

## Second Temple Literature – Where is it from, and why do we care?

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### Apocrypha

All translations of Apocrypha below are from A. Pietersma and B. G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint (=NETS)*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

#### **Judith** (transl. Cameron Boyd-Taylor, NETS)

It was the twelfth year of the reign of Nabouchodonosor, who ruled over the Assyrians from Nineue, the great city.

#### **Tobit** (transl. Alexander A. Di Lella, NETS)

1 The book of the words of Tobith son of Tobiel son of Hananiel son of Adouel son of Gabael son of Raphael son of Ragouel of the descendants of Asiel, of the tribe of Nephthaleim, 2 who in the days of Enemessaros, the king of the Assyrians, was taken into captivity from Thisbe which is to the right of Kydios Nephthaleim in Upper Galilee, above Asserb to the west, left of Phogor.

3 I, Tobith, walked in the ways of truth and in righteous acts all the days of my life, and I performed many acts of charity for my kindred and my people who had gone with me in exile into the land of the Assyrians, into Nineue. 4 And when I was in my own country, in the land of Israel, and when I was young, all the tribe of Nephthaleim my ancestor withdrew from the house of Daudid my ancestor and from Ierousalem...

#### **2 Maccabees** (transl. Joachim Schaper, NETS)

1 The fellow Judeans in Hierosolyma and those in the land of Judea, to their Judean brothers in Egypt, greetings and true peace. 2 May God do good to you, and may he remember his covenant with Abraam and Isaak and Iakob, his faithful slaves. 3 May he give you all a heart to worship him and to do his will with a strong heart and a willing spirit. 4 May he open your heart to his law and his ordinances, and may he bring peace. 5 May he heed your prayers and be reconciled to you, and may he not forsake you in a time of evil. 6 We are now praying for you here. 7 In the reign of Demetrius, in the one hundred sixty-ninth year, we Judeans wrote to you in the critical distress that came upon us in those years after Jason and his company revolted from the holy land and the kingdom 8 and burned the gate and shed innocent blood. We prayed to the Lord and were heard, and we offered sacrifice and grain offering, and we lit the lamps and set out the loaves. 9 And now see that you keep the days of the feast of tent pitching in the month of Chaseleu.

## Pseudepigrapha

**1 Enoch** (transl. M. Black, *The Book of Enoch or I Enoch: A New English Edition with Commentary and Textual Notes*, SVTP 7, Leiden: Brill, 1985.)

1:1 The words of the blessing of Enoch according to which he blessed the chosen and righteous who must be present on the day of distress (which is appointed) for the removal of all the wicked and impious, 2 And Enoch answered and said: (there was) a righteous man whose eyes were opened by the Lord, and he saw a holy vision in the heavens which the angels showed to me. And I heard everything from them, and I understood what I saw, but not for this generation, but for a distant generation which will come.

**Jubilees** (transl. J. C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, CSCO 511, Lovanii: Peeters, 1989.)

### Prologue

These are the words regarding the divisions of the times of the law and of the testimony, of the events of the years, of the weeks of their jubilees throughout all the years of eternity as he related (them) to Moses on Mt. Sinai when he went up to receive the stone tablets — the law and the commandments — on the Lord's orders as he had told him that he should come up to the summit of the mountain.

1:27 Then he said to an angel of the presence: Dictate to Moses (starting) from the beginning of the creation until the time when my temple is built among them throughout the ages of eternity... 1:29 The angel of the presence, who was going along in front of the Israelite camp, took the tablets (which told) of the divisions of the years from the time the law and the testimony were created — for the weeks of their jubilees, year by year in their full number, and their jubilees from [the time of the creation until] the time of the new creation when the heavens, the earth, and all their creatures will be renewed like the powers of the sky and like all the creatures of the earth, until the time when the temple of the Lord will be created in Jerusalem on Mt. Zion.

**4 Ezra** (transl. Michael Stone in Michael Stone and Matthias Henze, *4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: Translations, Introductions, and Notes*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.)

3:1 In the thirtieth year after the destruction of our city, I, Salathiel, who am also called Ezra, was in Babylon. I was troubled as I lay on my bed, and my thoughts welled up in my heart, 3:2 because I saw the desolation of Zion and the wealth of those who lived in Babylon. 3:3 My spirit was greatly agitated, and I began to speak anxious words to the Most High, and said, 3:4 “O sovereign Lord, didst thou not speak at the beginning when thou didst form the earth—and that without help—and didst command the dust 3:5 and it gave thee Adam, a lifeless body? Yet he was the workmanship of thy hand s,<sup>1</sup> and thou didst breathe into him the breath of life and he was made alive in thy presence. 3:6 And thou didst lead him into the garden which thy right hand had planted before the earth appeared.