CHAPTER 4

THE INTERTEXTUAL RELATEDNESS OF THE ABRAHAM NARRATIVE

4.1. Introduction: Methodological Considerations

The present work has been proceeding in favour of a hermeneutical hypothesis that the Abraham narrative is a single literary unit of the Pentateuch, which composed of the smaller and larger compositions (i.e., narratives, poetries, and law codes) according to the compositional strategy of the author/the final composer. The compositions are not simply the arrangement of sources, but are strategically composed in such a way that one can discern relationships among its parts. That strategy is the key to the theology of the Pentateuch. They, thus, reflect the theological characteristics and the direction, goal, and tendency of the author/the final composer of the whole work. As such, they are also a clear indication of the author's hermeneutic. In the interweaving of these literary components into a whole, a discernible strategy can be traced throughout the entire work.

In the compositional strategy of the Pentateuch, the Abraham narrative not merely has been effectively shaped, but has been intentionally structured to uncover an inherent relationship between the past and the future in lying behind the final shape of the Pentateuch. To say it another way, the narrative is a part of a larger typological scheme of the Pentateuch intending to show that future events are foreshadowed and anticipated in the past events (Cassuto 1992:309-344; cf. Samilhamer 1992:35-44).[355]

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[355] As stated already in the section of 'the composition criticism' in the chapter 1 (see, pp. 20-32, esp. n. 50 and 59), it has called this feature "narrative typology."

In this respect, one finds intertextual relationships between the texts in the Abraham narrative and the texts in the remainder of the Pentateuch, focusing on how the meaning of the earlier texts has remained the same. That is to say, the latter texts may be viewed as an explication or elaboration of the former texts, which become an assumed part of that of the latter texts.[356] Thus, it hardly seems likely that so many verbal and thematic parallels between the Abraham narrative and the remainder of the Pentateuch could be a mere coincidence. In this chapter, these textual correlations are more than mere happenstance will be investigated at the level of theme, structure and meaning. Given the extent of the Pentateuch and the complexity of the Abraham narrative, however, it would be an almost impossible task to examine in detail all the relevant texts. To keep the investigation within manageable boundaries, some selection is essential.

4.2. Thematic Links

Since we have recognized the essential homogeneity of Genesis and the remaining books of the Pentateuch, we must consider the unifying theme of the work. As Clines 1997) stated, the theme is not-yet realized promised of blessing for the patriarchs. The promissory blessing to Abraham in Gen 12:1-3 expresses the thematic material of the Pentateuch: 1) promise of descendants, and 2) promise of land. This blessing is repeated in varied forms for Abraham (Gen 15:4-5, 9-21; 17:4-7,19-20; 18:18; 22:17),

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[356] As stated earlier, texts do not exist in isolation but are always in relation with one another (cf. Carroll, *Intertextuality and the Book of Jeremiah*, 57). Texts echo and allude to each other. Similarities and difference between texts both invite 'conversation' between them and allow 'each text to be affected by other' (D. N. Fewell, "Introduction: Writing, Reading and Relating," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* [Louisville: Westminster & John Knox Press, 1992], 13).

Isaac (Gen 26:3-4), and Jacob (Gen 28:13-14; 32:29). This thematic linkage between the Abraham narrative and the remaining of the Pentateuch binds the whole in terms of the not-yet realized blessings of the patriarch.

4.2.1. The Seed

The theme concerning the promise of the son is found in the Pentateuch (Gen 12:1-3; 13:16; 15:2-4,5; 16:10,11; 17:2,5,6,15-16,19-21; 18:1-10,14,16,18; [21:3]; 26:2-5,24-25; 28:3,14; 32:12[Heb. 13]; 35:11; 46:3; [47:27]; 48:4,16,19; [Exod 1]; 32:10; Num 14:12, Deut 1:10,11; 6:3; 13:17 [Heb 18]' 15:6). In the patriarchal narratives (Gen 12-50), the promise is confined to the Abraham narrative, where it dominates the accounts. This theme occurs in a variety of forms. It is not found alone but together with the promise of a son (Genesis 18) of land and blessing, of assistance and blessing. In particular, in Genesis 18, it is the central feature of the story, a promise made to a childless person in order to solve the problem the patriarch faced. In the announcement of pregnancy and of a birth, Gen 15:1-6 is closely connected with the promise of posterity in Gen 17:15:21, where the covenant promise states that Isaac will be preferred above Ishmael. The birth of a son is recounted in Gen 21:1-3, a short time after it had been promised (Westermann 1976:690-693). In it, the patriarchal narratives features the promise of descendants, and although the tension of a son born to Sarah is resolved, Genesis closes with a mere "seventy" persons descended through Jacob. Joseph's final words announce the return of Jacob's seed (Gen 50:24; cf. Exod 6:3-8). The prologue of Exodus (1:1-7) back-references the ending of Genesis by recalling Joseph's death (Gen 50:26) again and describing the circumstances of Jacob's

offspring in Egypt. It does so by including a genealogical listing of the sons of Jacob who migrated to Egypt, the favorite structural device of the Genesis composer. It is significant that the cessation of one generation, namely, Joseph's generation, and the inauguration of a new is at the juncture of Genesis and Exodus, for this is a thematic interest in Exodus-Deuteronomy, which portrays the succession of Moses' generation by Joshua's new wilderness generation.

In the meantime, the comparison of the number of Abraham's seed to that of the stars of the heavens occurs several times in the Pentateuch: twice the promise was reiterated to Isaac (Gen 22:17; 26:4), and then again by Moses at a crucial moment when God was on the verge of destroying the whole nation (Exod. 32:13). Deut 1:10 alludes to this promise in reference to the great multitude that came out of Egypt, but as Deut 28:62 makes clear, the promise remained to be fulfilled in a future generation. It is possible that the image of the "star" which is to arise out of the house of Jacob in Num 24:17 owes part of its sense to this particular feature of the promise to the fathers.[357]

4.2.2. The Land

In Genesis God promised a land to the ancestors of Israel (Gen 12:7; 13:14-15,17; 15:7-2117:8; 24:7; 26:3-5; 28:4,13-14; 35:12; 48:4; 50:24), a theme picked up in the Pentateuch that follow (Exod. 6:4,7-8; 13:5,11; 32:13; 33:1;Lev 26:42; Num 10:29; 11:12; 14:16,23; 32:11), especially Deuteronomy (Deut 1:8,35; 4:31; 6:10,18,23; 7:8;

[357] In it, the narrative of Numbers also recounts the transition in the descendants of the promise, closing out the old generation, now dead and buried, save Moses himself, as the Lord had said at Kadesh (e.g., Num 14:29-35). Cf. D. T. Olson, *The Death of the Old and the Birth of the New: The Framework of the Book of Numbers and the Pentateuch*, BJS 71 (Chico: Scholars Press, 1985), 186-91.

8:1,18; 9:5,27; 10:11; 11:8-9,18-21; 26:3,15; 28:11; 31:7,20; 29:13; 30:20; 34:4). The Abraham narrative begins with a divine promise of the gift of land. At first, this promise is articulated in rather vague terms as the patriarch sets out from his homeland (Gen 12:1-3), but it is later made more specific (Gen 12:7), and is repeatedly affirmed, with varying formulations, both to Abraham himself (Gen 13:14-17; 15:18-21; 17:8) and to his descendants (Gen 26:3f.; 28:13-15; 35:11f.). The promise of land, although sometimes appearing in isolation, is frequently interlaced with other promises, which have been variously analyzed and categorized, namely, the promise of a son/descendants/progeny (Gen 13:16; 15:1-6; 16:10-12; 26:4), the promise of God's presence/blessing (Gen 26:24; 28:13-15), and the promise of a new relationship with God (Gen 17:4-8).[358] Of all the promises, however, it was the promise of land that was to prove the most important and decisive for Israel, for this promise was reiterated and reinterpreted from one generation to the next in such a way that it became a living power and a seminal force in the life of the people.[359]

As can be seen from Gen 15:7-21 and 13:14-17, the emphasis lies on the promise made to Abraham. The story in Gen 15:7-21 concerns only the promise of the land. The passage depicted God alone moving between the halves of the sacrificial animals after

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[358] The distinction between the promise of a son and the promise of many descendants is emphasized by Westermann, *Promise to the Fathers*, 11ff., and the promise of a new relationship with God as an independent category is advocated by von Rad. See, G. von Rad, "The Promised Land and Yahweh's Land in the Hexateuch," in *From Genesis to Chronicles: Explorations in Old Testament Theology*, ed. K. C. Hanson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 59-60.

[359] From the viewpoint of the Pentateuch faith, the promise was significant for two reasons: 1) it emphasized the fact that the people did not dwell in a land to which the changes and chances of history just happen to have brought them, but in a land which had been destined for them by Yahweh before Israel even became a nation. Israel's occupation of Canaan was therefore not to be regarded as an historical coincidence, but as part of God's purposive action in history; and 2) the promise served to remind Israel that it was not native to the land of Canaan, but had been granted it by the will of God. Thus, the land that was to become Israel's possession was not one, which Abraham had inherited by natural right from his ancestors, but one, which had been freely granted as Yahweh's gracious gift. See, W. Zimmerli, "Land and Possession," 67-79.

sunsets as "a smoking furnace and a flaming torch" (v. 17). Thus, God obligated himself and only himself to fulfill the terms of this oath. Abraham was not asked or required likewise to obligate himself. The total burden for the delivery of the gift of the land fell on the divine provider but not on the devotion of the patriarch. As if to underscore the permanence of this arrangement, Gen 17:7,13,19 stress that this was to be a בְּרִית עוֹלָם ("an everlasting covenant").[360] The promise is probably the basis for an accepted formula for the legal transfer of land (cf. Gen 48:22). Such an adaptation is suggested by Gen 13:14-17. In the formula "to your descendants I will give this land," Abraham received a promise that would be fulfilled only for his descendants, and so this presupposes a period later than those of the patriarchs. This promise probably was formulated when possession of the land was a life-and-death matter for the tribes that settled in Canaan. At the end of the patriarchal stories (Gen 50:24), it is stated that the promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob refers to the gift of the land of Canaan to the Israelites who leave Egypt. Here, the promise functions to tie the history of Israel to the patriarchal narratives (esp. the Abraham cycle).

Numbers' attention is given to the land promise as preparations are underway for departure to Canaan (Num 1:1-10:11). Although the book opens in Israel's second year, it closes thirty-eight years later, and the people have progressed only as far as the banks of the Jordan (Num 1:1; 10:11). Their efforts to obtain the land were thwarted by unbelief (Numbers 13-14), and the remainder of the account tells of Israel's vagabond existence in the desert. Nevertheless, the land remained its hope and goal (Numbers 20); a foretaste of their inheritance is enjoyed by the dispossession of Amorite kings in

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[360] W. C. Kaiser, "The Promised Land: A Biblical-Historical View" *BSac* 138 (1981): 302-11.

Trnasjordan (Numbers 22-24). After overcoming additional setbacks, the Israelites finally arrive on the plains of Moab (Num 33:48), anticipating the realization of the promises, and there they remain.

There is no doubt that one of Deuteronomy's central concerns is the land (cf. Mayes 1979:79-81). This theme is basic to the book and permeates all parts and levels of it. In the book, the promise of the land is formulated as an oath and has the function of legitimizing the occupation of the land by the tribes (cf. Westermann 1976:690-693). The final work of this book continues the emphasis on the land element of the promise: "In the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly bless you" (Deut 15:4; also 3:2, 18, 20; 4:1; 12:1). It is described a a land "flowing with milk and honey" which was promised to the "father" (Deut 6:3; 11:9; 26:5, 15; 27:3). The last words of Moses reiterate the promise: "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants'" (Deut 34:4). In addition, Lev 25:23 (cf. Exod 19:5; Lev 20:22-24; Num 36:7), in a context dealing with the Year of Jubilee, declares that the owner of the land is none other than the Lord. Indeed the God of Israel is the giver of whatever the land yields (Deut 6:10-11). Thus, one of the central theological affirmations about the land is that it is the gift of God to Israel (Deut 1:8; 4:31; 11:9, 21; 26:3, 15; cf. Exod 6:4, 8). Eighteen times the book of Deuteronomy (1:8, 35; 6:10, 18, 23; 7:13; 8:1; 9:5; 10:11; 11:9, 21; 19:8; 26:3, 15; 28:11; 30:20; 31:7; 34:4) refers to the promise of the land made with the patriarchs, and all but three of these eighteen references emphasize the fact that God likewise "gave" it to them.[361] In fact, it was in view of "going into and

[361] See, D. Miller, Jr., Patrick, "The Gift of God: The Deuteronomic Theology of the Land," *Int* 23 (1969): 454.

possessing this land" that Israelites' exodus from Egypt and journey through the wilderness took place (Deut 1:7-8; 6:23; 26:3, 5-10).[362] This land was "a good land" (Deut 1:25,35; 3:23; 4:21-22; 6:18; 8:7,10; 9:6; 11:17), for it was filled with brooks, springs, wheat, barley, grapes, vines, figs, pomegranates, olives, honey, iron, and copper. Yet what God gave he then termed Israel's נַחֲלָה ("inheritance"). It was "the good land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance" (Deut 4:21; cf. 4:38; 12:9; 15:4; 19:10; 20:16; 21:23; 24:4; 25:19; 26:1). Whereas the land had been granted to the patriarchs by virtue of the divine word and oath, it was still theirs in theory and not in actuality. For over half a millennium it was only the land of their sojourning; they did not as yet possess it. The under Joshua's conquest the ancient promise was to be made a reality.

Since the land was a "gift," as Deuteronomy affirmed in some twenty-five references (Deut 1:20,25; 2:29; 3:20; 4:40; 5:16),[363] Israel had but to "possess" (ירשׁ) it (Deut 3:18, 5:31; 12:1; 15:4; 19:2,14; 25:19). This does not mean that the idea of taking the land by force or conquest was contradictory to the idea of its bestowal as a gift. As Miller (1969:455) correctly reconciled the situation, God's overthrow of the enemy would be the way in which God would finally allow Israel to take possession of the land. The two notions come together in the expression, "The land which Yahweh gives

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[362] von Rad, *Problem of the Hexateuch*, 1-78, has argued for a "historical credo" in Deut 26:5-10 from which the Hexateuch grew.

[363] The concept of the land as a gift is developed in Deuteronomy. Here, the land is described as a place filled in abundance with all the necessary provisions of life (Deut 8:7-10), which is compared with the land of Egypt, to which it is far superior (Deut 11:10-12). Its fertility is expressed by the recurring formula 'a land flowing with milk and honey' (Deut 6:3; 11:9; 26:9, 15; 27:3; 31:20). According to Deuteronomy, this land was the supreme gift, which Yahweh was to bestow upon Israelites, and it was a gift, which patently transcended all human expectation. Further, Deuteronomy emphasis that the land was a gift, which was imparted to all the people of Israel, which is the inheritance of them as a whole (cf. P. Diepold, *Israels Land* BWANT 95 [Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1972], 79f.; J. G. McConville, *Law and Theology in Deuteronomy* [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984]).

you to posses." Thus, corresponding to the notion of the land as divine gift, there was a human dimension, which was to manifest itself in Israel's response. Yahweh's gift to Israel implied a requirement on his part, and throughout Deuteronomy there is a continued demand for Israel's obedience, and an emphasis on the obligations, which the people owed to God.

Meanwhile, it has frequently been observed by commentators concerning precise nature of the relation between the law and the land in Deuteronomy. In the laws (Deuteronomy 12-26) the theme is often expressed as the basis for the laws and institutions. The whole of the law code is viewed as a "constitution" given through Moses in anticipation to the people's inhering the land. The law was viewed both as the norm of Israel's life in the land and as the primary condition of its occupation. This view of the nature of the law, however, inevitably resulted in a certain tension between the concept of gift and that of commandment, for it is implied that without obedience to the law, there could be no land-gift, and consequently the gift itself appears to be made conditional.[364] The commandments were given prior to Israel's entry into the promised land, but their observance became meaningful only after the conquest and settlement. Here again, therefore, the indicative is made the basis for the imperative, and observance of the law is presented as their thankful response to the privileges granted to them by Yahweh. Once viewed in this light, Deuteronomy can be absolved from the charge of legalism, for its covenant theology 'prevents the indicative from being reduced to cheap grace, and prevents the imperative from degenerating into works of righteousness' (Diepold: 1972:100). Israel cannot earn its salvation by

[364] L. Perlitt, "Motive und Schichten der Landtheologie im Deuteronomium," in *Das Land Israel in biblishcer Zeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1983), 46-58.

obedience to the law; yet, it is only when Israel hears and obeys God's commands that it can fully realize its existence as the chosen people in the promised land.

4.3. Textual Links

As a literary unit, the Abraham narrative is not isolated, but forms a part of a greater narrative whole. Links to the following accounts in Genesis and the rest of the Pentateuch are particularly noticeable at the level of words and sentences. In this section, these connecting elements will be presented.

4.3.1. The Divine Promise (Gen 12:1-9// Gen 49:8-21// Numbers 24)

The divine promise made to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3) is a central not merely to the Abraham narrative but to the whole Pentateuch. Nevertheless, more important here is the question of the role the pericope plays in the overall purpose of the Pentateuch. When viewed in the light of their parallels with other parts of the books, the passage plays a strategic role in the overall message of the Pentateuch. Its placement in the books is part of the writer's plan to develop a central theological thesis.

In Gen 1:28, the author/the final composer reveals that at the center of God's purpose in creating human beings was his desire to bless them. Even after they were cast away from God's protective care in the garden caused by their act of disobedience, God promised that he would provide a means for restoring the blessing: a future "seed" would one day come and crush the head of the serpent (Gen 3:15). Gen 3:15 shows plainly that God's original intention for the humanity was blessing and that his

continual concern for them remains the same. When God chose Abraham as the channel of the promised "seed" (Gen 12:1-3), his express purpose was to bless Abraham and all the nations of the earth through this "seed." In this respect, the author/the final composer has figured Abraham and his descendants, like Noah, as a new beginning in God's plan of blessing as well as a return to God's original plan of blessing all humankind (Gen 1:28). This idea is developed in a number of other ways as well in Genesis in the light of the frequent reiteration of God's blessing in Gen 1:28 (cf. Gen 9:1) throughout the narratives of Abraham and his descendants (e.g., Gen 12:1-3; 13:15-16; 15:5, 18; 17:6-8; 22:17-18; 25:11; 26:2-4; 27:27-29; 49:28).[365] Like his original intent for Adam in the beginning, God's intent for Abraham was that he would become a great nation and enjoy God's good land. In this sense, Abraham is represented here as a new Adam and the 'seed of Abraham' as s second Adam, a new humanity.

At the close of the book of Genesis, the author/the final composer gives the reader a glimpse of the future seed of Abraham. That is to say, when Abraham's seed was on the verge of entering into Egyptian bondage, God furthered his promise by giving a prophecy to the patriarch Jacob. The prophecy was about one of his sons, Judah (Gen 49:8-12). Through the family of Judah, one would come who would be a king and

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[365] Genesis shows that God has a blessing for all living creatures as a creation ordinance (Gen 1:22, 28; cf. Gen 5:2; 9:1) but the "blessing" for the nations will be realized only by those who bless Abraham and his seed (Gen 12:1-3). A "blessing" presupposes a relationship between God and the persons blessed. Especially, in the patriarchal narratives, God's blessing means proliferation and success (e.g., Gen 12:2-3; 17:16; 22:17; 26:24; 39:5; 48:3-4). See, J. Scharbert, "ברך brk; בְּרָכָה bᵉrākhāh," in *TDOT* 2.279-308, esp. 284, 289, 294. Cf. also, e.g., Exod 20:24; Deut 1:11; 7:13; Ruth 2:4, 1 Chr 4:10; Isa 51:2; Pss 67:1, 6 [2,7]; 115:12-15. ברך occurs in Genesis 8x in qal, 3x in niphal, 59x in piel; the noun בְּרָכָה occurs 16x, giving 88 occurrences of the root in Genesis, more than any other biblical book…. See C. W. Mitchell, *The Meaning BRK "To Bless" in the Old Testament*, SBLDS 95 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), Table 1, 184.

restore God's blessing to Israel and all the nations. This one "seed" who is to come, to whom the right of kingship belongs, will be the "lion of the tribe of Judah" and "to him will be the obedience of the nations" (Gen 49:10). The importance which the author attaches to the connection of the fulfillment of the "blessing" and coming of this one from the tribe of Judah can be seen in the narrative framework given to the prophet poem of Jacob in Genesis 49. At the conclusion of Jacob's words, the author/the final composer has repeated three times that his words are to be understood as a renewal of the theme of the blessing (Gen 49:28):

כָּל־אֵ֔לֶּה שִׁבְטֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל שְׁנֵ֣ים עָשָׂ֑ר וְזֹ֣את אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּ֤ר לָהֶם֙ אֲבִיהֶ֔ם

וַיְבָ֣רֶךְ אוֹתָ֗ם אִ֚ישׁ אֲשֶׁ֣ר כְּבִרְכָת֔וֹ בֵּרַ֖ךְ אֹתָֽם

Having eliminated the older brothers as rightful heirs of the blessing, Jacob foretold a future for the tribe of Judah that pictured him as the preeminent son. In verse 9, Judah is portrayed as a "young lion," which sleeping in its den after having just devoured its prey. In v. 10 the picture is filled out with a description of the young warrior as a king. He is the one who holds the "scepter" and the "ruler's staff." The point of Jacob's words is that Judah will hold such a status among the tribes of Israel until one comes "to whom it belongs." The most startling aspect of the description of this one from the tribe of Judah comes next: "and the obedience of the nations is his" (v. 10b). The use of the plural word עַמִּים ("nations") rather than the singular suggests that Jacob had in view a kingship that extended beyond the boundaries of the Israelites to include other nations as well. There may be an anticipation of this view in the promise of God to Jacob in Gen 28:3 and 48:4: "I will make you a community of peoples." As God had forewarned Abraham (Gen 15:13-16) his people would first undergo a time of bondage and oppression until when the sin of the Amorites had reached its full measure (v. 16).

However, God promised that after four generations Abraham's "seed" would return to the land and again enjoy his blessing. The future reign of this king and the blessing that is to ensue now is the focus of other poetic texts in the Pentateuch (cf. Numbers 24).

With this backdrop of the historical narrative, the author/the final composer takes interest in the prophecies of Balaam (Num 22:1-24:25). Underlying the narratives, which tell the story of Balaam, is the author's interest in the promise God had made to Abraham. According to that promise, those who bless his seed will be blessed and those who curse his seed will be cursed. The story opens with Balak's dread of the great numbers of Israel (Num 22:3). The king Balak of the Moabites had hired Balaam to curse the seed of Abraham (Num 22:5-41), but as the story unfolds, God permitted him only to bless them (Num 24:10; cf. Num 23:8-9, 20). They show that God has already begun to fulfill his promise to Abraham and that his seed had become "a great nation" (Num 22:6). They also show that God was about to fulfill his promise to give Abraham's seed the land. When Balak sent for Balaam to curse this people, Israel was poised on the plains of Moab ready to go into the land. Finally, the Balaam narratives show that the curses of the nations could not thwart God's promise to bless the seed of Abraham. In spite of the nations' attempts to curse God's people, all that could ultimately happen is their blessing. Through Balaam the seed of Abraham is blessed and the seed of Moab is cursed (Num 24:17). Thus, inside the texts themselves we have an assertion that God's will for a blessing to Israel cannot be resisted and certainly cannot be contradicted by a curse. In context, it is asserted that all the force of God's sovereignty is a blessing for Israel. Thus, the texts are related, in their final form, to the initial blessing God makes to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3). The text, moreover, picks up on the Genesis theme that not only is Israel blessed, but through Israel other peoples

are blessed as well: "Blessed is everyone who blesses you, and cursed is everyone who curses you" (Num 24:9b).

The narratives dealing with Balaam (Num 22:1-24:25), thus, play a strategic role in the overall message of the Pentateuch, particularly in the development of the themes of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 12:1-3). Their placement at this point in the book of Numbers is part of the author's/the final composer's plan to develop a central theological thesis. As well as, they also serve as an inclusio to the Exodus-wilderness narratives. That is, the Balaam narratives restate the central themes of these narratives at their conclusion in a way that parallels the statement of these themes at their beginning. That is to say, the Balaam story, which lies at the close of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, parallels many of the events and ideas of the story of Pharaoh at the beginning of the book of Exodus. The parallels are striking.

1. Balak and Pharaoh – kings of large and powerful nations which represented a major obstacle to Israel's entering the promised land.

2. Israel as a threat to Moabites and Egypt – Israel was a threat to these nations only because God kept his promise to the fathers and had given them great increase in numbers (Exod 1:7, 9; Num 22:3, 6).

3. The plans of the two kings – Pharaoh's plans were an attempt to stop Israel from returning to their land (Exod 1:10); that is, his plan was to block the very blessing, which God had promised to Abraham (Gen 15:16) – enjoyment of the promised land. Thus, what the writer attempts to show is that the promise of a great nation to Abraham (Gen 12:2) and the blessing of humankind (Gen 1:28; 15:16) were beginning to be fulfilled in Israel's sojourn in Egypt, and the

nations were set on thwarting that promise. Like Pharaoh's plans, Balak's plans is Numbers were also motivated by the fact that Israel had become "too numerous" (Num 22:6; כִּי־עָצוּם הוּא "for they are too mighty for me"). Also like Pharaoh, Balak was intent on keeping the Israelites out of the land (Num 22:6).

4. Pharaoh's and Balak's three attempts – Pharaoh made three attempts to counteract the blessing and hence to decrease the number of God's people. His first attempt was that he put slave masters over the Israelites to oppress them (Exod 1:11-14)[366]; his second attempt was that he commanded the Hebrew midwives to kill the male children (vv. 15-21)[367]; and in the third attempt he commanded that every male child be thrown into the Nile (v. 22).[368] Yet as the narrative unfolds, on each occasion, God intervened and Pharaoh's plan was turned into a blessing. Whatever the particular scheme of the Egyptians, Israel increased all the more. Moreover, within the structure of the story unfolding in

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[366] The account of Pharaoh's first attempt (Exod 1:11-14) is intended to show that "the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread" (Exod 1:12). In his first oracle, Balaam focused precisely on this point: "How can I curse those whom God has not cursed?" (Num 23:8), and he concluded by stressing the phenomenal growth of God's people: "Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel?" (Num 23:10).

[367] In Pharaoh's second attempt to thwart God's blessing the midwives, who feared God and disobeyed Pharaoh's command, express the central idea of the short narrative: "The Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive" (Exod 1:19). To be sure, their words were a ruse to cover their disobeying Pharaoh's orders; nevertheless, they find an echo in the theme of Balaam's second oracle, Israel's mighty strength: God brought them out of Egypt; they have the strength of wild ox…The people rise like a lioness; they rouse themselves like a lion" (Num 24:8). It may be of interest to note that Pharaoh's plans were stymied by the apparent deception of the Hebrew midwives and that in Balaam's second oracle he states, "God is not a man, that he should lie" (Num 23:19).

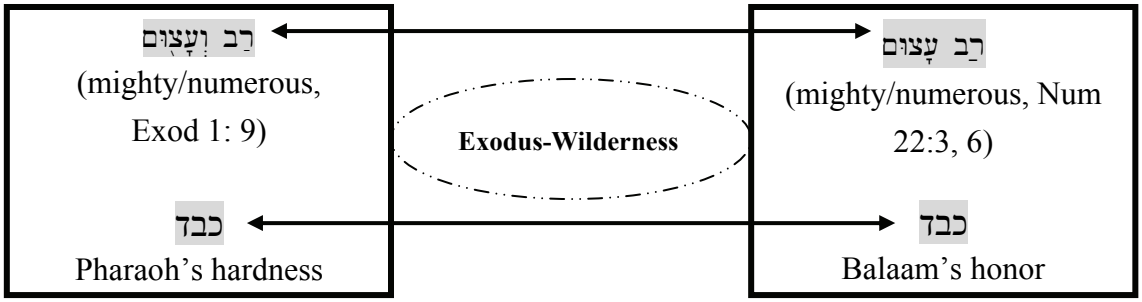
[368] This third attempt also finds an interesting parallel in Balaam's third oracle. In an ironic reversal of the evil intended by Pharaoh's order to cast the seed of Abraham into the river, Balaam's third oracle use the well-watered gardens that spread out along the banks of a river to speak of the abundance of Israel's "seed." A literal reading of Balaam's remark in Num 24:7 is "Their seed is in the abundant waters." Thus, what was once the intended means for the destruction of the promised seed, that is, the "abundant water," has now become the poetic image of God's faithfulness to his promise.

the narrative, it was as a result of Pharaoh's third plan, that of casting the male children into the Nile, that the writer was able to introduce the announcement of the birth of God's chosen deliverer, Moses. This narrative is remarkably similar to the narrative which deal with Balaam. Like Pharaoh before him, Balak also made three attempts to thwart God's blessing for Israel (Num 23:1-12, 13-26; 23:27-24:9), and each attempt was turned into a blessing (Num 23:11-12, 25-26; 24:10-11). It should be noted that though Balaam gave more than three oracles, the writer has arranged the oracles into three attempts to curse Israel. Balak himself reflects the writer's interest when he says, "I summoned you to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them these three times" (Num 24:10). As in the case of Pharaoh's three attempts, after Balak's third attempt the author/the final composer turns to the question of the birth of God's chosen deliverer, the prophecy of the star that was to arise out of Jacob (Num 24:12-25).[369] In view of this larger attempt by the author/the final composer to portray events at the beginning of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness as parallel to similar events at the end, it is not surprising to find that Balaam's first three oracles are thematically parallel to Pharaoh's three attempts to suppress God's blessing of Israel in Egypt, and that Balaam's last oracle focuses on the coming of a deliverer.

Other features in the verbal texture of the two narratives also suggest that the above

[369] An interesting implication of the parallels presented here between the account of the birth of Moses in Exodus 2 and the announcement of the "star" to arise from the family of Jacob in Number 24 is that Moses thus appears to be portrayed in these narratives as a prototype of the "star of Jacob." Such a view Moses is consistent with the fact that elsewhere in the Pentateuch Moses is cast as a figure of the coming king (Deut 33:5) and prophet (Deuteronomy 18 and 34). This is also consistent with the fact that later biblical writers often saw in Moses a picture of the future Messiah (e.g., Hos 2:2).

parallels are part of the author's/the final composer's conscious intention. For example, the story line of both passages is guided by the same verbal pattern in the use of the Hebrew term for *heavy* (כבד).[370] The narrative of Pharaoh's opposition to releasing the Israelites is guided by the recurring reference to the "hardening" of his heart (Exod 7:14; 8:11, 28; 9:7, 34; 10:1). At the climax of the story, by means of a wordplay on the notion of hardening Pharaoh's heart, the Lord says, "I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh" (Exod 14:4). It should be noted here that in Hebrew, the word for *glory* (כבד) has the same root as that for harden (כבד). Moreover, the story of Balaam is clearly guided by Balak's promise to "reward" him richly if he would curse Israel (Num 22:17, 37; 24:11). Again the Hebrew root is the same as that for "to harden" and "to glory." The two narratives, then, are linked at the thematic, structural, and verbal levels.[371]



The author's/the final composer's purpose appears to be to view the reign of the future king in terms taken from God' great act of salvation in the past. The future is going to be like the past. What God did for Israel in the past is seen as a type of what he will do for them in the future when he sends his promised king.

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[370] Hebrew narratives are often guided by a thematic verbal pattern. In this regard, Sailhamer presents two key-words as instances, "Shem/name" and "Isaac/laughed" which link the narratives of Genesis 9-12 and that of Genesis 12-26 respectively. See, Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 44.
[371] Ibid., 41-44.

Not only do Balaam's final oracles allude to his own earlier ones, but also in speaking of the future king, Balaam alludes to and even quotes the earlier poetic sections in the Pentateuch. In the oracles of Balaam, then, we find the central messianic themes of the Pentateuch restated and expanded. For example, in Numbers 24:9, Balaam says of the future king about whom he gives his oracle: "Like a lion he [singular] crouches and lies down, like a lioness – who dares to rouse him [singular]?" This entire section of Balaam's oracle is a quotation of Jacob's prophecy of the king who will come from the tribe of Judah: "Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness – who dares to rouse him?" (Gen 49:9). When Balaam says of this future king, "Those who bless you will be blessed and those who curse you will be cursed" (Num 24:9b). He clearly applies to this future king the blessing to the seed of Isaac: "Those who curse you will be cursed and those who bless you will be blessed" (Gen 27:29), and that of Abraham: "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse" (Gen 12:3). Finally, Balaam's description of the future victory of the coming king, "He will crush the foreheads of Moab and the skulls of all the sons of Sheth" (Num 24:17), draw heavily on God's words of promise and judgment spoken to the serpent in Gen 3:15: "I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and hers; he will crush your head."

4.3.2. Abraham's Itinerary to Egypt (Gen 12:10-20)

One may find striking parallels and similar passages between the narratives of Abraham's sojourn (Gen 12:10-13:4) to Egypt and Israel's, concerning the migration of

the children to that land (Gen 42:5; 47:11-13).[372] Sailhamer (1992:141) states, "the account of Abraham's sojourn in Egypt bears the stamp of having been intentionally shaped to parallel the later account of God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Genesis 41-Exodus 12)." Abraham's encounter with Pharaoh foreshadows the last years of Jacob, who with his sons take up residence in Egypt where they are enriched by the court and thereby avoid famine (Gen 45:16-20; 47:1-12). Abraham's experience in Egypt also offered a typology for the Israelites who were enslaved and free only after the infliction of grievous plagues, the tenth touching Pharaoh's house through the death of his son. Such a correspondence between father and descendants is underlying the prediction of the Egyptian sojourn in Gen 15:13-14. As with Abraham, the Hebrews emerged after their ordeal with many possessions so that it was Egypt that was "plundered" (Exod 3:21-22; 11:2-3; 12:35-36). Thus, the parallels are striking:

ABRAHAM (Gen 12:10-13:4)	JOSEPH (Gen 41:54b-Exod 12:42)
וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ (v. 10): a famine	וַיְהִי רָעָב בְּכָל־הָאֲרָצוֹת (Gen 41:54b): a famine
כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לָבוֹא מִצְרָיְמָה… (v. 11): when he drew near to go into Egypt…	וַיָּבֹאוּ אַרְצָה גֹּשֶׁן (46:28): and they came into the land of Goshen
וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ (v. 11): he said to Sarai his wife	וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אֶחָיו (46:31a): And Joseph said unto his brothers
יָדַעְתִּי כִּי… (v. 11): I know that …	אֶעֱלֶה וְאַגִּידָה לְפַרְעֹה וְאֹמְרָה (46:31b): I will go up, and show Pharaoh and say to him
וְהָיָה כִּי־יִרְאוּ אֹתָךְ הַמִּצְרִים וְאָמְרוּ	וְהָיָה כִּי־יִקְרָא לָכֶם פַּרְעֹה וְאָמַר…

[372] Cf. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, II.334, Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 116-17, and Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, 93. The case of Isaac, who also journeyed locally to Gerar differs from that of Abraham and Jacob, for the Lord prohibited him from descending to Egypt (Gen 26:1-2). In the Old Testament, famine is commonly understood as divine curse (e.g., Deut 28:23-24; Amos 4:6-8) or at least divine absence (Ruth 1:1, 6). However, there is no hint of divine disapproval of the patriarchs or any objection to their leaving Canaan in the light of the case of Jacob that it is specifically condoned by the Lord (Gen 46:3-4).

(v. 12): And it shall come to pass when the Egyptians see you, they will say	(46:33): And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say…
אִמְרִי… (v. 13): Say…	וַאֲמַרְתֶּם… (46:34a): Say…
לְמַעַן יִיטַב־לִי בַעֲבוּרֵךְ (v. 13): that it might be well with me on account of you	תֵּשְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן (46:34b): that you might dwell in the land of Goshen
וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתָהּ שָׂרֵי פַרְעֹה וַיְהַלְלוּ אֹתָהּ אֶל־פַּרְעֹה (v. 15a): and the officials saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh	וַיָּבֹא יוֹסֵף וַיַּגֶּד לְפַרְעֹה… (47:1): Then Joseph came and declared to Pharaoh…
וַתֻּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה בֵּית פַּרְעֹה (v. 15b): and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house	וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר אָבִיךָ וְאַחֶיךָ בָּאוּ אֵלֶיךָ (47:5): And Pharaoh said to Joseph, saying, your father and your brothers are come into the land
וּלְאַבְרָם הֵיטִיב בַּעֲבוּרָהּ וַיְהִי־לוֹ צֹאן־וּבָקָר וַחֲמֹרִים (v. 16a): And he entreated Abram well for her sake; and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses	וְשַׂמְתֶּם שָׂרֵי מִקְנֶה עַל־אֲשֶׁר־לִי (47:6): then make them rulers over my cattle וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָהּ וַיִּפְרוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד (47:27): and they possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly
וַיְנַגַּע יְהוָה אֶת־פַּרְעֹה נְגָעִים גְּדֹלִים וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ (v. 17): And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues[373]	עוֹד נֶגַע אֶחָד אָבִיא עַל־פַּרְעֹה (Exod 11:1): yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh
וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה לְאַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר (v. 18):[374] And Pharaoh called to Abram and said	וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה וְלְאַהֲרֹן לַיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר… (12:31):And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said…
קַח וָלֵךְ (v. 19): Take and go	קְחוּ… וָלֵכוּ (12:32): Take…and go
וַיְשַׁלַּח[375] אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ (v. 20): they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had	לְשַׁלְּחָם מִן־הָאָרֶץ… (12:33): to send them from the land…

[373] Gen 12:17 highlights the contrast between Abraham's welfare and that of Pharaoh. Meanwhile, "diseases" translates the Hebrew for "plagues," which is the same word describing the ten plagues against Pharaoh (Exod 11:1). Cf. the verb and its cognate accusative noun, וַיְנַגַּע…נְגָעִים , lit., "and (the Lord) plagued … plagues."

[374] One may find the Pharaoh's double role of judge and of one of the contending parties in Gen 20:10; 26:9; 44:14-34; Exod 1:18-19. Furthermore, Pharaoh's two "why" questions, in which he shares his indignation with Abraham, are but one illustration of many in the Old Testament in which several "why" questions occur in sequence, always with לָמָּה (Gen 31:27, 30; 47:15, 19; Exod 5:22; Num 11:11). See, J. Barr, " 'Why?' in Biblical Hebrew," *JTS* 36 (1985): 29-30. Also, Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis 1-17*, 385.

[375] The Hebrew word, שלח, occurs in earlier when God "sent forth" Adam and Eve the garden (Gen 3:23) and also in later when Pharaoh releases the Israelites from his tight hold (Exod 6:1; 11:1; 12:33). See, Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis 1-17*, 386.

וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם...הַנֶּגְבָּה (13:1): And Abram went up from Egypt toward the Negev	וַיִּסְעוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵרַעְמְסֵס סֻכֹּתָה (12:37): And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth
וְלוֹט עִמּוֹ (v. 1): and with Lot	וְגַם־עֵרֶב רַב עָלָה אִתָּם (12:38a): And a mixed multitude went up also with them
וְאַבְרָם כָּבֵד מְאֹד בַּמִּקְנֶה בַּכֶּסֶף וּבַזָּהָב (v. 2): And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold	וּבָקָר מִקְנֶה כָּבֵד מְאֹד (12:38b): and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle כְּלֵי־כֶסֶף וּכְלֵי זָהָב (12:35): silver, and gold
וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם אַבְרָם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה (v. 4): and there Abram called on the name of the Lord	הִוא־הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה לַיהוָה (12:42): the is that night of the Lord

The author/the final composer "has carefully worded the account of Abraham's sojourn in, and deliverance from, Egypt with the greater sojourn and deliverance in mind" (Ross 1988:273-4). From these parallels between two events, one may see that the author/the final composer intended to use this story as a paradigm to teach Israel the nature of her departure from Egypt and return to Palestine.[376] In this respect, it is noteworthy in the light such parallels that "by shaping the account of Abraham's sojourn in Egypt to parallel the events of the Exodus, the author/the final composer permits the reader to see the implications of God's past deeds with his chosen people. The past is not allowed to remain in the past. Its lessons are drawn for the future" (Sailhamer 1992:142). In addition to the similarities between two texts, one may also find some elements of contrast. Indeed, the texts are inverted in terms of "good guys" and "bad guys." The Egyptians are not oppressors in Gen 12:10-20; they are not "hard-

[376] Instruction, teaching, and inculcation are for Cassuto frequently the essence, the true meaning of biblical narrative. The analogy between Gen 12:10-20 and the Exodus teaches that "the bandage of the children of Israel In Egypt was not an accidental calamity, but part of a plan prepared beforehand" and "that the Lord is ever ready to protect his faithful ones" (*A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, II.336-37). One the other hand, Westermann's reliance on form critical reconstruction leads him to conclude that "there is certainly no direct link" between Gen 12:10-13:4 and the exodus events. See, Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*, 166.

hearted." Indeed, Pharaoh is aware of the moral issues entailed once he learns that Sarah is Abraham's wife. The Egyptians in Genesis are far from the Egyptians in Exodus. In conclusion, the relationship between Gen 12:10-20 and the Exodus suggests that Gen 12:10-20 is a powerful example of the effects of the paradigmatic possibilities of biblical narrative, of how it overloads a text and frustrate an attempt at clear, univocal reading, a final, definitive reading. The text explodes in all directions.

4.3.3. The Instruction of War with Foreign Nation (Gen 14:13-16// Deut 20:1-15)

In a number of points, the events of Genesis 14 reflect the same concerns as those of Deut 20:1-15, the instructions concerning carrying out wars with foreign nations: 1) Abraham's actions are described in ways reminiscent of the conduct of warfare against "cities that are afar off and don not belong to the nations nearby" (cf. Deut 20:15); 2) He does not hesitate to go into battle against an army greater than his (Gen 14:14; cf. Deut 20:1; cf. Judg 7:7, MT[6]); 3) Abraham went into battle specially with only the "dedicated young men in his house" (Gen 14:14). The Hebrew expression used here for "חָנִיךְ, dedicated" is not found elsewhere in the Bible, nor is its meaning clear within the context of ancient history and customs. The use of the word here, however, provides another link with Deut 20:5, which states that one who goes into battle should only be one who has already "חָנַךְ,[377] dedicated" his house; 4) Though he rejected the offer of a reward from the king of Sodom, Abraham laid claim to own rightfully that which his young men have eaten (Gen 14:24) as was prescribed in Deut 20:14, where

[377] Since within the Pentateuch the verb occurs only in this passage of Deuteronomy, a link between the two texts by means of the terminology seems likely.

says explicitly that those who go into war with nations afar off may "eat" of the spoils taken in battle. Abraham also recognized that his three friends had their own rightful share in the spoil (Gen 14:24), which corresponds to the provisions of Deuteronomy 20:14; 5) Nevertheless, Abraham flatly rejected the offer to take from the possessions of the king of Sodom (Gen 14:23), as was prescribed in Deuteronomy 20:17 for the spoils of those nations who live within the boundaries of the land of inheritance; and 6) Along these same lines it is to be noted that Deuteronomy 20:2 assigned to the "priest" the role of reminding the people that "the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory" (cf. Deut 20:13, "When the Lord your God delivers it into you hand"). In much the same way, Abraham was met by Melchizedek, "a priest" of the Most High God, who proclaimed to him that it was "the Most High God who delivered your enemies into your hand" (Gen 14:20).

In the light of such similarities, it appears that the author has intended to show that Abraham lived a life in harmony with God's will even though he lived long before the revelation at Sinai. Abraham was one who pictured God's Law written on his heart. He obeyed the Law, though the Law had not yet been given. Such an understanding of the life of Abraham is not foreign to the author of Genesis. Indeed, one of the last statements made about Abraham in Genesis is that he kept God's "commandments, statutes and laws" (Gen 26:5). These terms are well-known from the pages of Deuteronomy (e.g., Deut 11:1; 26:17), where they are the stock vocabulary for describing the keeping of the Torah revealed at Sinai. The author's point appears to have been to show that Abraham, as a man of faith, "kept the law." He did not have the Law written out before him; nevertheless, he kept it. In this respect, the picture of Abraham that emerges from Genesis 14 and 26 is much like that of the new covenant

promise in Jer 31:33, in which God has promised to write the Torah on the heart of his covenant people so that they will obey it "from the heart." This is the same picture of Abraham that later emerges as the central figure in the NT writer's portrayal of lie under the new covenant (e.g., Romans 4, Galatians 3).

4.3.4. Gen 15:7-17 and Exod 19:1-24:11 (the Sinai Covenant)

After Abraham confessed his reliance on the Lord in response to the king of Sodom (Gen 14:22-24), Abraham received a vision in which two divine speeches expand on the two earlier promises (Gen 12:1-3; 13:14-17) of a son whose prodigious progeny (vv. 1-6) will possess the land of Canaan (vv. 7-21). Only here are the covenant elements of land and children coupled by God with an elaborate ritual.[378] Abraham receives righteousness through faith (v. 6),[379] and divine oath and the rite of בְּרִית ("covenant," vv. 9,18) confirm the promises. As for the significance of Genesis 15 for the Abraham narrative as a whole, Westermann remarks on its importance: "Genesis 15 not only stands at the center of the external structure of the Abraham narrative, but also it regarded in the history of exegesis right down to the present as the very heart of the Abraham story."[380] It not merely provides a theological commentary on the promises foundational to the theme of the Abraham narrative, but establishes the promises in a

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[378] Cf. R. W. L. Moberly, "Abraham's Righteousness (Gen 15:6)," in *Studies in the Pentateuch*, ed. J. A. Emerton (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 119.

[379] Most important in the dialogue between Abraham and God in Gen 15:1-6 is the statement expressed in the third person in v. 6 that because Abraham believed what God had said, "the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness." This is the only place in the Bible where the two Hebrew words for אמן ("believe") and צְדָקָה ("righteousness") are used together in a single sentence. Abraham's faith in 15:6, which arches both forward and backward to cover both sections of Genesis 15, is his acknowledgement of Yahweh corresponding to that in Exod 6:7 and 7:5.

[380] Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*, 230.

broad historical vista by relating them to the exodus and conquest (vv. 13-16). As 15:18 shows, vv. 7-17 recounts the establishment of a covenant between the Lord and Abraham. it is fitting that in many respects the account should foreshadow the making of the covenant at Sinai.

Gen 15:7-17	The Covenant at Sinai (Exod 20)
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים I am the Lord, who brought you up out of Ur of the Chaldeans (15:7).	אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם I am the Lord your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt (20:2).
…וְהִנֵּה אֵימָה חֲשֵׁכָה גְדֹלָה נֹפֶלֶת עָלָיו …and an horror of great darkness fell upon him (15:12) וַעֲלָטָה הָיָה וְהִנֵּה תַנּוּר עָשָׁן וְלַפִּיד אֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָבַר בֵּין הַגְּזָרִים הָאֵלֶּה and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces (15:17)	יָרַד עָלָיו יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ וַיַּעַל עֲשָׁנוֹ כְּעֶשֶׁן הַכִּבְשָׁן… the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace… (19:18) וְכָל־הָעָם ׀ רֹאִים אֶת־הַקּוֹלֹת וְאֶת־הַלַּפִּידִם… וְאֶת־הָהָר עָשֵׁן And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightings, … and the mountain smoking (20:18)
…כִּי־גֵר ׀ יִהְיֶה זַרְעֲךָ בְּאֶרֶץ ׀ לֹא לָהֶם וַעֲבָדוּם וְעִנּוּ אֹתָם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה …that your seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years (15:13) …וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן יֵצְאוּ בִרְכֻשׁ גָּדוֹל …and afterward shall they come out with great substance (15:14)	

The opening statement in Gen 15:7: “I am the Lord, who brought you up out of Ur of the Chaldeans,” is virtually identical to the opening statement of the Sinai covenant in Exod 20:2: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you up out of the land Egypt.” The expression “Ur of the Chaldeans” refers back to Gen 11:28, 31 and grounds the present covenant in a past act of divine salvation from “Babylon,” just as Exodus 20:2 grounds

the Sinai covenant in an act of divine salvation from Egypt. In addition, the formulation of Gen 15:7 of reflecting a basic tenet of Israel's faith together with Yahweh's self-predication is found only in Exod 6:6; 7:5; 20:2; 29:46; Lev 19:36; 25:38, 42, 55; 26:13; Num 15:41 and Deut 5:6 (Ha 1989:101-103).[381] Particularly, its formulation of Abraham's exodus bears a very close affinity with Lev. 25:38 not only in the choice but also in the order of words.[382] The coming of God's presence in the awesome fire and darkness of Mount Sinai (Exod 19:18; 20:18; Deut 4:11) appears to be intentionally reflected in Abraham's pyrotechnic vision (Gen 15:12, 17). In the Lord's words to Abraham (15:13-16) the connection between Abraham's covenant and the Sinai covenant is explicitly made by means of the reference to the four hundred years of bondage of Abraham's seed and their subsequent "exodus" ("and after this they will go out." V. 14[383]).

In addition, Gen 15 bears several major points of contact with the Sinai narrative. The first one has to do with the close association of the fire and smoke/cloud with the divine theophany on Sinai (Exod 19:18; 20:18). In fact, Exod 20:18 uses the words לַפִּידִם and עָשָׁן in the description of the theophany. This calls to mind the significance

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[381] From the texts listed above, it is obvious that the exodus tradition has acquired a somewhat stereotyped formulation: אֲנִי (אָנֹכִי) יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם

[382] Cf. N. Lohfink, *Die Landverheissung als Eid. Eine Studie zu Gen. 15*, Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 28 (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholishches Bibelwerk, 1967), 61; M. Anbar, "Genesis 15: A conflation of Two Deuteronomic Narratives," *JBL* 101 (1982): 45.

[383] Gen 15:14 presents the exodus as a consequence of Yahweh's judgment: וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן יֵצְאוּ בִרְכֻשׁ גָּדוֹל וְגַם אֹתָהּ clearly refers to the exodus event (cf. Exod 12:42; 14:11), the connection between v. 14ab and the events that led up to the exodus is not so obvious. The key word of v. 14ab is דָּן – a word not found in the narration of any of the events. On the one hand, there is an analogous situation between Gen 15:14 and Exod 6:2-8 and 7:1-5. In all three texts, the Israelites were oppressed and Yahweh was bent on delivering them. On the ground of the analogous situation in the three passages as well as their reference to the same exodus event in the history of Israel, it seems clear that Yahweh's act depicted by דָּן in Gen 15:14 refers to the whole series of plagues leading up to the utter destruction of the Egyptians in the sea that Exod 6:2-8 and 7:1-5 announce. The point of Gen 15:14 is אַחֲרֵי־כֵן יֵצְאוּ ("afterward shall they come out"). Thus, Gen 15:14 reflects the author's/the final composer's intention to recapitulate the entire exodus tradition.

of the flaming torch (לַפִּיד אֵשׁ) and the smoking firepot (תַּנּוּר עָשָׁן) in Gen 15:17 as representing Yahweh's presence. Secondly, the Sinai narrative presents the Mosaic covenant being not only sealed but also renewed within the setting of a theophany (Exod 24:1-11; 34). The technical expression כָּרַת בְּרִית is used in both passages to depict the act of "making" the covenant (Exod 24:8; 34:10,27). Gen 15:18a couches the divine promise of land donation in v. 18b in the same technical term כָּרַת בְּרִית. V. 17 of course sets this covenant making within a theophany so that the parallelism with the Sinai narrative is reinforced. The use of כָּרַת בְּרִית in Gen 15:18a is significant. For, here it clearly refers to the divine oath promising donation of land to Abraham's descendants. Elsewhere in the Pentateuch it denotes a bilateral covenant – either as a mutual pact between two human partners (Gen 21:27,32; 26:28; 31:44; Exod 23:32; Deut 7:2) or as the covenant Yahweh made with the Israelites binding both in a God-people relationship (cf. Deut 26:17-19; 29:12) with obligations for both partners. Interpreting in this way, Gen 15:17-18 sum up Israel's entire history recapitulated in vv. 13-14, 16. For the two verses explicitly refer to the exodus and Sinai traditions through the use of the cultic implements to represent the divine theophanies in both traditions and the כָּרַת בְּרִית that goes back to the covenant at Sinai.

Such considerations lead to the conclusion that the author intends to draw the reader's attention to the events at Sinai in his depiction of the covenant with Abraham. If we ask why the author has sought to bring in the picture of Sinai here, the answer lies in the purpose of the book. It is part of the overall strategy of the book to show that what God did at Sinai was part of a larger plan which had already been put into action with the patriarchs. Thus, the exodus and the Sinai covenant serve as reminders not only of

God's power and grace but also of God's faithfulness. What he sets out to accomplish with his people, he will carry through to the end.[384]

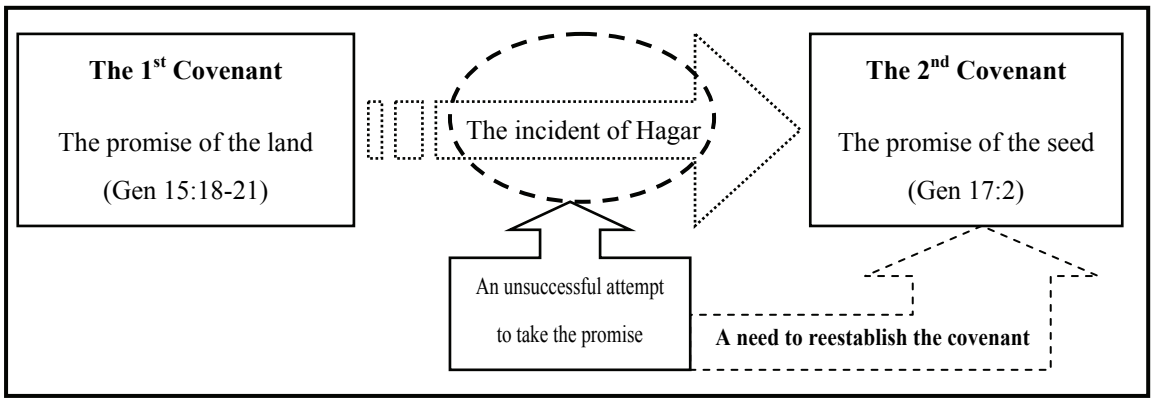
4.3.5. The Compositional Resemblance (Gen 15-17// Exod 24-34)

The choice of words in Gen 17:2 ("I will make my covenant," RSV) poses a question of the coherence of Genesis 17 with the preceding narrative. Why did the author/the final composer include two accounts of a divine-human covenant? What function in the overall narrative does each pericope serve? How significant is this for the interpretation of the theological theme(s) of this section of Genesis and the book as a whole? With regard to these questions, Williamson (2000:26-77) represents four identifiable interpretations of the relationship between Genesis 15 and 17: 1) progressive states in the establishment of the same covenant; 2) the making and renewal of a single covenant; 3) different oral or literary traditions about the establishment of the same covenant; and 4) two separate covenant, each with its own particular emphasis. Clearly the degree of continuity and discontinuity is important for determining the relationship between the two covenant pericopes. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude – from the elements continuity and discontinuity – that these chapters focus on two distinct, yet related, covenants established between God and Abraham. In other words, when examined the context of the narrative as a whole, the divine-human covenants in the Abraham narrative are best understood as relating to different promissory aspects, which are held together by a common thread: God's plan to

[384] See, Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as the Narrative*, 152-53.

mediate blessing to all the nations of the earth through Abraham and his 'seed'.[385]

In this respect one may condensed that the former covenant in Genesis 15 concerns the promise of the land (Gen 15:18-21) and latter covenant concerns the promise of a great abundance of descendants (Gen 17:2).[386] However, it should be noted that between these two covenants was the incident with Hagar. There may thus have been a need to reestablish the earlier covenant after that unsuccessful attempt to take the promise into their own hands.



A similar line of argument can be seen in the narratives of the covenant at Sinai. The covenant is first established in Exodus 24 and then, again, in Exodus 34. Between these two accounts, however, is the narrative of the incident of the golden calf (Exod. 19:16; 32:1-35), which implied a failure on Israel's part in keeping the covenant.

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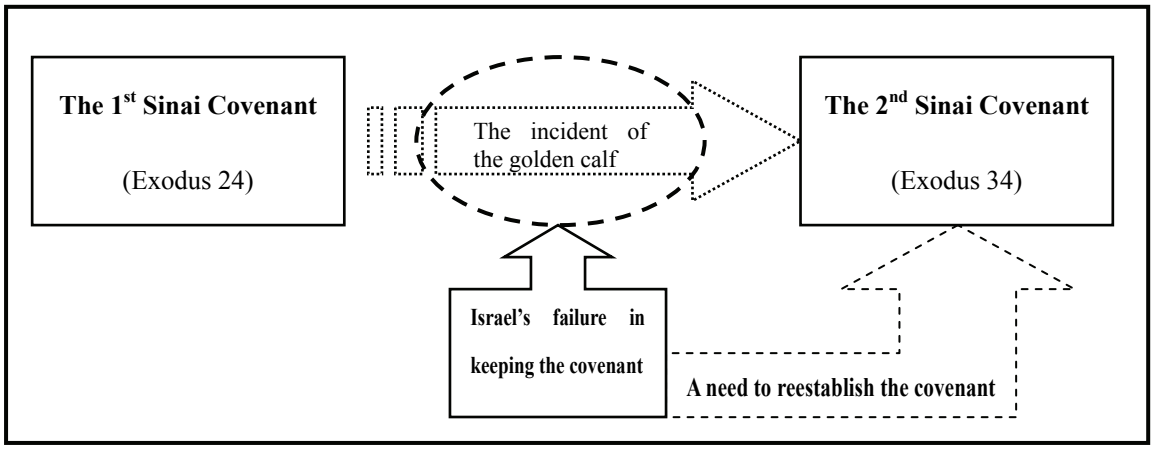
[385] See, Williamson, *Abraham, Israel and the Nations*, 260-67.
[386] Cf.Victor H. Matthews, *Old Testament Turning Points: The Narratives That Shaped a Nation* (Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2005), 44-53.



4.3.6. The Analogies Between the Hagar Episodes (Gen 16:1-16// Gen 21:8-21) and Related Texts in the rest of the Pentateuch

The Hagar episodes in the Abraham narrative is a highly episodic nature. The pericopes, to some extent, stand on their own, and their contribution and relation to the rest of the Pentateuch in terms of inversion. Indeed, the annunciation and career of Hagar foreshadows Israel's exodus (cf. Deut 26:6-7). The reversal between two texts is in evidence in the Hagar episodes. Hagar and Ishmael typify in reverse Israel's experience of Egyptian hostility (Gen 16:6; Exod 1:11-12), expulsion (Gen 21:10; Exod 12:39), and flight (Gen 16:16; Exod 14:5). To put it concretely, Sarah, the Israelites, deals harshly with or "oppresses" Hagar, the Egyptian,[387] who subsequently "flees" into the "wilderness" where she encounters the "angel of the Lord" (Gen 16:7-14). There are parallels with both Israel and Moses. The Israelites are "oppressed" (Exod 1:11-12), subsequently "flee" (Exod 14:5) in the "wilderness" (Exod 13:8;

[387] Plaut notes an Arabic tradition that Hagar was in fact one of the maidservants provided by Pharaoh. See, W. Gunther Plaut, *Genesis* The Torah: A Modern Commentary (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1974), 131.

14:3,5,11) where the "angel of God" (Exod 14:19; 32:34) goes before them. In the second Hagar episode, Sarah demands that Abraham "cast out" (גרשׁ) Hagar (Gen 21:10). Abraham complies and "sends her away" (שלח); Hagar leaves and wanders in the wilderness (Gen 21:14-21). Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and demand, "Send my people away, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness" (Exod 5:1). Eventually, the people are "cast out" of the land of Egypt (Exod 6:1; 11:1; 12:39). In addition, Hagar and Moses share in a pattern of events: oppression (Exod 2:11-15a), flight in the desert where theophany occurs (Exod 2:15b; 3:2), return and expulsion when miraculous deliverance occurs (Exod 10:11; 11:1, 15:22-27).[388] The historical irony in Hagar's revenge is the Egyptian enslavement of Sarah's descendant (cf. Gen 15:13; 16:6). In addition, Hagar's son, who taunts Isaac, foreshadows the Egyptian purge of the Hebrew children (Gen 15:13; 21:10; Exod 1:16). This observation does demonstrate that any reading of the Abraham narrative cannot be simple and limit itself to the narrative.

Moreover, Genesis 16 alludes to three other important passages in the Pentateuch: Gen 3:6; 12:3; and Deut 7:1-6.[389] By bringing the events of Hagar and Abraham into the larger context of these other passages, the author enlarges the reference of the story beyond Abraham and Hagar as individuals and ties their actions to the themes of the Pentateuch as a whole. The first sign of an intentional interdependence of the Hagar story on surrounding texts is the notice at the beginning of the narrative that Hagar was an "Egyptian" maid of Sarah (Gen 16:1, 3). The second reference to Hagar as "the Egyptian" is strikingly different from the first. The adjective does not modify "the

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[388] T. B. Dozeman, "The Wilderness and Salvation History in the Hagar Story," *JBL* 117 (1998): 23-43.
[389] Sailhamer, *Pentateuch As Narrative*, 153-55.

maiden" as in verse 1 ("Egyptian maid"), but stands alone as a substantive along with "maid" in apposition to the personal name Hagar ("Hagar, the Egyptian, her maid"). In verse 3, then, "the Egyptian" serves as a conspicuous reminder of Hagar's identity in verse 1, "an Egyptian maid." The mention of Hagar's geographical origin appears to function as a connecting link with the geographical list immediately preceding the story (Gen 15:18-21), since in that list, the first geographical name is Egypt (Gen 15:18). If such a connection is intentional, then it appears that the author is attempting to position the account of Hagar (Genesis 16) so that her story is representative of those nations in the preceding list. A way was thus opened for the events in the life of Hagar and Abraham to be interpreted within the larger theological context of Genesis and the Pentateuch where these lists of names occur. Particularly important in this regard are the similarities between Genesis 16 and Deut 7:1-6, the prohibition of taking foreign wives, a text, which had enormous importance to later generations of Israelites.[390] The account of Sarah's plan to have a son has not only been connected with the list of nations in Genesis 15, but also appears to have been intentionally shaped with reference to the account of the Fall in Genesis 3. Each of the main verbs (wayyiqtol forms) and key expressions in Gen 16:2-3 finds a parallel in Genesis 3:

Gen 16:2-3	Genesis 3
16:2a וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי אֶל־אַבְרָם…	3:2a וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־הַנָּחָשׁ…
And Sarai said to Abram…	And the woman said to the serpent…
16:2b וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם לְקוֹל שָׂרָי	3:17 …כִּי־שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אִשְׁתֶּךָ…
and Abram heard to the voice of Sarai.	…because you have heard to the voice of your wife…
16:3a וַתִּקַּח שָׂרַי אֵשֶׁת־אַבְרָם אֶת־הָגָר…	3:6a וַתִּקַּח מִפִּרְיוֹ וַתֹּאכַל…

[390] See, Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 114ff.

And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar…	He took of the fruit and did eat…
16:3b וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָם אִישָׁהּ לְוֹ לְאִשָּׁה and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife	3:6b וַתִּתֵּן גַּם־לְאִישָׁהּ עִמָּהּ… and gave also to her husband with her…
16:8 וַיֹּאמַר הָגָר שִׁפְחַת שָׂרַי אֵי־מִזֶּה בָּאת וְאָנָה תֵלֵכִי And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?	3:9 …אַיֶּכָּה׃ …where are you?
16:10 הַרְבָּה אַרְבֶּה אֶת־זַרְעֵךְ… I will multiply your seed exceedingly… 16:11 הִנָּךְ הָרָה וְיֹלַדְתְּ בֵּן וְקָרָאת שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁמָעֵאל… Behold, you be with child, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael 16:12 יָדוֹ בַכֹּל וְיַד כֹּל בּוֹ… his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him…	3:15 וְאֵיבָה׀ אָשִׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ וּבֵין זַרְעָהּ הוּא יְשׁוּפְךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תְּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עָקֵב And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel

From the author's vantage point, he shows Sara's plan to deal with her own barrenness, like Eve's scheme to be like God, to be an attempt to circumvent God's plan of blessing in favor of gaining a blessing on her own. By placing the Hagar story after the story of affirming the promise of a child (Gen 15:4), the author suggests that Sarah's scheme was intended to head off that divine promise by supplying it with a human solution. Thus, the story falls in line with the theme of the stories, which preceded it in demonstrating the unacceptability of human effort in fulfilling the divine promise.[391] At the same time that these parallels establish an association between the Hagar narrative and the Fall (Genesis 3), the repeated use of the verb קלל ("curse", "despise) in 16:4-5 appears also to mark an intentional association of the passage with the

[391] Sarah's plan (Gen 16:1-6), though successful, does not meet with divine approval (Gen 17:15-19), just as the plans and schemes of those in the previous narratives had ended in failure (e.g., Gen 3:6-8; 4:3-7; 11:1-9; 12:10-20; 13:1-12; 14:21-24).

patriarchal blessing in Gen 12:3. This word ("to curse") occurs with a similar meaning only in these two passages in Genesis. It is mentioned twice within Gen 16:4-5 that Hagar the Egyptian "despised" Sarah, the very thing which Gen 12:3 warned would end in God's curse: "Those who despise you I will curse." It is noteworthy that one of the few other occurrences of the verb is Deut 23:5, a passage with longstanding association with Deut 7:1-6 and the theme of "foreign wives" within the OT canon. In Deut 7:1-6, where is an explication of the second section of the first Commandment about separation from the gods of other nations, Moses accentuates the fact that Israel is called to forsake any possibility of following after the idols of the nations and to remember the only God who keeps "his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him" (Deut 7:9). Moses appears intent on stressing the notion that separation from the gods of other nations necessarily entails separation from the nations themselves (Deut 7:2-3). Indeed, Deut 7:3 stressed the threat of marriage to "foreigner." Moses' concern, thus, is with the effect of joining in marriage and treaties with the Canaanites, who practice idolatry (Deut 7:4).

4.3.7. "Walk with God" in the Pentateuch

The genealogical list in Genesis 5 is nearly identical in form to the one in Gen 11:1-26, the genealogy of Shem. A comparison of the formal elements of the two genealogies shows that the only difference between them is the inclusion of the clause "and he died" at the end of each of the names in Genesis 5. Why would the author have felt it important to remind the reader specifically of the death of each of these patriarchs, whereas in the other genealogical lists he allows the matter of the individual's death to

remain implicit in the statement of the total number of the years of his life? The answer is not hard to find in Genesis 5 because in this chapter alone one of the patriarchs, Enoch, did not die. The total number of the years of his life is given, as with the other genealogies, but only here is there an exception (Gen 5:24). In other words, the author purposefully underscores the death of each patriarchs in Genesis 5 in order to highlight and focus the reader's attention on the exceptional case of Enoch. Why does the author want to point to Enoch so specifically as an exception? The author's purpose can better be seen in the way he has emphasized, through repetition, that Enoch "walked with God" (Gen 5:22, 24). The phrase "walk with God" clearly has a special meaning to the author since he uses the same expression to describe Noah as "a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time" (Gen 6:9), and Abraham and Isaac as faithful servants of God (Gen 17:1; 24:40; 48:15). The sense of the author is clear. Enoch is an example of one who found life amid the curse of death. One can find life if one "walks with God." For the author, then, a door is left open for a return to the Tree of Life in the Garden. Enoch found that door in his "walking with God" and in so doing has become a paradigm for all who seek to find life. It is significant that the author returns to this theme at the opening of Genesis 17, where God establishes his covenant promise with Abraham (Gen 17:1-2). To "walk with God" is to fulfill one's covenant obligations. Abraham's final response in Gen 17:23 shows that he obeyed the covenant as commanded in Gen 17:9 – he circumcised all male members of his household, "as God had spoken to him" (v. 23). This final remark about Abraham's obedience carries the reader back to the beginning of the narrative where the injunction was given: "walk before me (הִתְהַלֵּךְ) and be blameless (תָּמִים, v. 1)." This portrait of an obedient Abraham is reminiscent of the picture of Noah, who also "walked with God" (הִתְהַלֵּךְ)

and was "blameless" (תָּמִים, Gen 6:9). In the light of the scarcity of these terms in Genesis, it seems likely that the author expects the reader to make an association between these two great men based on the close recurrence of both terms. "Blameless" occurs in Genesis only in these two texts; "walk before God" occurs more frequently, but in carefully chosen contexts (Enoch, Gen 5:22, 24; Noah Gen 6:9; Abraham, Gen 17:1; 24:40; 48:15 [with Isaac]). Thus Abraham and Noah are presented as examples of those who have lived in obedience to the covenant and are thus "blameless" before God, because both obeyed God "as he commanded them" (Gen 17:23; cf. 6:22; 7:5, 9, 16).

For the author/the final composer, "walking with God" is the way to life as Moses tells the people in the wilderness (Deut 30:15-16). It is important to see that for the author of the Pentateuch "walking with God" could not have meant a mere keeping of a set of laws. Rather, it is just with those who could not have had a set of "laws" that the author associates the theme of "walking with God." By choosing such individuals to exemplify "walking with God," the author shows his desire to teach another way to life than merely a legalistic adherence to the Law. We must not lose sight of the fact that from the author's perspective the way of the Law at Sinai has not proved successful (e.g., Deut 31:27). A better way lay still in the future (Deut 30:5-16). For him the way to life is exemplified best in people like Enoch ("he walked with God," Gen 5:22), Noah ("he walked with God," Gen 6:9), and Abraham ("he believed God and he reckoned it to him for righteousness," Gen 15:6). The point is clear enough: God delivers those who "walk with" him and who do not "corrupt his way." In the repetitions, the author's/the final composer's message comes through most clearly.

Thus when the author repeats four times that those who survived the Flood were those who had done "as the Lord had commanded" (Gen 6:22; 7:5, 9, 16), his point is clear. Obedience to the will of the Lord is the way to salvation. In the way that Noah is here (Gen 7:6-24) an example of obedience and salvation, later narrative figures, such as Abraham (Gen 21:4) and the Israelites (Exod 12:28), will be called upon to exhibit the same lesson.

4.3.8. The Woman-at-the-Well (Genesis 24, 29// Exodus 2)

The parallels between the Rebekah story (Gen 24:1-67, esp. vv. 11-20) and the accounts in Gen 29:1-10 and Exod 2:16-22, where a wife is obtained in a foreign land have been observed by some critics.[392] It is apparent that the author has related Genesis 24 to the whole of the Abraham narrative and knows also of the Isaac-Rebekah and Jacob-Laban narratives, indicating that the composition was conceived in light of the former. J. G. Williams has pointed out a literary conventions in the biblical text, such as that of the betrothal to a woman at a well (as in Genesis 24 and 29, Exodus 2).[393] He has isolated the example of the woman-at-the-well motif in the biblical texts. The three passages all contain the motif of meeting the wife-to-be at a well.[394] Indeed, from analyses of the episodes meeting at a well, it is clear that in such encounters the

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[392] These intertextual relationships are usually attributed to a secondary editor whose purpose was to integrate disparate patriarchal stories into the epic account, e.g., Thompson, *Origin Traditionl*, 102; Van Seters, on the basis of chronological and other links, believes that the original arrangement was possibly Gen 22:20-24; 25:1-6; 24:1-67; and 25:11 (*Abraham in History*, 248).

[393] See, James G. Williams, "The Beautiful and the Barren: Conventions in Biblical Type-Scenes" *JSOT* 17 (1980): 107-19.

[394] Kenneth T Aitken, however, has concluded, after a detailed study of the structure of Genesis 24 that aside from the marriage itself, therefore, the basic structure of the plot in Genssis 24 has no parallel in either Genesis 29 or Exodus 2. See, Aitken's work, "The Wooing of Rebekah: A Study in the Development of the Tradition," *JSOT* 30 (1984): 3-23.

emphasis is particularly on the main character who meets a woman (a daughter) coming to draw water. The main character does something for her and receives an invitation to come to her father's home; a marriage ensues.[395]

The similarity can be traced at the level of word choice and its theme. Firstly, at the level of word's choice, וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל־הַבְּאֵר ("he remained at the well," Exod 2:15) suggests a similarity to the well stories in Genesis 24 and 29. In Gen 24:10-27, the servant of Abraham found Rebekah to be Isaac's wife; in that pericope שׁקה (*hiphil*, "to give to drink") occurs seven times (vv. 14[x3], 17, 18[x2], 19) and הַבְּאֵר ("the well") three times. In Gen 29:1-14, at the meeting between Jacob and Rachel, matters are presented the other way around: הַבְּאֵר occurs seven times and שׁקה thrice. Similarily, in Exod 2:15, Moses is sitting at הַבְּאֵר and gives the flock to drink (שׁקה, thrice). Secondly, there is also a thematic analogy between the accounts: a bride is acquired (for Isaac, Jacob and Moses) and a safe home is found after fleeing as the result of an unforgivable deed (Jacob and Moses). In addition, the servant (Gen 24:26-27) testifies that it was the Lord who "led" (נחה) him successfully (cf. v. 48). The servant may well be cast by the author in the image of Moses. In the song of victory Moses says similarly, "In your unfailing love (חֶסֶד) you will lead (נחה) the people" (Exod 15:13), and the divine command to Moses, "go (הלך), lead (נחה) the people…and my angel (מַלְאָכִי) will go before you (לְפָנֶיךָ)" in Exod 32:34 recalls the servant's exultation (v. 27) and Abraham's promise of a guiding angel (v. 7)

Further, the textual resemblance can be presented in terms of the continuation of life for a son. In Genesis 24 and 29, animals were given water: camels (Gen 24:14ff.) and

[395] Cf. G. F. Davies, *Israel in Egypt. Reading Exodus 1-2*, JSOT 134 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 146-52.

the flock (Gen 29:3). In the first place, to be given water signifies life to these animals. Nonetheless, the context in which the stories take place and the special role of the daughters (cf. Gen 24:13; 29:6) make it clear that there is a more critical issue involved here. The continuation of Abraham's line is at stake. The special place of הַבְּאֵר in the architecture of the biblical texts indicates that, besides being a source of life for the flock, it particularly has to do with the continuation of life for the 'son'. This notion is also present in the story of Hagar, who named a well Lahai-Roi (Gen 16:14). The fact that Ishmael, the son of Abraham, could be born is due to the fact that this well was there. In this regard, H C White correctly maintained that the name of the well does not refer to the fact that 'Hagar lived after seeing God, but rather to the life given to her child because of the sight.'"[396] The well Lahai-Roi is again mentioned in connection with Isaac. Coming from that well when he saw the camels approaching, Isaac went to meet them and to receive Rebekah as his wife (Gen 24:62, 67). He was living nearby that well when Elohim blessed him (Gen 25:11). Between these two occurrences, the story of the death of Abraham is related (Gen 25:1-11), so that the well Lahai-Roi forms an enclosing framework around Abraham's death and burial. At the well Lahai-Roi, the critical issue concerns the life of Abraham's offspring. In Exodus as well, more is involved than providing a flock with water. The announcement of the birth of a son, Gershom (Exod 2:22) and the scene at the well form an inclusio around Moses' meeting with the priest of Midian.[397]

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[396] H. C. White, "The Initiation Legend of Ishmael," *ZAW* 87 (1975): 267-87 (esp. 286, n 61).
[397] This ananlysis is heavily on the basis of Jopie Siebert-Hommes' work, *Let the Daughters Live!: The Literary Architecture of Exodus 1-2 as a Key for Interpretaion*, Biblical Interpretation Series 37 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 77, 121-23.

4.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have recognized the essential homogeneity of the Abraham narrative and the remaining books of the Pentateuch. The close textual relationships between the Abraham narrative and the remainder of the Pentateuch, which we had observed above allude that the author/the final composer of the Pentateuch has deliberately shaped the texts in such a way that one can discern relationships among its parts. As stated in the section of the introduction, the narrative is composed as a part of a larger typological scheme of the Pentateuch, foreshadowing the future events. The episodes in the Abraham narrative, thus, prefigure events in the life of Israel in the eschatological perspective of the Pentateuch; it is ever looking forward to future generation, where appropriation of the promissory blessings can be reexperienced.