Jubilees also aimed to repudiate their views, as we will see through examination of the writings of Jewish philosophers in which reference is made to biblical law.

It appears likely that some Jewish philosophical works were already in circulation when Jubilees was composed. One earlier author is Aristo- bulus, of whose writings only fragments have survived. If the assertion that it was written around 100 B.C.E. is correct, then the Wisdom of Solomon was roughly contemporary with Jubilees. And although Philo’s prolific writings are later than Jubilees, it is generally held that he was preceded by earlier Jewish philosophers.

Just as the Hellenistic Jewish historians attributed the creation of Hellenistic culture to Moses, the Jewish philosophers claimed that Greek philosophy owed its wisdom to Moses, since it was derived from the Torah, which had been translated into Greek in the past. Because they also assumed that, through its imprint upon Nature, the Law could be learned independently, without an external legislator, this argument was not of central importance for Jewish philosophers. This statement requires further explanation.

The existence of a world of ideas, a pre-Creation intellectual world imprinted in the universe upon Creation, was a central belief in Second Temple times. An early work, the biblical book of Proverbs, already

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83 Collins, Athens, 9.
84 Concerning the book’s dating, see J. J. Collins, Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 179. Collins rejects the opinion that the Wisdom of Solomon refers to contemporary historical events, and dates the book to the early Roman era.
87 Moses is thus a philosopher; unlike in the Bible, his knowledge does not derive from God’s words. See D. Winston, “Judaism and Hellenism: Hidden Tensions in Philo’s Thought,” StPhA 2 (1990): 12.
portrays Wisdom as an independent, pre-Creation entity. The role of Wisdom, however, reached its full development in Hellenistic Jewish literature, a development furthered by acquaintance with Stoic philosophy and with the thought of the disciples of the Platonic school. Wisdom, or more precisely Logos, was created by God prior to Creation, and embedded in the newly formed universe. Any observer of the universe and its operational laws can learn something of the essence of God. achieve a full understanding of the laws of the universe, and draw conclusions as to what constitutes proper conduct in the created world. Any person can apprehend, and should obey, this natural law. But Wisdom—herein lies the Jewish aspect—is also the law that the Creator gave to the Children of Israel. Clearly, the laws that can be derived from the order of nature are the ethical laws, and these are indeed mentioned in the Hellenistic Jewish Wisdom of Solomon. The laws of purity and impurity, sacrifices and festivals are more difficult to incorporate.

Another characteristic of philosophical inquiry is that, unlike the Bible, the philosopher concentrates on God’s dominion over Creation and the natural order, not on God’s action in history. Philo interprets historical events as philosophical journeys, and the Wisdom of Solomon

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88 Hengel, Judaism, 1:168 (in reference to Aristobulus’ work).
89 For its acquaintance with Stoicism, see Collins, Jewish Wisdom, 196–8. On the Platonic school, see D. Winston, The Wisdom of Solomon: New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 43; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1979), 33–4; Birnbaum, Place of Judaism, 20–21, and the bibliographic list in note 47 there. Philo’s branch of philosophy is not relevant to this consideration.
90 Philo uses mostly ‘Logos’ but ‘Wisdom’ can be found also in his writings. Philo does not elucidate, however, on the relationship between the two; see J. Dillon, The Middle Platonists (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 163–4.
94 Philo, De opificio mundi, I.3: “It consists of an account of the creation of the world, implying that the world is in harmony with the Law, and the Law with the world, and that the man who observes the law is constituted thereby a loyal citizen of the world, regulating his doings by the purpose and will of Nature, in accordance with which the entire world itself also is administered,” trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whittaker, Philo (LCL; London and New York, 1929), 1:7.
96 Collins, Jewish Wisdom, 192–3.
97 See, for example, De somniis, L.32–60.
portrays history as a sequence of events that relate stories of righteous men and their rewards, and of sinners and their punishments, which come not from God, but through the built-in law of the universe, as a natural action of its component parts. In sum, the portrayal of Judaism as a philosophy involves a double shift: the role of God moves from history to creation; and Jewish law shifts from ritual and ethics to ethics alone.

Jubilees also speaks of an entity extant before Creation: the Torah and the teʿudah (also another name for the book) engraved on the heavenly tablets before Creation. Copied at the time of the theophany (the “jubilee of jubilees” since Creation) and dictated to Moses by the Angel of the Presence, the book of Jubilees was brought down to the Israelites when Moses descended from Sinai. I have tried elsewhere to determine the meaning of this Torah and briefly summarize my findings here.

Jubilees is characterized mainly as teʿudah—the predestined history. However Torah is also integrated into Jubilees—the laws which are not found in the biblical story. What is important for our discussion is the relationship between the two. Though Jubilees is purportedly a copy of the writing on the heavenly tablets, it contains scattered comments made by the angel who dictates “the Torah and the teʿudah,” which refer to a time continuum outside the scope of Jubilees (the period from Creation to the Sinaitic theophany). These comments generally appear whenever a biblical law influences the course of history in the patriarchal period, and teach us that the law to be given on Mount

99 Wisdom of Solomon 16:24, 19:6, 19:18; Philo, Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesis, II.64; De vita Mosis II.266–7; and a short survey by Collins, Jewish Wisdom, 215–16 and additional bibliography there.
100 See E. J. Schnabel, Law and Wisdom from Ben Sira to Paul (WUNT 2. Tübingen: Mohr, 1983): “The significance of the particularistic Jewish laws is played down. The ethical perspective of the laws is emphasized” (132).
102 For example, chapter 3 relates the creation of Adam and Eve: Adam was created in the first week and Eve in the second. Jubilees also informs us regarding the first couple’s entrance to Paradise: Adam was brought there forty days after being created; Eve eighty days thereafter. We witness here how the law of tam at yoledet, postnatal impurity, shapes history. This is evident from what the dictating angel tells Moses, namely, that the children of Israel will abide by this law from Sinai on: “For this reason a commandment was written in the heavenly tablets for the one who gives birth to a child: if she gives birth to a male, she is to remain in her impurity for seven days like the first seven days; then for 33 days she is to remain in the blood of purification.
Sinai shapes historical events. Thus, Adam and Eve were created in accordance with the law declaring a parturient woman to be unclean; the Flood is associated with the law forbidding the consumption of blood; and Dinah died before her time because of the law making marriage between a Jewish woman and a non-Jew punishable by death. The laws, as well as the punishments meted out to their violators, mold historical events, which were predetermined by God before Creation. In *Jubilees* history—*te'udah*—possesses a halakhic dimension, Torah. Furthermore, for *Jubilees*, the belief that history obeys the laws of the Torah is a corollary of the idea that an observer of history will be able to learn the laws of the Torah and their proper interpretation.

In contrast to the emphasis on *Logos*, the order of Creation, and on the laws of nature and ethics in Jewish philosophy, *Jubilees* stresses the course of history and ritual law. Whoever observes the course of Jewish history and the history of other peoples will learn the laws and their interpretation. The emphasis in *Jubilees* is on God’s function in history and the biblical laws of purity, tithes, and festivals. Was the book written as an answer to Jewish philosophical literature? With due caution, I would like to argue that it was. This becomes evident from comparison of its Creation story to what is related in Hellenistic Jewish literature. *Jubilees* stresses that the world was created not by speech but by action. Though in Genesis 1 speech and action appear together (“Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided

She is not to touch any sacred thing nor to enter the sanctuary until she completes these days for a male. As for a female she is to remain in her impurity for two weeks of days like the first two weeks and 66 days in the blood of purification. Their total is 80 days” (*Jub.* 3:10–11).

Despite his equation of ‘Wisdom’ and ‘Torah’, Ben Sira should not be seen as an anti-philosophy polemic. Collins notes that Ben Sira emphasizes Wisdom but ignores the implications of its identification with Torah (Collins, *Wisdom*, 58–61). According to Schnabel, ‘Torah’ stands at the center of Ben Sira’s thinking and although identifying it with ‘Wisdom,’ Ben Sira is not aware of the latter concept’s complexity. See Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom*, 69–92. Notwithstanding the discrepancy between Schnabel’s and Collins’ views, they both agree that an anti-philosophical bent is absent from Ben Sira.

In examining the creation story in *Jubilees*, VanderKam cites Hengel’s adaptation of Bickerman’s assertion that the Hellenizers in the Hasmoncean era were philosophers who sought to purify Judaism from wrong opinions and from a mythic conception of God; J. C. VanderKam, “Genesis 1 in *Jubilees 2*,” *DSD* 1 (1994): 319–21. This notion was, however, refuted much earlier by M. Stern, “M. Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus*,” *Keruah Sepher* 46 (1970–71): 94–99 (98–9) (Hebrew).

the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so” [Gen 1:6–7; 1917 JPS], the expression “And God said…” does not appear in the Creation story in Jubilees 2, which stresses only action (“On the second day he made a firmament between the waters, and the waters were divided on that day. Half of them went up above and half of them went down below the firmament (which was) in the middle above the surface of the whole earth” [2:4]). An obvious effort is made to reject the idea that it was God’s “Word,” and not his “Hands” that operated.

The anti-philosophical polemic can also be observed in the treatment of the number seven. This number is central both to the biblical Creation account and to the description of nature in Hellenistic Jewish philosophy. Aristobulus sings the praises of the number seven, which is active both in divine (the universe) and in human matters (human nature). The seventh day is the day of rest because the number seven is that light in which everything is correctly perceived and apprehended. The number seven is also of paramount importance in Philo’s thought, and his De opificio mundi provides a detailed list of its virtues and recounts its revelation in the universe and in man (89–128).

In Jubilees, the number seven also appears in the seven things created on the first day: “For on the first day he created the [1] heavens that are above, [2] the earth, [3] the waters, and [4] all of the spirits who serve before him…. [5] [There were also] the depths, [6] darkness and [7] and light, dawn and evening which he prepared through the knowledge of his mind” (2:2). Although all of these things appear in the biblical account of the first day, Jubilees seems to depart from the

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106 Because Gen 1:9 states that “God said” without following what he said with an action (“God said, ‘Let the water below the sky be gathered into one area, that the dry land may appear.’ And it was so.”), Jubilees also mentions that God says: “On the third day he did as he said to the waters that they should pass from the surface of the whole earth to one place and that the dry land should appear. The waters did so, as he told them” (Jub. 2:5–6).


110 See also De decalogo 20–31, 102–5, where Philo molds these numbers to the biblical laws. Seven also has a prominent place in the Jewish prayers that were preserved in the Constitutiones Apostolorum. See D. A. Fiensy, Prayers Alleged to be Jewish: An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum (Brown Judaic Studies 65. Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1985), 76–8, 232.
plain meaning of the Bible. The pre-Creation situation as described in Gen 1:2 (“the earth being unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and the spirit of God sweeping over the water”) is counted among the things created (darkness, abysses [= the deep], spirit, water). A deliberate effort is being made to arrive at the number seven, perhaps in reaction to Hellenistic Jewish interpretation (indeed, the same list is found in Philo’s De opificio mundi 27–29). But in Jubilees the emphasis is not on the number seven, but on twenty-two, which operates in history, not in nature. Twenty-two “kinds of works” were made from the first day to Sabbath eve, and twenty-two generations will pass from Adam to Jacob, the patriarch of the nation who will observe the Sabbath day. At this point, indeed, the text proclaims: “this is the first te’udah and Torah” (2:24). This is the first demonstration of how the Torah—the Sabbath—operates in the te’udah—the march of history.

Tentative Conclusions

Though not a Hellenistic Jewish work, the book of Jubilees is undoubtedly a product of the Hellenistic world. It is therefore conceivable that the text was aware of and responded to trends of thought present in Hellenistic Jewish literature. If this assessment is correct, what more general conclusions can then be proposed? Were the Jews of the land of Israel familiar with Hellenistic Jewish literature, and if so, was this because such literature was written there, or because of the close ties between the land of Israel and Alexandria? As mentioned in the opening, scholars have noted the existence of active Hellenism in the Hasmonean court toward the late second century B.C.E. This may have promoted the creation of Hellenistic Jewish literature in the land of Israel itself, and perhaps Eupolemus testifies to such a trend. This increases the plausibility that Jubilees, written c. 100 B.C.E., was acquainted with the Hellenistic world and with Hellenistic Jewish literature from the land of Israel itself.

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112 As mentioned (n. 64) Stern exiled him to Egypt or Cyprus; Hengel argues that he wrote in the land of Israel.
Nevertheless, it is possible to continue to adhere to the conservative view, which questions the existence of such strong Hellenistic influence in the land of Israel. But if so, it could still tentatively be argued that the circles among which Jubilees was written were singularly influenced by Hellenistic culture. Perhaps the Essenes (in my opinion, Jubilees was written within circles very close to the Qumran sect) originated in Egypt, in reaction to certain trends common among Hellenistic Jewry. Perhaps the Therapeutae (“healers”) of whom Philo speaks so enthusiastically, noting their diligent preoccupation, night and day, with allegorical interpretation of the Torah and with the study of the laws of nature and the ethical laws that follow from them, were the forerunners of the Essenes (whose name indicates some association with medicine), who were concerned night and day with deriving the Torah from the te’udah, and inferring laws from history.