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THE BOOK OF JUBILEES

TRANSLATED FROM THE ETHIOPIC

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OBERLIN, OHIO:

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1888

until the sixteenth thereof he entered and all that we brought to him into the ark, and the Lord locked it from without on the seventeenth, at eve. 22. And the Lord opened seven flood-gates of heaven and the mouths of the fountains of the great deep, seven mouths in number. 23. And the flood-gates began to pour down water from heaven forty days and forty nights, and the fountains of the deep also sent up waters, until the whole world was full of water. 24. And the water increased upon the earth: fifteen ells the waters were raised over all the high mountains, and the ark was lifted above the earth and moved upon the face of the waters. 25. And the water remained standing upon the face of the earth five months, one hundred and fifty days. 26. And the ark proceeded and rested upon the top of Lûbâr, one of the mountains of Ararat. 17. And in the fourth month the fountains of the great deep were closed, and the flood-gates of heaven were restrained, and in the new moon of the seventh month all the mouths of the deep of the earth were opened, and the water began to descend into the deep below. 28. And in the new moon of the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible, and in the new moon of the first month the earth became visible. 29. And the waters disappeared from above the earth in the fifth week, in the seventh year thereof, and on the seventeenth day in the second month the earth became dry. 30. And on the twenty-seventh thereof he opened the ark and sent out of it the animals and the beasts and the birds and whatever moves.

CHAP. VI. 1. And at the new moon of the third month he came out of the ark and built an altar on that hill. 2. And he appeared on the earth, and he took a young goat and atoned by its blood for all the guilt of the earth, because every thing that had been on it was destroyed except those that were in the ark with Noah; and he placed the fat on the altar, and he took an ox and a goat and a sheep and young goats and salt and a turtle dove

and the young of a dove and brought a burnt sacrifice upon the altar, and scattered over them fruit offerings baked in oil and sprinkled the blood and wine, and placed upon it frankincense, and a sweet savour arose which was acceptable before the Lord. 3. And the Lord smelt the sweet savour, and he made with him a covenant that there should no more be a flood upon the earth which would destroy the earth: all the days of the earth, seed and harvest shall not cease, frost and heat and summer and winter and day and night shall not change their order and shall not cease forever. 4. "And ye, grow and increase on the earth and increase over it, and be for a blessing in its midst: your fear and your terror I will put upon every thing that is on the earth and in the sea. 5. And, behold, I have given you all the animals and all the beasts and every thing that flies and every thing that moves on the earth and the fish in the waters and all things for food; like the herbs of grass, I have given them all to you to eat. 6. Only flesh in which is its life with blood ye shall not eat: for the blood is the soul of all flesh, so that your blood in your souls be not demanded of you. 7. From the hands of each one I will demand the blood of a man; every one that sheddeth the blood of a man, by the hand of a man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God did he create Adam. 8. But ye, grow and increase upon the earth." 9. And Noah and his sons swore that they would not eat any blood that is in any flesh, and they made a covenant before the Lord God for ever, in all the generations of the world, in this month. 10. On this account he spoke to thee that thou shouldst make a covenant with the children of Israel in this month upon the mountain, with an oath, and shouldst sprinkle blood over them on account of all the words of the covenant which the Lord has made with them for all days.¹ 11. And this testimony is written concerning you, that you observe it in all days, that ye do not in all days eat any blood of ani-

¹ The covenant of Sinai is regarded as a renewal of the Noachic covenant.

mals and birds and beasts in all the days of the earth; and the man who eats the blood of an animal or of beasts or of birds in all the days of the earth, he and his seed shall be rooted out of the land. 12. And thou command the children of Israel that they shall not eat any blood, so that their names and their seed may be before the Lord our God all the days. 13. And for this law there is no limit of days, for it is for eternity; and they shall observe it to generation and generation, so that they may continue supplicating in their behalf with blood before the Lord on the altar on each day and day; mornings and evenings they shall supplicate in their behalf perpetually before the Lord, that they may observe this and not be rooted out. 14. And he gave to Noah and his sons a sign that there should not again be a deluge over the earth; he placed his bow in the clouds as the sign of the eternal covenant that no water of the deluge should again come over the earth to destroy it all the days of the earth. 15. On this account it is ordained and written on the tablets of heaven that the celebration of the festival of weeks should be in this month, once a year, for a renewed covenant in each year and year.¹ 16. And during the time this festival was being celebrated in heaven, from the days of creation to the days of Noah, it was twenty-six jubilees and five weeks of years; and Noah and his sons observed it seven jubilees and one week of years until the time when Noah died. 17. But his children violated it until the days of Abraham, and they ate blood. But Abraham alone observed it, and Isaac and Jacob observed it, for these are his children, up to thy day; and in thy day the children of Israel forgot it until I renewed it for them on this mountain. 18. And thou command the children of Israel that they should observe this festival in all their generations as a commandment for

¹ It will be observed here and throughout the book that the author connects the religious system and worship in Israel not only with the ordinances of the tablets of heaven, but also with important events in the lines of the patriarchs.

them: one day in the year, in this month, they shall celebrate this festival. 19. For it is the festival of weeks and is a festival of first fruits; for this festival is of a double nature and double kind, as is written and engraved concerning its celebration. 20. For I have written it in the book of the first law in which I wrote to thee that thou shouldst observe it in its time one day a year; and I have explained to thee the offerings on that day, that they should be remembered and that the children of Israel should celebrate it one day in each year. 21. And at the new moon of the first month, and in the new moon of the fourth month, and in the new moon of the seventh month, and in the new moon of the tenth month are the days of remembrance and the days of the festivals in the four divisions of the years: written and ordained they are for a testimony until eternity. 22. And Noah ordained them for himself as festivals for future generations, for on them there was to him a remembrance. 23. At the new moon of the first month it was said to him that he should make for himself an ark, and on it the earth became dry, and he opened [the ark] and saw the earth. And at the new moon of the fourth month the mouth of the flood-gates of the lowest deep was closed. 24. And at the new moon of the seventh month all the mouths of the flood-gates of the earth were opened and the waters began to descend into the depth beneath. 25. And at the new moon of the tenth month the tops of the mountains appeared, and Noah became glad. 26. And on this account he ordained them as festivals of remembrance unto himself unto eternity, and thus they are ordained. 27. And they were raised into the tablets of heaven: thirteen sabbaths to each, from one to another their remembrance, from the first to the second, from the second to the third, from the third to the fourth. 28. And all the days of this commandment are fifty-two sabbaths of days, and the whole year is completed. 29. Thus it is engraved and ordained in the tablets of heaven, and there is no transgression

from one year to another. And thou command the children of Israel that they should observe the years in this number, three hundred and sixty-four days, and the year shall be complete and the fixed date of their days and their festivals shall not be corrupted, for every thing transpires in them according to their testimony; and they [Israel] shall not miss a day or corrupt a festival. 31. But if they do transgress and do not observe them according to his commandment, then will be corrupted all their fixed dates, and the years will waver in consequence, and also their times and their years, and they will transgress their ordinances. 32. And all the children of Israel will forget and will not find the paths of the years, and will forget the new moon and the sabbaths and the festivals, and in all the order of the years they will err. 33. For I know, and from now on I shall make it known to thee, and not from my heart, but thus is written in a book before me and is ordained in the tablets of heaven, the division of the days, that they forget not the festivals of my covenant and walk according to the festivals of the gentiles, after their errors and after their ignorance. 34. And there will be those who will make observations of the moon, for this one [the moon] corrupts the stated times and comes out earlier each year by ten days. 35. And in this way they will corrupt the years and will observe a wrong day as the day of testimony and a corrupted festival day, and every one will mix holy days with unclean ones and unclean with holy; for they will err as to months and sabbaths and festivals and jubilees. 36. And on this account I command thee and testify to thee that thou shouldst testify to them, for after thy death thy children will corrupt, so that they make a year only three hundred and sixty-four days,¹ and on this account they will err as to new moons and sabbaths and fixed times and festivals and will ever eat blood with all kinds of flesh.

¹ How this statement is to be reconciled with verse 30 is not clear.