On "Exegetical Function" in Rewritten Scripture: Inner-Biblical Exegesis and the Abram/Ravens Narrative in *Jubilees*

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1.0 Introduction: Interpretation in Rewritten Bible or Rewritten Bible as Interpretation? Exegetical Aims and Compositional Strategy

While no consensus obtains among specialists as to what the term "rewritten Bible" (or "rewritten Scripture") properly denotes[1]—or whether, indeed, it is proper to use at all[2]—most agree that the texts thought to represent this category are basically exegetical in character.[3] That is, they are supposed to have as their

[1] Moshe J. Bernstein provides a clear overview of the various surveys and representative views ("'Rewritten Bible': A Generic Category Which Has Outlived Its Usefulness?" *Textus* 22 [2005] 169–96). Among more recent treatments, see especially Anders Klostergaard Petersen, "Rewritten Bible as a Borderline Phenomenon—Genre, Textual Strategy, or Canonical Anachronism?" in *Flores Florentino: Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Early Jewish Studies* (ed. Anthony Hilhorst, Émile Puech, and Eibert Tigchelaar; Leiden: Brill, 2007) 285–306; and Molly M. Zahn, "Talking about Rewritten Texts: Some Reflections on Terminology," in *Changes in Scripture: Rewriting and Interpreting Authoritative Traditions in the Second Temple Period* (ed. Hanne von Weissenberg, Juha Pakkala, and Marko Marttila; BZAW 419; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011) 93–119.

[2] See, e.g., James C. VanderKam, "Questions of Canon Viewed through the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Canon Debate* (ed. Lee M. McDonald and James A. Sanders; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2002) 91–109; and idem, "The Wording of Biblical Citations in Some Rewritten Scriptural Works," in *The Bible as a Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (ed. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov; London: The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2002) 41–56, esp. 42–43, 52–53. See also Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism* (JSJSup 77; Leiden: Brill, 2003) 44.

[3] See Geza Vermes's classic description of "rewritten Bible": "In order to anticipate questions, and to solve problems in advance, the midrashist inserts haggadic development into the biblical narrative" (*Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* [2nd ed.; StPB 4; Leiden: Brill, 1973] 95). More recently he reaffirms: "The aim [of 'Rewritten Bible type exegesis'] is expository, not

HTR 106:4 (2013) 373–402

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017816013000217 Published online by Cambridge University Press

aim or goal the interpretation of texts that are now part of the Hebrew Bible. At the same time, it is universally recognized that the authors of so-called rewritten Bible compositions exercised a substantial degree of freedom in their retelling. They clearly had their own interests, motives, and aims, distinct from those of the biblical narrative.[4] These interests (sometimes characterized as "ideological" in nature), in turn, determine the structure or literary shape of their work, including such basic elements as character, plot, scope, and narrative voice.[5] Thus, while it is constitutive for the genre or category that such works mainly follow the sequence and wording of the biblical text, they are not—and cannot be—identical to the latter in compositional form.[6] Every rewritten Bible composition is defined by its own retelling strategy or program.

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historical or theological" ("Bible Interpretation at Qumran," in *Yigael Yadin Memorial Volume* [ed. Amnon Ben-Tor et al.; ErIsr 20; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1989] 184*–91*, at 188*). Cf. Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible?," esp. 172–73 and 182–83; Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 43–44.

[4] "[T]he rewriting of the Bible was carried out in the Second Temple period largely to convey ideological messages" (Bernstein, "Rewritten Bible?," 193). On the distinction between exegesis and ideology, see Moshe J. Bernstein, "4Q252: From Re-Written Bible to Biblical Commentary," *JJS* 45 (1994) 1–27, at 1–2; but cf. the important caveat of Kugel: "[E]ven in cases of blatantly ideological interpretations, it is usually quite difficult to decide whether a given interpreter set out to patrol all of Scripture in search of a place to 'plant' an expression of his own ideology, or whether, on the contrary, faced with a particular exegetical stimulus in the biblical text—an unusual word, an apparent incongruity, or the like—the interpreter came up with an explanation that, in one way or another, also reflected his own ideology or the issues of the day. For these reasons, it seems best to leave aside any distinction between 'pure' and other forms of exegesis" (*Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998] 21–22; cf. idem, *In Potiphar's House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts* [San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990] 248–51); Molly M. Zahn, *Rethinking Rewritten Scripture: Composition and Exegesis in the 4QReworked Pentateuch Manuscripts* (STDJ 95; Leiden: Brill, 2011) 14–15 n. 34; and Alexander Samely, *The Interpretation of Speech in the Pentateuchal Targums: A Study of Method and Presentation in Targumic Exegesis* (TSAJ 27; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1993) 82–85.

[5] Cf. Devorah Dimant: "The functions of the biblical materials in works considered as 'rewritten Bible', are defined in relation to their role within the compositional structure. . . . While the implicit quotations are reworked in a way as to preserve their essential lexical and syntactical structure, in the expansions the author is free to shape them according to the narrative plot and his own aims. It is often done by adding details to a general picture or group which figured in the original context" ("Use and Interpretation of Mikra in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* [ed. Martin J. Mulder and Harry Sysling; CRINT 2/1; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1988] 379–419, at 403, 406).

[6] George J. Brooke: "[I]t can generally be said that Rewritten Bible texts are those which closely follow their scriptural base text and which clearly display an editorial intention that is other than or supplementary to that of the text being altered" ("Rewritten Bible," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea* Scrolls [ed. Lawrence H. Shiffman and James C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000] 2:777–81, at 778). VanderKam speaks of works that "exhibit both adherence and yet a certain independence from a scriptural text" ("Wording," 42). On this dialectical relationship, see further Thomas Willi's description of the "gehorsame Unbotmäßigkeit der Auslegung" (*Die Chronik als Auslegung: Untersuchungen zur literarischen Gestaltung der historischen Überlieferung Israels* [FRLANT 106; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972] 54).

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How then are we to construe the relationship between exegesis and the broader compositional aims of such literary activity?[7] How do literary works with their own plot, aims, and structure function as "exegesis," or what does it mean to describe them as "interpretation"? Stated otherwise, is rewritten Bible itself a form of interpretation, or does it just contain interpretation? I take this to be a crucial question with respect to understanding "rewritten Bible" as a form of literary and exegetical production in antiquity.

This question regarding the relationship between exegesis and composition has important implications for understanding the concept of "exegetical function" in rewritten Bible. The already classic works of Geza Vermes and James Kugel illustrate vividly the extent to which a specific textual or conceptual difficulty in the biblical text can be identified as the formal stimulus—the exegetical "trigger"—for expansions of all sorts.[8] But formal stimuli on the word or passage level fall well short of accounting for the genesis of a work like *Jubilees* or the Temple Scroll. The word- or verse-centered approach must therefore be combined with a broader compositional perspective if we are to come fully to terms with "exegetical function" in rewritten Bible. To be sure, identifying the specific textual origin of an exegetical tradition or motif, on the one hand, and describing the composition and aims of a work as a whole, on the other, can be conceived of as two separate types of inquiry.[9] Yet examples of "rewritten Bible" are not merely compilations or anthologies of exegetical tradition. They are, instead, full-fledged literary works in their own right, each with its own distinct profile and its own specific compositional aims, and these aims determine—to different degrees in different cases—how the authors select and shape the exegetical material. For that reason, we would be wise to resist the impulse to decouple the question of exegetical function and that of compositional aim.[10]

[7] See the superb treatment of this question in Reinhard G. Kratz, "Die Suche nach Identität in der nachexilischen Theologiegeschichte: Zur Hermeneutik des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes und ihrer Bedeutung für das Verständnis des Alten Testaments," in *Das Judentum im Zeitalter des Zweiten Tempels* (ed. idem; FAT 42; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004) 157–80, esp. 174–75; and T. Willi, *Die Chronik als Auslegung*, 54–56, 66–68, 132–89, esp. 149, 152–53, 166, 169, 177–78; see also Odil Hannes Steck, *Die Prophetenbücher und ihr theologisches Zeugnis* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996) 157–58. For an alternative description of this relationship under the dual rubrics of exegesis and authorization, see Najman, *Seconding Sinai*, 45. By this account, the literary activity of rewriting is ultimately an authority-conferring strategy, a means of authorizing interpretations. Cf. also Michael Segal, "Between Bible and Rewritten Bible," in *Biblical Interpretation at Qumran* (ed. Matthias Henze; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005) 10–28, at 11–12.

[8] "Ancient biblical interpretation is an interpretation of verses not stories" (Kugel, *Traditions,* 24).

[9] As reflected in Kugel's formulation: "Exegetical motifs . . . were the very fabric of ancient biblical interpretation. Individual authors may have put their own stamp on the motifs that they inherited, and even the choice to include or not include a given motif may reflect the tastes, ideology, or other particulars of a specific author. But the motifs themselves constituted the raw material out of which most ancient retellings and commentaries were made" (*Traditions*, 28).

[10] A point also emphasized by Dimant: "But here lies another pitfall; to set out from unresolved difficulties of a given biblical episode in order to review the solutions offered to them in later writings is to look for common interpretative aims. Such an investigation usually entails playing down or disregarding the specific function of a biblical text in individual compositions" ("Use and Interpretation of Mikra," 379).

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The pericope of the ravens in *Jubilees* 11 illustrates this point well. This relatively elaborate narrative expansion has proven resistant to resolution in terms of "exegetical function."[11] In a recent article, however, an attempt was made to demonstrate that an interpretive issue in the text of Genesis does indeed underlie the raven pericope in *Jubilees* 11.[12] In the view of Cory Crawford, the expansion represents a response to a perceived conflict between God's promises to Abram in Gen 15:7 "to give to you (לך) this land" and 15:18 "to your seed (לזרעך) shall I give this land from the River of Egypt to the Great River—the River Euphrates." The latter verse, he says, presents two problems: 1) Abram is "no longer explicitly included as an inheritor of 'this land'"; and 2) "the boundaries of 'this land' enclose a vast territory that no Israelite king, no 'seed' of Abraham, would ever control."[13] Crawford maintains that the author of *Jubilees* attempted to solve these difficulties by interpreting the promise in Gen 15:18 as a description of a past event, understanding the verse to mean "I have given this land to your method of sowing."[14] The raven episode prevents the conclusion that the promise went unfulfilled by demonstrating that YHWH "had already given the land to Abram's literal 'seed,' when Abram 'returned' the ravens and invented the seed plow in order to allow his method of sowing, his זרע, to be used forever after in the land of all the peoples from the Euphrates to the Nile."[15]

There are, however, major difficulties with this account. The first arises from the fact that *Jubilees* 11 clearly locates the raven episode during Abraham's youth in Mesopotamia, not Canaan; "the land" in question is explicitly identified as "the land of the Chaldeans" (11.21).[16] If this story in *Jubilees* is intended to demonstrate that God had already, in fact, fulfilled his promise in Genesis 15 by giving the land of Canaan over to Abraham's sowing method, it neglects to indicate this crucial point.[17] Similarly, Abram's sowing the land of the Chaldeans in the raven

[11] Studies on this pericope have tended to focus on its relationship to traditions in other literature. These include Sebastian P. Brock, "Abraham and the Ravens: A Syriac Counterpart to Jubilees 11–12 and Its Implications," *JSJ* 9 (1978) 135–52; Michael Knowles, "Abram and the Birds in *Jubilees* 11: A Subtext for the Parable of the Sower?" *NTS* 41 (1995) 145–51; and Daniel J. Silver, "'Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore"'—Some Reflections on Jubilees, Chapter 11" in "*Open Thou Mine Eyes . . .": Essays on Aggadah and Judaica Presented to Rabbi William G. Braude on His Eightieth Birthday and Dedicated to His Memory* (ed. Herman Blumberg et al.; Hoboken, N.J.: KTAV, 1992) 255–72.

[12] Cory D. Crawford, "On the Exegetical Function of the Abraham/Ravens Tradition in *Jubilees* 11," *HTR* 97 (2004) 91–97.

[13] Ibid., 93.

[14] One may doubt whether זרע can mean "method of sowing" in the Hebrew Bible, as Crawford claims (cf. *HALOT* 282 as against the references in BDB 282 for the meaning "sowing"). But this is not necessarily consequential, since the author of *Jubilees* (or another early interpreter) may have understood it to mean such nonetheless.

[15] Crawford, "Exegetical Function," 94.

[16] Unless otherwise noted, all translations are from the second volume of *The Book of Jubilees* (ed. James C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; CSCO 510–511; Scriptores Aethiopici 87–88; Louvain: Peeters, 1989).

[17] Crawford cites approvingly S. P. Brock's conjecture that the seed-plow was "perhaps introduced from [Mesopotamia] into Syria and Palestine (where it is still used) already in antiquity" (Brock,

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pericope does not actually help with the problem of the geographical extent of the land promise in Gen 15:18, since even that passage does not include Mesopotamia but stops short at the Euphrates.

Moreover, the rest of the book of *Jubilees* makes clear that the author does not recognize a contradiction between land promises to Abra(ha)m and those to his descendants, nor does one find any evidence that agricultural sowing indicates possession for the author.[18] Like Genesis, *Jubilees* continually affirms that God promised to give the land of Canaan to both Abraham and his descendents.[19] Indeed, in the actual treatment of Genesis 15 in *Jubilees* 14, the tension perceived by Crawford stands exactly as it does in the biblical text:

> 7 He said to him: "I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you the land of the Canaanites to occupy forever and to become God for you and your descendants after you." 8 He said: "Lord, Lord, how will I know that I will inherit (it)?"[20] (*Jub*. 14.7–8 // Gen 15:7)

> 18 On that day the Lord concluded a covenant with Abram with these words: "To your descendants I will give this land from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the Euphrates River: the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Phakorites, the Hivites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." (*Jub*. 14.18 // Gen 15:18)

Abraham himself declares in *Jub.* 22.27, "The most high God is the God of all and Creator of everything, who brought me from Ur of the Chaldeans to give me this land in order that I should possess it forever and raise up holy descendants so that they may be blessed forever." If there is a conceptual conflict between Abraham and his descendants possessing the land, the book of *Jubilees* shows no concern to reconcile this tension.[21] In sum, though

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"Abraham and the Ravens," 140 n. 118; Crawford, "Exegetical Function," 94). It is possible to argue, of course, that the author of *Jubilees* presumed a Palestinian readership possessing first-hand acquaintance with the agricultural methods of the region and therefore felt no need to draw this obvious inference. Still, if the raison d'être of the story is to show how the Lord gave the land of promise to Abraham's "seed/sowing," the absence of Canaan itself from the pericope strikes one as a rather glaring omission.

[18] See, in a slightly different connection, the reflections of Jon D. Levenson and Kevin Madigan: "As far as the Hebrew Bible goes, it would be most unwise to make a sharp division between Abraham and his descendants as the recipient of the promise" (*Resurrection: The Power of God for Jews and Christians* [New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009] 211).

[19] *Jub.* 1.7; 13.1–3, 20–21; 14.7, 18; 15.10; 17.3; 19.9; 22.27–30.

[20] In both Genesis and *Jubilees*, Abram clearly understands this as a future promise, not as a past accomplishment.

[21] On the importance of the promises within the reception of the Pentateuch in Second Temple Judaism, see especially Kratz, "Friend of God, Brother of Sarah, and Father of Isaac: Abraham in the Hebrew Bible and in Qumran," in *The Dynamics of Language and Exegesis at Qumran* (ed. Devorah Dimant and Reinhard G. Kratz; FAT 2/35; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 79–105, at 94–101; cf. idem, " 'Abraham, mein Freund'. Das Verhältnis von inner- und ausserbiblischer Schriftauslegung," in *Erzväter in der biblischen Tradition. Festschrift für Matthias Köckert* (ed. Anselm C. Hagedorn and Henrik Pfeiffer; BZAW 400; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009) 115–36, at 128–32, with literature.

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Crawford believes that "the cryptic narrative . . . can be decoded as an exegetical reconciliation of various promises that Yahweh made to Abram,"[22] *Jubilees* does not reconcile the alleged contradiction(s) and does not seem interested in the problem elsewhere. While Crawford has rightly sought an exegetical trigger within the biblical text, the pericope has yet to receive an adequate explanation from the standpoint of formal exegetical stimuli on the word or verse level.

Upon closer examination, it becomes clear that this story was not composed as a solution to an exegetical problem in a single verse or passage. Rather, the narrative is a complex and highly learned interpretive response not only to textual and intertextual problems but also to possibilities latent within the text of Genesis when read within the context of a broader corpus of interrelated traditions and along its hermeneutic contours.

The present study undertakes a reappraisal of the "exegetical function" of the Abram/ravens story in the book of *Jubilees*, with a view toward the wider issues of understanding "exegetical function" in rewritten scripture compositions more broadly. After examining the construction of *Jubilees* 11, its constituent components, and its sources, the study turns attention to the literary function of the narrative and its place within the book as a whole. The important role the pericope plays within a broader compositional strategy demands consideration alongside genetic factors, I submit, in any attempt to describe the "exegetical function" of the story. The complex way this text functions as exegesis is directly related to both considerations, genetic as well as poetic. Indeed, these complementary concerns prove essential in light of the character of scriptural rewriting as a mode of literary production. Moreover, the analysis will demonstrate that this narrative follows from existing trajectories and impulses of traditionary development within its scriptural sources, echoing similar reflexes throughout *Jubilees*. To this extent, rewritten scripture—at least as embodied in the Abram/ravens story—represents a further extension of the exegetical processes at work in the history of scriptural redaction and composition. All of these considerations deeply complicate and enrich the notion of "exegetical function" in such texts, while shedding important light on the concerns of those who produced them.

2.0 *Jubilees* 11 and Its Sources: The Anatomy of a Rewritten Narrative

2.1 Gen 15 and Jubilees 11

There can be little doubt that the raven narrative in *Jubilees* is somehow related to Genesis 15, as others have already recognized.[23] Genesis 15:11 in particular

[22] Crawford, "Exegetical Function," 95.

[23] Ibid., 92; Knowles, "Abram and the Birds," 146; *Book of Jubilees* (ed. VanderKam) 2:46–47.

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seems evident behind the expansion: וירד העיט על הפגרים וישב אתם אברם. The nature of Abram's action(s) in this cryptic verse and in relation to the even more enigmatic context is obscured by philological ambiguity in the final clause (וישב אתם אברם). In antiquity this phrase was interpreted variously to mean that Abram "frightened them [the birds] away,"[24] "sat with them [the pieces],"[25] "turned them [the birds] away,"[26] "brought them [the pieces] back to life,"[27] "answered them,"[28] or "struck them [the birds] repeatedly."[29] Indeed, many interpreters capitalized on the polyvalence of the consonantal text and read it multiple ways simultaneously.[30]

[24] Construing the consonants as וַיַּשֵּׁב אוֹתָם (in Tiberian representation, C נש״ב [Here and in the following notes I am using modern linguistic convention only for the purpose of descriptive precision. This by no means implies that ancient interpreters thought in precisely such categories.]): Aquila ἀπεσόβησε(ν); Rashi וישב לשון נשיבה והפרחה, כמו רוחו יַשֵּׁב (תהלים קמז יח); so BDB 674: "*and he drove them away* [perh. orig. *blow away*, drive away by blowing, or by a sound like blowing]"; cf. *HALOT* 728 (1) "cause to blow"; (2) "frighten away"; see also James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968) 174.

[25] וַיֵּשֶׁב אִתָּם (G יש״ב): 𝔊 καὶ συνεκάθισεν αὐτοῖς. Frankel attributes this to the translator's misreading of the Hebrew (*Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta* [Leipzig: Vogel, 1841] 214; see also idem, *Ueber den Einfluss der palästinischen Exegese auf die alexandrinische Hermeneutik* [Leipzig: Barth, 1851] 13; Peter Katz, "Notes on the Septuagint," *JTS* 47 [1946] 166–68, at 167), while Prijs thinks it is rather to be understood as a deliberate "aggadic interpretation" on the part of the translator (*Jüdische Tradition*, 73; cf. W. Emery Barnes, "The Recovery of the Septuagint," *JTS* 36 [1935] 123–31, at 129).

[26] וַיָּשֶׁב אוֹתָם (C שו״ב): 𝔠^{o} אתיב (variant: אפרח "made to fly away").

[27] וַיָּשֶׁב אוֹתָם (C שו״ב): *Gen. Rab.* 44.16 אמר ר׳ עזריה לכשיעשו בניך פגרים בלא גירים ובלא עצמות זכותך עומדת להם. Cf. Abraham Geiger: "Abraham brachte sie, die zerschnittenen Theile zurück, d. h. er belebte sie wieder" (*Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der inneren Entwicklung des Judentums* [2nd ed.; Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Madda, 1928] 458; [1st ed.: Breslau: Julius Hainauer, 1857]). See further Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909/1925) 1:236; 7:229.

[28] וַיָּשֶׁב אוֹתָם (C שו״ב): *Apoc. Ab.* 14.9 "And I did what the angel had commanded me. And whatever [Azazel] said to me about the descent, I answered him not" (cf. *Apoc. Ab.* 14.4–14; R. Rubinkiewicz, *OTP* 1:696).

[29] וַיָּשֶׁב אוֹתָם (C שב״ב): 𝔖 ܘܗܘ ܡܚܐ ܒܗ ܥܕ ܕܐܬܟܪ "and he kept on striking it (sc., the bird [ריחא])" (cf. *Gen. Rab.* 44.16 in next note); Levy, *Wörterbuch*, 4:494 "abschneiden, abhauen, zerschlagen." See *b. Shabb.* 87a, which interprets Exod 19:8 וישב משה with the comments: דברים שמשבבין דעתו של אדם וכו׳ "Moses told the people things that shatter human understanding—i.e., he first proclaimed the punishments for disobedience to the law, and only then the reward for its fulfillment."

[30] *Gen. Rab.* 44.16 offers an interesting combination of multiple construals: וירד העיט על הפגרים ונו׳ אמר ר׳ אסי נסב אברהם מכושה והוה מכש להון ולא הוו מתכשין ואפעלפיכן וישב אתם אברם בתשבה. אמר ר׳ עזריה לכשיעשו בניך פגרים בלא גירים ובלא עצמות זכותך עומדת להם ("And the *ʿayiṭ* descended upon the corpses, etc." R. Assi said, "Abraham took a hoe and kept striking them but they were not smitten [cf. Jastrow's odd rendering "And Abraham took a knocker and tried to frighten them away by knocking but they minded not" (*Dictionary*, 678)], yet Abraham turned them away by repentance." R. Azariah said, "Whenever your sons are made corpses without sinews and without bones, your merit will stand for them"). Both interpretations understand the "bird of prey" (העיט) to symbolize the plurality of nations and the corpses to represent Israel. R. Assi's interpretation first reads וישב אתם as a derivative of שב״ב "to strike, smash" then as שו״ב "to turn away, repent." Although it is unclear, R. Azariah's interpretation may represent וָיָּשֶׁב (C שו״ב), Abraham "brought them back to life" by his merit. See further the extensive note

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The relatively elaborate account of Abram's actions against birds in *Jubilees* 11 contains several features similar to those of other early interpretations of the text of Gen 15:11.

> 18 When the time for planting seeds in the ground arrived, all of them went out together to guard the seed from the ravens. Abram—a child of 14 years—went out with those who were going out. 19 As a cloud of ravens came to eat the seed, Abram would run at them[31] before they could settle on the ground. He would shout at them before they could settle on the ground to eat the seed and would say: 'Do not come down; return to the place from which you came'! And they returned. 20 That day he did (this) to the cloud of ravens 70 times. Not a single raven remained in any of the fields where Abram was. 21 All who were with him in any of the fields would see him shouting: then all of the ravens returned (to their place). His reputation grew large throughout the entire land of the Chaldeans. 22 All who were planting seed came to him in this year, and he kept going with them until the seedtime came to an end. They planted their land and that year brought in enough food. So they ate and were filled. 23 In the first year of the fifth week [1891] Abram taught the people who made equipment for bulls—the skillful woodworkers—and they made an implement above the ground, opposite the plow beam, so that one could place seed on it. The seed would then drop down from it onto the end of the plow and be hidden in the ground; and they would no longer be afraid of the ravens. 24 They made (something) like this above the ground on every plow beam. They planted seed, and all the land did as Abram told them. So they were no longer afraid of the birds. (*Jub*. 11.18–24)

There are, of course, many elements here that one does not find elsewhere in the interpretive traditions relating to Gen 15 ("ravens" in particular, the invention of seed-plow machines, Chaldean farmers, etc.). But like other texts and versions of Genesis 15, *Jubilees* 11 has Abram turn away (שו״ב) the descending (יר״ד) birds by responding to them (שו״ב C "to answer") or by shouting at them (נש״ב?).[32] Moreover, here too the action is construed as recurrent: Abram must repeat it 70 times on this single day (compare *Gen. Rab.* 44.16 והוה מכש להון ולא הוו מתכשין;

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in *Midrash Bereshit Rabba* (ed. Julius Theodor and Chanoch Albeck; Berlin: n.p., 1902/1903–1935/1936; repr., Jerusalem: Shalem, 1996) 1:438. On the relationship of this text in *Gen. Rab.* to the rendering of Gen 15:11 in ס, see Y. Maori, תרגום הפשיטתא לתורה והפרשנות היהודית הקדומה (The Peshitta Version of the Pentateuch and Early Jewish Exegesis) (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1995) 233. For additional cases of variation between שו״ב and שב״ב in rabbinic literature, see Victor Aptowitzer, *Das Schriftwort in der rabbinischen Literatur* (Vienna: Alfred Hodler, 1906–1915; repr., New York: KTAV, 1970), xiv.

[31] Charles: "and Abram ran to meet them before they settled on the ground" (*APOT* 2:30); M. Goldmann: וירץ אברם לקראתם ("ספר יובלים" ["The Book of Jubilees"] in הספרים החיצונים [The Apocryphal Books] [ed. Abraham Kahana; 2 vols.; Tel Aviv: Masada, 1959] 1:219–313). Compare 1 Sam 17:48.

[32] Note also the meaning of the verb עיט (G and C) "to shout at, fall upon with shouting, scream at" (*HALOT* 817).

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Gen 15:11 ʕ ⲙⲁ ⲁⲃⲣⲁⲙ ⲁⲃⲁⲧⲉⲛ)![33] Thus, it is clear that *Jubilees* 11 relates to Genesis 15 on some level.[34]

In its present narrative context in *Jubilees*, however, the raven story of chapter 11 has nothing to do with the covenant between the pieces of Gen 15. Indeed, the latter episode receives its own treatment in *Jub.* 14.7–20, without extensive exegetical embellishments. *Jub.* 14.12, reproduced here, corresponds to Gen 15:11: "Birds kept coming down on what was spread out,[35] but Abram kept preventing them and not allowing the birds to touch them." The demonic cloud of ravens is nowhere in sight. Instead, *Jubilees* offers a subdued retelling of the biblical text with a few minor adjustments. Besides the (collective) singular העיט represented by the plural "birds" (= הצפרים?),[36] *Jub.* 14.12 adds only the notion of iterativity present in other ancient construals of this text, as well as the note that Abram prevented the birds from even touching the carcasses—a transparent halakhic addition.[37] The main concern behind this addition is to prevent the defilement of the

[33] It is possible that another construal of וישב is made fruitful here with respect to the agricultural motifs (farming, plowing) in *Jub.* 11, namely, a derivation from שׁב״ב C "to cut, strike, dig" (Levy, *Wörterbuch*, 4:494; Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 1510). Per Jastrow, the nominal derivative שִׁיבָּא refers to "an incision or groove" (that a plow makes in the soil; *Dictionary*, 1556); cf. *b. Baba Batra* 36b כל שיבא ושיבא דכרבא ליעול בה "Let every incision that the plough makes go into the soil" (Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 1556; Levy, *Wörterbuch*, 4:494). Similarly, the implement Abram uses to "strike" the birds in *Gen. Rab.* 44:16 is apparently a "hoe" (see Levy s. מכוש מכושה "Schlägel, Hacke" [3:116]). Given this usage, one may cautiously suggest that the phrase וירד העיט על הפגרים וישב אתם אברם was interpreted as something like, "The birds kept coming down, so Abram had them (the farmers) plow grooves (in the ground for the seed)." As noted above, little agreement obtains among ancient interpreters about the antecedent of אתם due to the superficial lack of concord between the (collective) singular העיט and the plural pronoun (compare ʕ, which brings the prepositional phrase into concord with the sg. "bird"): does אתם refer to the bird(s), the corpse-pieces, or perhaps another unnamed party? *Apoc. Ab.* 13 understands the singular "unclean bird" to designate Azazel himself. Rabbinic interpretation, on the other hand, sees the sg./pl. shift as an indication that the bird symbolizes the plurality of the nations unified against Israel (see *Gen. Rab.* 44.15–16; 𝔗$^{N, P-J}$).

[34] For additional evidence of the influence of Gen 15 throughout the composition of *Jubilees*, see Atar Livneh, "Judgment and Revenge: The Exodus Account in *Jubilees* 48," *RevQ* 98 (2011) 161–75, at 166 n. 12.

[35] For the phrase and proposed emendations, see *Book of Jubilees* (ed. VanderKam), 2:84 n.

[36] Cf. 𝔊 ὄρνεα = צפורים in v.10 (𝔊 and 𝔲; cf. *Book of Jubilees* [ed. VanderKam], 2:84; Katz, "Notes on the Septuagint," 67).

[37] This is part of a constellation of additions concerning ritual details in vv. 9–10 (altar, ritual slaughter, blood rite, libation, etc.) that serve similar ends. "Thereby, Abraham's procedure as described in Genesis 15 becomes, unambiguously and emphatically, a sacrifice" (Christopher T. Begg, "Rereadings of the 'Animal Rite' of Genesis 15 in Early Jewish Narratives," *CBQ* 50 [1988] 36–46, at 38). On the supposed "scarecrow" (כלה עורב) apparatus on the Jerusalem temple mentioned in *m. Mid.* 4.6 (cf. Josephus*, Jewish War* 5:244; *Temple Scroll* 46:1–4; *'Abot R. Nat.* B 39 [Schechter 105]), see the discussion in Saul Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950) 173–77; and Yadin, *Temple Scroll*, 1:271–72. The additional clause in *Jub.* 14.12 may also reflect the influence of 2 Sam 21:10. This passage describes the valiant deeds of another defender-against-birds, Rizpah bat Ayyah, who protected the impaled corpses of her two sons and five other descendents of Saul: she "took sackcloth and spread it on a rock for herself, from the beginning of harvest until rain fell on them from the heavens; she did not allow the birds of the air to come on the bodies

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sacrificial pieces by the unclean bird, since *Jubilees* (unlike Genesis) has Abraham complete the sacrifice and God accept it (v. 19): "It passed (along), and Abram offered what had been spread out, the birds, their (cereal) offering, and their libation. The fire devoured them."[38] According to *Jub.* 14.1 (cf. 11.15 and Gen 15:2, 7), Abram is 88 years old when he wards off these birds. This is a far cry from the "lad of 14 years" (*Jub.* 11.18) who turned back the ravens in Mesopotamia.

According to Jubilees, then, the bird episode in Genesis 15 / *Jubilees* 14 and the raven incident in *Jubilees* 11 are two completely different episodes in Abraham's life: one during his youth in Chaldea and the other much later in life in Canaan. But if the raven story derives in some way from Genesis 15, why has it been separated from its source and transferred to another location?[39] By what itinerary and to what end has it been associated with Abram's youth?

2.2 Epistle of Jeremiah *53–55*

One explanation for the transfer is that suggested by Klaus Berger and developed further by Crawford. Berger proposed that "the origin of the raven tale and the tradition of the destruction of idols by fire connected to it could lie in the Epistle of Jeremiah 53."[40] In Crawford's opinion, this is not only possible but "likely."[41] The relevant verses in the Epistle of Jeremiah read as follows:

> 53 For neither can they [idols] set up a king in the land, nor can they give rain unto men. 54 Neither can they judge their own cause, nor redress a wrong, being unable: for they are as the crows between heaven and earth (ὥσπερ γὰρ κορῶναι ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς).[42] 55 For even when fire falls upon the house of gods of wood, or overlaid with gold or silver, their priests will flee away and escape, but they themselves shall be burnt asunder like beams.[43]

(ולא נתנה עוף השמים לנוח עליהם) by day, or the wild animals by night." Note that these events happened, according to 2 Sam 21:9, "in the first days of the harvest, the beginning of the barley harvest" (בימי קציר בראשונים תחילת קציר שערים), and that her protective watch continued until the rains.

[38] Compare 𝔠[N] היידין הוא טייסא דן הוא טייסא מסאבא מסאבא עופא דין הוא טייסא מסאבא ("What is this bird-of-prey? This is the unclean bird-of-prey—that is, an unclean bird"); cf. 𝔠[P-J]; *Apoc. Ab.* 13.2. On the complex text of Neofiti here, see B. Barry Levy, *Targum Neophyti 1: A Textual Study* (2 vols.; Studies in Judaism; Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1986–1987) 1:136–39.

[39] On the "traveling" or "transfer" of exegetical motifs, see Kugel, *In Potiphar's House*, 255–56; idem, *Traditions of the Bible*, 27–28.

[40] "Der Ursprung der Rabenlegende und der Tradition von der anschließenden Götzenverbrennung könnte in Ep Jer 53f liegen" (Klaus Berger, *Das Buch der Jubiläen* [JSHRZ 2.3; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1981] 288 n. 11e); similarly Kratz, "'Öffene seinen Mund und seine Ohren': Wie Abraham Hebräisch lernte," in *Das Judentum im Zeitalter des Zweiten Tempels* (ed. idem; FAT 42; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004) 340–51, at 345; idem, "Der Brief des Jeremia," in *Das Buch Baruch; Der Brief des Jeremia; Zusätze zu Ester und Daniel* (ed. Odil H. Steck, Reinhard G. Kratz, and Ingo Kottsieper; ATD-Apokryphen 5; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998) 69–108, at 82, 106.

[41] Crawford, "Exegetical Function," 96.

[42] For בין השמים ובין הארץ as a position of helplessness, compare 2 Sam 18:9; Zech 5:9 (over against Ezek 8:3; 1 Chron 21:16).

[43] Translation of C. J. Ball, "Epistle of Jeremy," in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (ed. Robert H. Charles; 2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913) 1:596–611, at 1:607–8.

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According to Berger, Crawford, and others, this obscure passage is the source of the connection between the idolatry motif and the raven story. Indeed, in their view the raven legend found in *Jubilees* and other (e.g., Syriac) sources originally arose as an explanation of this obscure text in the Epistle of Jeremiah.[44] Assuming a fourth- to second-century date based on the supposed allusion to Ep Jer in 2 Macc 2:1–3, Crawford thinks it "likely that this text was in existence before *Jubilees*, and . . . may have been the common source of the tradition witnessed both in the Syriac sources and in *Jubilees*."[45] Whether the author of 2 Maccabees actually alludes to Ep Jer is problematic, however, and the dating of the book is therefore quite uncertain.[46] Yet, even supposing an early date, the likelihood that this text is the source for the tradition in *Jubilees* depends primarily on the strength of the connection itself.

Epistle of Jeremiah 54, if the text as we now possess it is sound, compares idols to helpless (or useless) crows.[47] This is by no means the picture of the ravens in *Jubilees* 11. These latter birds are a highly effective force of destruction, endangering the lives of the entire population.[48] But more importantly, *Jubilees* does not compare idols to ravens (or vice-versa) at all. To be sure, Abram's turn from

[44] "If we presume, as seems likely, that the verses from the Epistle of Jeremiah became associated with Abrahamic traditions, then we can also hypothesize that the ravens tradition, of which reflections are seen in *Jubilees* and the Syriac literature, arose as an explanation of the odd use of the word 'crow' and became part and parcel of the patriarch's discovery of monotheism and rejection of idols. The difficulty we encounter is discerning whether or not Genesis 15 had a part to play in the pre-*Jubilees* form of the ravens tradition. It is possible that *Jubilees* itself educed the link between Genesis 15 and the ravens tradition by using the latter to illuminate the former" (Crawford, "Exegetical Function," 96).

[45] Here Crawford follows the dating of Carey A. Moore (*Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah: The Additions* [AB 44; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977] 327). Compare also the reflections on dating in Kratz, "Der Brief des Jeremia," 81–84.

[46] "[T]he author of 2 Maccabees 2 knew of other Jeremiah traditions, so one cannot be sure his source was the letter of Jeremiah" (VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001] 135).

[47] Ball thinks the text is not in order and suggests it originally read כעבים "like clouds" rather than כערבים "like crows" reflected in the Greek and Syriac translations of the Epistle ("Epistle of Jeremy," 607–8). Though Ball finds the image of the crows inappropriate to the context, compare Hartom's explanation: "Perhaps he compares idols to this bird [a crow] precisely for the reason that it is a loathsome bird which is of no use to people and which cries out loudly and does nothing at all!" He continues, "If we suppose that [the author] knew the LXX or the [Hebrew] version from which the translation was made, we are justified to suppose that he is alluding to the indecent disposition which is attributed to this bird there" (Hartom, "אגרת ירמיהו" [Epistle of Jeremiah] in הספרים החיצונים [The Apocryphal Books] [ed. Abraham Kahana; 2 vols.; Tel Aviv: Masada, 1959] 1:337–49, at 347 n. 53). He refers to Jer 3:2, the only other occurrence of the word "crow" in the LXX; cf. Ball, "Epistle of Jeremy," 608 n. 55.

[48] *Jub.* 11.11–13: "Then Prince Mastema sent ravens and birds to eat the seed which would be planted in the ground and to destroy the land in order to rob mankind of their labors. Before they plowed in the seed, the ravens would pick (it) from the surface of the ground. 12 . . . [T]he ravens and birds reduced them to poverty and ate their seed. 13 The years began to be unfruitful due to the birds. They would eat all the fruit of the trees from the orchards. During their time, if they were able to save a little of all the fruit of the earth, it was with great effort."

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idolatry and the raven incident are closely related in *Jubilees*: both events are explicitly noted to have occurred when Abram was fourteen years of age (11.16 "two weeks of years"; 11.18 "fourteen years"), and the raven episode is flanked on both sides by the idol motif (11.16–17; 12.1–21). The point of the connection, however, is not that idols are like birds. Rather, the ravens and the idols are connected in *Jubilees* only insofar as both are weapons of demonic forces in their effort to corrupt humankind.[49] In other words, the nature of the bird/idol connection differs entirely in both texts, leaving no clear evidence of a literary relationship between them. The proximity of raven/crow imagery to the burning of an idol's temple in both texts, though striking at first glance, becomes less convincing upon further reflection—particularly since the fire motif has entirely different textual grounds in each.[50] Thus, the dependence of *Jubilees* on Ep Jer appears tenuous, even if the Epistle was composed as early as the third or second century B.C.E.

If, however, the primary source of the bird/idol connection in *Jubilees* was unlikely to have been the Epistle of Jeremiah, why, in fact, was the raven motif, ostensibly related to Genesis 15, associated with Abram's boyhood conversion?[51] It seems to me that a clear answer is found in the Gideon narrative.

2.3 Jubilees *11–12 and the Gideon Narrative*

There are, first of all, obvious surface similarities between *Jubilees* 11 and the Gideon narrative in Judges 6–8, and several notable correspondences between key aspects of their respective plotlines are clear. Consider Judg 6:3–6, which serves as a prologue to the Gideon story:

> 3 And it would happen that when the Israelites had done their sowing (והיה אם זרע) Midian, Amalek, and the Sons of the East would come up against

[49] "*Jubilees* connects the demons/evil spirits with many kinds of sin, but bloodshed and idolatry are prominently consistent among them. In general the demons are agents of Mastema in causing evil of every sort in human society—evils that remind one of what happened before the flood" (VanderKam, "Demons," 345; cf. 340–41, 347).

[50] Isa 47:13–15 (cf. 50:11; Jer 43:12) clearly lies behind the idol burning in Ep Jer 55. Idol polemic passages such as this also resonate within *Jub.* 12.12–14, but there the burning motif is triggered primarily by the text of Gen 11:28 (וימת הרן . . . באור כשדים). See Kugel: "The original purpose of 'Haran Perished in the Furnace' was to clarify the troubling biblical assertion" (*Traditions*, 268–69; see discussion at 267–70). The fact that it is organic to the text of Genesis suggests that the fire motif was not introduced by *Jubilees* on the basis of an external source such as Ep Jer.

[51] There are clear reasons why Abram's conversion was located in his youth. While it is a biblical given that the forefathers practiced idolatry (Josh 24:2 "In olden times, your ancestors—Terah, father of Abraham and father of Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and they worshiped other gods" [ויעבדו אלהים אחרים]), *Jubilees* makes clear that Abram rejected this patrimony at an early age and thereby absolves him of guilt (*Book of Jubilees* [ed. VanderKam], 2:47). The timing of this event at the end of seventh Jubilee is clearly also significant for the author: "During the patriarch's youth, a period for which there are no biblical givens, the writer locates most events in the final or seventh year of year weeks" (VanderKam, "Studies in the Chronology of the Book of Jubilees," in *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (ed. idem; JSJSup 62; Leiden: Brill, 2000) 522–24, at 534–35.

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> them; 4 and they would encamp against them and would destroy the produce of the land (וישחיתו את יבול הארץ) all the way to Gaza, and leave no means of sustenance (ולא ישאירו מחיה) in Israel, not a sheep or an ox or an ass. 5 For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, swarming as thick as locusts (כדי ארבה לרב); they and their camels were innumerable. Thus they would invade the land to destroy it (לשחתה). 6 Israel was reduced to utter poverty (וידל ישראל מאד; καὶ ἐπτώχευσεν Ισραηλ σφόδρα) by the Midianites, and the Israelites cried out to the Lord.

Compare *Jub.* 11.11–12:

> 11 Then Prince Mastema sent ravens and birds to eat the seed which would be planted in the ground and to destroy the land in order to rob mankind of their labors. Before they plowed in the seed, the ravens would pick (it) from the surface of the ground. 12 For this reason he named him Terah: because the ravens and birds reduced them to poverty and ate their seed.

We thus have two similar tales of oppression involving sowing seed and a destructive swarm of adversaries who consume the produce and "destroy the land," such that the people are "reduced to poverty." Moreover, this narrative of oppression is juxtaposed in both stories to a tale about the young protagonist deliverer (*Jub.* 11.16, 18; Judg 6:15) turning from idolatry and destroying a site of his father's idolatrous worship at night (*Jub.* 12.12; Judg 6:25–32).

More subtle, but no less intriguing, are a number of verbal connections between the narratives. For instance, in Judg 7:3 God instructs Gideon to announce to his men, "Let anybody who is timid and fearful turn back and make like a bird (ישב ויצפר) from Mount Gilead." Even more curious is the phrase בצור עורב noted as the place where Gideon, after his victory, slays the first of the two generals, Oreb/Raven and Ze'ev/Wolf (7:25; cf. Isa 10:26 → Isa 9:3). This phrase, בצור עורב, is usually translated as a place name "at the Rock of Oreb" or "at the Rock of Raven." But the form itself could also quite easily be construed in connection with the verb צר״ר "be hard pressed, afflicted," as indeed the Old Greek translator of Isaiah understood the phrase in 𝔊-Isa 10:26 (בצור עורב = ἐν τόπῳ θλίψεως "in the Place of Affliction").[52]

We thus find a general similarity of plot conflict, with conspicuous verbal correspondences, as well as several verbal curiosities, such as the metaphorical comparison of men with birds and a phrase with the potential to be realized as "the affliction of ravens." Viewing them together, some kind of connection between the story of Gideon in Judges 6–8 and the Abram/Ravens tale in *Jubilees* 11 would

[52] Given these existing connections, it might be less of a stretch than first appears to note that Judg 8:4 ("And Gideon went to the Jordan and crossed [עובר]—he and the three hundred men with him, exhausted yet pursuing [עיפים ורדפים]") is reflected in 𝔊 as πεινῶντες καὶ διώκοντες (רעבים ורדפים). This latter reading, with the simple transposition of consonants (ערבים > רעבים), could make for a productive connection to Abram and the Chaldeans' common pursuit of ravens. See further notes 78 and 82 below.

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seem quite evident. But what is the nature of this literary association between Abraham and Gideon in *Jubilees*? Fascinating to note here are the numerous typological structures built into the presentation of Gideon in the Judges narrative itself—typological structures that serve above all to link Gideon and Abraham. An association between these two figures in the book of *Jubilees* is therefore by no means arbitrary. Indeed, upon closer examination it proves to represent a further link in an intertextual chain that is very much a part of the compositional development of these scriptural texts that serve as the source for *Jubilees*.

2.3.1 Narrative Analogies between Gideon and Abraham

The most obvious connection between Gideon and Abraham relates to the battle scene in each (Genesis 14 // Judges 7–8). The correspondences include:

1. The number of men: 318 for Abram and 300 for Gideon (Gen 14:14 // Judg 7:6). In both narratives, the point of this miniscule number is that the eventual victory is nothing short of miraculous and is accomplished solely by means of God's assistance. This is explicit in Judges: "The Lord said to Gideon, 'The troops with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand. Israel would only take the credit away from me, saying, "My own hand has delivered me" ' " (7:2; cf. 7:4). In Genesis, this same point is made by means of the connection between Genesis 14 and 15 (אליעזר, literally "My God is help," and numerically = 318 [200/ר + 7/ז + 70/ע + 10/י + 30/ל + 1/א]).[53]
2. The course of the battle: both follow the same sequence. Abram "divides" his 318 men "at night," "strikes" the enemy and "pursues after them" a great distance: ויחלק עלהם לילה הוא ועבדיו ויכם וירדפם עד חובה אשר משמאל לדמשק (Gen 14:15). So also Gideon: ויחץ את שלש מאות אנשים (Judg 7:16); וירדפו אחרי מדין (7:23; cf. Isa 10:26: כמכת מדין בצור עורב).
3. The location: a valley (עמק) provides the setting of both stories. This is called "the Valley of the King" (עמק שוה הוא עמק המלך) in Genesis 14:17, a notable detail given that the Gideon narrative as a whole turns on the question of kingship (see Judg 8:18, 22–23).
4. Amalek: both battles somehow involve Amalekites. In Gen 14:7 "they [the four allied kings eventually defeated by Abraham] smote the entire field of the Amalekites" (כל שדי העמלקי). In Judg 6:33; 7:12 the Amalekites are among those struck down by Gideon's forces.
5. The aftermath: in Genesis 14, Melchizedek, king of Salem/שלם, meets Abram along the way of his return from the battle and brings out bread (14:18: הוציא לחם). "Bread" is precisely what Gideon seeks after the battle,

[53] *Gen. Rab.* 43.2 (Theodor-Albeck 42.2 [1:416–17, consult note]; 44.9 [1:431–32]); *b. Ned.* 32a. On the numerous connections between Gen 14 and 15, see John H. Sailhamer, "A Study in Interbiblical Interpretation," *TJ* 10 (1989) 33–48, at 45–48; repr. in idem, *An Introduction to Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1995) 298–311, at 309–11.

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but is not given (Judg 8:5; 15: תנו . . . לחם לעם), for which he punishes the people of Succoth and Penuel according to his word after he "returns in peace" (Judg 8:9: שלום). Abram thereupon solemnly refuses the battle spoils as a model of virtuosity and faith (Gen 14:22–24). Gideon, by contrast, takes a portion of the Midianite plunder and makes of it a golden ephod that becomes the cause of great apostasy (Judg 8:24–27).[54]

Beyond these, there are several other minor connections one might note, such as the fact that both Abram and Gideon are dwelling near prominent trees at the time of the divine encounter—Abraham at "the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite" (אלוני ממרא האמרי; Gen 14:13; see also 13:18), Gideon at "the terebinth at Ofrah which belongs to Joash the Abiezrite" (האלה בעפרה אשר ליואש אבי העזרי; Judg 6:11). One might also note the prominence of שלום "peace" in the Gideon narrative (Judg 6:23–24 [note the name of his altar in v. 24: יהוה שלום]; 8:9); cf. Gen 14:18; 15:15. Also interesting is "the son of [Abraham's] house, Eliezer (אליעזר) in Genesis 15 and Gideon's own connection to Abiezer (אביעזר), repeatedly mentioned in the narrative (Judg 6:34; 6:11; 8:2; cf. 6:23–24).

The parallels extend beyond the battle narrative. Compare, for example, Abraham's divine visitation in Gen 18:1–8 with the visitation of the angel in Judges 6.

> 1 The LORD appeared to him (וירא אליו יהוה) by the terebinths of Mamre (באלני ממרא); he was sitting (והוא ישב) at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot. 2 Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them and he bowed to the ground 3 and he said, "My lords, if I have found favor in your sight (ויאמר אדני אם־נא מצאתי חן בעיניך), do not go on past your servant (אל־נא תעבר מעל עבדך). 4 Let a little water be brought; bathe your feet and recline under the tree (תחת העץ). 5 And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves; then go on—seeing that you have come your servant's way." They replied, "Do as you have said." 6 Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quick, three seahs of choice flour! Knead and make cakes (מהרי שלש סאים קמח סלת לושי ועשי עגות)!" 7 Then Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf, tender and choice, and gave it to a servant-boy, who hastened to prepare it (לעשות אתו). 8 He took curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared (אשר עשה) and set these before them (ויתן לפניהם); and he waited on them under the tree (תחת העץ) and they ate (ויאכלו). (Gen 18:1–8)

> 11 An angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth (וישב תחת האלה) at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite. His son Gideon was then beating out wheat inside a winepress in order to keep it safe from the Midianites. 12 The angel of the LORD appeared to him (וירא אליו מלאך יהוה) [. . .] 17 And he said to him, "If I have found favor in your sight (ויאמר אליו אם־נא מצאתי חן בעיניך), give me a sign that it is you who are speaking to me: 18 do not leave from here (אל־נא תמש מזה) until I come back to you

[54] On the parallels with the golden calf episode and with Jeroboam (1 Kgs 12:26–32), see Hava Shalom-Guy, "בין תיאור הרפרמה של ירבעם לפרשת העגל," *Shnaton* 16 (2006) 15–27.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017816013000217 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> and bring out my offering and place it before you (והנחתי לפניך)." And he answered, "I will stay until you return." 19 So Gideon went in and prepared a kid and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour (בא ויעש גדי־עזים ואיפת־קמח מצות).[55] He put the meat in a basket (סל) and poured the broth into a pot, and he brought them out to him under the terebinth (אל־תחת האלה) and he presented them. 20 the angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread, put them on yonder rock, and spill out the broth." He did so. 21 The angel of the LORD held out the staff that he carried, and touched the meat and the unleavened bread with its tip. A fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread (ותאכל את־הבשר ואת־המצות). And the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight. (Judg 6:11–12, 17–21)

It goes without saying that not all of these individual connections bear equal argumentative weight. Taken together, however, they make a rather strong case that the Gideon narrative is itself deliberately shaped in relation to Abraham.

2.3.2 Abraham, Gideon, and Psalm 110

One can observe the typological correspondence between Abraham and Gideon quite strikingly in another text as well, Psalm 110. This psalm contains the only mention of Melchizedek in the Hebrew Bible apart from Genesis 14. Moreover, on close examination, there are a number of intriguing features of the psalm's wording and imagery that suggest some kind of connection with Abraham traditions. This was well recognized in Jewish interpretation (see Rashi, *ad loc*, summarizing earlier tradition; cf. *b. Ned* 32b).

At the same time, there are other curious elements of the psalm that seem to point in the direction of Gideon. For instance, within the Hebrew Bible, only in the case of Gideon is God's election of a victorious ruler authenticated by, or even associated with, morning "dew" (טל), as depicted in Ps 110:3 (מרחם משחר לך טל ילדותך; cf. Judg 6:36–40, where טל occurs four times in as many verses). As A. Schenker has noted, once this connection is established, many other commonalities between Psalm 110 and Gideon become apparent, such as the mention of "youth" (Ps 110:3; Judg 6:15); of "smiting kings" (Ps 110:5; Judg 8:2; cf. 7:25); of a large number of corpses strewn across a great expanse of land (Ps 110:6: ידין בגוים מלא גויות מחץ ראש על ארץ רבה; Judg 8:10; cf. 7:22–24); of an "army" (called an עם) characterized by generosity (Ps 110:3; Judg 8:24–27; cf. 7:4–8); and, last but not least, of military victory associated with drinking water from a stream and lifting the head (Ps 110:6; Judg 7:4–8 with 8:28).[56]

[55] Note מצות in Gen 19:3 (Lot's banquet for the angels visiting Sodom, which mirrors and contrasts with Abraham's in the previous chapter).

[56] Adrian Schenker, "Critique textuelle ou littéraire au Ps 110(109) 3. Les initiatives de la Septante et de l'édition protomassorétique à la fin du 3e ou au 2e siècle," in *Un carrefour dans l'histoire de la Bible. Du texte à la théologie au IIe siècle avant J.-C.* (ed. Innocent Himbaza and Adrian Schenker; OBO 233; Fribourg/Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007) 112–30.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017816013000217 Published online by Cambridge University Press

While one can say much more about these features of the psalm and their overall function or purpose, it suffices here simply to note that the typological correspondence between Abraham and Gideon that is clear in the Judges narrative also comes to expression in Psalm 110, particularly in its masoretic textual form.[57] It is not surprising, then, to find a similar correspondence between Abraham and Gideon (and David!) reflected in other texts as well, such as 1 Chron 21:18–27.[58]

2.3.3 Gideon, Abraham, and Moses

But the connections with Abraham in the Gideon narrative go even deeper, insofar as they include within their purview many well-recognized correspondences to stories about Moses. The opening of the story of Gideon, for instance, relates specifically to the commissioning scene of Moses in Exodus 3 and not merely to a conventional type-scene.[59] Gideon's battle against Midian, Amalek, and the Sons of the East in Judges 7–8 also appears to have connections with Moses's battle against Amalek in Exodus 17, another story of a battle (with Amalek) that specifically underscores the dependence on divine assistance for victory (expressed in this case by the need for Moses to keep his staff raised [vv. 11–12]).[60] But, here again, as others have noted, this story in Exodus is itself aligned within the broader compositional structure of the Pentateuch in such a way that it corresponds to Abraham's battle in Genesis 14. Indeed, it is part of an entire series of structural parallels in which Abraham's life prefigures the life of Moses and

[57] Schenker observes that the decisive detail for making the connection to Gideon, לך מל, is missing in 𝔊 (ἐκ γαστρὸς πρὸ ἑωσφόρου ἐξεγέννησά σε = מרחם משחר יָלְדְתִּיךָ; cf. Ps 2:7). From this fact, he concludes that the masoretic plus reflects a secondary redactional re-interpretation of the psalm undertaken in the early Hasmonean period. In Schenker's view, the attempt to align the psalm with Gideon reflected in 𝔐-Ps 110:3 represents an effort to immunize the psalm against polytheistic or Davidic-messianic misinterpretations: "En résumé, on peut comprendre le Ps 110,3 du TM comme une nouvelle interprétation du psaume, qui lui donnait une signification immunisée contre des malentendus polythéistes ou messianiques davidiques. Le jeune sauveur et juge institué par YHWH, v. 6 (ידין), ressemblait à Gédéon. Si cette interprétation du psaume selon le TM est juste, la nouvelle rédaction du v. 3 conviendrait bien au début du temps des Hasmonéens" (ibid., 125). Schenker thus argues for a strong contrast between an emphasis on Gideon, who refused the monarchy, and Davidic-royal expectations: "Ce régent semblable au juge Gédéon serait ainsi ni roi ni fils de David! Il serait bien plus comme un des anciens juges d'Israël, donc justement comme Gédéon, qui refusa la royauté, parce que YHWH était le roi d'Israël, Jg 8,22-23" (ibid., 124). These connections are indeed intriguing, but whether a deliberate association with Gideon entails an anti-royalist position is less clear—both with regard to the Gideon narrative itself, which is not at all straightforward on this point, and with regard to the reuse of the Gideon material elsewhere. See, e.g., Isa 9:3 (כיום מדין) and 10:26 (כמכת מדין בצור עורב), where Gideon's battle is held up as a model for the future destruction of "Assyria" in direct connection with explicit Davidic royalist hopes (Isa 9:5–6; 11:1–10).

[58] See discussion in Willi, *Chronik als Auslegung*, 157–58.

[59] See esp. Hava Shalom-Guy, "The Call Narrative of Gideon and Moses: Literary Convention or More?" *JHS* 11 (2011) 2–19, with literature.

[60] Cf. Isa 10:26, where God will arouse a scourge as in the smiting of Midian at the Rock of Oreb and lift up his staff (ומטהו על הים ונשאו בדרך מצרים).

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the nation.[61] One could say much more in this connection, but by way of simple illustration:

Genesis 12–13	//	Genesis 42 – Exodus 14
During famine, Abram's descent to, sojourn in, and exodus out of Egypt with plagues, great wealth, etc.		During famine, Jacob/Israel's descent to, sojourn in, and exodus out of Egypt, with plagues, great wealth, etc.[62]
Gen 14:1–16	//	Exod 17:8–16
battle, divine victory, Amalek (14:7)		battle, divine victory, Amalek
Gen 14:18–24	//	Exodus 18
Melchizedek – foreign priest encountered directly following battle narrative – explicit blessing of God (ברוך אל עליון; Gen 14:20) – peace (שלום; Gen 14:18/15:15) – bread (לחם; Gen 14:18) – eat (אכ״ל; Gen 14:24)		Jethro – foreign priest encountered directly following battle narrative – explicit blessing of God (ברוך יהוה; Exod 18:10) – peace (שלום; Exod 18:7) – bread (לחם; Exod 18:12) – eat (אכ״ל; Exod 18:12)
Genesis 15	//	Exodus 18
– a "son" named אליעזר (Gen 15:2) – "stranger in land" (Gen 15:13) (כי גר יהיה זרעך בארץ לא להם) Cf. – צפור (Gen 15:10) – חז״ה (Gen 15:1 במחזה)		– a son named אליעזר (Exod 18:4) – another Gershom, explained as "stranger in land" (Exod 18:3) (גרשם כי אמר גר הייתי בארץ נכריה) Cf. – צפורה (Exod 18:2) – חז״ה (Exod 18:21 תחזה), etc.[63]

In light of these connections, it can hardly be a coincidence that Gideon's firstborn son happens to be named Jether (יתר; Judg 8:20), which is another name ascribed to Jethro within the text of Exodus (Exod 4:18).

Thus, it is evident that the presentation of Gideon—with simultaneous reference to Abraham and to Moses—itself mirrors literary strategies at work in the shaping of this material in the Pentateuch. These narratives of Abraham and

[61] See esp. Yair Zakovitch, *"And You Shall Tell Your Son . . .": The Concept of the Exodus in the Bible* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1991).

[62] See the verbal correspondences catalogued in Zakovitch, *Concept of the Exodus*, 18–20; and John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1992) 141–43.

[63] For many of these connections, see Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 280–81; idem, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch: Revelation, Composition, Interpretation* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2009) 370–71.

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Moses are brought into literary correspondence by means of a large-scale typological patterning. The Gideon narrative appears to pick up on these hermeneutic trajectories and to extend them. It seems to me that the ravens story in *Jubilees* represents another reflex of precisely the same impulse, a continuation of this same mode of traditionary development.

2.3.4 Jubilees 11 and Gideon: Summary

Returning to our point of departure, the ravens narrative in *Jubilees*, it seems clear that the Gideon parallel supplies the general storyline: oppression (specifically related to sowing seed, the destruction of land and produce by an enemy swarm, and the reduction of the people to poverty), deliverance from evil forces by a youthful hero who also destroys a center of idolatrous worship at night, and so forth.

The victorious actions of Gideon at the Rock/Affliction of Raven (בצור ערב), where the people are delivered from the oppression of "Midian and Amalek and the Sons of the East," are literarily parallel to Abram's battle in Genesis 14 and Moses's battle against Amalek in Exodus 17. All are miraculous victories that underscore a dependence on divine intervention. The ravens tradition in *Jubilees* 11 develops out of these existing literary connections between Gideon, Moses, and Abraham. This author clearly recognized such connections and, as it appears, exegetically inferred, deduced, or extrapolated from them a further event that transpired during Abraham's youth.[64] In other words, this narrative was produced on the basis of and in response to the typological correspondences built into the narratives of Abraham and Moses and Gideon. Those existing textual connections not only opened up space for but also actively suggested or implied for this author a story about Abram's defeat of the ravens. Just as other scriptural traditions take Gideon's victory בצור ערב as a model for a future defeat of "Assyria" (Isa 10:26; cf. 9:3), so also is this deliverance itself seen as prefigured by Abraham (and Moses).[65]

[64] Compare Reinhard G. Kratz's description of the Chronicler's work: "Der Chronist sucht offenbar zuallererst in seinem Quellen selbst nach verborgener, implizierter Identität und Einheit, die er dann mit Bezug auf die Vorlage im eigenen Werk explizit macht und woraus er die Identität Israels und seines Gottes begründet. Somit ist die Chronik . . . durchaus 'als Auslegung' zu verstehen" (Kratz, "Identität," 164); cf. Thomas Willi's description, also in connection with Chronicles, of "exegetical history writing" (*auslegende Geschichtsschreibung*): "Wenn der Chronist der Nötigung, Geschichte der vorexilischen Zeit zu schreiben, nachgeben wollte, so blieb ihm . . . nur ein Weg: der der Interpretation des überlieferten Materials, mithin der Auslegung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerkes. Weder die Verdrängungs- noch die Ergänzungstheorie vermag diesem eigenartigen Verhältnis zwischen Deuteronomisten und Chronisten gerecht zu werden, das sich zwischen den beiden Polen der Abhängigkeit und Freiheit, Gebundenheit und Kühnheit bewegt, ja das man als die gehorsame Unbotmäßigkeit der Auslegung bezeichnen möchte" (*Chronik als Auslegung*, 54). Also: "Ihre Art der Geschichtsschreibung, Auslegung im besten Sinne des Wortes, hat das Ziel, zum Verständnis der Quelle anzuleiten, die Primärvorlage auf einen bestimmten historisch-theologischen, d.h. heilsgeschichtlichen Gegenstand hin durchsichtig zu machen, zu erhellen, den Text der Vorlage auf dieses Thema hin zu konzentrieren und Zusammenhänge aufzudecken" (*Chronik als Auslegung*, 66).

[65] VanderKam suggests that another factor contributing to the story's placement in Abram's youth may have been "the more widely attested phenomenon of signaling the presence of a great

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*2.4 Etymology of Terah's Name (*תרח < טרח*)*

If I have seen the matter correctly, the Gideon/Abraham correspondence, on the one hand, and the covenant between the pieces, on the other hand, go a long way toward explaining the basic structure of *Jubilees* 11 and many of its specific features. But the ravens narrative is more subtle and complex still, and one can discern additional textual connections. Consider the ostensible anchor of the tradition in the text of *Jubilees*, the interpretive crux of the supposed etymology of Terah's name (*Jub.* 11.12): "For this reason he named him *Terah*: because the ravens and birds reduced them to poverty and ate their seed."[66]

> This is one of many places in *Jubilees* where access to the specific formulation of the original Hebrew would be highly desirable. Many have attempted to explain the etymology of Terah offered in *Jub.* 11.[67] Jerome explicitly appealed to *Jubilees* when he indicated in comments on Num 33:27 that תרח means *abactor*, *depulsor*, since Terah was known for driving off ravens from the field.[68] After listing many possible options for the derivation (Aram. תר״ך "vertreiben"; תר״ה "ausspähen"; נת״ר "brechen, abschlagen, auflösen, wegwerfen"; אר״ח "wandern"; רו״ח "Bewegung, Zerstreuung, ein die Zerstreuung Veranlassender"), Beer concludes with the following assessment: "Hierzu gelangt, läßt sich vermuthen, dass auch die oben angeführte Erzählung im Buch der Jubil., wornach Terach die Raubvögel verscheuchte oder zerstreute, aus nurgedachter Deutung der Namens תרח als 'Zerstreuer' ihre Entstehung habe, welcher Ursprung aber dem Hieronymus nicht bekannt war."[69] In a similar way, Rönsch wondered whether *Jubilees* derived תרח from רו״ח "to blow away, to scare away by blowing" (on analogy to "its synonym נשב").[70] Though such a derivation would seem to provide a needed exegetical

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person already at an early time in his/her life (the Moses/Sargon syndrome, something we also find for Noah, among others)" (personal communication, May 2005). On this, see Isaac Leo Seeligmann, "Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegese," in *Congress Volume: Copenhagen 1953* (ed. G. W. Anderson et al.; VTSup 1; Leiden: Brill, 1953) 150–81, at 155; repr., *Isaac Leo Seeligmann: Gesammelte Studien zur hebräischen Bibel* [ed. Erhard Blum; FAT 41; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004] 1–30).

[66] For attempts to explain the derivation, see Charles, *Jubilees*, 88 n. 12; Bernhard Beer, *Leben Abraham's nach Auffassung der jüdischen Sage mit erläuternden Anmerkungen und Nachweisungen* (Leipzig: Oskar Leiner, 1859) 95–96; Hermann Rönsch, *Das Buch der Jubiläen oder die Kleine Genesis* (Leipzig: Fue's Verlag [R. Reisenland], 1874) 265–67; *Book of Jubilees* [ed. VanderKam], 1:66 n.; Lester Grabbe, *Etymology in Early Jewish Interpretation* (BJS 115; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 165.

[67] The derivation and meaning of the name in Genesis remains highly uncertain, though suggestions include connection with a place name or with the ibex (*HALOT* 1792–93).

[68] *Epist*. 78, ad Fabiolam, Mansio 24 [PG 22:713]: "Hoc eodem vocabulo [= Thare] et iisdem litteris scriptum invenio patrem Abraham, qui in supradicto apocrypho Geneseos volumine, abactis corvis, qui hominum frumenta vastabant, abactoris, vel depulsoris sortitus est nomen" (as cited in *Book of Jubilees* [ed. VanderKam], 2:66 n.).

[69] Beer, *Leben Abraham's*, 95–96.

[70] "Könnte תרח nicht von dem Verbum רוח abgeleitet sein? Wenn diesem mit demselben Rechte, wie seinem Synonym נשב (Tuch's *Genesis* S. 287), die Bedeutung *hinwegwehen*, *durch wehen verscheuchen*, ἀποσοβεῖν, zugeschrieben werden darf, so würde die Annahme, תָּרַח sei mittelst des präformativen ת aus רוח gebildet, geraden Weges zu der Hieronymianischen Deutung *abactor*, *depulsor* gelangen" (Rönsch, *Das Buch der Jubiläen*, 266 n. 3).

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connection between the name of Terah and Gen 15:11 (וישב אתם), it makes no sense of the actual etymology offered in *Jub.* 11.12: "For this reason he named him *Terah*: because the ravens and birds reduced them to poverty and ate their seed." Here, Terah is supposed to be related to "reduction to poverty," not "scaring away." Indeed, much of the speculation on the derivation of the name (Ewald, Rönsch, Beer) explains only Jerome's comment that Terah means "one who drives away" and not the usage in *Jubilees*. Yet it is not at all clear how Jerome's comment relates to the book of *Jubilees* in its preserved form(s). It seems likely, in fact, that the comment represents a different tradition, perhaps one based on a distortion or misunderstanding of *Jub*. 11.

On the other hand, some commentators have attempted to make sense of the etymology in the context of *Jubilees* itself. Charles, for example, suggested that "[t]he Ethiopic here = ἐπτώχισαν αὐτούς, but it could also be a rendering of ἔθλιψαν or ἐκάκωσαν. Hence this verb may go back to the Chaldee verb תרע 'to ravage, devastate'."[71] Note, however, in light of the discussion above that the phrase "reduced them to poverty" seems to reflect Judg 6:6 וידל ישראל (𝔊 καὶ ἐπτώχευσεν Ισραηλ), and one does not require a verb cognate with תרח in this context. More compelling than Charles's connection with Aramaic תרע (properly "to break, shatter," which does not really correspond to the actions of the ravens) is Goldmann's suggestion that *Jubilees* connects תרח with טר״ח "to trouble, burden," although it does not seem necessary to claim, as he does, that this was due to an actual "phonetic" spelling in the underlying Hebrew text of Genesis.[72] Of all the proposed solutions, this derivation seems to make the most sense of the text of *Jub.* 11.12.[73]

Based on the discussion above (§ 2.1–3), the covenant between the pieces and the Gideon narrative together appear to have provided the basic material for identifying the troubled circumstances supposed to underlie Terah's name with the plague of ravens. In the absence of the precise Hebrew reading, the mechanism for the etymological derivation must remain uncertain. But if we assume that it is indeed based on a perceived semantic association with טר״ח, as seems reasonable, this suggests an intriguing connection with another passage: Job 37:11, which is the only verbal occurrence of טר״ח in the Hebrew Bible:[74] אף ברי יטריח עב יפיץ ענן אורו. In this section of the book, Elihu attempts to instruct Job about the great power and justice of God as evident from his control of meteorological phenomena. The precise sense of 37:11 is not clear within this context, and the variety of interpretations in antiquity attests to the

[71] Charles, *Jubilees*, 88 n. 12.

[72] "It appears that a phonetic form was before the translator (תרח / טרח) and a popular etymology was made on this basis" (Goldmann, "ספר יובלים," 49 n.). As Rönsch states, "Ganz anderer Art sind die Ableitungen aus älterer Zeit" (*Das Buch der Jubiläen*, 267).

[73] The root טרח (C in BH, JArm^{t} "to burden"; JArm^{gb}, MHeb = "to trouble" [*HALOT* 379]) occurs as a verb in the Hebrew Bible only in Job 37:11; the nominal derivative טֹרַח ("burden" or "trouble") is found in Deut 1:12 and Isa 1:14.

[74] For another clear use of Job in connection to Abraham in Jubilees (where Mastema mirrors the *satan* in Job 1–2), see the *'aqedah* account in *Jub.* 17–18 (esp. 17.16–18).

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difficulty of the verse.[75] The first clause is particularly obscure: what does ברי mean and how does it relate to יטריח עב? In any event, the activity depicted in this verse is supposed to demonstrate that God accomplishes "all that he commands . . . upon the face of the inhabited earth," whether for scourge or for blessing (vv. 12–13). In relation to *Jubilees* 11, several features of Job 37:11 might be noted:

1. The (exclusive) use of the verb טר״ח, which, if connected to Terah/תרח, plays a key linking role within the raven pericope in *Jubilees*.
2. The role of a (troubling or burdensome) "cloud" (ענן), a term also applied to the ravens in *Jub.* 11.19, 20 (but which is absent from the description of Judg 6:5 כדי ארבה לרב).
3. The mention of ברי/פרי, which was construed by other early interpreters as referring either to a "chosen one" (בר״ר; α' θ') or to "fruit" (פרי; σ'), either of which would be relevant in connection with *Jubilees* 11 (11,13 "fruit of the trees" and "fruit of the earth").
4. The role of אורו "his (God's) light" in this verse and Abraham's association with the "light" God appoints to the nations (לאור גוים) in Isaiah.[76]

[75] Aquila: καίπερ ἐκλεκτὸν ἐνοχλήσει πάχος "although a thick mass troubles the chosen (>בר״ר)."

Theodotion: καὶ ἐκλεκτὸν καταπλάσσει νεφέλη "And (if) a cloud shall plaster over (> טו״ח "to plaster over, besmear" :: טר״ח) the chosen."

Symmachus: 1) ἀλλὰ καὶ καρπῷ ἐπιβρίσει νεφέλη "But indeed a cloud shall weigh down with fruit" (> פרי?). Gray thinks καρπός means "corn" or "grain" here [see LSJ 879] and reflects Hebrew ברי related to בר "grain" rather than a פ/ב interchange (George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Job* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921] 291). But this equivalent (καρπός = בר) is not otherwise attested; 2) Syh: ἀλλὰ καρπὸν δώσει νεφέλη "But a cloud will give fruit."

11Q10 (11QtgJob) Col. XXIX: אף בהון ימרק ענן ענן מן נורה וינפק[ין] "With them also he causes the cloud[s] to gleam, and he discharges from a cloud his fire."

Targ. Job (*Miqra'ot Gedolot*): ברם בברירותא עיבא מבדר ענן מטריה "Yet with brightness he loads the thick-cloud, his rain scatters a cloud."

Rashi: אף־ברי שם מלאך הממונה על העננים והוא יפיץ ענן מטרו של המקום "*Aph-Beri* is the name of the angel appointed over the clouds and he scatters the cloud of the rain of the Omnipresent." See *t. Nid.* 16b אף־ברי שהוא שר מטר אין עושה אלא ברשות הקב״ה.

[76] See Isa 41:2–4, 8–9; 42:6 (cf. 49:6, 8), where the servant "Israel"—the "seed of Abraham my friend" (זרע אברהם אהבי; 41:8)—is apparently addressed in terms of Abraham's calling and designated "a light to the nations" (אתנך . . . לאור גוים); cf. Isa 51:2. See E. J. Kissane's comments on Isa 42:6: "Jahweh called Israel of old in the person of Abraham (xli. 2), and because of that election, He is now about to intervene to deliver Israel, in order that the national life may be restored, and the spiritual mission of Israel may be accomplished. *I called thee*. The reference is to the call of Abraham as described in xli. 2" (*The Book of Isaiah* [Dublin: Richview Press, 1943] 237 [italics in original]). See also 𝔊ʲ 41:2; Calvin *ad loc*. N.B. in relation to *Jubilees* the clear contrastive function of these passages in Isaiah with the idol polemics to which they are juxtaposed. On the function of this appeal to Abraham in Deutero-Isaiah, see esp. Kratz, *Kyros in Deuterojesaja-Buch: Untersuchungen zu Entstehung und Theologie von Jes 40–55* (FAT 1; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991) 43–47; 153–57; 161–63; idem, "Abraham mein Freund," 119–22; idem, "Friend of God," 82–83.

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The hypothesis that Job 37:11 was evoked for the author by the presumed etymology of Terah's name and read back into the narrative of Abraham's youth[77] would account for certain details of the *Jubilees* story that are not otherwise explicable on the basis of Gen 15 or the Gideon narrative: the relation between Terah/"trouble" (טרח) and the "cloud" (ענן) of birds, both in relation to Abraham (cf. אורו).[78] Though admittedly speculative, it would be entirely consistent with the complex literary and exegetical activity of this author elsewhere.[79]

In any case, in terms of "exegetical function," this hypothesis still does not account for all the features of the raven pericope, which cannot be reduced either to an exegesis of Genesis 15, to an etymology of Terah's name, or to an etiology of the seed-plow.[80] Further consideration of the particulars of the story reveals the clear and literarily important function of this text within the overall narrative strategy of the book of *Jubilees*. To this strategic function we now turn.

3.0 Other Sources

It appears that the composer of the raven story has incorporated elements from a number of sources. For example, in addition to Genesis 15, aspects of other

[77] This would be similar to the phenomenon Kugel designates "back-referencing": "[T]he incorporation of such additional biblical texts into an originally simple motif, so that the motif then seems simultaneously to address multiple problems from different places in the Bible, is a very common phenomenon" (*In Potiphar's House*, 254).

[78] One might mention in passing the graphic similarity of the word used in direct connection with טר״ח (as either subject or object), עב "thick cloud," and ערב "raven," the specific bird of *Jubilees* 11, which, as suggested above, seems to derive in the first instance from the Gideon narrative (cf. Isa 10:26). Along similar lines, one might note that "raven" (ערב) plays nicely upon "famine" (רעב) as a part of the larger analogical relationship between Abraham and Joseph in the book of Jubilees (see further below). Daniel Silver, by contrast, finds in the mention of ravens in this wholly negative portrayal—an unusual perspective in the ancient world, he argues—evidence that the author was an unsophisticated farmer (Silver, "Quoth the Raven," 268). This supposition is extremely difficult to reconcile with the textual virtuosity so abundantly evident within *Jubilees*.

[79] See esp. Odil Hannes Steck, "Die getöteten 'Zeugen' und die verfolgten 'Tora-Sucher' in *Jub.* 1,12: Ein Beitrag zur Zeugnis-Terminologie des Jubiläenbuches (I)," *ZAW* 107 (1995) 445–65 and "Die getöteten 'Zeugen' und die verfolgten 'Tora-Sucher' in *Jub.* 1,12: Ein Beitrag zur Zeugnis-Terminologie des Jubiläenbuches (II)," *ZAW* 108 (1996) 70–86; see also VanderKam: "[The author of Jubilees'] comprehensive knowledge of the Scriptures must constantly be borne in mind when one studies passages in the book; they should, in some way, be connected with the biblical base, whether in *Genesis/Exodus* or in other places. This is true even for those sections that clearly depart from the narrative in *Genesis/Exodus* in significant ways. They should retain a relationship of some kind to the scriptural text, although that relationship may consist only in allusions to or collocations of other passages in the Bible" ("Jubilees' Exegetical Creation of Levi the Priest," *RevQ* 17 (1996) 359–73; repr., *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* [ed. idem; JSJSup 62; Leiden: Brill, 2000] 545–62, at 545).

[80] Thus Brock: "Jubilees gives the ravens episode in order to introduce Abraham as the inventor of the seed-plow" ("Abraham and the Ravens," 140). As Knowles correctly observes, "this attribution is incidental to the narrative's broader themes of fruitfulness, covenant fulfillment, and the role of demonic opposition in the lives of God's people" ("Abram and the Birds," 146 n. 6); cf. Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees: The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26–25:10 in the Book of Jubilees 11:14–23:8* (JSJSup 161; Leiden: Brill, 2012) 27.

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divine promises to Abram appear to be reflected. One finds unmistakable resonances of Gen 12:2–3 (ואברכך ואגדלה שמך והיה ברכה . . . ונברכו בך כל משפחת האדמה; "and I shall bless you and make your name great and you shall be a blessing . . . and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed") in *Jubilees* 11. Besides the overall picture of the Chaldeans being blessed through Abram's action (11.22 "and they ate and were satisfied"; 11.24 "and they were no longer afraid of the birds"; compare Judg 8:28; cf. Lev 25:19), *Jub.* 11.21 anticipates the wording of Gen 12:2 with the comment that "[Abram's] name became great (→ ויגדל שמו) throughout the entire land of the Chaldeans."[81]

But some features of the narrative cannot be explained adequately by appeal to scriptural materials relating to Abraham. Two prominent examples are Abram's supplying food for all the people of the land during the famine (*Jub*. 11.22; cf. v. 13) and Abram's teaching the Chaldeans the technology of the seed-plow (*Jub*. 11.23–24). These are not minor details within the story but key plot elements; yet they have no apparent grounding in scriptural texts about Abraham.

The presentation of Abraham as introducer of the seed-plow technology, and specifically in a Mesopotamian context, doubtless reflects an awareness of and engagement with Mesopotamian mythology, according to which Enlil was the inventor of the plow-seeder.[82] And surely the Deutero-Isaianic idol polemic (in connection with Abraham and Babylon)[83] is not far from the surface when *Jub*. 11.23 (in anticipation of his turn from idolatry in *Jubilees* 12) describes Abram teaching "the skillful woodworkers" of Chaldea the salvific technology of the seed-plow (compare the work of the חרש חכם "skillful woodworker" lampooned in Isa 40:19; cf. 41:7).

[81] Jon D. Levenson (personal communication) makes the intriguing suggestion that the story of Abram and the ravens may also anticipate, to some extent, Abram's later difficulties in matters of seed/offspring. If so, Abram's symbolic defeat of the powers of sterility here would "look forward both to Sarah's conception of Isaac but also to Sarai and Abram's defeating the power of sterility through the use of a surrogate mother."

[82] See Benno Landsberger, "Corrections to the Article, 'An Old Babylonian Charm against Merḫu'," *JNES* 17 (1958) 56–58, at 56 n. 4 (regarding the text: "Enlil made the seeder-plow go over the soil"). On Mesopotamian depictions of cultural achievement and their "desacralization" in biblical sources, see, e.g., Rainer Albertz, "Die Kulturarbeit im Atramḫasīs im Vergleich zur biblischen Urgeschichte," in *Geschichte und Theologie. Studien zur Exegese des alten Testaments und zur Religionsgeschichte Israels* (ed. Ingo Kottsieper and Jakob Wöhrle; BZAW 326; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003) 1–43; Robert A. Di Vito, "The Demarcation of Divine and Human Realms in Genesis 2–11," in *Creation in the Biblical Traditions* (ed. Richard J. Clifford and John J. Collins; CBQMS 24; Washington, D.C.: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1992) 39–56, esp. 51–56. On the topos of the first inventor (πρῶτος εὑρητής) in Greek literature, see Adolf Kleingünther, *ΠΡΩΤΟΣ ΕΥΡΗΤΗΣ. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte einer Fragestellung* (Philologus Suppl. 26; Leipzig: Dietrich, 1933) 1–55; Klaus Thraede, "Erfinder II (geistesgeschichtlich)," *RAC* 5 (1962) 1191–278; and Erkki Koskenniemi, *The Old Testament Miracle-Workers in Early Judaism* (WUNT 2/206; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 53; van Ruiten, *Abraham in Jubilees*, 27 n. 13.

[83] See n. 76 above.

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But this polemical play with the ancient Near Eastern culture-bringer traditions, while certainly a clever and significant aspect of the narrative, again falls well short of accounting for the nature and function of the pericope as a whole.[84] Nor should these cultural connections obscure the fact that, when viewed within the context of the book of *Jubilees*, such details belong to a broader interpretive pattern, forming clear analogies to the presentation of other key patriarchal figures such as Adam, Enoch, Noah, and Joseph. Consider the following passage concerning Adam in the Garden of Eden:

> 15 During the first week of the first jubilee Adam and his wife spent the seven years in the Garden of Eden working and guarding it. We gave him work and were teaching him (how) to do everything that was appropriate for working (it). 16 While he was working (it) he was naked but did not realize (it) nor was he ashamed. He would guard the garden against birds, animals, and cattle.[85] He would gather its fruit and eat (it) and would store its surplus for himself and his wife. He would store what was being kept. (*Jub.* 3.15–16)

To this, compare *Jub.* 11.13, which articulates a reversal of that situation.[86]

> The years began to be unfruitful due to the birds. They would eat all the fruit of the trees from the orchards. During their time, if they were able to save a little of all the fruit of the earth, it was with great effort.

Here it appears that Abraham's role as a defender against avian threat (Gen 15:11) is retrojected back onto Adam, and Abraham's own actions are thereby brought into continuity with a paradisiacal ideal. Placed within this larger plotline, both Abram's teaching and his actions become salvific acts of the first order.[87] Similarly, the depiction both of Adam's storing of surplus and of the Chaldean farmers coming to Abraham for food and following his orders throughout the year of harvest bears strong verbal and thematic resemblance to the biblical depiction of Joseph in Egypt. See, e.g.:

> 54 ותחלינה שבע שני הרעב לבוא . . . ויהי רעב בכל הארצות ובכל־ארץ מצרים היה לחם: 55 ותרעב כל ארץ מצרים ויצעק אל פרעה ללחם ויאמר פרעה לכל מצרים לכו אל יוסף אשר יאמר לכם תעשו: 56 והרעב היה על כל פני הארץ
>
> 54 And the seven years of famine began to come . . . and a famine was in all the lands, but in the entire land of Egypt there was bread. 55 And when all

[84] Against the claim of Brock, among others, see n. 80 above.

[85] Compare the reading preserved in Glycas (ὁ Ἀδὰμ ἀπεσόβει τὰ πετεινὰ καὶ ἑρπετά) (*Michaelis Glycae Annales* [ed. Immanuel Bekker; Bonn: Impensis Ed. Weber, 1836] 206, cited by Charles, *Jubilees*, 25 n.) with the reading of Aquila on Gen 15:11 וישב (ἀπεσόβησε(ν)).

[86] Also noted by van Ruiten: "The description in *Jub.* 11:13c looks like an antithesis to the description of the paradisiacal situation after the angels taught Adam how to till the land" (*Abraham in Jubilees*, 28 n. 14).

[87] Compare the treatment of Gideon's victory in Isa 10:26 (cf. 9:3). On the general effect, see the reflections of van Ruiten: "By keeping the ravens away from the fields and by inventing a sowing machine, Abram is able to cancel at least part of the influence Mastema has over mankind" (ibid., 28–29).

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> the land of Egypt was famished, it cried out to Pharoah for bread and Pharoah said to all of Egypt, "Go to Joseph! Do what he tells you." 56 And the famine was upon the entire face of the earth. (Gen 41:54–56)

> 17 ויביאו את מקניהם אל יוסף ויתן להם יוסף לחם . . . בשנה ההוא: 18 ותתם השנה ההוא ויבאו אליו בשנה השנית ויאמרו לו . . . :

> 17 And they brought their flocks to Joseph and Joseph gave them bread . . . in that year. 18 And when that year ended they came to him in the second year and they said to him . . . (Gen 47:17–18)

> 13 The years began to be unfruitful due to the birds.[88] . . . 22 All who were planting seed came to him in this year, and he kept going with them until the seedtime came to an end. They planted their land and that year brought in enough food. So they ate and were filled.[89] . . . 24 . . . and all the land did as Abram told them. So they were no longer afraid of the birds. (*Jub.* 11.13; 22; 24)

It appears then, that the presentations of Adam and Abraham in *Jubilees* have been constructed in part on analogy to the biblical depiction of Joseph.[90] There are also similarities with the portrayal of Noah in *Jubilees*, and indeed, elsewhere in the book the continuity between Noah and Abraham is explicit.[91] In the raven pericope, like Noah, Abraham preserves life in the face of the earth's destruction (שׁח״ת) and removes a curse from the land (Gen 9:21 → Gen 5:29).[92]

Note, furthermore, the function of teaching in all of these instances. Angels teach Adam in the Garden how to work and keep it, so that he drives away birds and other animals and stores up surplus (*Jub.* 3.15–16); Abraham teaches the

[88] Perhaps a wordplay is intended here between "famine" (רעב) and "raven" (ערב) of *Jub.* 11.11–12.

[89] Lev 25:19: ונתנה הארץ פריה ואכלתם לשבע וישבתם לבטח עליה.

[90] On the similarities between the presentation of the patriarchs in the biblical narrative, see Zakovitch: "The phenomenon of assimilation is, as we have endeavored to show, a creative force which left its impression both on extrabiblical literature, which retells the biblical stories, and on stories in the Bible itself" ("Assimilation in Biblical Narrative," 195). Also: "[Assimilation] arises when a traditionist or editor increases the affinity of stories already similar in themselves by adding to one of them material borrowed from the parallel tradition or composed by him under the influence of the parallel tradition" ("Assimilation in Biblical Narrative," 176). See also Dimant, "The Use and Interpretation of Mikra," 417.

[91] E.g., *Jub.* 6.17–19: "For this reason it has been ordained and written on the heavenly tablets that they should celebrate the festival of weeks during this month—once a year—to renew the covenant each and every year. 18 This entire festival had been celebrated in heaven from the time of creation until the lifetime of Noah—for 26 jubilees and five weeks of years. Then Noah and his sons kept it for seven jubilees and one week of years until Noah's death. From the day of Noah's death his sons corrupted (it) until Abraham's lifetime and were eating blood. 19 Abraham alone kept (it), and his sons Isaac and Jacob kept it until your lifetime. During your lifetime the Israelites had forgotten (it) until I renewed (it) for them at this mountain."

[92] Compare Gen 6:13 (והנני משחיתם את הארץ; cf. 17) with *Jub.* 11.11 ("Then Prince Mastema sent ravens and birds to eat the seed which would be planted in the ground and to destroy the land in order to rob mankind of their labors"). Compare also the etymology of Noah's name in Gen 5:29 (ויקרא את שמו נח לאמר זה ינחמנו ממעשנו ומעצבון ידינו מן האדמה אשר אררה יהוה).

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Chaldeans the seed-plow technology, which has the effect of counteracting the evil of the demonic birds:

> In the first year of the fifth week Abram taught the people who made equipment for bulls—the skillful woodworkers—and they made an implement above the ground, opposite the plow beam, so that one could place seed on it. The seed would then drop down from it onto the end of the plow and be hidden in the ground; and they would no longer be afraid of the ravens. (*Jub.* 11.23)

According to *Jubilees* 10, Noah also transmitted teaching with a similar prophylactic function:

> 9 Then he said that a tenth of them should be left before him, while he would make nine parts descend to the place of judgment. 10 He told one of us that we should teach Noah all their medicines because he knew that they would neither conduct themselves properly nor fight fairly. 11 We acted in accord with his entire command. All of the evil ones who were savage we tied up in the place of judgment, while we left a tenth of them to exercise power on the earth before the satan. 12 We explained to Noah all the medicines for their diseases with their deceptions so that he could cure (them) by means of the earth's plants. 13 Noah wrote down in a book everything (just) as we had taught him regarding all the kinds of medicine, and the evil spirits were precluded from pursuing Noah's children.[93] (*Jub*. 10.10–13)

In *Jubilees* 11, the causal force behind the oppressive birds is Mastema (cf. Hos 9:7), leader of all evil forces in the world.[94] It is noteworthy then that the teaching of Abraham regarding the plow has the same effect as Noah's teaching about medicines—both function to counteract the forces of evil. Indeed, the reasons for these analogies between Abraham, Noah, and Joseph appear to be closely related to the teaching of *Jubilees* regarding the role of evil in the world and in relation to the chosen line. The passage about Noah's teaching is one of the few explicit discussions of demons in relation to the promised line within the book.[95] Similarly, *Jubilees* makes a special point to note (twice) that during Joseph's days "there was no *satan* or any evil one" (*Jub.* 40.9; 46.2). This statement occurs in two other strategic locations in Jubilees. The so-called apocalypse of *Jubilees* 23 declares that in the future, in the days when "the children will begin to study the laws, to seek out the commands, and to return to the right way" (v. 26), "there will be neither a *satan* nor any evil one who will destroy" (v. 29). Again, the final chapter of the book returns to the topic with the statement that "[t]he jubilees

[93] Compare also the angelic instruction to Adam regarding how to "do everything that is appropriate for working [the land of the Garden]" in *Jub.* 3.15 (cf. 3.35). On the relationship between Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses and the writing/teaching motif, see VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001) 118–20, 123.

[94] Cf. Charles, *Jubilees*, 80 n.; Kratz, " 'Öffene seinen Mund'," 345.

[95] On which see VanderKam, "The Demons in the Book of Jubilees," in *Die Dämonen/Demons: The Demonology of the Israelite-Jewish and Early Christian Literature in the Context of their Environment* (ed. A. Lange, H. Lichtenberger, and K. F. Diethard Römheld; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 339–64.

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will pass by until Israel is pure of every sexual evil, impurity, contamination, sin, and error. Then they will live confidently in the entire land. They will no longer have any *satan* or any evil person. The land will be pure from that time until eternity" (50.5). Such passages correspond to the historical program outlined in the first chapter of the book (esp. 1.15–18, 23–25).[96] We see, then, that the days of Joseph's rule are cast as a narrative example for the future, when Israel turns from error and returns fully to the Torah. In the same way, in *Jubilees* 11 Abram's separation from idolatry (*Jub.* 11.16–17) is directly related to the counteraction of evil (birds sent by Mastema; *Jub.* 11.11–13, 18–24). His success in this matter is depicted narratively as a consequence of his turning from idolatry and separation from the Chaldean ways of his father.[97]

In sum, then, the actions of Abram in the raven pericope are connected to a series of structurally decisive texts and thematic emphases of the book of *Jubilees* as a literary whole.[98] The narrative analogy between young Abraham, Adam, Noah, and Joseph plays an important role in the compositional strategy of the book of *Jubilees*, which emphasizes the deep continuities among righteous forefathers and between them and their future descendants.[99] Here again, the profoundly intertextual and analogical presentation in *Jubilees* follows hermeneutic trajectories inherent within its source, taking up and extending these same typological strategies already at work in the multilayered presentation of these figures within the composition of Genesis

[96] "The structure of the book, with ch. 1 serving as an introduction to the narrative, implies that the perspective presented in it is one that the author wished to impress upon his readers" (*Book of Jubilees* [ed. VanderKam] 2:132). On the importance of *Jubilees* 1 within the composition as a whole, see esp. Steck, "Die getöteten 'Zeugen' (I–II)"; see further Andrew Teeter, "Torah, Wisdom, and the Composition of Rewritten Scripture: *Jubilees* and 11QPs[a] in Comparative Perspective," in *Wisdom and Torah: The Reception of 'Torah' in the Wisdom Literature of the Second Temple Period* (ed. Bernd U. Schipper and D. Andrew Teeter; JSJSup 163; Leiden: Brill, 2013) 233–72, esp. 244–59.

[97] Compare similar observations in van Ruiten, *Abraham in Jubilees*, 27–29.

[98] The separation of the chosen line from the Gentiles is one of the fundamental thematic features of the book of *Jubilees* that characterizes the author's viewpoint (see VanderKam, "Origins and Purpose," 19). "*Jubilees* is an all-out defense of what makes the people of Israel distinctive from the nations and a forceful assertion that they were never one with them. It is an outright contradiction of the views expressed in 1 Macc. 1.11–13 that Israel could avoid problems by covenanting with the gentiles. For the author of *Jubilees* that was a recipe for disaster, and the only way to prevent such difficulties was by greater adherence to the distinctive ways of the covenant between God and the people whom he had chosen from creation" (*Book of Jubilees* [ed. VanderKam], 2:140–41; cf. VanderKam, "Origins and Purpose," 20–22). According to the narrative arrangement, Abraham's separation from the idolatrous ways of the Chaldeans prevents the disaster of the birds.

[99] The notion of the forefathers serving as narrative types for their future descendants has clear precedent in the biblical text itself. See Umberto Cassuto, "אברהם" ("Abraham") in אנציקלופדיה מקראית (Encyclopedia Biblica) (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1950–1988) 1:61–68, at 65–66; Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985) 372–89; Yair Zakovitch, צבת בצבת עשויה: מה בין מדרש פנים־מקראי למדרש חוץ־מקראי (Inner-biblical and Extra-biblical Midrash and the Relationship between Them) (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2009) 132–44. On typologization as a literary, exegetical, and historiographic strategy in the reworking of sources in Chronicles, see Willi, *Chronik als Auslegung*, 160–69; Kratz, "Identität," 168.

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itself.[100] "The new is said in the old, because the old includes the new within it; the old is said anew because the new goes forth from the old."[101]

4.0 Conclusions

Some of the conclusions of this study may therefore be summarized as follows:

1. Though features of the raven story certainly derive from Genesis 15, the narrative in *Jubilees* is not an interpretation of that passage.
2. The transfer of the bird motif from Genesis 15 to Abraham's youth in Ur of the Chaldeans is based on the thoroughgoing analogies between Gideon and Abraham. These analogies provide both the exegetical warrant and the raw material for the story in *Jubilees*, triangulated with the supposed etymology of Terah's name (possibly in connection with Job 37:11). If it is related at all, the Epistle of Jeremiah appears not to have played a decisive role.
3. The pericope incorporates details from other passages relating to Abraham (Gen 12:2–3) and large-scale parallels with the portrayal of other patriarchs (Adam, Noah, Joseph).
4. Although the passage clearly responds to Mesopotamian traditions regarding the origin of the seed-plow, such is not its primary function.
5. The raven narrative in *Jubilees* is part of a larger compositional strategy. It displays close connections with structurally determinative texts in *Jubilees* (chapters 1, 23, and 50) and is concerned with fundamental thematic elements that are characteristic of the author's viewpoint (e.g., demons and evil forces in the world, separation from the ways of the Gentiles). The nature of its "exegetical function" must be understood in light of this fact.
6. Given the function of the pericope within this broader narrative strategy, both the placement (in Abraham's youth) and the specific form of the raven tradition are very likely the creation of the author of *Jubilees* himself. This has important implications for our understanding of other reflexes of the tradition (such as those presented in the Syriac sources).

This deceptively simple-looking narrative is formed on the basis of large-scale analogies—analogies imbedded in the literary shape of its sources or that follow from hermeneutic trajectories inherent within them. The story springs in equal measure from minute details of textual wording and implicature as well as from macrostructural comparisons of the largest scale. It is the product of intense exegetical engagement with a corpus of authoritative tradition that is regarded as

[100] For connections between Abraham (and Noah) and Adam, see Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture* (New York: Schocken Books, 1979) 17–39; idem, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 72–73; Jon D. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993) 84.

[101] Kratz: "Neues wird im Alten gesagt, weil das Alte das Neue in sich schließt, Altes wird neu gesagt, weil das Neue as dem Alten hervorgeht" ("Identität," 170). Cf. Augustine: "quamquam et in Vetere Novum lateat, et in Novo vetus pateat" (*Quaest. Hept.* 2.73).

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a coherent and relevant intertextual whole. *Jubilees*, by means of its exegetical rewriting, distills the teaching of that broader scriptural corpus and focuses it upon issues of greatest concern to the author and his time. Within such rewriting one observes a continuation or further extension of traditionary processes at work in the redactional development of the scriptural books themselves.[102]

The Abram/ravens narrative in *Jubilees* is not adequately explained as an exegetical response to Genesis 15 triggered by perceived theological or textual difficulties (Crawford), nor is it reducible to an etiology of the seed-plow (Brock).[103] Rather, it must be understood as part of a larger strategy in *Jubilees* and its construal of Genesis–Exodus within a more extensive corpus of authoritative tradition. Any attempt to explain its "exegetical function" must also account for this narrative function.

To the degree that this is the case, one must recognize the false dichotomy inherent in claims to the effect that "the ravens episode is designed to resolve exegetical questions rather than narrative or theological questions,"[104] along with the limitations of broader generalizations such as that "[a]ncient biblical interpretation is an interpretation of verses not stories."[105] This narrative is indeed in some sense "exegetical," inasmuch as it is an intensely text-oriented and interpretive product. Although it is not "commentary" as such, the story exhibits patent signs of having been derived from a comprehensive and penetrating interpretive engagement with a corpus of scriptural literature; it arises from the shape, wording, concepts, connections, and implications of these mutually illuminating texts.[106] Yet the problems it addresses are macrostructural, intertextual, theological, and narrative in nature.[107] This broader sense of "exegetical function" must be taken into account in the attempt to understand the genesis and hermeneutics of scriptural rewriting as a form of literary, theological, and interpretive production in antiquity.

[102] ". . . daß sich der Prozeß der Auslegung, der sich im literarischen Werden der biblischen Bücher vollzieht, in der sich daran anschließenden Produktion der außerbiblischen Literatur mehr oder weniger nahtlos fortsetzt" (Kratz, "Abraham mein Freund," 116); cf. idem, "Innerbiblische Exegese und Redaktionsgeschichte," in *Das Judentum im Zeitalter des Zweiten Tempels* (ed. idem; FAT 42; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004) 126–56. On the distinction between inner-literary and book-external processes, see idem, "Identität," 176–77; Steck, *Prophetenbücher*, 142 n. 28.

[103] See nn. 14 and 73 above.

[104] Crawford, "Exegetical Function," 97 n. 25.

[105] Kugel, *Traditions,* 24.

[106] See especially Steck, *Prophetenbücher*, 158, as well as the nuanced discussion of the importance of distinguishing means and ends in such analysis in Kratz, "Identität," 164–65 (cf. 174–75).

[107] "Das Jubiläenbuch zeigt sich in seiner Verwendung der Abraham-Gestalt als ein genuines Stück Biblischer Theologie," (Mogens Müller, "Abraham-Gestalt im Jubiläenbuch," *SJOT* 10 [1996] 238–57, at 256. Compare the reflections of Kratz on Chronicles: "Indem das ChrG diese Identitätsbestimmung in der Rezeption älterer Überlieferung vornimmt und selbst das Ergebnis dieses Rezeptionsvorgangs darstellt, vollzieht sich in der literarischen Genese des ChrG die Bildung von Theologie" ("Identität," 175).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017816013000217 Published online by Cambridge University Press