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### Review

JAMES C. VANDERKAM, *Jubilees 1: A Commentary on the Book of Jubilees, Chapters 1–21; Jubilees 2: A Commentary on the Book of Jubilees, Chapters 22–50*

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and typology—one is provided with a useful set of elements which now have to be taken into consideration, when approaching the study of these types of monuments in attempting a chronological and/or stylistic discourse. It also notes the need for a more systematic and interdisciplinary approach to such investigation, combining archaeology, architecture, art history, history, and the scrutiny of local traditions, not only for analysing the monument in itself but also for including it in the environmental, economic, social, and political context into which it was conceived, realized, and used.

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JAMES C. VANDERKAM, *Jubilees 1: A Commentary on the Book of Jubilees, Chapters 1–21; Jubilees 2: A Commentary on the Book of Jubilees, Chapters 22–50*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2018). I: xlviii, 646 pp.; II: xxxiv, 675 pp. Price: \$89.00. ISBN: 978-0-8006-6035-2; eISBN: 978-1-5064-3848-1.

The Book of Jubilees, a retelling of the story of Genesis and of Exodus 1–24, is a work of considerable interest and importance both in the context of Second Temple Judaism and in the context of the Ethiopian Orthodox (Tāwāḥədo) Church. The text was composed in Hebrew, and fragments of the Hebrew text were found amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Hebrew work was translated into Greek, but this version is lost apart from some quotations, and the Greek was itself translated into Latin (known only from one incomplete copy) and into Ethiopic. The text is also known from some citations in Syriac. However, it is only in Classical Ethiopic that a complete version of the Book of Jubilees survives, and it is on this version that those concerned with the book in any way have primarily to rely.

Professor James VanderKam has devoted a large part of his scholarly career to Jubilees. Following the publication of his Harvard dissertation, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, in 1977,<sup>1</sup> he took over from W. Baars and R. Zuurmond the preparation of a new critical edition and translation of the Ethiopic text,<sup>2</sup> and this was published in the Corpus

<sup>1</sup> J. C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, Harvard Semitic Monographs, 14 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977). See my review in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 25/2 (1980), 272–274.

<sup>2</sup> See W. Baars and R. Zuurmond, ‘The Project for a New Edition of the Ethiopic Book of Jubilees’, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 9/1 (1964), 67–74.

Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (CSCO) series in 1989.<sup>3</sup> He collaborated with J. T. Milik, to whom the Qumran Cave 4 fragments of Jubilees had originally been assigned, in the publication of these Hebrew fragments,<sup>4</sup> and he has published over sixty articles, listed in the bibliography, that bear directly or indirectly on the interpretation of Jubilees.

The work under review consists of an Introduction (pp. 1–121), translation with textual notes and commentary (pp. 125–1214), Bibliography (pp. 1215–1249), and reference and author indexes (pp. 1251–1317). In the Introduction, VanderKam summarizes the main conclusions of his work on Jubilees. His view that the book dates from the middle of the second century BCE (the 160s or perhaps the 150s), that the author was a priest, and that he was a pre-Qumran Essene, or possibly a forerunner of the Essenes, is convincing, but perhaps less certain is his view that the book is an authorial unity. His summary of the teachings of Jubilees (pp. 41–84) is very helpful and is likely to be extensively drawn upon by students—and scholars—in the years to come. The last four pages of the Introduction (pp. 118–121) are devoted to a brief discussion of the influence of Jubilees on Ethiopian literature. Here VanderKam reproduces Roger Cowley’s translation of the introduction to the *andämta* commentary on Jubilees,<sup>5</sup> and gives brief quotations from the translations of *Təʾəzazä sänbät*, the *andämta* commentary on Genesis, and the *Homily in Honour of Saturday* to illustrate the kind of use made of Jubilees. But he notes that this is only ‘a small sampling’ (p.118).

The textual evidence for Jubilees is succinctly described on pages 1–17 of the Introduction, and, as part of this, the Ethiopic is treated on pages 14–16. VanderKam lists the numerical sigla assigned by him to the twenty-seven

<sup>3</sup> J. C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees, I: A Critical Text*, II, ed., tr., Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 510, 511, Scriptorum Aethiopicum, 87, 88 (Louvain: In aedibus E. Peeters, 1989); see my review in *The Society for Old Testament Study, Book List* (1991), 43–44, and the correction in *The Society for Old Testament Study, Book List* (1992), 6.

<sup>4</sup> J. VanderKam and J. T. Milik, ‘Jubilees’, in H. Attridge, T. Elgvin, J. Milik, S. Olyan, J. Strugnell, E. Tov, J. VanderKam, S. White, in consultation with J. VanderKam, *Qumran Cave 4, VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 1*, Discoveries in the Judaean Desert, 13 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 1–185, esp. pp. 1–140.

<sup>5</sup> On page 15 of his commentary VanderKam lists a number of texts mentioned in the EMMML catalogues that are of interest for the study of Jubilees in Ethiopia. Several of these, for example Collegeville, MN, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (= EMMML) 1276, EMMML 1281, EMMML 1694, are described by VanderKam, quoting the catalogue descriptions, as copies of ‘an Amharic commentary on *Jubilees*’; they are in fact copies of the *andämta* commentary.

manuscripts available to him for his 1989 CSCO edition, marking with an asterisk the fifteen that he collated fully, and he also gives a list of the groups into which he divided the manuscripts. But no further information is provided here (and there is no stemma); for information about the identity and location of the manuscripts the reader will need to refer to CSCO 510, and for discussion of the manuscripts and their groupings to CSCO 511. It would have been desirable at least to have provided in the present volume a summary of the information and the discussion in the CSCO volumes to aid the reader. VanderKam does note that since 1989 additional copies of the Ethiopic text have become available, but he is probably correct in thinking that they would provide little new information.

Although differences are relatively minor, the translation is not absolutely identical with the translation in CSCO 511, and, so far as I can see, no explanation is given for this, nor indeed of the aim of the translation—of what its textual basis is meant to be. In fact the translation appears to be of his critically edited Ethiopic text adjusted to incorporate, and to take account of, the fragmentary Hebrew evidence, and words that occur in the Hebrew are underlined.<sup>6</sup> The incorporation of the Hebrew and other evidence into the translation of the Ethiopic is a reflection of VanderKam's view that 'the text of Jubilees has been preserved in a very accurate form in the later translations' (p. 16). It certainly does appear from the evidence that is available that the various textual witnesses to Jubilees do not differ radically from one another, but it would perhaps be more accurate to say that the mostly small Hebrew fragments can be restored in such a way as to coincide with the Ethiopic. It may be suggested that it might have been better to have given a translation of the oldest accessible Ethiopic text, on which we still have to rely for much of Jubilees, and to have treated the other textual witnesses, including the Hebrew, separately in parallel.

VanderKam reproduces the Hebrew evidence—although not completely—in the textual notes, where he also frequently discusses the text, often linking up with his comments in his CSCO edition. But in some of the notes he simply gives English translations of the variants recorded in his edition of the Ethiopic, and one wonders in many cases whether this serves any purpose either for those who know Ethiopic or for those who do not.

In the exegetical commentary itself, VanderKam provides a very detailed analysis of each chapter of the book and draws on a wide range of biblical and extra-biblical material, particularly the Dead Sea Scrolls, in his interpre-

<sup>6</sup> The translation also makes some use of the Greek and Syriac quotations and the Latin text.

tation of the text. The commentary is concerned with the significance of Jubilees in its original Jewish context, and there is a good deal of interaction with—and often quite critical comment on—the views of other scholars. No aspect of the text seems to have been left out of account, and those who use this very illuminating commentary will learn much.

Looking back at the totality of VanderKam's work on Jubilees, whether one agrees or not with the various scholarly decisions he has taken, there can be no question but that he has made an enormous and long-lasting contribution to the study of this book.

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GETATCHEW HAILE, *The Ethiopian Orthodox Church's Tradition on the Holy Cross*, Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity, 10 (Leiden–Boston, MA: Brill, 2018). 285 pp. Price: €162.00, \$187.00. ISBN: 978-90-04-34868-4.

This book by Getatchew Haile is a compendium of texts relating to the Cross in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church tradition. It results from a long-term engagement of the scholar with manuscripts and hymnographic collections, and appears to be related (or its logical continuation perhaps) to most of Getatchew Haile's previous works. The primary purpose of this work, as stated by the author, is 'to compile in one volume previously unpublished literary texts relating to the Holy Cross' (p. ix) and the book serves this purpose admirably well.

'Two leading hymns of this volume' (p. ix), according to the author, are *Səbhata masqal* ('Glorification of the Cross')<sup>1</sup> and *Məstira masqal* ('Mystery of the Cross').<sup>2</sup> Getatchew Haile attributes (as 'most likely') the authorship of *Səbhata masqal* (pp. 218–235) to renowned ʿAbbā Bāḥrəy (active in 1593), although 'the hymn does not carry the name of its author' (p. 218). The argument for this attribution is that ʿAbbā Bāḥrəy 'wrote other works in MS BL Or. 534' (ibid.). Indeed, all arguments in favour of ʿAbbā Bāḥrəy's authorship of many of the works in MS BL Or. 534 seem to be very convincing and this manuscript may be quite a pearl for researchers in

<sup>1</sup> Attested in MS London, British Library, Or. 534, fols 4r–6r (sixteenth century; henceforth BL Or. 534), and in MS Collegeville, MN, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (= EMML), 6993, fols 85v–88v (eighteenth century).

<sup>2</sup> Attested in MS EMML 5835, fols 39r–41v (eighteenth century).