

THE REWRITING OF GENESIS 26 IN JOSEPHUS AND JUBILEES

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1. INTRODUCTION

Unlike his father and son, Isaac, the «shadow patriarch», has only a single biblical chapter, i.e. Genesis 26, in which he is the focus of attention.¹ In this essay, I wish to concentrate on two ancient, rather extensive, rewritings of Genesis' «Isaac chapter», i.e. those of Josephus in his *Antiquitates judaicae* (hereafter *Ant.*) 1.259-266² and the Book of *Jubilees* (hereafter *Jub.*) 24.8-33.³ In carrying out my proposed study, I shall first examine the two *relectures* separately, taking into account both the major textual witnesses for Genesis 26 (MT, LXX, the targums) and the wider ancient Jewish (and Christian) interpretative tradition

1. On Genesis 26, see D. DIECKMANN, *Segen für Isaak. Eine Rezeptionsästhetische Auslegung von Gen 26 und Kontexten* (BZAW 329), Berlin-New York 2003.

2. For the text and translation of *Ant.* 1.259-266, I use H. S. T. J. THACKERAY, *Josephus*, IV (LCL), Cambridge, MA-London 1930, 126-131. I have likewise consulted the text of the passage in É. NODÉ, *Flavius Josèphe Les Antiquités Juives*, IA: *Livres I à III*, Paris, 1990, 43-44 and the translation of and notes upon this in idem, *Flavius Josèphe Les Antiquités Juives*, IB: *Livres I à III*, Paris, 1990, 56-58, as well as the annotated translation of L. H. FELDMAN, *Flavius Josephus Judean Antiquities 1-4* (Flavius Josephus Translation and Commentary 3), Leiden, 2000, 101-104. On *Ant.* 1.259-266 see further the summary discussion in T. W. FRANXMAN, *Genesis and the «Jewish Antiquities» of Flavius Josephus* (BibOr 35), Rome, 1979, 177-191, and on Josephus' overall depiction of Isaac, see L. H. FELDMAN, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible*, Berkeley, CA 1998, 290-303.

3. For the translation of *Jub.* 24.8-33 I use: O. S. WINTERMUTE, «Jubilees», in J. H. CHARLESWORTH (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, I, New York: Garden City 1985, 103-104. I have likewise consulted the translation of R. H. CHARLES (as revised by C. RABIN) in H. F. D. SPARKS (ed.), *The Apocryphal Old Testament*, Oxford 1984, 78-80. On the *Jubilees* text, see also the summary discussions of G. L. DAVENPORT, *The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees* (StPB 20), Leiden 1971, 55-57 and J. C. ENDRES, *Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Jubilees* (CBQMS 18), Washington, D.C. 1987, 63-73.

concerning the chapter⁴ in so doing, and then conclude with a comparison of the two renderings.

Before proceeding to my study of Josephus and *Jubilees*, I should first say a word about the context and components of their common source text. Genesis 26, the one biblical chapter to feature, as noted above, Isaac for himself, is «framed» by material (Gen 25:19-33; 27:1-28:9) that focusses on the patriarch's difficult familial situation involving his wife Rebekah and their sons Esau and Jacob. Within Genesis 26 itself once may distinguish a total of seven short episodes as follows: (1) the Gerar theophany (vv. 1-5); (2) Abimelech safeguards Isaac and Rebekah (vv. 6-11); (3) Isaac expelled (vv. 12-16); (4) wells dug and named (vv. 17-22); (5) Beer-sheba theophany (vv. 23-25); (6) Isaac covenants with Abimelech (vv. 26-33); and (7) Appendix: Esau's marriages (vv. 34-35).

2. JOSEPHUS

In Genesis the immediately preceding context for what is told in Genesis 26 is the story of Rebekah's difficult pregnancy (25:19-23), the birth of her sons Esau and Jacob (25:24-26), and the incident of the famished Esau's selling his birthright to Jacob for the sake of the «pottage» the latter has prepared (25:29-34). Josephus, for his part, delays his reproduction of the concluding episode of Genesis 25 until a later point in his presentation, i.e. till after he has related Jacob's return to Canaan; see *Ant.* 2.1-4. As a result, his version of Genesis 26 (1.259-266) comes directly after his equivalent to Gen 25:28 (the notice on the preference given by Isaac to Esau, in contrast to Rebekah's favoring of Jacob) in 1.258 (*in fine*).

Gen 26:1a speaks of a «famine in the land», further qualifying this as additional to the famine in the «days of Abraham». The verse then continues with mention of Isaac's going to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. Thereupon, Gen 25:2 relates an appearance of the Lord who enjoins Isaac not to go down to Egypt,⁵ but rather to dwell in the land that he will tell him. Gen 26:3-5 expands this double divine directive with words of promise (vv. 3-4) and a concluding statement by the Deity that he his promises to Isaac are made in recognition of the exemplary behavior of Abraham (v. 5). In response to God's

4. For an overview of this material, see L. GINZBERG, *The Legends of the Jews*, I, Philadelphia 1968, 321-328; V, 278-282, nn. 52-72.

5. *Gen. Rab.* 64.3 raises the question of why God would have forbidden Isaac to repair to Egypt, when his father had gone there (see Gen 12:10). In response it quotes a R. Hoshaya who has God informing Isaac, with allusion to the *Aqedah* episode: «Thou art a burnt-offering without blemish; as a burnt-offering becomes unfit if it passes out beyond the Temple enclosures, so wilt thou become unfit if thou goest beyond the country». For Philo (*Leg.* 2.59; *Det.* 46; *Conf.* 81; *Mig.* 29), the «Egypt» spoken of in Gen 26:1 is the body and its passions from which Isaac was told by God to (and did in fact) keep himself detached.

communication to him, Isaac then (26:6) «dwells in Gerar». Josephus gives a much reduced and re-arranged version of this entire sequence in 1.259a: «A famine now prevailing in the land,⁶ Isaac (Ἰσαακός, compare LXX Ἰσαάκ) resolved to go to Egypt,⁷ where the land was fruitful,⁸ but at God's bidding removed to Gerar.⁹»

Gen 26:1b (*in fine*) cites Isaac's going to Abimelech «king of the Philistines», but says nothing concerning the latter's response to his approach. Josephus fills this gap in 1.259b with a remark that itself serves to set up a contrast with Abimelech's subsequent stance towards Isaac as reported in 26:14b,16 (// 1.259c). This insertion reads: «Here Abimelech (Ἀβιμέλεχος; compare LXX Ἀβιμέλεχ)¹⁰ welcomed (ὑποδέχεται)¹¹ in virtue of his former friendship and hospitality to Abraham (κατὰ ξενίαν καὶ φιλίαν¹² τὴν Ἀβράμου)¹³ and at first showed him the utmost benevolence (εὐνοία)...».

6. Josephus omits Gen 26:1a's linkage of this famine with the one of Abraham's time (see Gen 12:10// *Ant.* 1.161). His non-reproduction of the Bible's *Rückverweis* is part of his larger strategy of downplaying Scripture's emphasis on the parallelism between Isaac's life and that of his father such that the former seems, to a large extent, to simply relive the latter's experience. On Josephus' concern to represent Isaac, both negatively and positively, as more distinctive vis-à-vis Abraham, see FELDMAN, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 295.

7. Gen 26:1 does not speak of such a resolve on Isaac's part. Josephus infers that the patriarch must have previously formed such a plan, given that in 26:2 the Lord tells him not to go to Egypt (in my presentation of both Josephus and *Jubilees* I italicize elements of their accounts which have no direct counterpart in Genesis itself).

8. With this phrase Josephus supplies a motivation for Isaac's «resolve» about going to Egypt cited by him just previously.

9. The above phrase represents Josephus' condensed version of the sequence of Gen 26:1b (Isaac goes to Gerar), 26:2-5 (God's address to Isaac), and 26:6 (following that address Isaac takes up residence in Gerar). Its minimalistic utilization of the biblical divine speech corresponds to Josephus' «detheologizing» tendency in his retelling of biblical history; on which see FELDMAN, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 205-214. In addition, his rendering eliminates God's double promise to give «all these lands» to Isaac's descendants (see 26:3,4)—a promise that posed difficulties for Josephus, given his compatriots' recent loss of their land and Roman sensibilities on the matter of control of the land; see FELDMAN, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 154. At the same time, Josephus' rendition of Gen 26:1b-6 depicts a more dutiful Isaac who repairs to Gerar only after being told by God to do so, rather than, as happens in Gen 26:1b, going there on his own initiative, prior to God's address to him.

10. Josephus omits Gen 26:1b's qualification of Abimelech as «king of the Philistines». He already presented the figure as «king of that district», i.e. «Gerara in Philistia» in 1.207 (// Gen 20:7) and presumes readers will recall Abimelech's identity from that passage.

11. Note the historic present form. On Josephus' frequent use of this form, also when reproducing biblical passages in which the LXX uses some past form, see C. T. BEGG, *Josephus' Account of the Early Divided Monarchy* (BETL 108), Leuven 1993, 10-11, n. 32.

12. The above collocation occurs only here in Josephus.

13. Thackeray and Nodet (*ad loc.*) render the above construction as an objective genitive: the friendship and hospitality Abimelech showed to Abraham. Feldman (*ad loc.*) takes it rather as a subjective genitive: Abraham's friendship and hospitality towards Abimelech. In any case, the reference is to the friendship pact made between the two men as described in *Ant.* 1. 212 (// Gen 21:22-34).

Gen 26:7-11 tells of the immediate sequels to Isaac's settlement in Gerar (26:6), i.e. the patriarch's passing off his wife as his sister, Abimelech's discovery of the truth and his confrontation of Isaac, the latter's response, and the king's prohibition of anyone's «touching» the pair. This presentation is problematic in various respects. For one thing, it depicts Isaac as a liar in his dealings with his pagan host, whose sole concern is with preserving his own life even at the cost of being deprived of his wife (see vv. 7, 9). In addition, the stratagem adopted by him with regard to the king seems implausible, given that Isaac's father Abraham had employed this very expedient with the same king Abimelech (see Genesis 20) on whom Isaac now attempts to use it. In view of these considerations— as well as his concern (see n. 6) that Isaac not appear as one who simply relives Abraham's experiences— it is not surprising that Josephus simply omits the entire sequence.¹⁴ In so doing, Josephus moves directly from his insertion about Abimelech's initial welcoming of Isaac (1.259b) to the king's expulsion of his guest as recounted in Gen 26:12-16. Here again, Josephus deals quite freely with his *Vorlage*, whose elements he both compresses and rearranges in 1.259c-260a: «but was prevented by envy (φθόνου)¹⁵ from maintaining these feelings to the end; for seeing that God (τὸν θεόν) was with Isaac and showered such favours upon him,¹⁶ he cast him off».¹⁷

14. By contrast, *Zohar* 1.140b-141a develops an elaborate commentary around the elements of the story told in Gen 26:7-11. In this commentary, Isaac, e.g., in designating Rebekah as his «sister» (26:7) would, in fact, have been referring to the *Shekinah* with which Isaac held constant converse. Again, the reference to the «window» through which Abimelech looks and beholds Isaac «fondling» Rebekah (26:8) would allude to the king's practice of magic arts by which he found out Isaac's secret, while the «fondling» spoken of in the Bible would have in view Isaac's conversing with the *Shekinah* that always remained close to Rebekah. Finally, the *Zohar* comments concerning Abimelech's protective prohibition (26:11) that this exemplifies the ways of the impious, even whose benefactions are never perfect since in what follows (26:6) the same king expels Isaac from his territory. Philo (*Plant.* 168-170) for his part, depicts the «fondling» cited in Gen 26:8 as «the sacred sporting of the soul» that is appropriate for the wise man and which is witnessed solely by King Abimelech «with whom wisdom was a very long time a guest».

15. According to Gen 26:14b, the Philistines *en bloc* «envied» (LXX ἐζήλωσαν) the successful Isaac. Josephus makes this envy an attribute of Abimelech alone. On «envy» as a key factor both in the story of Israel as retold by Josephus and in his own personal life-story as recounted in his corpus, see L. H. FELDMAN, *Studies in Josephus' Rewritten Bible* (JSJSup 58), Leiden 1998, 209-213.

16. In the account of Isaac's expulsion by Abimelech in Gen 26:12-16, nothing is said explicitly about the king (or the Philistines in general) observing the blessings bestowed on Isaac by the Lord. On the other hand, the opening portion of Josephus' formulation above does read like an anticipated version of what Abimelech and his companions say to Isaac in Gen 26:28a, i.e. «We see plainly that the Lord (LXX κύριος) is with you...». On Josephus' virtually complete avoidance of the Bible's use of (the) Lord (LXX [ὁ] κύριος) as a divine title, likely due to the non-currency of that usage in «secular» Greek, see BEGG, *Josephus' Account*, 45, n. 18.

17. Compare the quotation of Abimelech's word to Isaac in Gen 26:16: «Go away from us; for you are much mightier than we». In his compressed rendering of Gen 26:12-16 in *Ant.* 1.260a Josephus omits/synthesizes the following source particulars: the notice on Isaac's reaping a hun-

Abimelech's command to Isaac in Gen 26:16 leads (26:17) to the latter's resettling in «the valley of Gerar» (LXX ἐν φάραγγι Γεδάρων) Josephus (1.260b) expatiates on this notice, likewise turning its place indication into the proper name of the site where Isaac establishes himself: «*Meeting with this change in the temper of Abimelech arising from jealousy* (ἀπὸ τοῦ βασκάνου),¹⁸ Isaac then withdrew to a place called the Ravine (Φάραγγα) not far from Gerara (Γεδάρων)». Once resettled, Isaac's first initiative, according to Gen 26:18, is to re-dig the wells dug in his father's time which the Philistines had stopped up (see 26:15) and to give them their earlier names. Josephus, who has omitted the earlier source notice to which 26:18 alludes (see above), likewise passes over the content of the latter verse— thereby, once again, downplaying the Bible's paralleling of son and father.¹⁹ Proceeding in this way, the historian directly links his rendering of Gen 26:17 with the development spoken of in 26:19-20, i.e. the digging of a new well and the ownership quarrel between Isaac's retinue and the Philistine herdsmen to which this gives rise.²⁰ In reproducing the latter notice, Josephus (1.260b) modifies its presentation significantly, e.g., focusing attention on the person of Isaac: «Here, as he was digging a well,²¹ some shepherds²² fell upon him and started a fight (μαχίην) in order to stop the work²³; and when Isaac declined a quarrel, they claimed a victory.»²⁴

dredfold from what he had sown in the land (v. 12), his becoming very rich in «flocks and herds and a great household» (vv. 13-14a), and the parenthetical remark about the Philistines having filled with earth the wells that Abraham's servants had dug (v. 15). The last of these omissions accords with Josephus' tendency (see n. 6) to downplay the Bible's insistent paralleling of Isaac with his father. In targumic (see *Tg. Ps.-J.* Gen 26:12) and rabbinic tradition (see, e.g., *Gen. Rab.* 44.6), the reference to the measuring presupposed by the figure (a hundredfold) cited for Isaac's reaping in 26:12 is taken as indication that Isaac measured the yield of his produce with a view to paying a tithe on this— whether for the benefit of the cultic officers or for the poor. Jerome in his *Hebrew Questions of Genesis* on Gen 26:12 opines that the hundredfold harvest spoken of there refers, not to grain (which is not explicitly mentioned in the verse), but to an increase in the patriarch's virtues.

18. Josephus' remaining uses of the adjective βάσκανος are in *Bellum judaicum* (*BJ*) 1.208; *Ant.* 6.59; 11.114; 14.265. The term harks back to the mention of Abimelech's «being prevented by envy» (ὑπὸ φρόνου) from continuing in his benevolent stance towards Isaac in 1.259c.

19. In Philo's *QG* 4.194 Isaac's deed as recounted in Gen 26:18 is held up as example of filial piety.

20. *Tg. Ps.-J.* concludes its rendering of Gen 26:20 with the following plus: «Now it was the will of heaven that (the well [which the Gerar herdsmen have just claimed for themselves]) should dry up. So they returned it to Isaac and it began to flow (again)».

21. In Gen 20:19 it is «Isaac's servants» who dig in the valley and find a well of springing water there.

22. In Gen 26:20a these figures as qualified as «of Gerar».

23. According to Gen 26:20, the Gerar herdsmen «quarrel» with Isaac's herdsmen, claiming «the well is ours». Josephus has them proceed against Isaac himself and accentuates the aggressiveness of their initiative.

24. This conclusion to Josephus' version of Gen 26:19-20 has no counterpart in the source account, which ends with Isaac conferring the name «Esek» on the well that had prompted the

Gen 26:21 tells, in summary terms, of the digging of a second well, the quarrel this evoked, and the name «Sitnah» (=«Enmity»);²⁵ Josephus (1.261a) elaborates, once again highlighting the person of Isaac (unmentioned in 26:21) himself: «*He retired and began digging another,*²⁶ but when *other* shepherds of *Abimelech* did him violence (βιασαμένων²⁷)....».²⁸ The «well-sequence» of Gen 26:19-22 culminates in v. 22 with the digging of a third well, which, this time, does not give rise to a dispute and so is named «Rehoboth» (= «broad places») by Isaac. Josephus' account of this development (1.261b) evidences various elaborations and modifications: «... he left this also and departed, *purchasing his security by reasonable calculation* (εὐγνώμονι λογισμῶ²⁹)».³⁰ Then, when *accident* (αὐτομάτου) *enabled*³¹ him to dig unmolested (ἀνεπικώλυτον),³² he called this well Roðbôth (Ῥοῦβῶθ),³³ a name which denotes "spacious" (εὐρύχωρον)³⁴».³⁵ To this notice he attaches, in 1.262b, his delayed mentions of the names given the two earlier wells by Isaac: «Of the former wells one was

two parties to content (Josephus will give his delayed equivalent to this notice in 1.262b). The historian's substitute conclusion to the episode represents Isaac as a man of peace in the face of provocation by foreigners, one who even goes so far in this regard as to allow his harassers to claim "victory" for themselves. That depiction in turn accords with Josephus' concern, evidenced throughout the *Antiquities*, to counter current claims about Jewish hostility/ misanthropy towards non-Jews, on which see FELDMAN, *Studies*, 557-560; ID, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 660-661.

25. *Tg. Ps.-J.* Gen 26:21 interjects the following plus prior to MT's closing notice on Isaac's naming the second well «Sitnah»: «and it [the well] dried up and did not flow again». See n. 20.

26. In Gen 26:21 «they» (the servants/herdsmen of Isaac, 26:19-20) dig the well.

27. On Josephus' use of this term and its *Wortfeld*, see E. MOORE, «ΒΙΑΖΩ, ΑΠΙΑΖΩ and Cognates in Josephus», *NTS* 21 (1974-1975) 519-543.

28. Gen 26:21 concludes with mention of Isaac's calling the second well «Sitnah» («enmity»). As he did with the naming of the first well, Josephus reserves this item for a latter point in his presentation.

29. Josephus' one remaining use of this phrase is in *Ant.* 16.397.

30. The above italicized phrase as no equivalent in Gen 26:22; it highlights both the peacefulness and purposefulness which Isaac responds to the renewed Philistine provocation.

31. On this Epicurean-sounding formulation, which, as such, contrasts with Josephus' overall emphasis on divine providence's role in Israel's history and related formulations elsewhere in his corpus, see FELDMAN, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 190, 301 and n. 20, 423, 427, 640.

32. The above phrase conflates the wording of Gen 26:22a: «... (Isaac) dug another well, and over that they did not quarrel».

33. Josephus here transliterates the Hebrew well-name (רְהוֹבֹת), whereas LXX translates with Εὐρύχωρία, a translation to which Josephus has an equivalent in the continuation of his rendering; see above.

34. Josephus' uses this adjective only here; his employment reflects the LXX's nominal translation of the Hebrew well-name; see previous note.

35. Josephus' above explanation of the Hebrew name Isaac gives the third well takes the place of the theological remark attributed to the patriarch in connection with his naming of the well in Gen 26:22bβ: «For now the Lord has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land». The historian's avoidance of the biblical invocation of the Deity here accords with his ascribing Isaac's being able to dig the third well «unmolested» to «chance»; see above.

called "Eskos" (Ἔσκον), that is to say "Combat"³⁶ (μάχην),³⁷ the other "Stena" (Στένα³⁸), signifying "Hatred" (ἔχθραν).³⁹

The fifth section I have distinguished within Genesis 26, i.e. vv. 23-25, recounts the following developments: Isaac goes to Beer-sheba (v. 23), where the Lord appears and addresses reassuring words to him (v. 24); Isaac responds by building an altar, calling on the Lord's name, and pitching his tent at the site, where his servants also dig a well (v. 25). Josephus, in line with his «detheologizing» tendency (see n. 9) omits this entire sequence. Having done so, he proceeds to the next episode featured in Genesis 26, i.e. the *rapprochement* between Isaac and the Philistines described in vv. 26-33. In introducing Abimelech's approach to Isaac (26:26), Josephus (1.263a) provides an elaborate motivation for his initiative:

Isaac's power thus steadily mounted through increasing wealth;⁴⁰ and Abimelech, thinking that his growing fortunes were a threat to himself⁴¹ (since their relations had been strained even when living together (συνιδιαιτήσεως)⁴² and Isaac had retired dissimulating his hatred (ἔχθρα)⁴³ and fearing that his former friendship

36. This nominal form echoes the same form in 1.260c, where Josephus speaks of the shepherds' «starting a fight (μάχην)» with Isaac.

37. Josephus' above formulation stands closer to MT Gen 26:20: «So he called the name of the well Esek (עֶסֶק) because they contended (יָרִיבוּ) with him» than to LXX's «he called the name of the well Injustice (Ἄδικία), for they did injustice (ἠδίκησαν) to him».

38. This is the conjecture of Thackeray (whom Feldman follows), itself inspired by the proposal of B. Niese (Στέναν), for the Σύαι(ν)αν or Σύεννα(ν) of the codices. Nodet reads Σύαιναν with the codices RO.

39. In providing both the name of the well and a translation of that name, Josephus combines the indications of MT («... he called its name Sitnah [רִינְטַח]») and LXX «(he called its name Enmity [Ἐχθρία]») Gen 26:21.

40. This phrase lacks an equivalent in Gen 26:26. It does, however, read like a delayed rendition of 26:13 («and the man [Isaac] became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy»); cf. 1.260a.

41. As FELDMAN, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 297 points out, with this allusion Josephus makes clear that Isaac's peacefulness, emphasized by him throughout his rendering of Genesis 26, is not to be equated with impotence. The allusion could be inspired by Abimelech's words when expelling Isaac in Gen 26:16 («Go away from us; for you are much mightier than we»).

42. Josephus' one remaining use of the noun συνιδιαιτήσις is in *Ant* 1.35 (of God's seeing Adam's lack of a «consort»).

43. This term echoes Josephus' translation (ἔχθραν) of the name for the second well in 1.262b. Mention of Isaac's «hatred» for his erstwhile host here complicates the image of the patriarch featured in what precedes, where he appears long-suffering and magnanimous in the face of the Philistine provocations. Josephus now makes clear that Isaac did, in fact, harbor resentment for their mistreatment of them, a resentment he was likewise in a position to act upon, as Josephus' previous reference to the «threat» posed by him indicates. Interestingly, in Gen 26:27 it is Isaac who asks the Philistine delegation «why have you come to me, seeing that you *hate* (LXX ἐμισήσατε) me...?».

(φιλίας)⁴⁴ might avail him nothing when Isaac should turn to avenge himself for his injuries...⁴⁵

Following the above insertion on Abimelech's state of mind, Josephus finally comes (1.263 *in fine*) to speak of the king's approaching Isaac with his retinue: «... (Abimelech) made renewed overtures (φιλίαν; see n. 44) to him,⁴⁶ taking with him Philoch (Φίλοχον),⁴⁷ one of his generals».⁴⁸

The story told in Gen 26:26-32 continues with an exchange between Isaac and the Philistines in which the former challenges the latter about their reason for coming to him (v. 27) and they reply with an *apologia* and an appeal that Isaac, «the blessed of the Lord», make a covenant with them (vv. 28-29).⁴⁹ Isaac, in turn, responds by preparing a feast for them at which they eat and drink (v. 30). Thereafter, the next morning, the parties arise, take mutual oaths; Isaac sets

44. This term echoes the mention Abimelech's prior «friendship and hospitality (φιλίαν) to Abraham» (or possibly vice versa; see n. 13) in 1.259. The reference to Abimelech's «fear» here prolongs Josephus' preceding reference to the king's «thinking his [Isaac's] growing fortunes a threat to himself», the whole sequence underscoring Isaac's power vis-à-vis the Philistines and the intimidating effect this has upon him.

45. This conclusion to Josephus' inserted motivation for Abimelech's approach to Isaac as cited in Gen 26:26 highlights both the former's awareness of having wronged the latter (compare Abimelech's disingenuous declaration to Isaac about his having not «touched» him, «done him no harm, and sent him away in peace» in 26:29) and the king's realization that Isaac can—and quite likely will—avenge those wrongs.

46. In Gen 26:26 Abimelech goes to Isaac from Gerar.

47. In MT Gen 26:26 Abimelech's (second) companion is called פִּיכֹל («Phicol»). The LXX text of the Göttingen edition has Φιλόχολ; among the variant readings one finds a form, Φιλόχ, corresponding to that given by Josephus.

48. In MT Gen 26:26 «Phicol» is called פִּיכֹל (RSV: «the commander of his [Abimelech's] army»); LXX has ὁ ἀρχιστράτηγος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ. In Gen 21:22 Phicol joins Abimelech in proposing to Abraham that a pact be established between them. In Josephus' compressed version of Gen 21:22-33 in *Ant.* 1.212 Phicol is not mentioned. Thus in Josephus' presentation Phicol makes his first appearance when Abimelech approaches Isaac—another instance of the historian's attenuating the Bible's insistence on the parallelism between father and son (who, moreover, is represented by him as receiving greater honor than Abraham in that, in his case (alone), Abimelech comes to him with his commander-in-chief in tow). From his version of Gen 26:26, Josephus omits mention of Abimelech's second companion, i.e. «Ahuzzath his adviser» (RSV; MT אֲחֻזַּת אֲדָוָה). In Jewish tradition, it is controverted whether the reference here is, as RSV (and LXX) has it to an individual figure; thus in *Tg. Ps.-J.* (see also *Tg. Neof.*) the MT phrase is rendered «he [Abimelech] took his friends», while *Gen. Rab.* 26.9 cites a disagreement on the matter between R. Nehemiah (who renders «a company of his friends») and R. Judah (for whom the reference is to an individual named «Ahuzzath»).

49. *Tg. Ps.-J.* elaborates on the Philistines' reply to Isaac of MT Gen 26:28-29, having them twice acknowledge that once Isaac left them, their wells dried up and their trees produced no fruit. See M. MAHER, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (The Aramaic Bible 1B), Colledgeville, MN, 1992, 93. See also n. 50.

them on their way, and «they depart from him in peace» (v. 31).⁵⁰ The whole incident is then rounded off with a report by Isaac's servants about their digging a well at which, they declare to him «we have found water»⁵¹ (v. 32). In response to their report Isaac calls the well «Shibah» (= «oath») (v. 33a),⁵² whereupon the narrator states "the name of the city is Beer-sheba to this day" (v. 33b).

Josephus (1.264) limits his rendition of this entire sequence to two items (the Philistines' obtaining what they ask of Isaac [cf. 26:30-31a] and their return home [see 26:31b], even while interjecting an extended reference to Isaac's motivation for acting as he does: «And having obtained complete satisfaction of his desires,⁵³ thanks to the good nature (χρηστότητα)⁵⁴ of Isaac, who set more store on ancient favors (χάρην) bestowed on himself and his father⁵⁵ than on recent indignation (ὀργή),⁵⁶ he⁵⁷ returned home».⁵⁸

50. *Tg. Ps.-J.* lacks an equivalent to MT Gen 26:30. Conversely, it elaborates on the MT text of 26:31, adding the details that Isaac «divided the bridle of an ass with them [the Philistines] and gave one part to them as a testimony, prayed for them and they became productive», and finally that he «accompanied» them as they depart. See MAHER, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, 93.

51. This is the reading of MT 26:32b: «(Isaac's servants) said to him (וַיֹּאמְרוּ), "we have found water". In LXX, by contrast, LXX reads: «they said, "we have not (οὐχ= Hebrew וַיֹּאמְרוּ) water"». Jerome, *Hebrew Questions on Genesis* 26:32-33 states that he does «not know why» the LXX reads as it does here, noting that Isaac's giving (see v. 33a) the well the name «Oath» does not seem to make sense on the supposition that water was *not* found there.

52. Philo expatiates at length on the allegorical import of this well-name in *Plant.* 78-84; *Som.* 1.14-40,68.

53. This formulation synthesizes the Philistines' request of Isaac («let their be a oath between you and us, and let us make a covenant [LXX διαθήκην] with you...» of v. 28) and the various measures taken by Isaac in his positive response to their appeal in vv. 30-31. On the historian's systematic avoidance of the term διαθήκη (= וְכָרַת) in the sense of «covenant» in his corpus, an avoidance likely prompted by the non-currency of such a use of the term in secular Greek, see BEGG, *Josephus' Account*, 100-101, n. 609. Josephus' above compression of 26:28-31 likewise contrives to eliminate the double (unusual) evocation of the name «the Lord» by the pagan Philistines in vv. 28-29.

54. Josephus' inserted reference to this quality of Isaac makes understandable his omission of the patriarch's resentful question to the Philistine delegation in Gen 26:27: «Why have you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from you?».

55. This part of Josephus' insertion harks back to the reference to Abimelech's «former friendship and hospitality to Abraham» and his (initial showing Isaac «utmost benevolence» in 1.259b. It likewise picks up (and responds to) Abimelech's fear in 1.263 «that his former friendship might avail him nothing....».

56. Compare the reference to Isaac's «dissimulating his hatred» in 1.263. In the course of his presentation Josephus makes clear that Isaac was indeed negatively affected by Abimelech's treatment of himself, but ultimately laid aside his resentment (and capacity to act on this) once the Philistines approach him.

57. In Gen 26:31b «they [the three Philistine leaders cited in v. 26] departed from him [Isaac] in peace». Although he mentioned "Philoch" at the start of the episode, Josephus at its conclusion focusses attention exclusively on Abimelech.

58. Josephus has no equivalent to the appendix of Gen 26:32-33 which appears quite loosely attached to what precedes via the «oath terminology» of vv. 31,33a. Josephus, who does not reproduce the reference to the parties «taking oath» with one another of v. 31aβ, likewise leaves

The complex of Genesis 26 concludes in vv. 34-35 by shifting attention from father Isaac to his now adult son Esau, the latter's «foreign» marriages, and the affect of these upon his parents. Among the problems posed by this sequence is the fact that the names of Esau's wives (and their respective fathers) differ between Gen 26:34 (Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite) and 36:2-3 (where Esau is said to take his three wives «from the Canaanites», i.e. Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, Oholibamah the daughter of Anah the son [so Sam LXX Syr; MT daughter] of Zibeon the Hivite and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter⁵⁹). In the face of this interbiblical discrepancy, Josephus (1.265) opts to follow the relevant indications of Genesis 36: «*Of Isaac's two children, Esau* (Ἡσαῦς, LXX Ἡσαῦ), *the favourite of his father*,⁶⁰ at the age of forty⁶¹ married Ada (Ἀδαν)⁶² and Alibame (Ἀλιβάμη),⁶³ daughters respectively of Helon (Ἡλωνος)⁶⁴ and Eusebeon (Ἐυσεβεῶνος),⁶⁵ Canaanite chieftains...».⁶⁶

Gen 26:35 states laconically that Esau's wives «made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah».⁶⁷ Leaving Rebekah (and the daughters-in-law) aside, Josephus

aside the mention (v. 33a) of Isaac's giving the newly dug well a name («Shibah») reminiscent of their doing this. As for the narrator's appended comment about the (same) site being called «Beer-sheba» to this day in v. 33b, this poses the problem—which Josephus' omission of the comment obviates—that the place name in question had already been bestowed in Abraham's time according to Gen 21:31 (*// Ant.* 1.212). Once again, the source paralleling of father and son is downplayed by Josephus.

59. In Gen 28:9 the daughter of Ishmael whom Esau marries is called «Mahalath»).

60. This inserted characterization of Esau harks back to *Ant.* 1.258 where Josephus, on the basis of Gen 25:28, states that «the father loved the elder son, who was called Esau....»

61. *Gen. Rab.* 65.1 expatiates on this chronological indication of Gen 26:34, representing Esau as deliberately imitating his father (who himself married at age 40 according to Gen 25:20) in choosing to marry at that age.

62. MT Gen 36:2 עדה (RSV: Adah); LXX Ἀδά.

63. MT Gen 36:2 אהליבמה (RSV: «Oholibamah»); LXX Ὀλιβεμά.

64. MT Gen 36:2 אילון (RSV: «Elon»); LXX Αἰλώμ. Josephus omits the biblical designation of this figure as «the Hittite».

65. In MT Gen 36:2 «Zibeon» (צבעון) is the mother of Oholibamah's father «Anah» (ענה), whereas in LXX Σεβεγών is the father of Olibema's father «Ana». Josephus simplifies matters by making «Zibeon» the father of Alibame. He likewise omits the qualification of this figure as «the Hivite», just as he passes over—at this point—Esau's third wife according to Gen 36:3, i.e. Basemath (Gen 28:9 calls her Mahalath) daughter of Ishmael (he does report this marriage, in its Gen 28:9 placement, but using the name of 36:3) in *Ant.* 1.277.

66. Josephus derives his indication concerning the ethnicity of the fathers' of Esau's wives from Gen 36:2, where he is said to have taken his wives «from the Canaanites». He adds the specification concerning the fathers' rank.

67. Postbiblical Jewish tradition attempts to explicate MT's allusive reference to the offense perpetrated by (Esau and) their daughters-in-law on Isaac and Rebekah. Thus, *Tg. Ps.-J.* Gen 26:35 states: «They bent down in idolatry and they deliberately rebelled against Isaac and Rebekah with their evil deeds», while *Gen Rab.* 65.4, declares, *inter alia*, that Esau caused the Holy Spirit to depart from Isaac.

(1.266) substitutes an extended closing remark on Isaac's conflicted response to the initiative of his «favorite» son:

these marriages he [Esau] contracted on his own responsibility without consulting his father, for Isaac would never have permitted them, had his advice been sought, having no desire to form ties of affinity with the indigenous population.⁶⁸ However, not wishing to become at enmity (ἀπεχθῆς)⁶⁹ with his son through ordering him to separate from these women, he resolved to hold his peace.⁷⁰

Josephus' rewriting of Genesis 26 in *Ant.* 1.259-266 is characterized by its compression or even complete omission of a whole series of source components, i.e. the Gerar theophany (26:2-4), the discovery of Isaac's lie concerning Rebekah (26:7-11), Isaac's prospering in the Philistine country (26:12-15), the Beer-sheba theophany (26:23-25), and the exchange between Isaac and the Philistines, together with the attached well notice (26:26-33). Conversely, however, Josephus adds and/or substitutes various items of his own devising over the course of his presentation, e.g., Abimelech's initial welcoming of Isaac (1.259b), the king's motivation in approaching Isaac after expelling him (1.263), Isaac's own rationale for accepting Abimelech's overture (1.264), and the patriarch's response to Esau's marriages (1.266). Yet another feature of the historian's rewriting is his re-arrangement of the Bible's sequence. Thus, in contrast to Gen 26:1-2, he represents (1.259a) Isaac as going to Gerar only after being enjoined by God to do so, «holds over» the names given the first two wells by Isaac until the end of his version of the «well sequence» (compare 26:17-22 and 1.260-262), and anticipates the names of Esau's wives from Gen 36:2-3 in 1.265.⁷¹ All

68. This reference to Isaac's resistance to marriage between his progeny and the locals has a certain parallel in Gen 24:3, where Abraham requires his servant to swear that he will not take a wife for Isaac «from among the Canaanites, among whom I dwell». In his own version of Abraham's words to the servant in *Ant.* 1.242-243, Josephus does not mention this demand by the patriarch. It would appear then that he has re-applied the biblical Abraham's stance on the matter to Isaac, who, also in this respect, appears distinctive vis-à-vis his father. Moreover, Isaac is here implicitly depicted as one who already had an awareness of the requirements of the later Torah (see, e.g., Deut 7:2) on the matter of mixed marriages.

69. This term echoes the mentions (1.262,263) of the «enmity» (ἐχθρα) that marked the relationship between Isaac and the Philistines, but which was eventually overcome due to the «good nature» of the former (1.264). If then such «enmity» is something to be transcended in Isaac's dealings with the foreign Philistines, it certainly ought to be avoided at all costs in the relationship between him and his «favorite» son— as in fact did happen according to Josephus.

70. In the above remark Josephus evidences the problem «mixed marriages» posed for him. On the one hand, he does wish to uphold the Torah's (see Deut 7:2) prohibition of such marriages and so makes clear that Isaac did not countenance them in Esau's case. On the other hand, to press the subject unduly would play into the hands of contemporary Gentile critics with their claims about Jewish misanthropy vis-à-vis non-Jews, and so he represents Isaac as not requiring Esau to void his marriages or reproaching him for them. On the subject, see FELDMAN, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 136-139. 300.

71. This instance also involves, as we noted above, a substitution on Josephus' part for the content of Genesis 26, with the names of Gen 36:2-3 taking the place of those cited in 26:34.

these rewriting techniques evidence then the considerable freedom Josephus allowed himself in his handling of the data of Genesis 26.

What now is distinctive about Josephus' *relecture* of Genesis' «Isaac chapter?». For one thing, a certain «detheologizing» tendency can be observed throughout his retelling: one of the two source theophanies (26:23-25) is completely left aside by him and that of 26:2-5 is reduced to a passing allusion (1.259b) to «God's bidding» that prompts Isaac to go to Gerar. Overall, in contrast to Genesis 26's ninefold mention of the Lord/God (vv. 2,12,22,24 [bis],25,28,29), Josephus' rendering cites the Deity explicitly only twice (1.259,260).⁷² Equally «reductionistic» is Josephus' handling of Genesis' multiple linkages—whether explicit or implicit—between Isaac's experiences and those of his father (see n. 6). In addition, we noted a tendency on Josephus' part to reduce the role ascribed to the story's various minor characters along with a converse heightening of those its two primary personages, i.e. Abimelech and Isaac. Thus, it is Abimelech alone who is said to envy Isaac (1.259c; compare 26:14b); the Philistine shepherds provoke Isaac personally rather than his servants (compare 1.260-261 and 26:18-21); the figure of «Ahuzzath» disappears in Josephus' rewriting of 26:26 in 1.263a, and it is only Abimelech who obtains «full satisfaction» from Isaac and departs home in 1.264 whereas throughout 26:27-31 the entire Philistine delegation appears as Isaac's dialogue partner; Rebekah is nowhere mentioned (compare 26:7-11, 35), and in 1.266 the emphasis is not on the trouble caused for Isaac by Esau's foreign wives (as in 26:35), but rather on the patriarch's own response to his son's marriages. At the same time, this last form of Josephus' «reductionism» has its positive counterpart, i.e. the fact that Josephus devotes considerably more attention to the psychology of the story's two primary figures, i.e. Abimelech and Isaac, than does the Bible itself.⁷³ As a result of this preoccupation on his part, the two personages appear as more «rounded» characters vis-à-vis their biblical namesakes. Specifically, in Josephus' portrayal Abimelech emerges as highly changeable in his dispositions and actions: remembering past amity, he first (1.259b) welcomes Isaac, but then (1.259c-260a) turns against him out of an «envy» and «jealousy» that are personal to him—rather than, as in Gen 26:14b, common to the Philistines as a whole (see above), while ultimately, however, on the basis of his «fearful» calculations initiates contact with him once again. Overall then, it might be said that Abimelech comes off rather more badly at Josephus' hands than he does in the source—especially when one recalls that Josephus leaves aside the king's

72. Recall too that in connection with the third well spoken of in Gen 26:22, Josephus (1.262) attributes the fact of Isaac's being able to dig this «unmolested», not to God (as does Isaac in his word concerning it in 26:22 [«he called its name Rehoboth, saying "now the Lord has made room for us..."»]), but rather to «chance».

73. On such psychologizing as a hallmark of Josephus' retelling of biblical history, see FELDMAN, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 197-204.

«finest moment» in Genesis 26, i.e. his confrontation of the liar Isaac and the magnanimous protection he, nonetheless, extends to that liar and his sister-wife (see vv. 7-11). Conversely, the character of Isaac gets developed by Josephus in ways that diverge, mostly *in bonam partem*, from and go considerably beyond, what Genesis 26 tells of him. At the outset (see 1.259a) his piety is accentuated in that it is only at God's direction that he goes to Gerar (compare 26:1-2). The unseemly episode involving the patriarch's lie, the (misguided) fear that prompts this, and the Gentile ruler's exemplary response to this disappears completely in Josephus' retelling. Personally beset by the Philistine herdsmen (compare 26:18-21), Isaac refuses to be drawn into a fight with them (1.260-261). Subsequently, Josephus omits Isaac's petulant question to the Philistine delegation of 26:27, even while introducing mention of the «hatred» that Isaac had «dissimulated» when withdrawing from Abimelech as well as the latter's consciousness of the former's capacity to requite his mistreatment of him (1.263). Isaac then for Josephus is no impotent, unfeeling «pushover», who has not choice but to swallow the wrongs done him. The fact then, that he ultimately nonetheless lays aside his claim and ability to avenge himself is attributed by Josephus in the extra-biblical remark of 1.264, to the patriarch's «good nature» that gives greater weight to past benefits than to «recent indignation». And finally, Isaac's response to Esau's unsuitable marriages also redounds to the former's credit: committed as he is to the Torah's prohibition of such marriages and possessing the authority to force Esau to terminate them, he nevertheless lets matters rest so as not to provoke hostility between him and his son.⁷⁴ In all these respects then, the Isaac of Josephus' retelling of Genesis 26 appears as a model Jew for the historian's own time, i.e. one who is aware of and devoted to the Law's requirements, and who, while not lacking in power/authority vis-à-vis both Gentiles and his own household, consciously refrains, as an implicit alternative to the inner and outer-directed violence of so many of Josephus' contemporary compatriots, from using those endowments in ways that would set him at long-term enmity with either group.

3. JUBILEES

The other rewriting of Genesis 26 which I wish to examine in this study, i.e. *Jub.* 24.8-33, actually antedates Josephus' *Antiquities* (finished ca. 93 A.D.; see *Ant.* 20.267) by some 250 years.⁷⁵

74. On Josephus' concern to promote intra-Jewish harmony in his rewriting of biblical history, see FELDMAN, *Studies*, 556.

75. On the widely accepted date of somewhere in the mid-2nd century B.C. for the composition of *Jubilees*, see S. SCHUBERT, *Tradition und Erneuerung. Studien zum Jubiläenbuch und seinem Trägerkreis* (EHS III.771), Frankfurt am Main, 1998, 23-34.

Jub. 24.8ff. is itself preceded in 24.1-7 by the author's selective utilization of elements of Gen 25:11ff.:⁷⁶ God's blessing of Isaac following his father's death and Isaac's settling at Beer-la-hai-roi («Well of the Vision») (24.1// 25:11);⁷⁷ an anticipation of the famine notice of Gen 26:1a (24.2);⁷⁸ and a quite literal rendering of the story of Esau's selling his birthright to his brother Jacob (24.3-7// 25:29-34).⁷⁹

Following the intervening narrative of 24.3-7, *Jubilees* picks up on the famine notice of Gen 26:1a, already previously cited in 24.2, in 24.8a, now adding the extra-biblical particulars that in the face of the famine «*Isaac started to go down to Egypt*⁸⁰ in the second year of this [i.e. the fourth week of the jubilee cited in 24.2] week». As in Gen 26:1b, *Jub.* 24.8b has the itinerant Isaac arriving in Gerar *chez* King Abimelech. Gerar in Gen 26:2-5 is the scene of a theophany in the course of which the Lord addresses Isaac with words of both command (he is not to go to Egypt but rather to dwell in the land he will tell him, v. 2) and assurance for himself and his descendants (vv. 3-4), these being the reward for Abraham's exemplary obedience (v. 5). *Jub.* 24.9-11 reproduces the content of this sequence quite closely.⁸¹

To the notice of Gen 26:6 about Isaac's dwelling in Gerar *Jub.* appends a characteristic indication concerning the duration of his stay, i.e. «three weeks of years». Having thus followed the narrative of Gen 26:1-6 with great fidelity in 24.(2) 8-12, *Jubilees* now, however, begins evidencing a freer treatment

76. From the sequence of Gen 25:11-34, *Jubilees* omits the listing of Ishmael's descendants (25:12-18), the account of the complications surrounding the birth of Jacob and Esau (25:19-26). Elements of the latter passage (the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah [25:19-20], the birth of the twins [25:24-26a] are cited at a earlier point in *Jubilees'* presentation; see 19.10,13 (where they are followed by an anticipated version [19.14] of 25:27-28 [the contrasting occupations of the two sons and their parents' divergent preferences for them (in contrast to Gen 25:28, 19.14 makes the one who loves Jacob not this mother Rebekah, but rather his grandfather Abraham).

77. *Jub.* 24.1 adds that Isaac's settlement took place «in the first year of this jubilee» and that «he lived there seven years».

78. To the wording of Gen 26:1a *Jub.* 24.2 prefaces a chronological indication as to when the famine began, i.e. «in the first year of the fourth week».

79. As pointed out in n. 76, *Jubilees* gives its rendering of Gen 25:27-28, the biblical lead-in to the story of Esau's sale of his birthright (25:29-34), in 19.14. In addition, *Jub.* 24.7 rounds off the birthright story with the extra-biblical notice «And Jacob became the older one but Esau was lowered from seniority».

80. This notice is inspired by God's prohibition as cited in Gen 26:2b «do not go down to Egypt». For *Jubilees* that prohibition presupposes that Isaac has in fact initiated the forbidden move.

81. Among differences between the two versions, I note the following: whereas 26:3-4 has the Lord speak twice of «all these lands» which he will give to Isaac's descendants, *Jub.* 24.10 uses the singular «land» in both instances. In Gen 26:5 a series of four law-terms are used in reference to what Abraham «kept»; in *Jub.* 24.11b a fifth such term is appended, i.e. «my [God's] covenant». Finally, *Jub.* 24.11 rounds off the whole sequence with a concluding, extra-biblical divine exhortation: «And now obey my voice, and dwell in this land».

of its source, passing over entirely the problematic episode of Isaac's lie about Rebekah's status, its discovery by Abimelech and the king's confrontation of the deceptive patriarch as related in 26:7-10. So doing, it proceeds immediately (24.13) to the royal «protection order» for Isaac and Rebekah in which the foregoing story eventuates in 26:11, at the same time generalizing this into a death-sanctioned proscription of anyone touching either Isaac «or anything that is his».⁸²

The third of the component units within Genesis 26 as distinguished above (vv. 12-16) concerns Isaac's prospering (vv. 12-14a) and the affect of this on the Philistines (vv. 14b-16). *Jubilees* reproduces the former sequence in 24.14-15abα with various modifications.⁸³

(14) And Jacob grew prosperous *among the Philistines*⁸⁴ and had many possessions, oxen, and sheep and camels and asses,⁸⁵ and much property.⁸⁶ And he sowed in the land of the Philistine, and he raised *grain* one hundredfold.⁸⁷ And Isaac became very wealthy....⁸⁸

Jubilees then continues (24.15bβ-17a) with a rendering of Gen 26:14b-16 that adheres more closely to the biblical presentation (including its parenthetical reference [26:15] to the stopping up of the wells of Abraham's day): (24.15bβ) «And the Philistines became jealous of him [= 26:14b]. (24.16) And all the wells which the servants of Abraham dug during Abraham's lifetime the Philistines stopped up and filled with dirt *after Abraham's death* [= 26:15]. (24.17a) And Amimelek said to Isaac, "Go away from us because you are much mightier than we [= 26:16]"».

82. In Genesis the story of 26:7-10 provides a rationale for Abimelech's prohibition in 26:11; in *Jubilees* it is issued by the king *sua sponte*, with no indication of a motivation for his initiative.

83. In particular, *Jubilees* re-arranges the sequence of Gen 26:12-14a, reproducing this in the order vv. 13, 14a, 12, 13.

84. Compare Gen 26:13: «And the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy».

85. Compare the more general terminology used in Gen 26:14a: «he had possessions of flocks and herds, and a great household....». *Jubilees'* catalogue of Isaac's livestock may be inspired by the enumeration of the goods Abram acquires in Egypt Gen 12:16, this including «sheep, oxen, he-asses,... she-asses, and camels».

86. This rendering follows the Ethiopic, whereas the Latin has *ministerium magnum* («a great [household] staff») in agreement with Gen 26:14a, which speaks of Isaac's «great household»; see WINTERMUTE, *Jubilees*, 103, n. e.

87. Compare Gen 26:12a: «And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold». *Jubilees* omits the biblical chronological indication while supplying an object for Isaac's sowing. It leaves aside the attached notice of 26:12 about the Lord's «blessing» him.

88. This reiteration concerning Isaac's wealth corresponds to the notice on the matter in Gen 26:13 (see n. 83).

Gen 26:17-22 features the digging of assorted wells following Isaac's separation from Abimelech and the names given them by the patriarch. *Jub.* 24.17b elaborates the departure and settlement notice of 26:17 with yet another calendrical specification: «And Isaac went away from there *in the first year of the seventh week*. And he sojourned in the valleys [26:17 has the singular] of Gerar....». Thereafter, 24.18 has a «they»—rather than Isaac in particular as in 26:18a—redig Abraham's wells that have just been filled in by the Philistines, while it follows 26:18b in making Isaac the one to give them their former names.

The biblical «wells-sequence» continues in 26:19-20 with the digging of a well by Isaac's retainers, an initiative that leads to a controversy between them and the Gerar herdsmen that is commemorated in the name («Esek») given the site by Isaac. *Jubilees'* version (24.19) introduces several minor modifications and additions: Isaac's men dig «wells», where «they found running water»; their opponents become angry with them,⁸⁹ claiming for themselves the «water» rather than the «well»; Isaac calls the site «harshness»,⁹⁰ and a explanatory comment concerning this name is appended, i.e. «because they had been harsh with us».

The episode of Gen 26:19-20 repeats itself in 26:21, where the new well gets the name «Sitnah» («enmity»); *Jub.* 24.20a limits itself to reproducing the data of the latter text unchanged. The Bible becomes more expansive in Gen 26:22, when speaking of a final well whose name («Rehoboth»= «broad places») attests to the peaceful circumstances of its excavation. Once again, *Jubilees* (24.20b) follows its *Vorlage* with minimal modification:

And he rose from there, and they dug⁹¹ another well, but they were not angered about that,⁹² and he called it «Breadth», and Isaac said, «Now the Lord has made wide (a place) for us. And we have increased in the land».⁹³

The next segment I have distinguished within Genesis 26 is the Beer-sheba theophany scene of vv. 23-25. That segment opens with Isaac's repairing to «Beer-sheba» (MT; «the well of the oath», LXX) in v. 23. *Jub.* 24.21 translates the MT *à la* LXX, and appends a chronological precision: «And he went up from there to the Well of the Oath *in the first year of the first week in the forty-fourth jubilee*». At Beer-sheba, the Lord, according to Gen 26:24, appears to Isaac at night, presenting himself as the God of Abraham, exhorting him not to fear, and making a triple promise to him, doing this, in turn, «for my servant Abraham's sake». Each

89. In Wintermute's translation of *Jub.* 24.19 those with whom the Philistine herdsmen «become angry» are «the shepherds of Jacob». This designation appears to be a misprint for «Isaac's shepherds», the rendering of Charles/Rubin *ad loc.*

90. This is the translation given by Wintermute; Charles/Rubin render «Perversity».

91. In Gen 26:22a Isaac himself digs the well.

92. Gen 26:22aβ states «over that [well] they did not quarrel».

93. In Gen 26:22 (*in fine*) Isaac's corresponding word is formulated in futuristic terms: «and we shall be fruitful in the land».

of these components of the biblical verse finds a counterpart in *Jub.* 24.22 where they are amplified with two additional elements, one chronological, the other metaphorical: «And the Lord appeared to him during that night, *on the new moon of the first month*, and he said to him, «I am the God of Abraham, your father. Do not fear, *because* I am with you, and I shall bless you and I shall surely multiply your seed *like the sand of the earth*⁹⁴ because of Abraham, my servant». Genesis' theophany scene concludes in 26:25 with a four-fold sequel to God's speech: Isaac builds an altar on the spot, calls on the Lord's name, and pitches his tent, while his servants dig a well. *Jubilees'* version (24.23-24) adds a reminiscence concerning Abraham's earlier altar-building at Beer-sheba to the first of these items, just as it substitutes one of its own for the third element of the biblical catalogue: (24.23) «And he built an altar there, *where Abraham, his father, built at first*⁹⁵ and called upon the name of the Lord *and he offered a sacrifice to the God of Abraham, his father*.⁹⁶ (24.24) And they dug⁹⁷ a well and found running water». ⁹⁸

The events told in Genesis 26 culminate in vv. 26-31, which relate the reconciliation between Isaac and the Philistines that comes about on the latter's initiative, to which is then attached (vv. 32-33) yet another well-naming account. *Jubilees* handles this whole sequence with great freedom. Specifically, *Jub.* 24.25a utilizes in first place the data of 26:32 according to the wording of LXX, while at the same time introducing a distinction between the well spoken of there and that of 26:25 (see n. 98): «*But the servants of Isaac dug another well and did not find water*.⁹⁹ And they went and told Isaac that they did not find water». ¹⁰⁰ According to Gen 26:33, the servants' report of v. 32 leads to the well

94. *Jubilees* derives this comparative phrase from Gen 22:17 (*Jub.* 18.15), where it figures in the divine oath that the angel conveys to Abraham regarding his progeny, following the latter's near-sacrifice of Isaac.

95. The above insertion concerning Isaac's altar-building harks back to *Jub.* 16.20a where Abraham builds at an altar to the Lord at the Well of the Oath (in Gen 21:33 Abraham «plants a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba»). In *Jubilees*, that earlier notice, in turn, is followed by a long, biblically unparalleled, sequence (16.20b-31) concerning Abraham's celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in proximity to his newly built altar.

96. In Gen 26:25b Isaac «pitches his tent» at Beer-sheba. The patriarch's alternative activity in *Jubilees* is likely inspired by that work's presentation in 16.20-31 (see n. 95), where, having built an altar at the Well of the Oath (16.20a) Abraham proceeds to offer a series of sacrifices (16.22-24) in connection with his observance of Tabernacles.

97. Gen 26:25b specifies that Isaac's servants dug the well.

98. In appending this notice on the outcome of the well-digging cited in Gen 26:25b, *Jubilees* is likely inspired by 26:32 where Isaac's servants bring him the report concerning the well they have dug «we have found water».

99. This reference to the digging of «another well» at which water is not found sets the well in question in contrast to the one whose digging, cited just previously in 24.24, does yield water, *Jubilees'* notice on the non-productivity of the former well is inspired by the LXX version of the servants' report («we have found no water») to Isaac in Gen 26:32b; see following note.

100. This report reflects the LXX reading in Gen 26:32b, where his servants inform Isaac «we have found no water». In MT, they report that they have found water.

cited by them being given a double name, i.e. «Shibah» (= «oath»), this by Isaac himself (v. 33a) and «Beer-sheba», a name v. 33b reports, that perdures «to this day». *Jub.* 24.25b-26a, whose concluding element represents a compressed, «displaced» rendering of the sequence of 26:26-31, elaborates considerably on the component parts of 26:33:

And Isaac said, «I have sworn (an oath) on this day to the Philistines.¹⁰¹ And this thing has happened to us».¹⁰² And he named that place the «Well of the Oath»¹⁰³ because he swore an oath¹⁰⁴ to Abimelek and to 'Ahuzzat, his friend, and to Phicol, the commander of his army.¹⁰⁵

Genesis 26 concludes with a complex of notices (vv. 34-35) on Esau's foreign wives and the distress these cause his parents that serves to make the transition to chap. 27 where Esau will be deprived of the blessing of the first-born. *Jubilees* 24 passes over the data of Gen 26:34-35.¹⁰⁶ In place thereof, the chapter concludes with a long sequence (24.27-33), inspired by the LXX reading about Isaac's servants not finding water in Gen 26:32b, concerning the curse Isaac pronounces over the Philistines. This sequence opens in 24.27 with a statement concerning Isaac's «second thoughts» regarding his just made agreement with the Philistines: «And Isaac knew on that day that under pressure he swore an oath to them to make peace with them».¹⁰⁷ In response to that realization about

101. Isaac's declaration here has a biblical basis in the notice of Gen 25:31a, which reports that Isaac and the Philistines «took oath another with one another». In *Jubilees* this notice becomes a retrospective report by Isaac concerning a unilateral «oath» made by him to the Philistines.

102. This further, biblically unparalleled, statement by Isaac alludes to the just cited failure of the «other well» dug by his servants to yield water, a failure which, as will emerge in what follows, the patriarch now interprets as punishment for his own previous wrongful swearing to the Philistines.

103. The above notice might be seen as *Jubilees'* conflation of Gen 26:33, where Isaac himself calls the well «Shibah» («oath») in v. 33a, while v. 33b reports that the site-name «Beer-sheba» (MT; LXX: «the well of the oath» [so *Jubilees*]) has continued «to this day».

104. See n. 100 and Gen 26:31a.

105. *Jubilees* draws the names of the three-member Philistine delegation from Gen 26:26. Its reduction of the entire sequence 26:26-31 to the above allusion apparently reflects the author's embarrassment over a biblical episode that involves a patriarch entering into an agreement with a reprobate Gentile people, the Philistines. Instead of reporting that happening in detail, the author opts to recount at length the «curse» Isaac pronounces over those same Philistines, thereby undoing, to the extent possible, the effects of his beneficent action in their regard. See above.

106. One does find a brief allusion to the notices of Gen 26:34-35 in the context of *Jubilees'* version of Genesis 27 in chap. 25, where (v. 1), where Rebekah warns Jacob not to marry a Canaanite woman «like Esau your brother, who has married two Canaanite women, and they have been a constant source of distress to me....».

107. *Jubilees* thus has Isaac interpret the Philistine delegation's urgent request (see Gen 26:28-29) that he make a covenant with them as their "putting pressure" on him to do something that he should not.

the Philistines' «pressuring» of him Isaac proceeds, in 24.28-32, to utter a extended curse over them:¹⁰⁸

(24.28) And Isaac cursed the Philistines on that day, and he said «Cursed be the Philistines for the day of wrath and anger from among all the nations. May the Lord make them as scorn and a curse and (the object of) wrath and at the hands of the sinners, the nations, and in the hands of the Kittim.¹⁰⁹ (24.29) And whoever escapes from the sword of the enemy and from the Kittim, may the righteous people uproot them from beneath the sky with judgment, because they will be enemies and foes to my sons in their generations upon the earth.(24.30) And no remnant will be left to them,nor one who escapes on the day of the wrath of judgment;because all of the Philistine seed is (destined) for destruction and uprooting and removal from the earth.And, therefore, there will not be any name or seed which remains upon the earth for any of the Capthorim.¹¹⁰ (24.31) Because if they go up to heaven, from there they will fall;and if they are set firm in the earth, from there they will be torn out;And if they are hidden among the nations, from there they will be uprooted;and if they go down to Sheol, even there their judgment will multiply,and also there will no peace for them there.(24.32) And if they go into captivity by the hand of those who seek their life, they will kill them along the way. And neither name nor seed will be left for them in all the earth,because they shall walk in an eternal curse».¹¹¹

Having thus cited Isaac's curse, *Jubilees* (24.33) appends a notice on the heavenly ratification/preservation of the patriarch's words against the Philistines: «And thus it is written and engraved concerning him in the heavenly tablets to be done to him in the day of judgment so that they might be uprooted from the earth».¹¹²

108. On the biblical inspirations for the wording of Isaac's curse (e.g., Amos 9:1-4), see ENDRES, *Biblical Interpretation*, 70-73.

109. On «the Kittim» as a name for invaders (the Greeks, the Romans) coming to the Holy Land from the west, see, e.g., Dan 11:30; 1 Macc 1:1; 8:5; and cf. D. W. BAKER, «Kittim», in D. N. FREEDMAN (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 4, New York, 1992, 93.

110. This designation appears to be another name for the Philistines, given that in Amos 9:7 the Lord speaks of his having brought the Philistines up «from Capthor» (= Crete).

111. The intense hostility towards the Philistines evidenced by the above curse has a counterpart in Sir 50:25-26 where the sage speaks of the Philistines (along with the Edomites and Samaritans) as a group with whom his «soul is vexed». In addition, the Philistines figure among the adversaries of Judas Maccabees against whom he wages successful campaigns in 1 Macc 3:1-9:22; see 3:24,41b; 4:15,22; 5:66-68 and cf. ENDRES, *Biblical Interpretation*, 72-73, n. 47.

112. On the motif of the «heavenly tablets» in *Jubilees*, which recurs no less than thirty times in the book, see J.-M. HUSSER, «Scribes inspirés et écrits célestes», in A. LEMAIRE (ed.), *Congress Volume Leiden 2004* (VTSup 109), Leiden/Boston, 2006, 193-213, esp. 202-205. The above reference to the future «day of judgment» on which Isaac's curse against the Philistines, preserved henceforth on the heavenly tablets, will be activated, gives to *Jubilees'* rendering of Genesis 26 an eschatological thrust absent both in the source and in Josephus. On the topic of eschatology in *Jubilees*, see the work of Davenport cited in n. 3.

As a rewriting of Genesis 26, *Jub.* 24.8-33 makes a quite bifurcated impression. On the one hand, it reproduces portions of its *Vorlage* (26:1-5 [the Gerar theophany], 12-16 [the expulsion of Isaac], 17-22 [the wells and their names], 23-25 [the Beer-sheba theophany]) with minimal deviation. On the other hand, however, it also markedly reduces the biblical content in its rendering (24.12-13) of the segment concerning Isaac's sojourn in Gerar (26:6-11), just as it does in the case of the agreement between Isaac and the Philistines (26:26-33) in 24.24b-26 (where the sequence of the Genesis presentation is «scrambled» as well). In addition, *Jubilees* repositions the closing unit of Genesis 26 (vv. 34-35, Esau's foreign wives) as a later point in its narration (see *Jub.* 25.1, where Rebekah warns Jacob not to imitate his brother's matrimonial initiatives). The most noteworthy divergence between Genesis 26 and *Jubilees* 24 is, however, the long passage, without a source basis of any sort, in which Isaac pronounces a vehement curse upon the Philistines with whom he has just concluded a pact; see 24.27.33.

Given this two-sided approach to the Genesis data on the part of the *Jubilees* author, what is distinctive about his presentation of the Isaac story? Most obviously, *Jub.* 24.8ff. is distinguished by its characteristic calendrical preoccupation; no less than five times (see 24.8,12,17,21,22) it introduces a specification about the date or duration of some happening spoken of—without a corresponding chronological indication—in Genesis 26. In comparison with its source, *Jub.* 24.8ff. also clearly evidences a more negative stance towards Isaac's covenanting with the Philistines than does the Bible itself: their agreement came about, according to *Jub.* 24.27 under Philistine «pressure», is requited with failure by Isaac's men to find water at a newly-dug well (24.25),¹¹³ and eventuates in Isaac's counteracting his initiative in favor of the Philistines with a curse against them (24.27-33). Finally, whereas *Jubilees'* presentation of the presence and role(s) of both God and Abimelech are approximately the same as in Genesis, its portrayal of Isaac exhibits several distinctive features. On the positive side, *Jubilees* accentuates the patriarch's exemplary status by, e.g., passing over the embarrassing episode of Isaac's lie about Rebekah's status and his confrontation by Abimelech concerning the matter (Gen 26:7-10), and by appending mention that he used the altar he had built (so Gen 26:25) to actually sacrifice to the Lord (24.23). At the same time, however, he does make clear that in covenanting with the Philistines Isaac did something he should not have, even as it also represents him as doing so «under pressure» (24.27), recognizing the connection between his act and the failure of the last well to yield water (24.25), and then attempting to abrogate the his agreement with the Philistines by pronouncing a curse upon them (24.27-32), a move which receives heavenly sanction (v. 33). In sum,

113. Compare LXX Gen 26:32 (where the servants simply report as a matter of fact that they have not found water at the well they have dug) and *Jub.* 24.25 (where Isaac recognizes a causal, punitive connection between his own swearing to the Philistines and the failure of the new well to yield water).

Jubilees' rewriting of Genesis 26 revolves around three problem/question areas evoked by the biblical narrative, i.e. the precise dating of the events recounted, the evaluation of Isaac's covenant-making with the Philistines, and, more generally, the dubious, embarrassing aspects of the image of the patriarch conveyed by the source chapter.

4. CONCLUSION

In what precedes I have provided a detailed comparison between my two *relectures* and their common biblical source, i.e. Genesis 26. In the conclusion of this essay I shall now compare the rewritings of Josephus and *Jubilees* so as determine where and how they agree and disagree in the specifics of their respective retellings of Genesis 26.

The two versions do, first of all, evidence, certain points of agreement in their handling of the data of the Genesis chapter. In particular, both eliminate Isaac's lie about Rebekah's status and Abimelech's confrontation of him concerning this as reported in Gen 26:7-11. Both likewise compress the Bible's detailed account of the covenant-making between Isaac and the Philistines (Gen 26:26-31; compare *Ant.* 1.263-264 and *Jub.* 24.25b-26), even as they both reproduce the «well-sequence» of Gen 26:17-22 in detail (see *Ant.* 1.260-262 and *Jub.* 24.17b-20).

It is, however, the divergences between the two renditions' approach to their source text that predominate. The chronological specifications that punctuate *Jubilees'* presentation lack an equivalent in Josephus (and the Bible itself). Josephus limits himself to general references to the wealth acquired by Isaac in Gerar (see *Ant.* 1.260,263); *Jubilees* (26.14) elaborates on Gen 26:14's catalogue of the possessions amassed by the patriarch there. Josephus reduces the Gerar theophany of Gen 26:2-5 to a brief allusion in *Ant.* 1.259 and entirely dispenses with God's self-manifestation at Beer-sheba (Gen 26:23-25), thereby diminishing the divine role in the proceedings. *Jubilees*, by contrast, follows the Bible in making a significant place for God in the events related, reproducing *in extenso*, as it does, both theophanies of Genesis 26 (see 24.9-11 and 24.21-23, respectively). Josephus adopts a favorable posture towards Isaac's treaty-making with the Philistines, in fact, going beyond the Bible in this respect (see *Ant.* 1.263-264) as an example of Jewish benevolence towards Gentiles; *Jubilees* (24.25b-33), on the contrary, makes clear its disapproval of that initiative on the part of Isaac, to whom it further attributes an eschatologically-oriented curse against the Philistines without parallel in either Josephus or Genesis. In the overall presentation of *Jubilees*, the last of the wells dug by Isaac's servants (Gen 26:25b) and the water this fails to produce (26:32 LXX) figures prominently (see 24.25), but is left unmentioned by Josephus. *Jubilees*, moreover, has no equivalent to Josephus' (extra-biblical) evocation of Abimelech's initial welcoming of Isaac (see *Ant.* 1.259b) and his sentiments when approaching the expelled Isaac (see

1.263), although, conversely, it does cite (24.13) the king's protective order from Gen 26:11 that Josephus passes over. More generally, *Jubilees* does not evidence the interest in the psychology of both Abimelech and Isaac manifest throughout Josephus' version. As was pointed out above, Josephus generally downplays the Isaac// Abraham parallelism so prominent in Genesis; *Jubilees* takes over and even accentuates (see, e.g., its appended notice on Isaac's sacrifice to «the God of Abraham his father» in 24.23) this biblical feature. Finally, while Josephus (*Ant.* 1.265-266) retains the narrative notices concerning Esau's foreign marriages of Gen 26:34-35 and expatiates on these, *Jubilees* shifts these to a latter point in its narration (see 25.1), likewise turning the sequence into a word by Rebekah to Jacob and omitting the names of Esau's wives cited in Gen 26:34.

A final remark. It seems clear that both Josephus and *Jubilees* viewed the account of Genesis 26 as calling for modification and elaboration. In carrying out that task, the two versions largely went their own ways, however. It would be of interest to extend such a comparative reading of their respective *relectures* to other biblical passages jointly treated by them to see whether the *Tendenzen* I have identified as operative in their handling of Genesis 26 —and any additional ones— make themselves felt there as well.

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Resum

Gènesi 26 és l'únic capítol de la Bíblia que se centra en la figura d'Isaac. Aquest assaig aporta una lectura minuciosa i comparativa de les dues antigues versions de Gènesi 26: la de Flavi Josep en *Antiquitates Judaicae* 1.259-266 i la d'*El Llibre dels Jubileus* 24.8-33. De la comparació entre elles es desprèn que Flavi Josep destaca la psicologia d'Isaac i d'Abimelech, mentre treu importància al paper de Déu en la història i als trets de paral·lelisme Isaac/Abraham de Gènesi 26, adoptant una visió positiva en l'acord dels patriarques i els filisteus, com a model no conflictiu de les relacions entre jueus i gentils. *Jubileus*, per la seva banda, evidencia una preocupació de datació en la seva versió, que es manifesta per la inserció repetida de dates precises en la narració dels fets. En contrast amb Flavi Josep, dona un paper molt rellevant a Déu en el desenvolupament de la història, i pren una clara postura negativa envers els tractats fets per Isaac, que en darrera instància fa que el patriarca pronunciï una maledicció d'orientació escatològica sobre els seus antics aliats.