

Retelling Biblical Retellings:

Epiphanius, the Pseudo-Clementines, and the Reception-History of *Jubilees*

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In the heresiological writings of Epiphanius, one finds preserved a poignant moment in the late antique Christian reception of so-called “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.” In the course of his magisterial mapping of the genealogy of error from the primeval age to his present, Epiphanius comes to the Sethians—the 39th of the 80 poisonous sects for which he claims to provide antidotes in his medicine chest, the *Panarion*. Epiphanius’ derision, in this particular case, centers on what he mocks as the “melodrama, mythic nonsense, and fictitious clap-trap” of their beliefs about primeval history.¹ As exemplar and cause of the fanciful folly of their ideas about Abel, Cain, and Seth, he accuses the Sethians of partaking in the practice and products of pseudepigraphy:

Composing books in the names of great men, they say that there are seven books in the name of Seth... And another in the name of Abraham—which they also claim to be revelation—quite full of all sorts of wickedness. And another in the name of Moses. And still others [in names of] others. (*Pan.* 39.5.1)²

At first sight, Epiphanius’ statement—written in the 370s CE—might seem simply to echo the sentiment more famously expressed roughly a decade earlier by the Alexandrian bishop

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¹ Translations here and below follow F. Williams, trans., *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis* (2 vols.; Nag Hammadi studies 35–36; Leiden: Brill, 1987–1994), revised in consultation with the Greek in K. Holl and J. Dummer, eds., *Epiphanius* (GCS 10, 13; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1980).

² The importance of this passage was noted already Johann Albert Fabricius, who quotes it as the first of his witnesses to what he calls *Parva Genesis* in *Codex pseudepigraphus veteris testamenti* (Hamburg, 1713), 849–64. On the passing reference to “Allogenes” in *Pan.* 39.5.1, not here quoted or discussed, compare 20.2.2, and see W.-P. Funk, et al., eds., *L'allogène: NH XI, 3* (Bibliothèque Copte de Nag Hammadi, Textes 30; Louvain: Peeters, 2004), 1–4.

Athanasius. In the 39th Festal Letter of 367 CE, Athanasius had presented pseudepigraphy as virtually coterminous with “heresy.”³ Not only is this letter often celebrated as the first to define a closed biblical canon of the same scope as would become common in Western Christendom, but Athanasius denounces, in the process, what he calls “apocrypha” and what we might call “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.” Whereas earlier Christians such as Clement, Origen, and Tertullian reflected a range of views about the value of such works for preserving non-pagan wisdom and pre-Christian witnesses to Christ,⁴ Athanasius re-frames the issue. For him, the circulation of books in the names of figures like Enoch, Isaiah, and Moses is not a question about the Jewish literary heritage of the church, but rather a problem of Christian “heresy” (esp. *Ep.* 39.21).

Athanasius’ 39th Festal Letter was as innovative as it has been influential, and its heresiological thrust has become even more evident with an additional Coptic fragment, as presented in a new edition in 2010 by David Brakke.⁵ Not only is Athanasius’ argument for the ultimate sufficiency of the “canonized” scriptures rooted in his citation of biblical verses to counter Marcion, Manichees, etc., but his argument for the undue dangers of “apocrypha” is rooted in the claim that “heretics” of this very sort are the ones *really* responsible for creating and circulating such writings. Parabiblical literature is thus re-presented as the pernicious and duplicitous opposite of what Athanasius here defends, in a carefully-constructed contrast, as the canon of scriptures that ensures “orthodoxy.”

³ D. Brakke, “Canon Formation and Social Conflict in Fourth-Century Egypt: Athanasius of Alexandria’s Thirty-Ninth Festal Letter,” *HTR* 87 (1994): 395–419.

⁴ J. Ruwet, “Les apocryphes dans le oeuvres d’Origène,” *Biblica* 25 (1944): 143–66; W. Adler, “The Pseudepigrapha in the Early Church,” in *The Canon Debate* (ed. L. M. McDonald and J. A. Sanders; Peabody, Mass.: Hendriksen, 2002), 214–24; A. Y. Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 160–232.

⁵ D. Brakke, “A New Fragment of Athanasius’s 39th Festal Letter: Heresy, Apocrypha, and the Canon,” *HTR* 103 (2010): 47–66.

Any transgression of what he here seeks to promote as a self-evidently closed set of exclusively sacred scriptures is tantamount—Athanasius further contends—to the hard-hearted transgression of Deut 4:2: “You shall not add to the word that I commanded you.”⁶ Just as Athanasius thus invokes the words of Moses to counter the production of further works in Moses’ name, so his argument against pseudepigraphy in the names of Enoch and others also pivots on Mosaic authorship. Certainly—Athanasius argues—no Scripture existed before Moses, whether by Enoch or anyone else: “How could Moses have an apocryphal book? He is the one who published Deuteronomy with heaven and earth as witnesses!” (cf. Deut 4:26).⁷

At first sight, Epiphanius might seem to be arguing along much the same lines, not least because he takes aim at Sethian, Abrahamic, and Mosaic pseudepigraphy within an even more explicitly heresiological context.⁸ Moreover, earlier in the *Panarion*, he too provides the reader with a list of those Jewish Scriptures that are authentically “sacred writings” (*Pan.* 8.6.1–4), alluding passingly in contrast to “certain apocrypha.” And the Sethians are hardly the only “heretics,” in his subsequent catalogue of sects, to be associated with pseudepigraphical forgery and “apocrypha.” So too with the Archontics (40.2.1), Bardaisan (56.2.2), the Hieracites (67.3.4), and others.⁹

⁶ For a recent iteration of the same problem, posed with the same proof-text, see J. L. Kugel, *How to Read the Bible* (New York: Free Press, 2007), 684–85.

⁷ On the resonance of Athanasius’ assertions with modern notions of pseudepigraphy, see my essay on “Pseudepigraphy, Authorship and the Reception of ‘the Bible’ in Late Antiquity,” in *The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity* (ed. L. DiTommaso and L. Turcescu; *The Bible in Ancient Christianity* 6; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 467–90.

⁸ Traditionally, the *Panarion* has been treated mostly as a mine of information, but fresh attention to its form and rhetoric have made clear that Epiphanius is here engaged in the project of constructing “orthodoxy”; see A. Pourkier, *L’Hérésiologie chez Épiphanie de Salamine* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1992); J. Schott, “Heresiology as Universal History in Epiphanius’ *Panarion*,” *ZAC* 10 (2007): 546–63; Y. R. Kim, “Reading the *Panarion* as Collective Biography: The Heresiarch as Unholy Man,” *VC* 64.4 (2010): 382–413.

⁹ In some cases, Epiphanius’ denunciation of “heretics” for reading or producing “apocrypha” is paired with explicit reference to known works that modern scholars call “Old Testament pseudepigrapha.” Epiphanius reports of Archontics, for instance, that they “have forged some apocrypha of their own... and they take cues from the *Ascension of Isaiah*, and from still other apocrypha” (40.2.1), and the *Ascension of Isaiah* is associated with the Hieracites too (67.3.4). In some such reports, reference is made to works that modern scholars call “New Testament

A closer look at the passage with which we began, however, reveals a somewhat different take. Epiphanius does indeed connect the “heresy” of the Sethians with their use of books circulating under the names of Seth, Abraham, and Moses, and he implies that some or all of these books have been spuriously produced by the Sethians themselves. Yet what is so striking, in this particular passage, is how Epiphanius goes on to answer them. Where Athanasius quotes Deuteronomy, Epiphanius cites the *Book of Jubilees*. He appeals, in other words, to a Second Temple Jewish text, attributed to Moses, outside of what he himself knows and lists as the Jewish Scriptures.¹⁰ And he makes no effort to hide this move. Not only does he cite *Jubilees* by name—informing the reader that he reports what he discovered “in the *Jubilees* (ἐν τοῖς Ἰωβηλαίοις), which is also called the *Little Genesis*” (τῆ καὶ λεπτῆ Γενέσει καλουμένη)—but he does so without any explanation, even despite the fact that he is among the first known Christian authors to cite the work by name. With Jerome and Didymus of Alexandria, in fact, Epiphanius marks the beginning of our extant evidence for the explicit engagement with this Second Temple Jewish text in Christian sources.¹¹

In modern scholarship, Athanasius’ 39th Festal Letter has been much discussed, often as a turning-point in the transmission of Christianity’s literary heritage from Second Temple

Apocrypha.” Hence, of the Origenists, he says that “they use various scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and certain apocrypha, especially the so-called *Acts of Andrew*” (63.2.1), while Encratites are said to use “the so-called *Acts of Andrew*, and [*Acts*] of *John*, and [*Acts*] of *Thomas*, and certain apocrypha” (67.1.5). At times, allusion to such books is perhaps deliberately vague: Severans use “certain apocrypha... but also the canonical books in part” (45.4.1); Bardaisan is said to draw from “the Law and the Prophets and the Old and New Testaments, besides certain apocrypha” (56.2.2).

¹⁰ See the list of “books of prophets” (προφητῶν βιβλους) that the Jews had at the time of their return from the Babylonian Exile at *Pan.* 8.6.1–2; Epiphanius there distinguishes between these “27 books given to the Jews by God,” counted by the Jews as 22 (8.6.3), from two other disputed books (Wisdom of ben Sira; Wisdom of Solomon) as well as “certain other hidden books” (ἄλλων τινῶν βιβλίον ἐναποκρύφω; 8.6.4).

¹¹ W. Adler, “Reception History of the Book of *Jubilees*: A Prime Example,” Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins, 13 March 2003. The relevant quotations and allusions from Epiphanius, Jerome, and various chronographers were gathered already by Fabricius (*Codex pseudepigraphus VT*, 849–64), and expanded by H. Röscher, *Das Buch der Jubiläen oder die kleine Genesis* (Leipzig, 1874), 251–382, with materials from catenae, etc. Newer assessments include A. Denis, *Fragmenta pseudepigraphorum quae supersunt graeca* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 70–102; J. C. VanderKam, “The Manuscript Tradition of Jubilees,” in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah: The Evidence of the Book of Jubilees* (ed. G. Boccaccini and G. Ibba; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 12–15.

Judaism.¹² In the Patristic literature of the second and third centuries CE, one finds references, citations, and allusions to the parabiblical literature of Second Temple times, consistent with the Jewish background of Jesus and earliest Christianity. In the fourth century, however, such fluidity is seemingly foreclosed. Or, rather, so it seems when we focus on Athanasius and consider his canonizing efforts in light of our evidence for the afterlives of certain Second Temple texts, such as the Books of Enoch, for which there are a number of references, citations, and allusions in the first three centuries CE, but dwindling and negative notices precisely in the fourth century and following.¹³

What I would like to suggest, however, is that Epiphanius' citation of *Jubilees* may also have something important to tell us about the Christian transmission of texts and traditions from Second Temple Judaism, precisely because it does not fit quite so neatly into our conventional scholarly narratives about the creation of the canon and the reception of "pseudepigrapha." Why is it that explicit reference to *Jubilees* begins precisely when canonical boundaries start to tighten, and when similar Second Temple Jewish texts, like the Books of Enoch, are coming under sharpened suspicion? And why is Epiphanius—hardly a champion of "apocrypha" and far from a paragon of conscientious source-citation—among the first Christians to cite *Jubilees* by name?

It is this double puzzle that I would like to consider in this essay. To do so, I shall reflect upon the fourth-century reception of *Jubilees* in light of its own self-presentation in relation to the Torah, but I would also like to ask how its practice of "retelling" Genesis-traditions about primeval times (esp. Genesis 1–10) relates to Epiphanius' own acts of "retelling" the same history, in much the same terms, from Genesis, *Jubilees*, and other sources. With *Jubilees*, as we

¹² This tendency is noted, e.g., in Brakke, "Canon Formation and Social Conflict"; L. M. McDonald, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (Peabody: Hendriksen, 2007), esp. 51–52, 355.

¹³ Reed, *Fallen Angels*, 122–232.

shall see, Epiphanius shares the concern of creating a universal primeval-history that is also preface to a genealogy of error, with the personages and lineages from Genesis 1–11 serving as base and backbone. To highlight some of what is at stake in this choice, I shall adduce another fourth-century example, namely, the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies*. The material about primeval history in the eighth and ninth *Homilies* may offer some interesting points of parallel, contrast, and counter-point—as fourth-century traditions possibly dependant on *Jubilees*, possibly known to Epiphanius, and certainly sharing halakhic concerns with the former and heresiological concerns with the latter. Through the triangulation of the three sources—all of which are inextricably “biblical retellings,” universal histories, and genealogies of error—I hope to illumine something of the Christian transformation of Second Temple Jewish texts and traditions, but also the continuities that connect them.¹⁴

1. *Jubilees* and its Early Reception

The *Book of Jubilees*, composed in Hebrew in the second century BCE, presents itself as a record of divine revelations, as delivered through an angel, to Moses on Mt. Sinai. The work begins rather remarkably, as Martha Himmelfarb notes, “with a story of its own revelation that provides an account of its relationship to the Torah... The Torah is apparently identified with the tablets

¹⁴ I here use the term “biblical retelling” in the broadest sense, so as to highlight conceptual and discursive continuities. For a reading of Epiphanius’ *Panarion* within a tradition of Christian chronographical discourse indebted to *Jubilees*, see now Y. R. Kim, “The imagined worlds of Epiphanius of Cyprus” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2006), 196–237. For an application of the category “rewritten Bible” to Epiphanius’ work, see Schott, “Heresiology,” 547–48, but compare the terminological debates in relation to Second Temple materials in H. Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), esp. 1–12; M. Segal, “Between Bible and rewritten Bible,” in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. M. Henze; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 10–28; M. Bernstein, “Rewritten Bible: A Generic Category Which Has Outlived its Usefulness?” *Textus* 22 (2005): 169–96.

of the law while *Jubilees* itself is the transcript of the revelation that took place during the forty days and nights.”¹⁵ The result, as James VanderKam has observed, is that

The writer leaves no doubt that he has placed his story at Sinai and, within that episode, in the action described in Exodus 24 where Moses ascends the mountain the day after the revelation on the same mountain (24:4)... And, far from mentioning this circumstance only at the beginning of the book and ignoring it afterwards, he reminds the reader of it in a whole series of passages. In fact, the book ends where it began, with Moses at Mt. Sinai (50:2)...¹⁶

What this schema serves to authorize is an expansive and detailed account of events also described in Genesis and the beginning of Exodus. In the process, the author seems to grapple with a number of the same textual, chronological, halakhic, and other issues discussed, in more explicitly exegetical terms, by later Jews and Christians. Indeed, it is not for naught that James Kugel can laud the author of *Jubilees* “one of the heroes” of *The Bible as it Was*.¹⁷ A great number of the motifs found in *Jubilees* appear in later sources as well, from the Second Temple period and well into the Middle Ages—whether because the author was perhaps especially inventive or influential, or whether because *Jubilees* just so happens to preserve and transmit, in writing, an unusually dense deposit of the oral interpretative traditions surrounding the Torah in Second Temple times.

For some modern readers, however, the apparently interpretative character of much of *Jubilees* have only served to sharpen the paradox of its own self-presentation as angelic speech, Mosaic writing, and extra-pentateuchal revelation. *Jubilees* is indeed a “parade example” of what can seem so very strange from a modern perspective about the parabiblical literature of Second Temple Judaism. How could a Jewish author, in the second century BCE, know so much about

¹⁵ M. Himmelfarb, “Torah, Testimony, and Heavenly Tablets: The Claim to Authority of the Book of *Jubilees*,” in *A Multiform Heritage: Studies on Early Judaism and Christianity in Honor of Robert A. Kraft* (ed. B. G. Wright; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 19–29 at 19. For varying opinions, see n. 18 below.

¹⁶ J. C. VanderKam, “The scriptural setting of the *Book of Jubilees*,” *DSD* 13.1 (2006): 61–72 at 61.

¹⁷ J. L. Kugel, *The Bible as it Was* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 38.

the Torah, seemingly care so much about the problems of its proper interpretation, and yet deign to write in the name of Moses, claiming a status for his own work equal to the Torah? How could he dare to “add to the words,” unless with some prideful or deceptive aim to replace, displace, or supersede?

This is certainly how Athanasius framed the issue, and it is also how some modern scholars have reacted to the authorial and revelatory claims of this and other parabiblical writings therefore labeled as “pseudepigrapha.”¹⁸ More recently, however, scholars such as Martha Himmelfarb and Hindy Najman have drawn attention to the supplementarity in the authorizing claims and self-presentation of *Jubilees*.¹⁹ *Jubilees* may relativize what it calls “the first Torah,” but it lays out a “division of labor” for the two to coexist side-by-side, as earthly selections from the divine archive of the heavenly tablets. Himmelfarb proposes, moreover, that this is precisely how *Jubilees* was received at Qumran: “For the *Damascus Covenant*, the Torah of Moses contains commandments, while *Jubilees* contains the history of Israel’s failure to fulfill those commandments.”²⁰ Such truth-claims might seem bold to us now, but they were plausible and persuasive—she suggests—when “there was not yet a fixed form of the biblical text, the final

¹⁸ Esp. B. Z. Wacholder, “Jubilees as the super canon: Torah-admonition versus Torah-commandment,” in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies* (ed. M. Bernstein, F. García Martínez, and J. Kampen; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 195–211. For a variety of positions, see Himmelfarb, “Torah, Testimony”; F. García Martínez, “The Heavenly Tablets in the Book of Jubilees,” in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (eds. M. Albani, J. Frey, A. Lange; Mohr Siebeck 1997), 243–60; H. Najman, “Interpretation as primordial writing: *Jubilees* and its authority conferring strategies,” *JSJ* 30.4 (1999): 379–410; C. Werman, “The *torah* and the *te’udah* engraved on the tablets,” *DSD* 9.1 (2002): 75–103; J. C. VanderKam, “Moses trumping Moses: Making the Book of Jubilees,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls; Transmission of Traditions and Production of Texts* (ed. S. Metso, H. Najman, and E. Schuller; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 25–44.

¹⁹ Esp. Himmelfarb, “Torah, Testimony”; Najman, “Interpretation as primordial writing”; eadem, “Reconsidering *Jubilees*: Prophecy and exemplarity,” in *Enoch and the Mosaic Torah*, 229–43. For a reassessment, see now J. J. Collins, “Changing scripture,” in *Changes in Scripture: Rewriting and Interpreting Authoritative Traditions in the Second Temple Period* (ed. H. von Weissenberg, J. Pakkala, and M. Marttila; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 23–45, esp. 34–38 on *Jubilees*.

²⁰ Himmelfarb, “Torah, Testimony,” 23, pointing also to the Hebrew fragments of *Jubilees* and related materials discovered at Qumran; cf. D. Dimant, “Two Scientific Fictions: The so-called Book of Noah and the Alleged Quotation of Jubilees in CD 16:3–4,” in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (ed. P. Flint, E. Tov, and J. VanderKam; VTSup 101; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 242–48.

contours of the canon had not yet been delineated, and... the very notion of a canon, a body of literature with exclusive claims to authority, had not yet emerged.”²¹

Yet by this logic, as even Himmelfarb admits, “the existence of a canon makes the peaceful coexistence of *Jubilees* and the Torah more difficult to maintain.”²² How, then, can we explain the case of Epiphanius, who seems to use the work with much the same ease as the *Damascus Document*, albeit writing in the fourth century CE, in the wake of Athanasius, and with a closed canon seemingly already in mind? And why is he among the first known Christian authors to cite this work explicitly by name?

2. *Jubilees*, Genesis, and Primeval History in Epiphanius’ *Panarion*

The challenge of answering these questions is compounded by the lack of explicit references to *Jubilees* in the centuries between the *Damascus Document*, on the one hand, and Epiphanius, Jerome, and Didymus, on the other.²³ Hence, when we find parallel exegetical and other traditions, it remains unclear whether we can posit of any influence *per se*—whether direct or indirect, oral or written, narrow or diffuse.²⁴ Perhaps some early Christians consulted the text, in whole or part, and just did not mention it. Or perhaps the parallels primarily reflect a common store of traditions. Or maybe, however innovative the author of *Jubilees* may have been in the second century BCE, however bold his revelatory claims, and however idiosyncratic in other ways, he was so successful in interweaving text and interpretation that some of his inventions

²¹ Himmelfarb, “Torah, Testimony,” 28–29.

²² Himmelfarb, “Torah, Testimony,” 29.

²³ As Adler (“Reception History”) notes, even authors like Clement and Origen, who typically “weigh in” on such works, are silent in this case.

²⁴ I here follow Adler, “Reception History”; contrast the maximalist reading of the evidence in J. M. Scott, *Geography in early Judaism and Christianity: The book of Jubilees* (SNTS Monograph Series 113; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Interestingly, there is an even larger gap in the evidence for its Jewish *Nachleben*, with traditions clearly connected to *Jubilees* not reappearing again until the early Middle Ages with works like *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer*, *Bereshit Rabbati*, etc.; see, e.g., R. Adelman, *The Return of the Repressed: Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer and the Pseudepigrapha* (JSJSupp 140; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 109–208.

came to be received, at least in some times and places, as if simply the self-evident or traditional meaning of Genesis itself.

The last option, in fact, is what we might have suspected if we only had the beginning of Epiphanius' *Panarion*. In the first three sections, Epiphanius retells the early history of humankind as preface to his catalogue of “heretical” sects. Even as he draws on Genesis 1–11, his account is clearly indebted to traditions from *Jubilees*, such as the treatment of Noah's progeny, the Tower of Babel, and the origins of idolatry in the age of Serug in *Jubilees* 10–11. No source, however, is here mentioned by name. Instead, the information paralleled in *Jubilees* is introduced as information encompassed in “the tradition (παράδοσις) that came down to us,” in the case of the “mischief” that appeared in the world with “sorcery, witchcraft, licentiousness, adultery, and iniquity” in the lifetime of Jared (*Pan.* 1.3; cf. *Jub* 4.15, 22), and in “the knowledge (γνώσις) that came down to us,” in the case of the origins of idolatry with Serug (3.4; cf. *Jub* 11.4–6).²⁵

For our purposes, the introductory sections of the *Panarion* also prove significant because they remind us that the work as a whole is framed as a sort of “biblical retelling” in its own right. Epiphanius sets the stage for his catalogue of sects by “retelling” Genesis 1–11 to make a point about the pre-history of “heresy.”²⁶ His point, more specifically, is that humankind sprung from a singular lineage with a single language, living in unity of belief as well, prior to the diversification, in age of Serug, that birthed idolatry and thus the “proto-heresy” of Hellenism.

Nevertheless, if the reference to Serug betrays something of the debt to *Jubilees*, analysis of its form and context exposes the debt to be likely indirect—as has been established, most

²⁵ I.e., ὡς ἡ ἐλθοῦσα εἰς ἡμᾶς γνώσις περιέχει in the former case, and ὡς δὲ ἡ παράδοσις ἡ εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐλθοῦσα περιέχει in the latter. Interestingly, similar phraseology (ὡς ἡ εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐλθοῦσα παράδοσις ἔχει) accompanies the description of Moses' burial by angels in *Pan.* 9.4.12.

²⁶ Schott, “Heresiology,” 547–50. Schott posits that “for Epiphanius, heresy exists in radical opposition to an a-historical orthodoxy that is entirely dissociated from historical processes of cultural development” (p. 547).

recently and decisively, by Bill Adler.²⁷ It is to the lost third-century *Chronicle* of Julius Africanus, he suggests, that Epiphanius is ultimately indebted for his material from *Jubilees*, albeit likely through the mediation of another source that has further adapted it.²⁸ Indeed, if Epiphanius' knowledge of *Jubilees* has been mediated through one or more Christian sources, it might help to explain how he can so readily appeal to the work, particularly if the excerpts known to him were already pre-selected for their value in enhancing the utilization of Scripture as scaffolding for universal history. If so, then the *Panarion* may provide us with an early example of a pattern that Adler highlights with respect to the later reception of *Jubilees*, into Byzantium and beyond, whereby excerpts were integrated into Catenae, interpolated into Josephus' *Antiquities*, and cited across a broad range of Christian chronicles. Perhaps already in the late fourth century CE, the historiographical use of *Jubilees* by Africanus and others was helping to "normalize" the work, to draw attention to its value as a source for filling the gaps in Genesis, and to disseminate its circulation in Greek translation, whether also or exclusively in the form of excerpts pre-selected for their value for the concerns of Christian historiography and exegesis.²⁹

Yet, even so, the problem of Epiphanius' explicit citation of the work by name, in the context of the Sethians, still remains. It is surely tempting to speculate that someone knowing *Jubilees*, only from excerpts, could have had no sense of its revelatory claims. Yet Jerome is

²⁷ Esp. W. Adler, "The Origins of the Proto-Heresies: Fragments from a Chronicle in the First Book of Epiphanius's *Panarion*," *JTS* 41 (1990): 472–501. Adler here shows how "Epiphanius' story of Serug and the rise of Hellenism is a reworking of historical and chronological traditions from Eusebius' *Canons* and Julius Africanus, combined with apocryphal expansions based loosely on Jewish sources, most notably the *Book of Jubilees*" (pp. 481–82).

²⁸ Adler, "Origins of the Proto-Heresies," 492–93, 498.

²⁹ See further Adler, "Reception History"; idem, "Abraham and the Burning of the Temple of Idols: *Jubilees*' Traditions in Christian Chronography," *JQR* 77.2/3 (1986–1987): 95–117; idem, "The *Chronographiae* of Julius Africanus and its Jewish Antecedents," *ZAC* 14.3 (2011): 496–524, esp. 510–14.

quite clear about placing the book within the category of “apocrypha.”³⁰ And, consistent with the diffusion of *Jubilees*’ self-authenticating claims throughout the book, reference to such statements survives even in the excerpts we now know second-hand through George Syncellus and others.³¹

It is thus all the more striking—in my view—that Epiphanius’ reference to *Jubilees* is marked by a seeming lack of canonical consciousness. He does not hesitate to denounce others for using “apocrypha,” even as he himself draws on *Jubilees*, without remark. That he so often integrates his sources, without any signal or citation, makes the pointedness of his choice, in this particular case, even more surprising.

Attention to the context and function of the citation, however, may give us some sense of his perception and presentation of *Jubilees*. The immediate context, here, is Epiphanius’ argument against Sethian claims that Cain and Abel are sons of two different fathers, and that Seth is the product of the planting of a divine seed, equivalent to Christ and fathering a line of the chosen (*Pan.* 39.2.1–3.5). Against the Sethians, Epiphanius thus seeks to establish that “one man was formed, Adam, and Cain, Abel, and Seth came from Adam” (39.4.2) and also that “Seth was a real man... the real brother of Cain and Abel, from one father and mother” (39.5.4). To do so, he first cites what “Scripture says,” quoting from Genesis (4:1–2, 25; *Pan.* 39.5.5–8). He then asserts that “it is clear that Cain and Seth took wives” (39.5.9). It is to establish this point that Epiphanius turns to cite *Jubilees*. Its genealogical material serves to fill the gaps in Genesis—

³⁰ This is most obvious in the case of Jerome, not least since *Ep.* 78.20 has been central to the discussion of the Christian *Nachleben* of *Jubilees* since Fabricius and Rönsch. For recent assessments of Didymus’ knowledge of traditions from *Jubilees*, particularly in light of the Tura papyri, see D. Lührmann, “Alttestamentliche Pseudepigraphen bei Didymos von Alexandrien,” *ZAW* 104 (1992): 231–49 at 239–45; R. A. Layton, *Didymus the Blind and His Circle in Late Antique Alexandria* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 60–61.

³¹ When Syncellus (33.1–18; F14b), for instance, mentions the 22 works of creation, 22 Hebrew letters, 22 patriarchs, and so on, in relation to Africanus and with reference to *Jubilees* (cf. 2.23), he notes of “the *Little Genesis*” that “some say [it] is also a revelation of Moses.”

those same gaps that, for Sethians and others, seem to have become like chasms into which to interpret archons and powers.³²

What is presented as valuable about *Jubilees*, then, is its extreme and concrete detail. “The book even contains the names of both Cain’s and Seth’s wives!” (*Pan.* 39.6.1; cf. *Jub* 4.7– 11), Epiphanius exclaims, when introducing it as an accurate witness. Its accuracy is further implied by the contrast with “these people who have recited their myths to the world” (39.6.1). The two are presented in terms as different as myth and history.

Jubilees’ specificity with respect to names seems to be useful for Epiphanius, as does another key concern in the work, which has been noted by Betsy Halpern Amaru—namely, the orderly pattern of its presentation of the evolution of marriage practices from brother-sister marriages outwards to the endogamy prescribed in the author’s present.³³ Countering what appears to have been an argument for allegorization grounded in the logic that the Torah would not condone incest, Epiphanius explains that Cain and Seth were married to their sisters, as was lawful in that age (*Pan.* 39.6.2–4; 39.7.1–3). After adding that Adam also had nine other sons, he turns back to the Torah, asserting that “you also have the suggestion of them in the Genesis of the World, the first Book of Moses, which says ‘And Adam lived 930 years, and begat sons and daughters, and died’” (39.6.6; cf. Gen 5:3–5). The material from *Jubilees*, in other words, is here presented as flowing naturally out from Genesis and then back again.

Even if Epiphanius never consulted *Jubilees* itself, it remains significant that he implies to the reader that he does know it, just as he implies that he knows about the Sethians from perhaps

³² My concern here is not with the accuracy of Epiphanius’ report, but rather with the Sethians as he represents them in the course of his appeal to *Jubilees*. For considerations of his statements about the Sethians in the broader context of the surviving evidence for texts and sects of this sort, see A.F.J. Klijn, *Seth in Jewish, Christian, and Gnostic Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 81–117; G. G. Stroumsa, *Another Seed: Studies in Gnostic Mythology* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 49–53; J. D. Turner, “The Gnostic Seth,” in *Biblical Figures outside the Bible* (ed. M. E. Stone and T. A. Bergen; Harrisburg: Trinity, 1998), 33–58.

³³ B. Halpern Amaru, *The Empowerment of Women in the Book of Jubilees* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

having met some in Egypt (*Pan.* 39.1.2). The citation of the text and title, in the context of his argument here, functions as a claim that he himself knows where “true scriptures” end and where their supplements begin. Even though the work from which he ultimately draws is one in which the two are so famously blurred, Epiphanius is thus able, on the level of argument, to set up his own textual practice in contrast to that of Sethians and others, who “mix their own invention” with the truth (39.9.1).

It is this very signaling, moreover, that helps to authenticate what immediately follows, wherein citations from Genesis blur into his own retelling of primeval history. Epiphanius cites traditions from Genesis again, outlining Noah’s construction of the ark by divine decree, as “the true scriptures tell us” (*Pan.* 39.7.5), and the entry into the ark of Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their three wives as what “the same book of truth says” (39.7.5; cf. Gen 7:7). This leads into a selective summary of the account of primeval history at the very beginning of the *Panarion*, focusing on the differentiation of human languages and lineages after the Flood (39.8.1–5). Having aligned his own “biblical retelling” with Scripture and history, in contrast to the myths and invention of the Sethians, he reveals what is at stake in a manner that places his practice of “retelling” on the side of right doctrine as well: “Once the origin [of humankind] is shown to be one,” he asserts, “[the Sethians] will return to the confession that the Master of all, the Creator and Maker of the whole, is one” (39.10.6).

3. *Jubilees* and the Torah in the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies*

Interestingly, this concern to argue for the singularity of God, against those who read multiple deities from and into Torah, is what ultimately motivates the “retelling” of primeval history in

the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* as well.³⁴ As for Epiphanius, moreover, heresiology is the very point and context:³⁵ the *Homilies*' account of primeval history occurs in a series of sermons on the origins of polytheism, sacrifice, and idolatry, which are placed in the mouth of the apostle Peter, set in Tripolis, and framed in terms of debates with Simon Magus.³⁶

Like Epiphanius, the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* describe the very first era of human history as prior to any error or differentiation—with Adam, who is called a prophet, also associated with the true religion later revealed by Jesus and his apostles.³⁷ Whereas Epiphanius tersely notes “mischief” in the days of Jared (see above), the *Homilies* explain how the lack of any difficulty led the first humans to ingratitude (8.11). The angels of the lowest heavens sought to teach them otherwise, and thus asked God for permission to descend to earth (8.12). Although intending to serve as models for proper action, they were overtaken by lust upon embodiment, whereupon they took wives, revealed forbidden knowledge, and sired Giants (8.13–15).

³⁴ This version of the Pseudo-Clementine novel is extant in the original Greek (ca. 300–320 CE?), while the other main version, the *Recognitions* (ca. 360–380 CE?) survives in full only in Rufinus' Latin translation of 407 CE; both are of probable Syrian provenance, and survive in part in Syriac translation. For the purposes of the present inquiry, I do not focus on the relationship between them, although I do treat as especially characteristic of the aims of the authors/redactors of the *Homilies* those passages, themes, etc., which are not directly paralleled in the *Recognitions* and which are thus less likely to reflect a shared source.

³⁵ I make this point in more detail, with Epiphanius' *Panarion* as a main intertext, in “Heresiology and the (Jewish-)Christian Novel: Narrativized Polemics in the Pseudo-Clementines,” in *Heresy and Self-Definition in Late Antiquity* (ed. E. Iricinschi and H. Zellentin; TSAJ 119; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 273–98. See also F. S. Jones, “Jewish Christians as Heresiologists and as Heresy,” *Rivista di storia del cristianesimo* 6.2 (2009): 333–47.

³⁶ On parallels of content and differences of emphasis in the Tripolis material in *Hom.* 8–11 and *Rec.* 4–6, see G. Strecker, *Das Judentum in den Pseudoklementinen* (TU 70²; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981), 70–75; also A. Y. Reed, “‘Jewish Christianity’ after the ‘Parting of the Ways’: Approaches to Historiography and Self-Definition in the Pseudo-Clementine Literature” in *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (ed. A. H. Becker and A. Y. Reed; TSAJ 95; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 188–231 at 213–17.

³⁷ On the prophethood of Adam, which is closely tied to the idea of the True Prophet, see *Hom.* 2.16–18; 3.17–21; 8.10; Strecker, *Judentum*, 145–53; H. J. W. Drijvers, “Adam and the True Prophet in the Pseudo-Clementines,” in *Loyalitätskonflikte in der Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Carsten Colpe* (ed. C. Elsas and H. Kippenberg; Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1990), 314–23. For the *Homilies*' depiction of monotheistic piety as the original state of humankind, to which polytheistic corruptions later accrued, see also 1.18; 3.23–25; 8.11–20; 9.2–18; 10.7–23. This theme finds ample parallel in the *Recognitions*, including in its early strata; see e.g. 1.24–38 and discussion, *passim*, in F. S. Jones, *An Ancient Jewish Christian Source on the History of Christianity: Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions 1.27–71* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995).

The story, in the *Homilies* (cf. *Rec.* 1.29; 4.26–27), is readily recognizable as a retelling of the account of the fallen angels first famous from the *Book of the Watchers* (esp. *1 Enoch* 6–16; cf. Gen 6:1–4), as expanded with themes from its Christian *Nachleben* as well as from the Greco-Roman discourse about the origins of civilization. The element of positive teaching (*Hom.* 8.12) echoes *Jubilees* (4.15; 5.6) in particular,³⁸ even as its articulation in terms of angelic rivalry brings to mind later Rabbinic versions of the tale.³⁹

More significant, for our present purposes, is the *Homilies*' treatment of the Giants, which includes some of the most pointed parallels of content and concern with *Jubilees*.⁴⁰ Here, the sins of the Giants center not so much on their violence, but on their consumption of blood (cf. *1 Enoch* 7.5).⁴¹ God rains manna upon them (cf. Ps 78:24–25), but the Giants desire to taste blood and thus eat flesh, tempting humankind to do the same (*Hom.* 8.15–16).⁴² As in the summary of the Flood attributed to Noah in *Jub* 7.21–25, the consumption of blood looms large, and cannibalism is added to their sins. The resultant impurity, moreover, is depicted as a main reason for the Flood: the shedding of blood, according to the *Homilies*, even defiled the air, causing the spread of disease (8.17; cf. Hippocrates, *Air* 5.6). Blood sacrifice and bodily disease are, in turn, central to the operation of demons after the Flood—those evil spirits who sprung from the souls of the dead bodies of the Giants (8.18–20; cf. 7.8; 9.12–14; *Jub* 11.4; 22.17). Apart from any explicit citation or direct quotation, of course, we can only speculate about the channels through

³⁸ So already Rönsch, *Das Buch Jubiläen*, 322–25.

³⁹ See, e.g., *3 Enoch* 4 (Schäfer, *Synopse* §§5–6); *Pesiqta Rabbati* 34.2; *Aggadot Bereshit praef. ad Gen* 6:2; *Bereshit Rabbati ad Gen* 6:2; *Midrash Petirat Moshe Rabbenu* in Jellenik, ed., *BHM* 1:129; Reed, *Fallen Angels*, 261. But compare also Lactantius, *Inst.* 2.15.

⁴⁰ See now E. Tigchelaar, “Manna-Eaters and Man-Eaters: Food of Giants and Men in the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* 8,” in *The Pseudo-Clementines* (ed. J. Bremmer; *Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha* 10; Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 92–114.

⁴¹ On blood in *Jubilees*, see W. K. Gilders, “Blood and Covenant: Interpretive Elaboration on Genesis 9.4–6 in the Book of Jubilees,” *JSP* 15.2 (2006): 83–118. On blood in the *Homilies*, see R. S. Boustán and A. Y. Reed, “Blood and Atonement in the Pseudo-Clementines and The Story of the Ten Martyrs,” *Henocho* 30.2 (2008): 111–42 at 114–30.

⁴² For this passage in the context of contemporaneous “pagan” aetiologies of meat-eating, defenses of vegetarianism, etc., see Tigchelaar, “Manna-Eaters,” 105–7; Boustán and Reed, “Blood and Atonement,” 126–27.

the authors/redactors of the *Homilies* came to know these traditions. By the fourth century, stories about fallen angels were certainly widespread. With regard to some traditions about Giants, parallels to *Jubilees* also have precedents in the *Book of the Watchers*, and independent exegetical development remains a possibility.⁴³

The *Homilies* then goes on, however, to describe the Law upon the demons in a manner perhaps most readily explained as a recasting of traditions in *Jubilees* 10.3–10. Not only do the souls of Giants survive as demons, but they are bound by a special Law, whereupon their violence is brought under angelic control for the discipline and punishment of human sinners (*Hom.* 8.18–19). The connection with *Jubilees* is, at the very least, intriguing, not least because the *Homilies* here develop traditions not discussed elsewhere, to my knowledge, in any such detail. That this material is unparalleled within the *Recognitions* suggests that it belongs to the fourth century CE, rather than to earlier sources or strata in the Pseudo-Clementine tradition.

If so, we may find here a further clue as to the seemingly new popularity of *Jubilees* among Christians in the fourth century, as well as a glimpse into another trajectory in its late antique afterlife, apart from those chronographical and related traditions so richly discussed by Adler. “[I]n the *Panarion*,” as Adler notes, “legends from *Jubilees* appear in a highly denatured and rationalized form.”⁴⁴ But if *Jubilees* was known, in some form, to the fourth-century authors of the *Homilies*, it was in a form that retained precisely the demonological concerns that struck Africanus and others as so problematic.⁴⁵ Africanus is the first known Christian author to suggest

⁴³ Jones posits that connections reflect direct dependence on *1 Enoch* and *Jubilees* at various stages in the tradition (e.g., *Ancient Jewish Christian Source*, 138–39), while Tigchelaar weighs the possibility of the circulation of Enochic traditions in its Syrian milieu (“Manna-Eaters,” 100–2), while stressing with respect to *Jubilees* that “all these motifs are also attested in other compositions” (p. 99); although his point is well taken, I am not sure that it applies to the motif of the law upon the Giants/demons.

⁴⁴ Adler, “Origins of the Proto-Heresies,” 477.

⁴⁵ Interestingly, the circulation of the work in more than mere excerpts may be attested by Oxyrhynchus Papyrus no. 4365; Simon Franklin suggests that it “contains the earliest surviving Greek manuscript reference to the *Book of Jubilees*... extremely valuable evidence—the only evidence—for the period between Sextus Julius

a euhemeristic reading of the “sons of God” of Gen 6:1–4 (Sync. 19.24–20.4), and Epiphanius seems to follow his lead.⁴⁶ By contrast, the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* construct primeval history with precisely this element as pivot. The result is a genealogy of error that falls closer to *Jubilees* itself.

No less intriguing is the manner in which the very practice of “biblical retelling”—and the retelling of “retellings”—fits with the theory of the Torah distinctive to the *Homilies*. According to the *Homilies*, what Moses received from God on Mt. Sinai was, not just the Torah, but the “Law with the explanations” (2.38). Both, moreover, are in oral form (3.47). These traditions are said to have been faithfully transmitted by the Jews in perfect succession from Moses, among the Pharisees as well as among Jewish apostles like James and Peter.⁴⁷ It is on them that one must depend when interpreting the Written Law, which contains points that have been added and exploited by “heretics” to denigrate the divine Creator.⁴⁸

Such a view of the Torah offers an unusual but effective solution to much the same problem that Epiphanius seeks to solve with reference to *Jubilees*—namely, the interpretative possibilities within the text of Genesis, as exploited by those whom both would deem “heretics.” In the *Homilies*, oral transmission and proper succession are privileged, and the result is intriguingly resonant (perhaps not coincidentally) with the Oral Torah of classical rabbinic Judaism.⁴⁹ Yet

Africanus and Epiphanius of Salamis... that the *Book of Jubilees* circulated among Greek-speaking Christians in early- or mid-fourth-century Egypt”; “A Note on a Pseudepigraphical Allusion in Oxyrhynchus Papyrus No 4365,” *VT* 48.1 (1998): 95–96. For more recent reflections on this possibility, see A.-M. Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians in the Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Harvard Theological Studies 60; Cambridge: Harvard Theological Studies, 2008), 72.

⁴⁶ Adler, “Origins of the Proto-Heresies,” 478–79.

⁴⁷ See further *Hom.* 3.18–19; 11.29; Reed, “Jewish-Christianity as Counter-history,” 190–95. This sentiment is echoed in *Ep. Pet.* 1.2 but finds no parallel in the *Recognitions*.

⁴⁸ See further *Hom.* 2.38–52; 3.4–6, 9–11, 17–21, 37–51; 16.9–14; 18.12–13, 18–22; Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, 166–86; K. E. Shuve, “The Doctrine of the False Pericopes and Other Late Antique Approaches to the Problem of Scripture’s Unity,” in *Nouvelles intrigues pseudo-clémentines* (ed. F. Amsler, et al.; Publications de l’Institut romand des sciences bibliques 6; Lausanne: Zèbre, 2008), 437–45.

⁴⁹ A. Baumgarten, “Literary Evidence for Jewish Christianity in the Galilee,” in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. L. Levine; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 43.

one wonders, as well, if such beliefs about the true transmission of Mosaic teaching might have enabled the use of Second Temple Jewish sources, like *Jubilees*, which claim precisely to preserve Mosaic teachings not found in the written text of Torah.⁵⁰

4. Conclusions

For our understanding of the fate of *Jubilees* in the fourth century CE, however, what may be most illuminating is what the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* share with both Epiphanius and Athanasius. All three are preoccupied with “heresy.” For Athanasius, the closing of the biblical canon seems to provide one solution, and it is one that would seem to find the loss of a work like *Jubilees* an adequate price to pay for asserting the epistemological monopoly and heresiological sufficiency of Scripture; for, even if his own reference to Mosaic pseudepigraphy more likely takes aim at a book like the *Assumption of Moses*, it takes its power from the categorical dismissal of parabiblical literary production. The authors/redactors of the *Homilies* take up the opposite position, relativizing the Torah (at least in its written forms) out of a sense of the dangers of interpretation; for them, the threat of “heretical” exegesis has become so pointed that they are willing to set aside the primacy of the written text of the Torah, so as to retain its perfection with respect to the oneness of God and the piety of his prophets. Consistent with the emphasis on orality, no written sources are mentioned by name, even as the content suggests possible dependence on *Jubilees* or similar traditions, as well as an openness to the self-presentation of such works as supplementary records of Sinaitic revelation. Epiphanius, then, falls somewhere in between. He seems aware that there are gaps in Genesis that allow for

⁵⁰ In light of the “Jewish-Christian” profile of the *Homilies*, and the echoes of *Jubilees* in earlier strata of Pseudo-Clementine tradition, one might further wonder whether Christians of this sort could have played some part in the translation of the work from Hebrew to Greek, whether before Africanus, or in the wake of his dissemination of extracts from the text. On these fronts, unfortunately, the evidence permits nothing beyond speculation.

“heretical” interpretations, and that the text of Genesis might not always suffice to answer them. Hence, for him, the information in a book like *Jubilees* could prove especially useful, particularly if received as pre-sifted, such as in the rationalistic framework of the Christian chronographical tradition.

Today, Athanasius’ comments are so widely cited perhaps in part because they sound so familiar, adding an aura of inevitability to the modern notion of the natural and inviolable bounds of “the Bible,” in comparison with which practices like “biblical retelling” or pseudepigraphy might seem like hubris or “heresy.” Yet, if the example of Epiphanius cautions us against assuming that the story of the closing of the Christian canon comes to a tidy close in 367 CE with Athanasius, then, attention to the reception-history of *Jubilees* stands as a reminder that modern labels like “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha” can conflate diverse texts that often had very different afterlives in the many centuries between their origins in Second Temple times and their integration into modern collections such as those of Johann Albert Fabricius, R. H. Charles, and James Charlesworth.⁵¹ Rather, here as elsewhere, the *Nachleben* of Second Temple Jewish texts and traditions remains stubbornly multivalent, reflecting the complexity and continued vitality of Christianity’s literary heritage from Second Temple Judaism into Late Antiquity and beyond.

⁵¹ See A. Y. Reed, “The Modern Invention of ‘Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,’” *JTS* 60.2 (2009): 403–36.