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MINISTRIES

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Testing the Book of Jubilees

Often we are asked what our position might be on some of the books that are not typically included in the standard 66 books of the bible. One of those books is the book of Jubilees.

To test whether or not something is from YHWH, we need to determine if it teaches the law of God, or if it teaches sin. Sin is defined as breaking the law of God.

1 John 3:4

“For sin is the transgression of the law.”

So we need to determine whether or not Jubilees holds up to the test. To the surprise of many, it is rather well supported that the book of Jubilees was written around the Maccabean period. That the book of Jubilees was written sometime in the first half of the second century BCE is confirmed by the fact that for the author, Hellenization still appears to be a dominant threat, as it has not receded into the collective memory of the Jewish people to become a past event.

The contentious argument against Hellenizing Jews can be found in Jubilees 3:31 which is against public nakedness. In Jubilees chapter 15:33-34, against not circumcising. So, the nature of Jubilees incorporates a sentiment that could only have developed in the coming out of the Maccabean period. In addition, the eschatological perspective of the book of Jubilees presupposes that only a short period of time between the beginning of the anticipated national revolt and the composition of the text has elapsed.

In Jubilees chapter 23:16-32, it is said that after national apostasy or Hellenization, the younger generation will arise and return to God. As a result, God will progressively bring about the end times blessings promised by the Prophets. Thus from the authors standpoint, the benefits occasioned by national repentance and renewed obedience to the law will occur in the near future. Since these end times blessings did not come as expected, the author must be writing at a

time when the possibility that they would come, still existed. That is, shortly after the beginnings of the Maccabean revolt.

Thus, unless Moses was resurrected, wrote Jubilees, and then died again, we should be cautious about gleaned new instructions from this book.

One might ask, "Why is this important?" Our Messiah Yeshua commanded us to follow the law of Moses, not the law of the book of Jubilees.

Matthew 23:1-3

“Then Jesus (Yeshua) said to the crowds and to his disciples, "The scribes and the Pharisees **sit on Moses' seat, so do and observe whatever they tell you**, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice."

Yeshua always corrected and instructed from what was written by Moses.

Mark 10:3

“He answered them, "What did Moses command you?"

In Mark 7 we find that when one adds or takes away from Moses, that Yeshua called that, simply put, a very bad thing. He said it was nullifying the Word of God in order to follow the commandments and traditions of men.

Mark 7:8-13

“You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men. And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! For Moses said, "Honor your father and your mother", and, "Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die." But you say, "If a man tells his father or his mother, "Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban" (that is, given to God)- then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus making void the Word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."

It should go without saying but, nullifying the Word of God in order to follow commandments and traditions of men, is a very bad thing. It's the whole basis of Matthew 23 in which the Pharisees were called hypocrites and brood of vipers and destined to hell.

Deuteronomy 13 spends a chapter detailing what is defined as a true prophet. A true prophet teaches only the law of God. Nothing more, and nothing less, despite any signs and wonders that may accompany the individual. However, if an individual has true prophecy, and amazing signs and wonders, yet the person does not teach the law of God as written by Moses, nothing more or nothing less, then that individual is a false prophet. Unfortunately, in some instances, the author of Jubilees adds to the Torah, the law of Moses. For example, in Jubilees chapter 50:8 it is stated that if a man lays with his wife on Shabbat, that is sin, meaning breaking the law of God and merits death.

Jubilees 50:8

"In it ye shall do no manner of work, ye and your sons, and your men- (8) servants and your maid-servants, and all your cattle and the sojourner also who is with you. And the man that does any work on it shall die; whoever desecrates that day, whoever lies with (his) wife, or whoever says he will do something on it, that he will set out on a journey thereon in regard to any buying or selling: and whoever draws water thereon which he had not prepared for himself on the sixth day, and whoever takes up any burden to carry it out of his tent or out of his house shall die."

Of course, no such command is found nowhere in the Torah. It's a commandment and tradition of men, and it is actually violating the law of God.

Deuteronomy 4:2

"You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord (YHWH) your God that I command you."

And, chapter 12:32

Deuteronomy 12:32

"Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it."

Thus, Jubilees is breaking the law of God, by adding to the law of God... and also recall, sin is defined as breaking the law of God.

1 John 3:4

"...for sin is the transgression of the law."

Thus, out of our love for the Word of God, and all that is established as truth, we cannot recommend the book of Jubilees.

Some attempt to defend against Jubilees breaking Torah and attempt to protect it by sighting Isaiah.

Isaiah 58:13

"If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord (YHWH) honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;"

The theory is that the Lord, through Isaiah, commands his people to abstain from pleasure on His Sabbath day. Thus when Jubilees states that the Torah of God commands a man to not lie with his wife on Shabbat, then that is no different than what Isaiah wrote in chapter 58:13.

Now, most footnotes mention that pleasure refers to activities of business, not pleasure as in lying with one's wife. Not only that, but if Isaiah was stating that one should not entertain any form of pleasure on the Sabbath, we would then have a greater problem than Jubilees adding to the Torah. Now, we would have Isaiah adding to the Torah, and thus be a false prophet. But Isaiah is not speaking of pleasure in general, but according to the context, is referring to having other people work for you. Which of course, is against Torah.

Isaiah 58:3

"Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers."

Thus Isaiah is not adding to the Torah, thus breaking the Torah, but in fact only teaching Torah. So what we have then, is Isaiah teaching Torah, but Jubilees adding to and breaking Torah.

Not only is the book of Jubilees not written by Moses, which is the foundation of the Torah Yeshua instructed and corrected from in his ministry, but the book of Jubilees actually adds to the Torah, breaking Deuteronomy chapters 4 and 12 by entering into territory of a false prophet as defined by Deuteronomy 13.

That is not to say that there is not good information or teaching that could be gleaned from the book of Jubilees. It is however, clearly not a book that one would want to set as an authority over one's life. The Torah, light, or Word of God is our authority. Anything against Torah should be rejected as false or darkness, however it must be read through a discerning heart and mind.

Is not the way of the adversary to mix what is truth, with what is false?

Our Messiah, as our example, never once quoted the book of Jubilees, never set it up as an authority, and in fact, based on the Torah, the book of Jubilees fails the test by adding to the Word of God. It is in this realization that we recommend strong caution with this book, and be sure that anything gleaned from the book is tested to what Moses wrote; which seems to suggest that it might be a better practice to do what Yeshua did: study and teach Moses and the Prophets instead, lest we be carried away by unprofitable doctrine contrary to Yeshua and Moses.

Some might say that Psalm 81:3-4 is not found in the Torah commandments either. However, if one has watched our teaching "[Time: Our Creator's Calender Series, The Foundation](#)", one will find that verses 3 and 4 are most certainly found in the Torah.

It might also be said that Jubilees is quoted in 2 Peter referring to Jubilees chapter 4:30.

2 Peter 3:8

"But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Now let's read Job, which was written hundreds of years earlier than the book of Jubilees.

Job 5:19

"He will deliver you from six troubles; in seven no evil shall touch you."

It is more likely that both 2 Peter and Jubilees were quoting the same ancient sources, and not Peter quoting Jubilees.

Psalm 90:4

"For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night."

The book of Jubilees and several other lost books were not considered popular in the first century. They were known, but not popular, as evidenced by a lack of sighting Jubilees and other books as any form of authority.

A group called the Essenes retained these books, whereas most Jewish sects did not place any authority on them as valid witnesses. In reading their writings, we learn that the Essenes harbored contempt for the Jewish sects that retained influence and power in the first century. Namely, the Sadducees and Pharisees.

They strongly disagreed with their usage of the calendar practiced in Yeshua's time. To be fair, Yeshua also voiced very strong doctrinal concerns about the Sadducees and Pharisees. At every opportunity, Yeshua intentionally violated their traditions. Such as instructing others to pick up their mat on the Sabbath, rubbing grain between their fingers on the Sabbath, or even not concerning oneself with washing one's hands before eating.

In the midst of all this, however, Yeshua never, not once, spoke against the calendar being employed in the first century.

In fact, as a testimony against the Essenes, Yeshua died on the Day of Passover as dictated by the calendar that the Pharisees employed. And our Messiah kept Shabbat on the same day as the Pharisees as well. Yeshua did not seem to harbor the same opinion of the calendar as the Essenes. For example:

John 13:1-2

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when (Yeshua) Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him."

John 19: 31,42

"Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby."

For more on this subject, please see our teaching "[Was the Last Supper a Passover Day?](#)"

Many scholars speculate that the books such as Enoch and Jubilees were added onto. As the evidence suggests that the authorship does not appear to be consistent. Both books, Enoch and Jubilees, interestingly enough, place a high degree of emphasis on a calendar that was not compatible with the dominant calendar used in the first century. The Essenes were very much against the calendar employed in the first century, and the Essenes were the ones who that harbored and retained these books and considered them sacred.

However, our Messiah disagreed with the Essene calendar and agreed with the calendar the Pharisees employed in 30 A.D. For more on this, please see our teaching "[Time: Our Creator's Calendar, The Foundation](#)".

The reality is, based on books that consist of what is normally defined as the New Testament, or the Brit Hadashah, we find that Yeshua in 30 A.D. became our Passover lamb on the day that the Pharisees defined as Passover; testifying against the authority of the calendars that the Essenes favored. So whether there was some original validity to the books such as Enoch and Jubilees, it is very possible that additions to the books were simply to perpetuate and inject false authority to a calendar that was not compatible with Moses or Yeshua.

With that, for whatever it is worth, we simply recommend caution and discernment. We fully realize that we are not any type of authority, or may have no credibility in your eyes. But the Torah is our authority in our lives. If it says to not add to, or take away from the Word of God, or it is false, then we have to live by what the Torah instructs.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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