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Pseudo-Philo's Approach to the
Biblical Lie Narratives

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's
Degree from the Zalman Shamir Department of Bible, Bar-Ilan
University

Ramat Gan, Israel   May 2022

This work was carried out under the supervision of Professor Esther Eshel, Zalman Shamir Department of Bible, Bar-Ilan University

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Acknowledgements

<h1>Contents</h1>

Abstract

Shakespeare wrote "Lord, Lord, how this world is given to lying" (Henry IV Part 1, act 5, sc. 4, l.148). Lies and deceit are everywhere. Pseudo Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (LAB) rewriting of the Bible from Adam until the death of Saul is no different. The rewriting is diverse. Some narratives are omitted or paraphrased whereas others are expanded or even originally created. An examination of the author's approach to the biblical narrative through analyzing his treatment of the lie narratives may shed further light on LAB. A close reading of these biblical narratives in comparison to those narratives in LAB and other contemporary works further develop the understanding of aspects of the exegetical methodology employed by LAB. The narratives have been categorized facilitating an analysis of different types of lie narratives. There are five sections: biblical lie narratives that are not related in LAB, lie narratives in which the lie is omitted, narratives in which LAB inserts lies, lie narratives recounted in a different context and original narratives imbued with lies. LAB makes the narratives more accessible and relevant to his readers who were not estranged to lies and deceit.

The first chapter introduces LAB and includes an overview of the history of LAB's composition and transmission. The scholarly debate surrounding the question of when it was written, specifically whether it was written before or after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, is examined. The chapter summarizes the previous scholarship on LAB, starting from the late 19th century, identifying the major works that have been written on LAB and highlighting the trends in scholarship around which aspects of LAB became worthy of attention. The purpose of LAB is discussed. The concepts of lying and deceit are introduced on a philosophical and theological level. The appearance of lie narratives in the Bible and their components are discussed. I summarize the research of Biblical lies in the biblical and post biblical traditions.

The second chapter outlines the numerous lie narratives that LAB chooses not to relate in the rewriting. Many of the lie narratives of Genesis and Exodus are overlooked and not reported. Many of the narratives containing deceit and lying of the patriarchs are omitted. The patriarchs are generally presented in a more positive light than in the biblical narrative.

In the third chapter I examine the Biblical lie narratives in which the lies are removed. Two narratives are examined: Gen.4, the lie of Cain and Gen. 34, the rape of Dinah. LAB shows awareness of the deceit and lies yet removes these aspects of the narrative in his retelling. The Cain narrative is shortened in order to avoid the difficulty of God seemingly appearing to not be omniscient in His question to Cain concerning the whereabouts of his brother (Gen. 4:9). The rape of Dina narrative is compared and contrasted to other rewritings of Gen. 34. The narrative is compared to that of Jubilees, the Aramaic Levi Document, the Testament of Levi and the Antiquities of the Jews. Many of the rewritings soften or reflect the deceit as being a positive trait. LAB may omit the deceit in this narrative as he develops a positive female character or as it is not relevant in the context in which the narrative is reported.

Chapter four analyzes the narratives in which LAB introduces lies into the biblical narrative or alters the lie. The narratives that are examined are: Josh. 22 and the building of an altar by the Transjordanian tribes, Judges 4-5 and in particular the meeting between Jael and Sisera and Judges 19-21 and the civil war between the tribes of Israel. The story of Jael and Sisera is compared to the narrative in the Antiquities of the Jews and to the book of Judith. The civil war that concludes Judges is an example of God lying and deceiving the people. In all the cases the necessity and motive of the lies are discussed.

Chapter five examines the use of lies in LAB out of their biblical context. LAB frequently refers to biblical events out of context and assumes that the reader has knowledge of the biblical narrative. Two biblical narratives involving deceit that LAB introduces out of context are discussed: Gen. 38, the narrative of Judah and Tamar and Numb. 16-17, the narrative of Korah's rebellion. The Genesis narrative is compared to the rewritings as they appear in Jubilees, the Testament of Judah and the Antiquities of the Jews. LAB presents Tamar as a model to be emulated and her deceit was sanctioned by God. In some instances, it is permissible to lie.

In chapter six, two original narratives in LAB are studied as they contain lies. The narrative of Abraham and the narrative of Jair the judge. In the midrashic expansion explaining the choice of Abraham LAB creates an original narrative which connects the narrative of the Tower of Babel with the choice of Abraham. The narrative recounts contention between Abraham and Joktan and has examples of lying. Abraham lies in

order to protect his comrades but nevertheless he is chosen to receive the land of Israel. The extended narrative of Jair presents him as a deceitful judge who pays for the deceit with his life.

The final chapter summarizes the findings of the previous chapters and presents some conclusions. Whilst it is thought that much of the biblical rewritings present the characters in a more idealistic fashion, I have shown that this is a more complex topic in LAB. On the one hand the characters of Genesis are presented positively even if briefly, yet they do also deceive and lie. The strong charismatic leaders presented in LAB have steadfast trust and belief in God and lead by example and they too may lie and deceive. LAB advances the role of women in the history of Israel. Women also lie and deceive, and their actions are endorsed by God. The motif of lying is apparent in connection with narratives concerned with idolatry. Hopefully this thesis will add new understandings to LAB's rewriting of the biblical text, shed some light on its exegetical methods and his approach to lies and deceit.

Introduction

This study will examine the approach towards lies in "*Biblical Antiquities*", attributed to Philo. I will begin by defining what is generally considered to be a lie, I will record the references to lying in the Bible and in the Second Temple Literature and finally I will examine the approach of the author of "*Biblical Antiquities*" to lies.

The *Biblical Antiquities* of Pseudo-Philo (often referred to by the Latin *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, hereafter abbreviated to LAB) is a rewriting of the Hebrew Bible from Adam until the death of Saul. Originally the work was attributed to Philo as it was frequently found together with Chapter 11 of Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus* (a chapter on Philo of Alexandria) and Philo's *Quaestiones et solutions in Genesium*. This attribution has been disproven and thus the work is referred to as Pseudo-Philo although the author remains unknown.[1] This rewriting summarizes lengthy biblical narratives or even completely by passes them.[2] Some sections are paraphrased and some exhibit verbatim quotations.[3] The work includes additional prayers, speeches and expansions that are interpolated into the biblical narrative. In some cases, entire new stories have been created or old stories have been radically revised. Most scholars define LAB as "rewritten Bible"[4], and as such it has received much scholarly attention.[5] In particular, scholars have examined LAB regarding issues such as its original language, the author and the date of composition of the work. Questions associated with the exegetical methodology of the author and his overall approach to the biblical text still require attention. The approach of the author to the text and the relationship between the interpretation and that of contemporary literature and later rabbinic literature may shed light on the work. In this study, I will examine the author's approach to the lie narratives found in the biblical text and his reinterpretation.[6] I will compare the rewriting to contemporary compositions and

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[1] Cohn (1898, 306), Jacobson (1996, 196-7).

[2] For example, Genesis 1-3 is omitted.

[3] For example, Genesis 12-50 is paraphrased in LAB 8.

[4] Vermes (1973, 95) coined and defined the phrase as "a narrative that follows scripture but includes a substantial amount of supplements and interpretative developments". Since Vermes, there have been many refinements to his definition and the name of the genre. See Alexander (1988, 116), Bernstein (2005).

[5] See "*Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms or Techniques? A Last dialogue with Geza Vermes*" Zsengellér, J. (ed), Leiden, 2014.

[6] Van Der Horst (1989, 45) suggests that it is impossible to rule out that the author of LAB is a woman.

to the contemporary and later rabbinic literature. This may further our understanding of the author's approach to the biblical text.

1.1 History of the Research of LAB

The LAB has survived in eighteen complete and three fragmentary Latin manuscripts dating from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries.[7] The composition was relatively unknown until Johannes Sichardus edited two manuscripts (Fulda-Kassel Theol. 4°, 3 from the eleventh century and a manuscript from the Lorsch monastery which has since been lost) and published his work in 1527. LAB was reprinted five times in the sixteenth century yet Leopold Cohn's article is accredited with reintroducing the LAB to scholars.[8] Montague James made the first English translation and, although not a critical edition, was based upon four manuscripts.[9] Guido Kisch also produced a monograph and Latin edition which made the text accessible to scholars.[10] Daniel Harrington presented a study suggesting Hebrew as the original text of LAB.[11] Louis Feldman wrote an introduction to the republished edition of James' translation and argued that LAB is a significant link between early *haggadah* and rabbinic *midrash*.[12] Charles Perrot and Pierre Bogaert produced a two volume commentary and a French version for the *Sources Chrétiennes* series together with Harrington who produced the critical Latin text.[13] Harrington also produced an English translation.[14] Frederick Murphy wrote articles and a book on LAB which focuses on the plot and characterization of the composition.[15] Murphy combines redaction criticism, using the Bible as a point of comparison and narrative criticism. He focuses on how the plot and characterization of each episode works, how it relates to the larger complex in which it is located, and how it contributes to the unified narrative of the work as a whole.

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[7] Charlesworth (1985, 298).

[8] Cohn (1898).

[9] James (1971). This version is a reprint of his 1917 edition with the Prolegemenon of Feldman included.

[10] Kisch (1949).

[11] Harrington (1970).

[12] Feldman (1971).

[13] Harrington (1976).

[14] Harrington in Charlesworth (1983-85).

[15] Murphy (1993).

Howard Jacobson produced a monumental two volume examination of LAB.[16] This work includes the Latin text, his English translation and a verse-by-verse commentary with extensive notes. The introduction treats the major problems associated with LAB (e.g. date, original language, manuscript tradition, exegetical techniques). Jacobson seeks to explain LAB in new ways by reconstructing the original Hebrew when that is useful, and by bringing new and pertinent evidence from the Bible, rabbinic literature, and from early Christian literature.

1.2   Authorship, Date and Language

Studies have mostly focused on the technical issues related to LAB: Date of composition, its original language and setting, the biblical text that served as its base and a comparison to other similar compositions.

The author of LAB is unknown and will probably remain that way. The traditional opinion is that the composition was authored in Palestine in Hebrew.[17] There is a minority view that suggests a Syrian composition for the work.[18] The work probably originated in Hebrew and was translated into Greek and then into Latin.[19] Jacobson suggests that the authors' familiarity with the pagan world and in particular Greek folk material implies that the author lived near a Greek city. Jacobson suggests that the familiarity of magic and the interest in demons may point to a city in Galilee as the provenance of the LAB.[20] This, however, is not a convincing argument as the use of magic and the presence of demons is also evident in other areas of the country.[21] Eyal Regev tentatively suggests that the author lived in the vicinity of Benjamin and close to Jerusalem.[22]

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[16] Jacobson (1996).

[17] Sixtus Senensis was the first to question the attribution of LAB to Philo in 1566 and he argued that the original language of LAB was Hebrew as it is full of Hebraisms. He concluded that one must choose between denying Philo the authorship of LAB or else of allowing him to have composed it in Hebrew. This is followed by Cohn (1898, 311). Feldman (1971, xxv), James (1971,28), Kisch (1949, 15-16), Harrington (1970), Jacobson (1996, 215-224).

[18] Brown (1992, 216).

[19] Cohn (1898, 311-312), Harrington (1970). Harrington also discusses the possibility of an Aramaic original but dismisses this possibility.

[20] Diez Merino (1970) regards LAB as a Jewish contemporary of Jesus who aimed to develop inner piety and religious devotion. He dismisses the origin as being Jerusalem or Qumran as this would have led to the censorship of certain opinions. Thus, he suggests a Galilean origin which was free of predefined and rigid positions and ideas.

[21] Eshel (1999, XIII-XIV), (2002, 18).

[22] Regev (2001,102).

The dating of the composition of LAB is the subject of lengthy scholarly debate. The general consensus is that LAB was composed shortly before or soon after the Jewish wars of 70 CE.[23] Thus the date of composition is thought to be in the latter half of the first century or the first half of the second century.

The arguments for a pre-70 date of composition suggest:[24]

   a) LAB contains no definite references to the Jewish war or to the destruction of the Temple. The reference in LAB 19:7 to the destruction states "I will show you the place where they will serve me for 740 years.[25] After this it will be given over to the hands of their enemies and they will breach it and foreigners will encircle it. And it will be on the same day that you smashed the tablets of the covenant…". If the period is 740 years then the reference fits with the conquest of Nebuchadnezzar or Antiochus Epiphanes, rather than that of Titus. As similar texts from this period (4 Ezra and 2 Baruch) are preoccupied with the loss of the Temple its absence in LAB is telling.[26] The emphasis on resisting oppressors and the importance of strong leadership may reflect a composition during the war in the prelude to the destruction of the Temple.

   b) The covenant is described in LAB in terms of people and not place. This implies that "the imminent threat is a loss of faith, not loss of land".[27]

   c) The genre employed by LAB of "the free attitude toward the biblical text fits the period before 70 better than after it".[28]

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[23] See discussions in Feldman (1971, xxviii – xxx), Jacobson (1996, 199-209).

[24] This summary is based upon Fisk (2001, 34-45).

[25] See Jacobson (1996, 624) for a discussion of the accuracy of the number 740 years and the subsequent ramifications.

[26] Nicklesburg (2005, 269), Harrington in Charlesworth (1985, 299) and Murphy (1993, 6). Jacobson (1996, 200) agrees that this is a reference to the destruction of the first Temple but rejects this as support for a pre-70 date.

[27] Halpern-Amaru (1994, 94). The converse may be argued. Following the destruction of the Temple Israel was required to redefine itself without the Temple thus leading to a rewriting of the biblical narratives in a way that do not emphasize the religious significance of 'space'.

[28] Harrington in Charlesworth (1985, 299) and Harrington (1985, 71). See also the view of Bogaert and Perrot (Harrington 1976, Vol 2 71). Jacobson (1996, 201) agrees that this form of biblical commentary tended to disappear following the destruction of the Temple but the choice of the date 70 C.E. is arbitrary.

d) The remarks concerning the Temple, sacrifice, leadership and synagogue suggest a pre-70 setting. LAB 22:8 states *usque in hodiernum diem* (even unto this day) could imply that sacrifices were still being offered at the time of the composition.[29]

The main arguments for a post-70 date of composition are:
   a) The mention of the seventeenth of Tammuz in LAB 19:7 is a date that became significant only post-destruction of the Temple. The Bible links the destruction of Solomon's Temple to the ninth of Tammuz (II Kings 25:2-4, Jer. 39:2) and rabbinic traditions link the events of 70 C.E. to the seventeenth of Tammuz.[30] As LAB contains the date of the seventeenth it must be referring to the capture of Jerusalem by Titus.[31]
   b) Thematic similarities and a social setting similar to 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch,[32] both post 70 C.E. compositions.[33]
   c) Highlighted themes in LAB point to the period of Roman rule following 70 C.E. The theme of Israel's leadership expressed through military exploits, speeches and trust in God in addition to the themes of Torah study in place of sacrifices and oppression as the result of the violation of the covenant suggest a post 70 C.E. setting.[34]

Is should be noted that there are other extreme views as to the date of composition. Abram Spiro has dated the work as early as 150 B.C.E as a polemic against the

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[29] Feldman (1971, xxviii) suggests that the author wants his audience to believe that the Temple still stood as he composed the work. Since the Temple in the narrative was the first Temple thus the implied author must have lived during the period of the second Temple.

[30] Mishna'ah Taanit 4:6.

[31] Cohn (1898, 327) where he states, "we may assume with confidence that the book was written after the destruction of the second Temple". James (1917, 29-31) supports Cohn as does Jacobson (1996, 202-205). Harrington in Charlesworth (1985,299) suggests that this could also be a reference to the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, or Pompey.

[32] Jacobson (1996, 253) regards LAB and 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra as responses to the same catastrophic circumstances but framed in a different way.

[33] James (1971, 46-59) shows the literary dependence of 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra on LAB. Strugnell (2007, 59) and Nickelsburg (1980, 63) agree but Feldman (1971, liv-lv) challenges James's opinion. The chronological priority of LAB only provides a *terminus ad quem* as earlier than 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra. Furthermore, 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra have a strong eschatological theme which is missing in LAB.

[34] Nickelsburg (1980, 63;1984, 108-11). However, this does not solve the question of the date of composition and Nickelsburg himself suggests that the author may also be addressing a pre-70 C.E. audience.

Samaritans.[35] Jean Hadot suggested a 1 B.C.E. date based upon alleged Essene tendencies in LAB.[36] Alexander Zeron has suggested a date as late as the third and fourth centuries based upon the affinities with the aggadah of the school of Rabbi Yohanan.[37] Ilan Tal has suggested that the composition dates from the 3rd or 4th century and is of a Latin-Roman origin.[38]

Bruce Fisk concludes his discussion concerning the dating of LAB by stating "that the jury will be forgiven if, on the basis of such evidence, it fails to convict. At the end of the day we must settle for uncertainty."[39] The argument has not been decided, yet the date of the composition of the LAB has the potential to shape the way one reads the work's theology, themes and influences

1.2.1   Genre

Geza Vermes, a scholar of the Dead Sea Scrolls, introduced the term "Rewritten Bible" to texts written in the Second Temple period that were related to but not canonized in scripture. His definition of the term includes LAB: "In order to anticipate questions, and solve problems in advance, the midrashist inserts haggadic developments into the biblical narrative— an exegetical process which is probably as ancient as scriptural interpretation itself. The Palestinian Targum and Josephus's Jewish Antiquities, Pseudo-Philo and Jubilees, and the recently discovered Genesis Apocryphon…each their own way show how the Bible was rewritten…".[40] Despite the scholarly controversy regarding the term "rewritten Bible" it remains common in describing many of the works from the Second Temple period.[41]

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[35] Spiro (1951,3).

[36] Hadot (1985).

[37] Zeron (1980, 42-52). He describes similarities between the school of Rabbi Yochanan and LAB: the role and ability of angels, the miracles that happened to the priest Phinechas and others. He also suggests a connection to Byzantine material from the 2nd and 3rd Century.

[38] Tal (2009, 381).

[39] Fisk (2001, 39). Similarly, Murphy (1993,6) states "no arguments will convince all parties" although he concludes that the balance is tipped in favour of a pre-70 C.E. date.

[40] Vermes (1973, 95).

[41] Halpern-Amaru (1994,4) notes that there are two approaches to the term: either it refers to "a literary technique, process or activity" or it is "a designation of a specific genre". Zahn (2011, 220) notes that as the Biblical canon had not yet been fixed the term "rewritten Bible" is anachronistic and "rewritten Scripture" is more fitting. See also Bernstein (2005) for his hesitations regarding the general issues and Zahn (2012). Vermes replied to some of the controversies in Zsengellér (2014, 8).

Cohn considered LAB to be "a piece of hagadic writing…it is to a certain extent a hagadic commentary on the historical books of the Old Testament".[42] Richard Bauckham regards LAB as "midrashic writings which is sometimes called 'the rewritten Bible'".[43] Jacobson regards LAB as an example of rewritten Bible. He shows similarities and differences to other works (Ezekiel the Tragedian, Joseph and Asenath, Genesis Apocryphon and Jubilees) of this genre. He concludes that "LAB is not only one of the earliest surviving works of Midrash…it is indeed our single most important repository of midrashic exegesis on these books".[44] Harrington is reluctant to use the term midrash regarding LAB because the reworking of the text is free, and the focus of the work is not the explication of the text.[45]

Interestingly, Feldman compared the methodology and content of LAB with its likely contemporary Josephus and suggested that LAB is "closer [than Josephus] to Midrash in method…[while Josephus is fundamentally a history, LAB has a] propensity to quote verses from other portions of the Bible while expounding and expanding on a given passage".[46] Feldman suggests that LAB occupies an intermediate position between Josephus and the rabbinic tradition.

This study examines the approach of LAB to the lie narratives and so I refer to the text as "rewritten Bible" in its broadest sense.

1.2.2 Purpose and Audience

Cohn asserted that the "author had no other end than to interest and to edify the reader and to strengthen his religious beliefs."[47] This opinion was followed by James and Kisch.[48] Feldman lists several possibilities as to the purpose of LAB.[49] He investigates the ideas that it is an anti-Samaritan work;[50] an anti-Tobiad polemic;[51] an anti-Mithraic

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[42] Cohn (1898, 314). Fisk (2002,25 note 30) notes that Azariah de Rossi located parallels between LAN and midrashim in the 16th Century.
[43] Bauckham (1983,33).
[44] Jacobson (2013, 471-2). See also Tal (2009, 379).
[45] Harrington (1986, 239). For further explanations concerning the genre and type of rewriting in LAB see Fisk (2002, 14-33). See also Beasley (2014, 27-30) for the relationship between LAB and midrashic literature, Murphy (1993, 4-5) and Burnette-Bletsch (2012, 453-455).
[46] Feldman (1996, 60-61).
[47] Cohn (1898, 322).
[48] James (1971, 33-34), Kisch (1949, 17).
[49] Feldman (1971, xxxiii – xlvii).
[50] Spiro (1951) argues that the omission of episodes that the Samaritans used to give themselves legitimacy implies that LAB is anti-Samaritan. The argument from silence is always difficult. Strugnell (2007) admits

piece;[52] an "Essene pamphlet";[53] a product of the Dead Sea Scrolls community,[54] Jewish mysticism,[55] Gnosticism,[56] or a work with connections to the sort of community that produced the Dura Europus artwork. There are features of the text that support each of these positions, but none of them is sufficiently prominent to justify confident assertions about the author's origins.[57] Paul Riessler noted that the LAB is a chronologically-prior compliment to Chronicles as it ends at the point where the Chronicles' narrative begins, the death of Saul (I Chron 10).[58] Murphy concludes that the reason for the existence of numerous different interpretations to the purpose of LAB is possibly due to the fact that the author represents fairly mainstream scribal Judaism in first century Palestine. Elements shared with narrower groups are present, but they are not developed in a way that shows one major influence.[59] It appears that in the light of the numerous different opinions concerning the purpose of the work that its purpose remains unclear.

Who was LAB's primary audience? This is a difficult question to answer. The author is unknown, and it is difficult to precisely date the work.[60] On the surface LAB has been compared to Jubilees.[61] The differences between them are great. The major topics of Jubilees, namely: the importance of the calendar, the role of demons and angelology, assignment of halachot to a pre-Sinai period are not evident in LAB.[62] The fact that these concepts are not evident in LAB would suggest that the audience is a more general one. Feldman compares LAB to Josephus as contemporaneous works.[63] He notes the thirty

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that there is evidence of anti Samaritanism in LAB but that does not imply that this controls the whole composition.

[51] Spiro (1951, 335-337). Feldman objects to this as the date attributed to LAB is long after the Tobiads had disappeared and so dedicating a work to this is peculiar. Strugnell (2007) suggests that the anti Tobiad polemic is imaginary.

[52] James (1971, 200) notices a Mithraic influence in the description of the images carved by Micha. Feldman (1971, xxxvii) disagrees as there is little evidence of serious Mithraism in Palestine.

[53] Feldman (1971, xxxvii – xl).

[54] Feldman (1971, xli – xliii).

[55] Feldman (1971, xlii – xliv).

[56] Feldman (1971, xliv – xlv).

[57] Harrington in Charlesworth (1985, 300) makes a similar point.

[58] Riessler (1928, 1315) as also quoted by Jacobson (1996, 254) and Spiro (1951, 280).

[59] Murphy (1993, 7).

[60] See page 3.

[61] Jacobson (1996, 212) and Feldman (1971, li)

[62] For the themes of Jubilees see Kugel (2012, 5-9), Segal (2007, 5-10). Concerning whether Jubilees is sectarian see the summary in Vanderkam (2018, 106-107).

[63] Feldman (1996, 57-82).

parallels between the books but regards Josephus as "a history with midrash like tales introduced within that framework" whereas LAB is closer to midrash in method".[64] It is also clear that Josephus wrote primarily for a non-Jewish audience and apologetics appear often whereas LAB is for a Jewish audience.[65] Murphy propounds that the major theme of LAB is one of hope.[66] This theme would be appropriate for a first century Jewish audience living under oppressive Roman rule with future potential annihilation. In response to this political reality, LAB, in the rewriting, stresses the theme of hope based on the assurance that God's commitment to Israel has been a perpetual since Abraham.[67] Cheryl Ann Brown proposes that the intended audience was probably a Jewish Hellenistic one.[68] There are numerous instances in which LAB presents his view against intermarriage or relationships with the non-Jewish world. For example, LAB 9:5 presents Tamar seducing her father-in-law as being preferable to being married to a gentile.[69]

It is difficult to conclusively show that LAB had a specific audience in mind. I agree with Feldman that the extensive genealogies, original prayers, dreams, visions, deathbed testimonies and fictitious speeches imply that the work was written for a general Jewish audience in order to raise their hopes of a better future.[70]

However, it is reasonable to assume that the work can provide valuable insights as to how the Jewish population of Palestine were reading/hearing and understanding the Bible in the first century.[71] The work also reflects the theology and beliefs of the Jewish population of that time.

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[64] Feldman (1996, 60).
[65] Feldman (1971, lxv) and Feldman (1996, 78).
[66] Murphy (1988, 54).
[67] Bohlinger (2019, 133-152) also suggests this idea. See also Nicklesburg (1980, 63-64) who suggests that LAB deals with good and bad leadership and maybe encouraging an audience during the Jewish revolt or in the difficult years prior to the revolt.
[68] Brown (1992, 2016). See also Levison (1995, 326) who proposes a that LAB was written in a Greco-Roman milieu in which characters were Hellenized by giving them a new context.
[69] See section 5.1.2 for my analysis of the narrative. Further examples of LAB being against intermarriage are LAB 18:13-14, 21:1, 30:1, 44:7, 43:5 and 45:3.
[70] Feldman (1996, 59).
[71] Harrington in Charlesworth (1985, 302) regards LAB as reflecting the understanding of the Bible in Palestinian synagogues. Perrot and Bogaert assumed a similar setting. See also Cook J. E., "Pseudo-Philo's Song of Hannah: Testament of a Mother in Israel", *JSP* 9 (1991), pp. 103-14. Feldman (1971, lxiv-lxv) notes that LAB agrees more often than does Josephus with the list of passages to be read and translated in the synagogue (B.T. 25a-b).

1.2.3 Modern Research

Other research has focused on the themes within LAB: reward and punishment,[72] idolatry,[73] the eternal covenant,[74] and the afterlife. George Nickelsburg notes that leaders and leadership have a prominent place in the narrative. He stresses that the author seeks to affirm the covenantal status of Israel even in desperate situations. The leaders are characterized as good or bad depending upon their obedience or disobedience of the laws of the covenant. The leaders act in order to implement God's purpose and to be an example to the rest of the people.[75]

Much research has been done on the role of women in LAB.[76] Some research has focused on the methodology and hermeneutics employed by LAB.[77] Jacobson devotes a chapter of his introduction to "narrative and exegetical techniques".[78] He outlines some of the phenomena that characterize these techniques. The knowledge of the Biblical text exhibited by the author of LAB is stressed. The author is adept at intertwining and adapting different biblical texts. Jacobson notes that the LAB may change a biblical narrative in order to make a particular point.

There remain questions that demand more attention in the study of LAB. What are the sources for the lengthy extra-biblical expansions? Is LAB an example of a work resolving exegetical problems? Is there an overall agenda to the work? Why does LAB summarize or extend some narratives and ignore others?

There are traditions evident in LAB that appear in later rabbinic and midrashic works. Some of these traditions are unique to LAB and are not found elsewhere in the Jewish apocrypha or pseudepigrapha. These interpretations are a result of similar influences, common sources and the use of similar methodologies in the approach to the text. The understanding of LAB may further our understanding of the development of rabbinic interpretations and their approach to the biblical text.

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[72] Engler (2012).
[73] Murphy (1988a).
[74] Murphy (1988b).
[75] Nickelsburg (1980).
[76] Van der Horst (1989), Halpern-Amaru (1991), Brown (1992). Descamp (2007).
[77] Bauckham (1983), Murphy (1993), Ziegler (1998) examined the creation of the character and narrative of Kenaz. Beasley (2014) researched the rewriting of Judges 17-21 in LAB.
[78] Jacobson (1996, 224 – 241).

1.3   The Aim and Method of the Research:

Lies, deceit and untruths are common in all spheres of life. The dictionary definition of lying is "a false statement made with the intent to deceive".[79] This definition implies that the speaker is aware that he is telling an untruth, the speaker intends to deceive and create a false impression. The widely accepted definition of lying is that presented by Arnold Isenberg which is the following "a lie is a statement made by one who does not believe it with the intention that someone else shall be led to believe it".[80] Sissela Bok defined 'lying' as an intentionally deceptive message in the form of a statement and 'deception' as communicating a message meant to mislead, making the receiver believe something that the deceiver does not. Deception does not require a statement and can be achieved through action, disguise, gesture or silence.[81] Intention is important in these definitions.[82] Theologians and philosophers have condemned most forms of lying.[83] On the other hand, some writers maintain that lies can be worthwhile and a useful tool for coping with life's trials and tribulations.[84] Lies and deception appear in the Bible. Yael Shemesh shows that biblical law strongly opposes perjury and prescribes a punishment of measure for measure, *lex talionis*. In order for any legal system to work it must do its utmost to impose severe sanctions on those who lie as a deterrent towards such behavior. The attitude towards lying expressed in the non-legal context of the Bible is one of condemnation.[85] This analysis of the Bible's attitude towards false witnesses and lying does not shed light on the Bible's attitude towards lying and deceit within the Biblical

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[79]   The Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford, 1989.

[80] Isenberg (1973, 248).

[81] Bok (1979, 5-13). This definition raises the methodological question of how to decide if a biblical narrative is one of lies and deceit. If no statement is necessary, then narratives that do not contain any biblical words for lying or deceit would also be included.

[82] For the definition of "lie" see Mahon J. E., "The Definition of Lying and Deception" in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/lying-definition/>. This article sheds light on the difficulties surrounding defining "lie".

[83] Bok (1979, 265 onwards) reviews a range of philosophical approaches to lying and deception. Augustine created categories of lies and suggested that there is room to consider deception for a good cause as being acceptable. Aquinas also agreed with Augustine. Kant rejected all forms of lying even if telling the truth may cause the death of an innocent person who is being pursued by a murderer,

[84] Cohen (1999, 9-10, 47-59)

[85] For example: Ps. 101:7, Prov.6:16-17, 19 and 12:22.

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narrative.[86] Shemesh concludes that concerning the biblical narrative "each case must be examined separately".[87]

The following is a list of cases of lies or deceit in the Bible.[88]

1. Gen. 3:1, 4 - the serpent's words to the woman.

2. Gen. 3: 9-10 - man lies to God as to the reason he is hiding.

3. Gen. 4:9 - Cain lies to God concerning the whereabouts of his dead brother.

4. Gen. 12:13 - Abraham's plan of action to deceive the Egyptians by claiming that Sarah is his sister.

5. Gen. 18:12-13 - the angel (God) deceives Abraham concerning Sarah's thoughts.

6. Gen. 18:15 - Sarah denies laughing.

7. Gen. 19:31-35 - Lot's daughters deceive him.

8. Gen. 20:2, 5 - Abraham claims that Sarah is his sister. Sarah also claims that she is Abraham's sister.

9. Gen 22:1, 2 - God tricks Abraham into thinking that He desires that he sacrifice his son.

10. Gen. 22:5 - Abraham lies to the two youths regarding their return after the binding of Isaac.

11. Gen. 22:8 - Abraham deceives Isaac in response to the question "where is the lamb to be slaughtered?".

12. Gen. 23: 5-15 - Ephron deceives Abraham into thinking that he will receive the place to bury Sarah as a gift but in reality, there was a price.

13. Gen. 24: 35-47 - the narrative told by Abraham's servant is rife with lies and changes the events as they happened.

14. Gen. 26:7 - Isaac claims that Rebekah is his sister out of fear for his own life.

15. Gen. 27: 18-27 - Jacob deceives Isaac, his father, by dressing up and claiming to be Esau. Rebekah is also an accomplice in this narrative.

16. Gen. 29:23 - Laban deceives Jacob and he is married to Leah instead of Rachel.

17. Gen. 31: 6-9 - Laban alters Jacob's wages numerous times.

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[86] Shemesh (2002, 83).
[87] Shemesh (2002, 83).
[88] This list is based upon a list of lies and deceit in Genesis and Exodus sent to me by E. Samet and an extensive list in Fargeon (2014, 333-342).

18. Gen. 31: 20 - Jacob deceives Laban and flees without informing him.

19. Gen. 31: 34-35 - Rachel lies to her father, Laban, concerning the whereabouts of his idols.

20. Gen. 33: 13-14 - Jacob is untruthful about joining Esau at a later date in Seir.

21. Gen. 34: 25-26 - Simeon and Levi deceive the people of Shechem.

22. Gen. 37: 10-11 - Jacob berates Joseph concerning his dream in order that the brothers not be jealous.

23. Gen. 37: 21-22 - Reuben lies to his brothers about how to kill Joseph and hides his true motives to save Joseph.

24. Gen. 37: 31-31 - Joseph's brothers deceive Jacob by presenting a blood-soaked garment and a false report of the events.

25. Gen. 38:11 - Yehuda deceived Tamar into believing that she will marry Shelah.

26. Gen. 38:16-19 - Tamar deceives Yehuda and seduces him.

27. Gen. 39: 14-19 - Potiphar's wife incriminates Joseph with her version of the events.

28. Gen. 42: 7-9 - Joseph takes advantage of the fact that he recognizes his brothers and that they do not recognize him.

29. Gen. 42: 29-34 - Joseph's brothers present the events that occurred in Egypt in a misleading fashion.

30. Gen: 43:23 - The person in charge of Joseph's house claims that he did receive the brothers' money when they first came down to Egypt.

31. Gen. 44: 1-2 - Joseph deceives his brothers by arranging for his own goblet to be hidden in Benjamin's sack.

32. Gen. 44: 4-6 - The person in charge of Joseph's house goes along with Joseph's plan and pursues the brothers accusing them of being robbers.

33. Gen. 44: 15 - Joseph accuses the brothers of stealing his goblet.

34. Gen 44: 18-29 - Yehuda's speech is factually incorrect. Yehuda changes the past events.

35. Gen. 50: 5 - Joseph's explanation of his father's will and testament.

36. Gen. 50: 16-17 - The brother's make up a speech of Jacob.

37. Exod. 1: 19 - The midwives lie to Pharaoh concerning their role in birth.

38. Exod. 2: 7-8 - Miriam suggests to Pharaoh's daughter that she find a woman to breastfeed Moses without revealing that it will be the child's mother.

39. Exod. 3: 18 - Moses is commanded to lie to Pharaoh by explaining that the people will go on a three-day excursion to worship God.

40. Exod. 3: 21-22 - Moses is informed that the people will borrow silver and gold and clothes from the Egyptians and plunder them (see also Exod. 11: 2, 12: 35-36).

41. Exod. 4: 18 - Moses lies to Jethro in explaining his decision to return to Egypt.

42. Exod. 8: 4 - Pharaoh agrees to release the people from Egypt to worship God only to change his mind (see also Exod. 8:24 and 28, 9: 28).

43. Exod. 14: 1-4 - Moshe is commanded to lead the people in the direction of Egypt in order to deceive Pharaoh and to cause him to pursue the people.

44. Exod. 14: 15-16 - God deceives the Egyptians and causes them to enter the sea.

45. Num. 22: 20-22 - God deceives Balaam into going with Balak's messengers, but He does not want him to go.

46. Jos. 2: 4-6 - Rahab deceives the kings messengers concerning the whereabouts of the spies.

47. Jos. 9 - The Gibeonites deceive Joshua concerning their dwelling place.

48. Jg. 3: 19-20 - Ehud tricks Eglon into believing that he comes with a divine message for him.

49. Jg. 4: 17-22 - The narrative concerning Jael and Sisera is rife with lies and deceit.

50. Jg. 20: 18, 23 - God deceives the people with his answers to their questions concerning the wars with Benjamin.

51. 1 Sam. 2:25 - God instructs Samuel how to deceive Saul as he anoints David.

52. 1 Sam. 15: 13-28 - Saul tries to deceive Samuel into believing that he has destroyed Amalek.

53. 1 Sam. 19: 11-18 - Michal deceives her father, Saul, in helping David to escape.

54. 1 Sam. 28: 8 - Saul deceives the witch of Ein Dor as he comes in disguise.

55. 1 Sam. 28:12 - The witch of Ein Dor discovers the deceit.[89]

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[89] I have ended the list at the end of 1 Sam. as this is the point at which LAB's narrative ends.

The identification of the lie narrative poses an interesting question. Martin Klopfenstein studied the words שקר/lie, כזב/deceit and כחש/falsehood as the main vocabulary for lies in the Bible.[90] He regards שוא/falsehood and רמי/deceit as being of secondary importance.[91] At the end of his book Klopfenstein begins to categorize the reasons why lying occurs in the Bible.[92]

Ora Horn Prouser, in her doctoral paper, "The Phenomenology of the Lie in the Biblical Narrative" develops the ideas of Klopfenstein and adds numerous other words that are used in the Bible to describe lies or deceit.[93]

Ido Naor also examined the semantics of lying in the Bible and he added to the previous words תעת"ע/to trick and טע"י/to err.[94] Naor points out that the dispersion of the semantics of lying shows that the three leading books of the Bible are Psalms (54 times), Jeremiah (50 times) and Proverbs (46 times). Following these books there is a gap until Isaiah (20 times).[95] This point strengthens the argument that study of lies in the Bible in the semantic field is limited. Most of the appearances of words connected or associated with lies are not found in the biblical narrative and biblical narratives containing lies do not include words from the semantics of lies.

People lie for different reasons.[96] From the list of lies above the following introductory themes are evident:

      a.   There are more cases of men lying than women.[97]

      b.   There are a variety of reasons for lying explicit in the narrative.[98]

          i.   Fear.[99]

         ii.   To save a life.[100]

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[90] Klopfenstein (1964, 2-310).

[91] Klopfenstein (1964, 310-320).

[92] Klopfenstein (1964, 325-352).

[93] Prouser (1991, 21-65) examines the words תל"ל, עק"ב, בד"א, חמ"ס, ושל"י פת"י, ער"ם, נכ"ל, חל"ק, נש"א הת"ל. Prouser explains that the abundance of different words for lying and deceit shows that these events are important. The fact that some of the words have a double meaning, positive and negative, shows that lies in the bible have an ambivalent status.

[94] Naor (2009, 18-35).

[95] Naor (2009, 32).

[96] Cohen (1999), Ford (1996) and Barnes (1994).

[97] Women lie in 6, 7, 8, 19, 26, 27, 37, 38, 46, 49 and 53.

[98] In many places the text does not explain the reason for the lie.

[99] For example, see 2, 6, 36, 37, 46 and 47.

[100] For example, see 4, 7, 14, 23, 25, 46, 47 and 53.

iii.   To gain an advantage.[101]

   c.   God lies.[102]

   d.   There are cases of lies that have no explicit moral judgment.[103]

Elchanan Samet observed that the cases may be categorized. He suggests that there are three types of lies: a lie, deceit and half-truths. Furthermore, he differentiates between the characters that are lying: a sinner or wicked person, a righteous person and God or his angel.[104]

Yoshiyahu Fargeon lists the lies according to who is lying. He also differentiates between the lies in the biblical narrative, and those in the prophets and wisdom literature.[105]

William Irwin was among the first scholars to analyse the topic of lies and deception in the biblical narrative.[106] His article, based upon a lecture given at a conference in Washington a year earlier, seeks to describe the progressive development of the ethical attitude towards telling the truth. Irwin focuses on the character of God. God is often portrayed as a 'warrior God'. Thus, the characteristics of a warrior god were to be imitated. The role of a warrior is to overcome the enemy and "all's fair in love and war" even deceit and lying.[107] Irwin uses the character of Samson as an example of the ideal warrior. Irwin brings further examples of God deceiving people.[108] Israel was aware that God would deceive his enemies both within and without Israel.[109] Irwin claims that in light of this it is no surprise that there are instances in the Bible where the belief of the people in God and his prophets is not absolute.[110] Finally he lists cases where people lie

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[101] For example, see 1, 4, 15, 21, 26, 27, 28, 44, 49 and 54.

[102] For example, see 9, 44, 45, 50 and 51.

[103] For example, see 12, 18, 32 and 41. See also Williams (2001) who suggests that there is moral judgment in the cases that he examines.

[104] Samet E. personal communication 13.07.17.

[105] Fargeon (2014, 333 – 342) uses the following subsections: God deceives his creations as in the biblical narrative, the prophets and wisdom literature; God collaborates with his creations in deceit in the biblical narrative, the prophets and wisdom literature; Attempts to deceive God; the participation of prophets in lies and deceit both in lying and being lied to.

[106] Irwin (1929).

[107] Irwin (1929, 365-366).

[108] Irwin (1929, 363) God uses deceit against Pharaoh in the Exodus narrative, against Ahab and his four hundred prophets before the battle at Ramoth Gilead and against the sons of Eli as they are unable to heed the reproach of their father.

[109] Irwin (1929, 364-365). For example. Gideon's claims against God before his appointment (Judg. 6:13) and Jer. 4:10.

[110] Irwin (1929. 360-361) For example Gideon does not believe God's promise that he will defeat Midian (Judg. 6: 36-37) and Abraham questions God's promise concerning him inheriting the land (Gen. 15: 8).

to each other.[111] In his final evaluation, Irwin suggests, that this dishonest behavior was supported as it was only a reflection of the behavior of their god.

Richard Freund has examined Genesis and Exodus from the point of view of the documentary hypothesis.[112] He points out that J, E and P use different vocabulary in the deception or lie narratives, relate differently to lies and also their moral judgement of lies. E and J present the patriarchs as liars and regard deception as acceptable behavior whereas P seems to view lying and deception as an unacceptable part of human behavior and does not present them. Freund claims that P regards the leadership of the patriarchs as ideal and so removes any aspect of them lying. J is not opposed to lying and does not condemn acts of deception even when the behavior is immoral. E prohibits lying but allows certain justifiable deceptions particularly if the outcome will be positive and there are no risks involved. Freund is not concerned with lie narratives beyond Genesis and Exodus.

Michael Williams examines fifteen examples of deception in Genesis.[113] In each case Williams identifies the liar, the one deceived, the motive, and presents the moral judgement of the liar when found. He also points to the use of specific vocabulary in each of the cases. He concludes that Genesis perceives deception as positive when it "is perpetrated by someone who has been wronged by another, so that the previous status quo is re-achieved (without, therefore, causing harm to the deceived)".[114] By way of contrast, other parts of the Bible are found to view deception positively only when it results in the removal of a threat to the perpetrator's well-being.[115] Williams, though, does not cover all the cases of lies and deception in Genesis.[116]

In his doctoral paper "'Why, O Lord, do you lead us astray?' God's involvement in lying and deception in the Biblical narrative", Fargeon reviews the scholarly literature concerning lying in the Biblical narrative.[117]

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[111] Irwin (1929,367-368). For example, Abraham lies about his wife (Gen 20:1) and to Isaac (Gen 22:7). Isaac told a lie about his wife (Gen 26:6). Jacob lied to his father in order to steal the blessings (Gen 27 19) and more.
[112] Freund (1991).
[113] Williams (2001).
[114] Williams (2001, 56).
[115] Williams (2001, 74).
[116] Williams does not consider Gen 4:9 or 18:15 as cases of lies.
[117] Fargeon (2014)

Towards the end of the Twentieth century biblical scholars began to use tools from anthropology and folklore literature.[118] Susan Niditch used folklore literature as a tool to study lying in the Bible.[119] Niditch outlines the methodology of folklore research and proceeds to apply this methodology to some of the biblical lie narratives. She differentiates between two types of people who tell lies: The wise hero and the protagonist trickster. An example of the former is Joseph who makes careful use of his intelligence in order to improve his situation and is usually successful. An example of the latter is Jacob, who uses tricks or ruses, which in themselves are not wicked, in order to improve his situation. The protagonist trickster is less stable than the wise hero and may also be the subject of trickery.[120]

John Anderson examined the authenticity of God in Genesis and the rest of the Bible,[121] cases of God tricking and deceiving in ancient literature and different cultures and defined 'trickster' as one who 'brings about a change in situation via trickery'.[122] Anderson proceeds to discuss God's behavior as a trickster in the Jacob narratives and analyses the theological ramifications of this.

The post-Biblical traditions of lying and deception develop and differ from the biblical versions. Freund suggests that the Septuagint accepts the existence of lying and deception by the matriarchs and patriarchs and minimally moderates the narratives.[123] Freund also discusses the attitudes of Philo, Josephus, Jubilees and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs to lies and deceit.[124] Williams' treatment of post-biblical Jewish tradition shows that post-biblical interpreters have a negative view of deception, which leads them to

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[118] See the Bibliography provided by Williams (2001, 212, note 1) and Nicholas (2009, 29, note 26)
[119] Niditch (1987).
[120] Niditch (1987, 149-150).
[121] Anderson (2011, 2-23).
[122] Anderson (2011, 22-33) has examples from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Hittite and Greek literature as well as from Indian and African mythology. See also Anderson (2011, 45-47).
[123] Freund (1991, 61).
[124] Freund (1991, 61-62). He suggests that Philo idealizes the patriarchal figures and so eliminates the lying from the narratives. Philo Abr. 89-98 [Daniel-Nataf] presents the narrative of Abraham in Egypt (Gen 12) as an example of the condemnation of Pharaoh rather than Abraham or Sarah. Philo raises Abraham and Sarah to levels of great virtue. Josephus's attitude is similar to that of Philo but to a lesser extent. For example, AJ 1.8 reports the deception of Genesis 12 as indirect: in place of saying "she is my sister" Abraham pretends to be Sarah's brother and directs her in a dissembling way to pretend the same.

minimize such behavior.[125] His survey of post-biblical exegesis is quite limited. The *midrashim* are largely restricted to those found in *Genesis Rabbah*, albeit with some citations from Louis Ginzberg's *Legends of the Jews*, and the Dead Sea Scrolls are not mentioned at all.

John Pilch addresses the subject of lying and deceit from a cultural anthropological perspective.[126] He posits that in order to provide an adequate and culturally plausible interpretation of the phenomenon of lying and deceit that it is necessary to address anthropological studies of Mediterranean culture. He hypothesizes that an honour and shame culture rely upon lying and deception as being key to enhance honour and to avoid the risk of being shamed. Society and people are driven by honour and shame. In order to protect honour, people use all kinds of preventative measures. One of the legitimate ways employed to safeguard honour is lying or deceit. Everyone in society is engaged in deception all the time. Pilch lists seven types of lie and deception employed in the service of honour and status:

1. Concealment of Failure
2. Concealment of Unintentional Failures
3. False Imputation.
4. Avoiding Quarrels or Trouble.
5. Attaining Material Gain.
6. Mischief.
7. In Defense of Kin.

In his analysis of the Book of Revelation, which he dates to the first century Mediterranean world, Pilch shows that it is normal for people to lie in the service of honour.

Philip Esler develops the ideas forwarded by Pilch in his analysis of the Book of Judith and stresses the importance of Mediterranean culture in order to understand the context in which the book was written and initially understood.[127] He sees the structure as being of challenge and response. Esler posits that the listeners expected Judith to lie and be

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[125] Williams (2001, 137).
[126] Pilch (1992) and (1994).
[127] Esler (2001, 65).

deceitful in order to advance the group interest and to preserve the honour of her people.[128] Esler accepts that the ideas of Bruce Malina and Pilch may be a simplification of the reality.[129] Zeba Crook shows that this is not a unique phenomenon of the Mediterranean area.[130] Whilst the concept of honour and shame in the Mediterranean culture are well attested this is not the only way in which the texts would have been read but it does suggest that deceit and lying were acceptable forms of behavior in certain instances.

1.4   The Necessity of the Research

The approach of the author towards lying has not been studied in connection to LAB. Therefore, in this study, I shall examine the author's approach to the biblical text by analyzing his treatment of the lie narratives. I will present a close reading of the lie narratives in the biblical literature and compare and contrast these readings with the parallel narratives in LAB. The narratives in LAB may be categorized into the following sections:

1. Biblical lie narratives which LAB does not relate at all.[131]

2. Biblical lie narratives in which LAB removes the lie.[132]

3. Biblical narratives into which LAB adds an aspect of lying or deceit.[133]

4. Biblical lie narratives which LAB relates out of their biblical context.[134]

5. Original lie narratives in LAB which are not evident in the biblical narrative.[135]

I will examine the reason why people lie and the results of their deceit in LAB and in other comparable biblical narratives. I will study the changes made by LAB to these biblical narratives. I will show how LAB uses biblical citations, quotations and allusions from other biblical and pseudepigraphal books in his retelling. Where relevant I will present parallels from these contemporary works and also developments of the motifs

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[128] Esler (2001, 94). See also deSilva (2006, 56 and 60).

[129] Esler (2001, 94).

[130] Crook (2009, 593). Crook suggests a reinterpretation of Malina's definitions of types of honour.

[131] For example, Gen 12, 10-20 is omitted in LAB entirely.

[132] For example, LAB 2:1 tells of the murder, but the narrative of Gen 4 is omitted.

[133] For example, LAB 22, 6 adds trickery/deceit to the narrative of the altar erected by Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Menashe in Josh 22, 9-34.

[134] LAB 9 reports Moses's birth story and refers to the deceit of Tamar in Gen 38. LAB assumes that his readers are familiar with the biblical Tamar narrative as it does not appear in his own retelling of Genesis.

[135]For example, LAB 6 narrates the story of Abraham and the fiery furnace, a non-biblical story in which Abraham lies.

used in these works and in *midrashim*.[136] Having analyzed LAB through the lie narratives I will endeavor to show common themes employed by the author in his treatment of these narratives and also to identify aspects of the exegetical methodology used by LAB. This may shed light on the message that the author wished to convey.

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[136] As I have explained there is a connection between LAB and 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch. James (1971, 43-45) argues that LAB is primarily dependent upon Jubilees. Feldman (1971, liii) considers James' claim doubtful. Jacobson (1996, 212) discusses the similarities and differences between LAB and Jubilees: the central themes differ - the role of the calendar and of demons in Jubilees is sparse in LAB. Jubilees is not an imitation of the Bible whereas LAB is. Feldman (1971, LIII) considers a connection between LAB and the Genesis Apocryphon.

Biblical Lie Narratives Not Related

While LAB is not concerned that the Biblical characters are deceitful and lie, there are many lie narratives that are omitted from his rewriting. A large amount of the lies listed in the introduction are found in Genesis. LAB 8 forms a bridge from Abraham until the end of Genesis. This short chapter condenses much of the material from Genesis. LAB omits many details from the biblical narrative and provides names that are not in the biblical story. Thus, no reference is made here to the lies and deceit of the forefathers.[1] I will now review some of these omitted biblical lie narratives and suggest reasons for their omission.

2.1 Abraham

Abraham receives more attention than the other forefathers even though little material from the Abraham cycle (Gen. 12-25) is reported. The Abraham narrative is highly condensed. The narratives in which Abraham presents his wife, Sarah, as his sister are not mentioned (Gen. 12:13 and 20:2,5). Nicklesburg regards Abraham as a leader and his election is seen as a reward for the trust that he placed in God.[2] However, LAB does not relate the major events of leadership in the life of Abraham. Thus, Murphy suggests that as Abraham does not act as a political leader his story is not related in detail.[3] Burnette-Bletsch explains that LAB presumes that the reader is familiar with the biblical narrative and will fill in the gaps. Furthermore, the omissions may be explained as an attempt by LAB to present the forefathers in a very positive light.[4] Embarrassing material is omitted. LAB uses flashbacks throughout the work and references are made to other narratives from Genesis. The binding of Isaac (Gen. 22) is an important story for LAB and is presented three times (LAB 18:5, 32: 2-4 and 40: 2-3).[5] LAB 32:2 suggests that Abraham told Isaac from the outset that he was the sacrifice and did not hide this fact from him or deceive him.

We will see later that there is an original narrative concerning Abraham that explains why he was chosen to be the founder of Israel.

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[1] Lies 4-36 in the list in the introduction are not present in LAB.
[2] Nickelsburg (1980, 52). See also later pp. 82-95.
[3] Murphy (1993, 241).
[4] Burnette-Bletsch (2012, 462).
[5] See Bohlinger (2016) and Fisk (2000).

2.2   Jacob

Jacob who is involved in much trickery and deceit in the Bible is only briefly mentioned in LAB 8.[6] However, Jacob appears out of context in a several places in LAB. LAB 17 mentions Jacob (Gen. 30: 37-42) following the Korah rebellion narrative. John Anderson describes Jacob as being deceptive in his acquisition of a large flock prior to his departure from Laban. Following the agreement that allowed Jacob to take all the spotted, streaked and dark animals that breed from the flock of Laban as his wage, Jacob appears to perform a magic trick that guarantees the proliferation of these types of animal (Gen. 30:31-43).[7] In his explanation to his wives (Gen. 31: 9) Jacob explains that his economic success is due to the interference of God.[8] It was God who took away Laban's flock and gave it to him. According to Jacob, who has deceived Laban, the real trickster is God. So, according to Anderson, it is God who condones and encourages Jacob to use deception in achieving economic stability. This narrative is seen as an example of the deceitful ways of Jacob or God.

The comparison of these events to the appointment of the high priesthood in LAB is somewhat surprising. How is the appointment of the high priesthood similar to the way that Jacob became wealthy? Murphy suggests that LAB refrained from presenting the direct power struggle between Moses and Korah in his rewriting of chapter 16 in order to present the appointment of the high priesthood, LAB 17, and the choosing of the tribe of Levi without the power struggle and as being a separate planned event.[9] The emphasis is placed on the fact that God initiates the choice and reveals an earlier decision of His. Aaron's rod sprouts signifying that he is the chosen one. The connection to Jacob is made through the almond rods: just as through the almond rods it was decided which portion of the flocks would be Jacob's so too through the almond rods the tribes understood that God had chosen Aaron.[10]

Jacob appears again in LAB 50 in the narrative of the birth of Samuel as Rachel and Leah are compared to Hannah and Pnina. Here too there is no deceit or lying.

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[6] See Niditch (1987) and Anderson (2011).
[7] Anderson (2011, 110, 111).
[8] Anderson (2011, 112).
[9] Murphy (1993, 84) and Jacobson (1996, 571).
[10] Murphy (1993, 84). This appears to be a tenuous link between the narratives, see Jacobson (1996, 573). There is discussion as to the connection between these two narratives. Ginzburg (2003, 730 note 600) shows sources concerning the rod of Aaron and Jacobson suggests that Feldman misread this note.

2.3   Joseph

Concerning Joseph, Jacobson is unsure as to whether LAB expects his readers to fill in the gaps in the narrative or whether Joseph is to be presented in a positive light and so the stories of him manipulating his family are omitted.[11] Murphy regards Joseph as an ideal figure who forgives his brothers and this may explain why the narrative is shortened.[12] This view is supported as Joseph's positive virtues are reported in LAB 43:5 where Samson is contrasted with Joseph as one who failed to emulate Joseph with regards to foreign women.

It is evident that LAB wishes to present the biblical characters in a positive light. Narratives that appear to present the characters negatively have been omitted or altered.

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[11] Jacobson (1996, 395).
[12] Murphy (1993, 241).

Biblical Lie Narratives in which LAB Removes the Lie

In this chapter we will examine some of the Biblical lie narratives which LAB reports but in which the lie is omitted in the rewriting. The two narratives are Genesis 4 and 34.

3.1   Cain the Liar

3.1.1   Cain in the Biblical Narrative (Gen 4:9)

Genesis 4 presents the first murder, fratricide, in the Bible. Adam's sons argue concerning God's response to their sacrifices. Following a warning from God, Cain murders Abel. Consequently, God addresses Cain (Gen. 4:9) concerning the whereabouts of his brother, Abel. Cain responds: "I do not know, am I my brother's keeper"[1]. Cain lies to God and is punished for murdering his brother.[2]

The only emotion expressed in the narrative is the anger of Cain and his despondence upon realizing that his sacrifice is not accepted by God (Gen 4: 5, 6). The motives for the murder are unapparent in the text. Gen. 4:8 has a striking lacuna:

וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיְהִי בִּהְיוֹתָם בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיָּקָם קַיִן אֶל הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ.

And Cain said to Abel his brother: "Let us go into the field". And when they were in the field, that Cain rose against Abel his brother, and killed him.

What did Cain say to his brother? Much has been written in explaining the lacuna which may provide the motive for the murder.[3] It is the following verse in the dialogue between God and Cain that expresses the deceit. Cain does not admit to his actions when questioned by God and seemingly continues his daily routine. Lying to God is not an issue for Cain.

3.1.2   Cain in Jewish Antiquities (Ant. 1:55-57)[4]

Titus Flavius Josephus was an important Jewish historian. He provided the only detailed descriptions of Jewish history, politics and culture of the Second Temple period. His major work is *Jewish Antiquities* which he completed in 93-94 CE. The work contains 20 books which cover history from Creation until the outbreak of the revolution versus the

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[1] Translations of the Bible are from Alter (2019).
[2] Hamilton (1990, 230) regards Cain as a liar, evasive and indifferent to God's questioning. See also Westermann (1984, 304) and Gunkel (1997, 44).
[3] See Byron (2011, 63-75) for a discussion and a summary of opinions and Kugel (1998,160-162).
[4] Feldman (1999).

Romans. Josephus explains that the aim of his *magnus opus* is to correct the ignorance that the non-Jews have of Jewish history.

Interpreters were puzzled by God's question to Cain in Gen. 4:9

<div dir="rtl">

"ויאמר ה' אל קין איה הבל אחיך.."

</div>

"And the Lord said to Cain: "where is Abel your brother…""

How could an omniscient God not know of the whereabouts of Abel? This question is seemingly strengthened by Gen. 4:10 where God announces that "your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground" and this implies that if God had not heard these sounds, then He would never have known the whereabouts of Abel. In order to overcome this issue Josephus presents God as having known what had occurred. In Ant. 1:55-57 he writes:

> 55. Consequently, Kais, provoked that Abelos had been valued more highly by God, killed his brother and rendering his corpse unseen, supposed that he would escape notice. But God, being aware of the deed, came to Kais, inquiring about his brother, whither he had gone, since He had not seen him for many days, whereas at all other times He had beheld him in His company. 56. Kais, being at a loss and not having anything to reply to God, kept answering at first that he too was perplexed at not seeing his brother, but angered by God's persistent pressuring and detailed examination, he said that he was not the guardian and custodian of him and of his deeds. 57. God thereupon now accused Kais of being his brother's murderer and said, "I am amazed that you are unable to say what has happened to a man whom you yourself have destroyed."

Byron suggests that Josephus presents Cain as "a guilty child caught in the act of stealing but continues to deny it".[5] Cain lies as he is ignorant of God and does not feel that he must take responsibility for his actions.

3.1.3 Cain in LAB 2

In order to understand LAB's representation of Cain it is important to see the context and purpose of the chapters that open the book. The opening chapters of LAB serve three main aims:

a. To present Abraham and his descendants.

b. To contrast Abraham with the rest of humanity and sinfulness.

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[5] Byron (2011, 84).

c. To set the stage for the Exodus.

No reference is made to the two Creation stories of Genesis 1 and 2.[6] The genealogies of Genesis 4 and 5 are reversed. LAB 1 reports Genesis 5 and LAB 2 does the same for Genesis 4. According to Murphy and Jacobson this reversal is intentional and stresses the positive side of humanity before the negative side.[7] This pattern presents Israel's potential for living at peace with God before recounting its failure to realize that potential. LAB 1 reports the children of Adam and concludes with the birth of Noah. There are few editorial comments in LAB 1. LAB 2, however, offers editorial comments that show that evils originated in Cain, the first murderer, and his descendants. LAB is aware of the narrative of Cain and Abel. LAB, like Jubilees, shortens the narrative and omits the dialogue between God and Cain. LAB 2:1 reads:

> Cain dwelt in the land trembling, as God had determined for him after he killed Abel his brother…

Kugel explains that Jubilees omits the details and the lies as the dialogue presents God as not knowing something.[8] If the question posed by God as to the whereabouts of Abel is removed then Cain's response also becomes irrelevant and as such is not reported. This could also be the case in LAB who simply reports that Cain dwelt in the land trembling as God had decreed for him after he killed his brother.

3.2 Deceit and Lies in the Dina Narrative (Gen. 34)
3.2.1 Dina in the Biblical Narrative (Gen. 34)

Jacob, following his reconciliation with his brother, Esau, journeyed on to the city of Shechem. Dinah, his only daughter, was seized and raped by Shechem the son of Hamor, the city's ruler.[9] Following the rape, Shechem requests that his father purchase Dina as a bride for him. Hamor approached Jacob with the marriage proposal and suggested that this could signify the beginning of general intermarrying and economic prosperity. When Jacob's sons heard of the events they were outraged. Instead of simply refusing the marriage proposition the brothers devised a plan. The marriage proposal would be

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[6] LAB 13:8 does mention the sin in the garden of Eden.
[7] Murphy (1993, 29) and Jacobson (1996, 293).
[8] Kugel (2012, 44).
[9] Most commentators assume that the text refers to forced, non-consensual intercourse even though the sequence of verbs in Hebrew, ויקח אתה וישכב אתה is open to interpretation. See, for example, Fewell and Gunn (1991, 211), Bechtel (1994, 19-36) and Shemesh (2007, 2-21).

accepted on condition that all the male members of Shechem undergo circumcision. The Shechemites cooperated and arranged a mass circumcision on a single day. Three days later, when the Shechemites are at the height of their pain from the circumcision, Simeon and Levi, two of Dina's brothers, enter the city unawares, and kill all the male Shechemites. Jacob appears to reprimand his sons for their actions, but they reply, "Shall our sister be treated as a whore?"

Gen. 34:13 states that the brothers responded to Shechem and Hamor with cunning (במרמה).[10] The trickery appears to be that the brothers seemingly agreed to the marriage and the intermingling of the peoples on condition that the Shechemites perform circumcision.[11] Hamor is immediately circumcised, and he and his father successfully persuade the Shechemites that this is a financially and politically worthwhile agreement. Two brothers, Levi and Simeon, attack the Shechemites, kill Hamor and Shechem and redeem Dina. The other brothers then take from the spoils. Jacob reprimands Simeon and Levi for their behavior.

The narrative is ambiguous, and the reader is left wondering about many aspects of the story. Did Dina desire to remain in Shechem with Hamor? Was Dina a prisoner in Shechem? Did Dina love Hamor? Jonathan Grossman shows that the narrative is "playing" with the reader and does not clearly state his opinion concerning Shechem.[12] Concerning the brothers and their behavior the text clearly shows Jacob's shame at their behaviour. Werman has shown that the chapter provides three viewpoints of the same event.[13] Hamor and Shechem regard their actions as being acceptable. Jacob regards Dinah as having been defiled by the events (34:5, 13, 27). The brothers regard the actions against Dinah as a scandalous act. The brothers respond to the scandalous act deceivingly. I think that the deceitful action of the brothers is seen in a positive light as

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[10] The same phrase is used in Gen. 27 by Isaac describing the behavior of Jacob as he stole the blessing from Jacob. Also Gen 29:27 concerning Laban's treatment of Jacob.
[11] Wenham (1994, 313) explains that the deceit of the brothers is not immediately clear, but the implication is that Dinah's brothers will not play fair. Von Rad (1963, 328) contrast the honest behavior of the Shechemites with the dishonest offer of Dinah's brothers.
[12] Grossman (2015, 45-47).
[13] Werman (2015, 406-407)

there is no Divine judgment of their action in the chapter and also as the brothers have the last word (Gen: 34:31):[14]

ויאמרו הכזונה יעשה את אחותינו

And they said: 'Like a whore should our sister be treated?'

Kugel suggests that this narrative puzzled the ancient reader by its very existence.[15] The narrative does not appear to convey a message. God does not appear in the biblical story. The Bible does not report what happens to Dina following the incident and the narrative itself concludes with a question mark. I will now look at how this narrative was rewritten in the Second Temple Literature.

3.2.2   Dina in Jubilees 30

The book of Jubilees is a retelling of much of the book of Genesis and the first part of the book of Exodus.[16] It claims to have been related to Moses on Mount Sinai by the 'angel of presence', God's chief angel. Whilst Moses was upon Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, God ordered His angel to dictate another book to Moses, a dated history of events. This is the book of Jubilees. It comprises of a retelling accompanied by new information answering questions about the Biblical narrative. Most scholars believe that it was written in the early 2nd century BCE.[17] Jubilees was composed in Hebrew by a learned Jew who probably lived near or in Jerusalem.[18] From the Hebrew a translator produced a Greek copy of the book. The Greek version served as the basis for the translations into Ge'ez (Classical Ethiopic) and Latin. A Syriac version may have been made from a Hebrew or Greek version.[19] It was also discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls and parts of 15 manuscripts were found there.

The author of Jubilees vehemently opposed intermarriage, and this is his explanation of the point of the narrative of Gen. 34. For this reason, the bible goes to great lengths to

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[14] Jacob does respond to the actions of Simeon and Levi in Gen. 49:5-7.

[15] Kugel (2006, 36-37). Kugel (1998, 403 -436) reviews numerous motifs that this narrative uses. We will focus on the lying in the narrative.

[16] For an introduction, translation and commentaries on Jubilees see Segal (2007), Kugel (2012), Werman (2015) and more recently Vanderkam (2018).

[17] Nicklesburg (2005, 72-73) suggests that the date is around 160 BCE. Kugel (2012,4) suggests that it may be even earlier.

[18] For a survey of the proposed dates of composition see Vanderkam (2018, 28-38).

[19] Kugel (2012,5), Vanderkam (2018, 1 and 8).

present the discussions of Hamor and Shechem concerning the possibility of intermarriage. Jubilees opens with Dinah being taken forcefully to the house of Shechem as a twelve-year-old girl.[20] As the author is not interested in Shechem and Hamor and any relationship with them, he omits the political and economic discussions apparent in Gen. 34 and simply states that Hamor desired to marry Dinah. Furthermore, Jubilees has Jacob and his sons being angry and agreeing that Dinah has been defiled. Jacob and his sons are united not only against Hamor and Shechem but against all the Shechemites. No mention is made of the deal procured with the Shechemites concerning circumcision. However, the author is aware of an act of deceit and trickery as is stated in Jubilees 30:3 "They spoke deceptively with them, acted in a crafty way toward them, and deceived them". Kugel explains that Tg. Neof., Tg. Onq. And Tg. Ps.-J. all render the biblical term מרמה/deceit as "with wisdom".[21] It seems likely that Jubilees seeks to mitigate the brother's falsehood by suggesting that while the brothers sought to deceive Hamor, their words where nevertheless true as Jubilees 30: 12-13 goes on to assert.[22] Vanderkam views the crafty behavior as being common to Jacob in his dealings with Isaac, Esau and Laban. This behavior is now performed by him and his sons.[23] The brothers' actions receive divine affirmation in Jubilees 30:6.[24] As a result of his actions, Levi is granted the priesthood in Jubilees 30:18.[25] The lie in Jubilees is unclear but there is definitely trickery involved and this is presented in a positive light as far as Jacob's family are concerned.

3.2.3 Dina in the Aramaic Levi Document

The Aramaic Levi Document (ALD) is a narrative concerning Levi's consecration to the priesthood and his teaching to his children. It is one of the earliest Jewish writings outside the Bible and served as a source for Jubilees and the Damascus Document from Qumran as well as for the Testament of Levi. It was composed in Hebrew in the third or early

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[20] Werman (2015, 410) points out that according to Jubilees, Dinah was nine years old and the use of twelve was probably for a halachic reason. Kugel (2012, 142) suggests that the age adds to the pathos of the narrative and had a particular legal reference. For a discussion on Dinah's age see Vanderkam (2018, 821-822).

[21] A similar transformation of the word מרמה/deceit occurs in the Targumim to Gen. 27:35.

[22] Kugel (1998, 409) and (2012, 144, nt.262), Vanderkam (2018, 823, nt.24).

[23] Vanderkam (2018, 823)

[24] Kugel (1998, 412) and Williams (2001, 106)

[25] Kugel (1998, 431), (2006, 120) and (2012, 147).

second Century.[26] Parts of ALD were first discovered among the writings of the Cairo geniza at the end of the nineteenth Century. Later, seven fragmentary copies of ALD were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Neither the beginning nor the end of the work survived.

There is only a short reference to the Dina narrative found in the ALD, Ch 1:1-3.[27] The first fourteen lines of the column are missing but sections of the remaining lines refer to the rape of Dina. Jonas Greenfeld presents an interesting explanation of the phrase נזורו "ערלת בשרכון והתחמיון כואתן" – "circumcise your fleshy foreskin and look like us". There is a difference between the phrase בשר ערלה (flesh of his foreskin) and ערלת בשר (foreskin of your flesh). The former appears in Gen 17:14, 24, 25 and Lev. 12:3 and the latter in Ezek. 44:6-9. Greenfeld suggests that there may be a theological point in which "circumcising of flesh" is contrasted with "circumcising of heart". He goes on to suggest that this may explain that the deception performed by the brothers was that the Shechemites would perform a physical circumcision as opposed to a spiritual one. However, this is not conclusive, and the text does not refer to deception.

Gideon Bohak discovered a new geniza fragment of the ALD in the John Rylands collection in Manchester (P1185). His discovery led him to claim that the beginning of ALD contains beyond any doubt a discussion between the brothers themselves concerning how they should proceed with Shechem and not a discussion with Shechem.[28] According to Bohak the discussion was between Levi, Jacob and probably Reuben. Jacob and Reuben suggested that the Shechemites should be persuaded to perform circumcision as part of a plan to weaken them and make their killing easier. Levi understood that the offer that would be made was not a genuine one. The new fragment states "ולאשליותן" – "to deceive them". Bohak reconstructs the narrative with the aid of Testament of Levi 6:3 and suggests that Levi attempted to convince Jacob and Reuben not to suggest that the Shechemites perform circumcision. Levi does this because he simply wishes to kill the Shechemites and it would be incorrect to murder circumcised people and there is no necessity to deceive the Shechemites as God has already commanded Levi to kill them. Levi does not approve of the approach of Jacob and Reuben. The Shechemites perform

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[26] Greenfeld, Stone and Eshel (2004,3 and 19).
[27] Greenfeld, Stone and Eshel (2004, 56-57).
[28] Bohak (2011, 381).

circumcision and Jacob is told to take advantage of the situation. The narrative of the murder of the Shechemites is missing. If Bohak is correct, then this would be a text with a definite acknowledgment of the deception in the narrative.

Kugel also analyzed and reconstructed this fragment (P 1185) differently to Bohak.[29] Kugel agrees that the discussion is between Jacob and the brothers concerning the best action to follow in dealing with the Shechemites and not a discussion with the Shechemites themselves. However, he disagrees with Bohak on the rest of the reconstruction of the story. Bohak suggests that all parties agreed to murder the Shechemites but they differed concerning the methods: Jacob and Reuben planned to deceive the Shechemites to perform circumcision and then to kill them whereas Levi simply planned to kill them. Kugel disagrees as this interpretation contradicts the accounts in the Biblical narrative, Jubilees and the poem of Theodotus.[30] If Jacob planned to kill the Shechemites then it is difficult to explain his anger in Gen 34:30 at the conclusion of the narrative:

> And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have stirred up trouble for me, making me stink among the land's inhabitants, among Canaanite and the Peruizite, when I am a handful of men. If they gather against me and strike me, I shall be destroyed, I and my household."

It is also difficult to explain Jacob's blessings to Simeon and Levi in Gen. 49: 5-7. It is difficult to explain this anger if Jacob also wanted to kill the Shechemites.

In the version by Theodotus, Jacob's proposition towards the Shechemites is sincere:

> "and Shechem the son of Emmor saw her and loved her, and seized and carried her off to his own home, and ravished her. 'But afterwards he came with his father to Jacob, to ask her for his partner in marriage; but he said he would not give her, until all the inhabitants of Shechem were circumcised and followed the customs of the Jews: and Emmor said he would persuade them."[31]

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[29] Kugel (2016, 698-703).
[30] The poem of Theodotus is cited in Eusebius's *Praeparatio evangelica* (9:22:5-6,8).
[31] See previous note.

Jacob did not want to kill the Shechemites and was opposed to the actions of Simeon and Levi. Again, Bohak's suggestion that also Jacob desired to kill the Shechemites is difficult. The version in the Testament of Levi will be discussed in the next section.

The crux of the argument between Bohak and Kugel appears to rest on the interpretation of the word "ואשליותן". Bohak regards this as a clear description of an act of deceit or trickery. Kugel, acknowledging Elisha Qimron, argues that "ואשליותן" is the aph'el infinitive followed by first-person plural pronominal suffix, "us". This would lead to an explanation that Shechem and Hamor were discussing the fact that they were about to be deceived. It is as if they knew what was about to happen and this has no basis in the biblical narrative. Moreover, if they knew that they were being deceived then why did they proceed with the circumcision. In addition, the word "ואשליותן", from the verbal root שלי in Aramaic means "to be at ease, quiet, unconcerned".[32] The use of this root in its aph'el form here might more plausibly mean something like, "to cause us to live at ease" or "to make us live in harmony".[33] Note that the aph'el form of this root in Syriac is defined as "to calm; to quiet; to allow to remain at rest."[34] In the context this would seem to be a fitting understanding of the phrase. In this case, ALD does not refer directly to an act of deceit or trickery at all.

This argument is strengthened by Dorothy Peters and Eshel.[35] ALD reports Levi's consecration into the priesthood and his teaching to his children. The concept of deception within ALD was therefore seen as problematic as Levi's consecration was to be presented as legitimate and divine. ALD distances Levi from any connection to the deception and the deception may be removed as "אשליותן" is understood as "to set at ease" and not as deception.

3.2.4 Dina in the Testament of Levi[36]

The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs is a book purporting to contain the last words of each of the twelve sons of Jacob. The testaments are not wills connected to property but rather "ethical wills" in which the dying person seeks to pass on some wisdom to his

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[32] Kugel (2016, 703).
[33] Kugel (ibid.).
[34] Smith (1903, 580).
[35] Eshel and Peters (2015, 241, 244).
[36] For an introduction, translation and explanation of the Testaments see Slingerland (1977), Collins (1984), Hollander and de Jonge (1986), Kugler (2001) and Kugel (2006).

descendants. Each of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs has a different focus. It probably originated in a Jewish collection of testaments but in its present form it appears to be a Christian work.[37] The testaments date to the second half of the second century or early third century.[38] The fundamental characteristic of a testament is that it is a discourse delivered in anticipation of imminent death. Usually, it is a father addressing his sons, or a leader addressing his people or his successor.

The Testament of Levi is one of the longer testaments. There is a literary dependence upon ALD in the Testament of Levi.[39] Primarily it deals with Levi's investiture into the priesthood and the vice of arrogance.[40] After a brief introduction, the Testament of Levi turns to the events in Shechem (T.Levi 2:1). Unlike Jubilees, the Testament of Levi mentions the matter of circumcision specifically.[41] Kugel has shown that there is a significant difference between the manuscripts of the Testaments.[42] Most manuscripts read: "[Levi says:] I advised my father and my brother Reuben to tell the sons of Hamor to be circumcised, since I was so stirred up by the outrage that they had committed in Israel" (T. Levi 6:3). However, the manuscript MS c has Levi suggesting the opposite advice: "After this I advised my father and my brother Reuben to tell the sons of Hamor *not* to be circumcised, since I was so stirred up by the outrage that they had committed in Israel". The Biblical text raises a difficulty as all the brothers participated in the deceit (Gen. 34:13) surrounding the circumcision yet only two of the brothers, Simeon and Levi, attacked the Shechemites (Gen. 34:25). If all the brothers were in on the plan, then why did they not all participate in the attack? Kugel suggests that ms. C is an attempt to answer this question. The reason Levi advised against the circumcision was because he, together with Simeon, had decided that the Shechemites were to be killed. The advice that Levi gives suggests that he opposed his brothers and father who were seemingly willing to allow the intermarriage and thus the proposal was a sincere one. In T. Levi, Levi's advice was ignored, and the mass circumcision took place. This left Simeon and

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[37] Hillel (2008, 5-10) reviews the opinions.

[38] For a review of the opinions concerning the date of composition see Kugler (2001, 31-38) and Kugel (2013, 1697-1703).

[39] Greenfeld, Stone and Eshel (2004, 25-29).

[40] Hollander and de Jonge (1985, 129) and Kugel (2006, 115-169).

[41] Judith 9:2-4 also recalls the narrative of Gen. 34. The deceit of the brothers is not mentioned but rather the Shechemites are termed deceitful. Judith only mentions Simeon but not Levi.

[42] Kugel (2016, 687).

Levi in a conundrum: should they take revenge and kill the Shechemites despite the mass circumcision or should they allow the Shechemites to join their clan despite what they have done? Simeon and Levi attacked and angered Jacob.[43] This interpretation of the narrative would clear the brothers of lying. The brothers intended to allow intermarriage with the Shechemites if they fulfilled the condition of circumcision. Simeon and Levi opposed this and simply attacked the Shechemites and did not even consider another option.[44]

Kugel notes the dissonance in the treatment of the Dina narrative within the Testaments. In the biblical narrative both Simeon and Levi are active in the annihilation of Shechem (Gen. 34: 25) and Jacob rebukes them for their actions (Gen. 34: 30). The Testament of Levi treats this narrative at length whereas the Testament of Simeon scarcely refers to the incident. Kugel opines that the Testament of Simeon regarded the behavior as positive. This is an argument deduced from silence as the Testament of Simeon does not refer to the incident in Shechem. The Testament of Levi accepts the reproof of Jacob but presents Levi's actions as a fulfillment of the will of God.[45]

Vered Hillel suggests that Levi is presented positively in the Dina narrative and is rewarded for avenging Dina.[46] The theme of the Testament of Levi, according to Hillel, is to validate the choice of Levi as the priest. As such Levi is selected by God and his investiture into the priesthood is not a result of human actions or choice. Levi does not need to use lies or deceit as his actions have been condoned by God.[47]

3.2.5   Dina in Jewish Antiquities (1:337-341)[48]

Josephus presents a shortened version of the Dina narrative. Feldman discusses the omissions and differences in Josephus' version of the narrative.[49] Josephus stresses the fact that Dinah is Jacob's only daughter. He places the narrative during a Hivvite festival, a religious setting. The narrative is more romantic. As Josephus is concerned about his audience, he treads a thin line in order not to offend the non-Jews. The negotiations

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[43] A similar view is presented in Theodotus, Fragment 4 (cited in Eusebius, Praeparatio Evangelica 9:22.5-6,8). Here Simeon and Levi murder the Shechemites as the mass circumcision is about to begin.
[44] Kugel (2016, 692-695) brings support from ALD to this reading of T. Levi.
[45] Kugel (1998, 432-436).
[46] Hillel (2008, 186).
[47] Hillel (2008, 186).
[48] Feldman (1999)
[49] Feldman (2004, 262-264)

concerning the dowry are omitted and no mention is made of circumcision or deceit. Josephus writes:

> "Therefore, the king departed, hoping that Iakobos would permit the marriage, but Iakobos, revealing to his children the rape of their sister and the request of Emmoros, asked them to hold a consultation as to what it was necessary to do. Now, most of them kept quiet, being at a loss to decide, but Symeon and Leuis, the girl's brothers, born of the same mother, agreed with each other on some action. While there was a festival and the Sikimites had turned to relaxation and feasting, attacking first the guards at night, they killed them while they were asleep and entering the city killed every male, and the king and his son, together with them, but they spared the women." (Ant. 1: 339-340).

Jacob, having met with the important leader of the Shechemites, informs his sons concerning the abduction and requests their advice. Most of the brothers remain quiet and are this cleared of all deceitful action. Only two brothers voice an opinion, Simeon and Levi. The military action is a surprise attack but is not connected to deceit. Josephus states that the attack took place during a festival after the Hivvites had feasted, first killing the sleeping guards and then al the males. Feldman suggests that the fact that the attack occurred at a festival would remind Josephus's readers that Shechem had seduced Dinah during a festival and so the punishment would fit the crime.[50] Feldman argues that the deceit here is restricted to Simeon and Levi, yet Josephus makes no mention of deceit or lying.[51]

3.2.6 Dina in LAB 8

Chapter 8 in LAB forms a bridge from the narrative of Abraham up to the descent to Egypt. Genesis 12-50 is condensed to one chapter. LAB briefly reports Abraham's movement to Canaan and his family life. The children born to Hagar and his separation from Lot. God promises that Sarah will bear a son who will continue the covenant. Isaac is born and he marries Rebecca.[52] Jacob and Esau are born, and the latter's children are listed. Jacob marries and has twelve children and one daughter. At this point LAB records the rape of Dinah. Only two sentences are devoted to this event. Shechem took Dinah and

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[50] Feldman (2004, 70).
[51] Feldman (ibid.).
[52] Rebecca is not mentioned by name in LAB. She is the "Daughter of Bethuel".

raped her. Two sons, Simeon and Levi killed the entire city of Shechem and rescued their sister from there. LAB then reports the tradition that Dinah went on to marry Job and their genealogy is listed.

LAB omits details of the narrative. Feldman suggests that the omission of the negotiations between Jacob and Shechem, between Jacob and his sons, the lack of circumcision nor any mention of deceit or lying is to avoid creating sympathy for Shechem and seeks to present Simeon and Levi as attacking idolatry. Feldman points out that this demonstrates that good people are rewarded by God.[53] Murphy agrees and stresses the importance of moral causality in LAB.[54] Jacobson sees the role of God in history as being a major theme in LAB. God is responsible also for the disasters that befall the Jews and are a result of sin. The righteous will be rewarded, and God will at some point bring salvation.[55] Whilst this is a clear theme of LAB, Feldman's mentioning of it here remains unclear to me. LAB's description is minimal and without judgment. Who are the good people that are "ultimately rewarded by God"?[56] If this is a reference to Dinah and her subsequent reward is her marriage to Job, then as Mary Anna Bader has shown Dinah as being passive throughout and that she is the subject of actions.[57] Thus, it is difficult to argue that she is good in the narrative. If, however, this is a reference to Simeon and Levi as being good there are also difficulties. Simeon and Levi's actions are presented with no moral judgement and are depicted as retaliation for the rape of Dinah and are not explicitly rewarded.

Murphy suggests that the narrative is included as LAB has an interest in military matters and those related to Israel's wars in Canaan.[58] Halpern-Amaru claims that LAB only develops a small number of Jacob's descendants: Dinah, Joseph and Tamar. These three characters receive particular attention even if it is only a verse or two.[59]

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[53] Feldman (2004, 261). Murphy (1993, 47) corroborates the idea of God rewarding the good and points to LAB 3:9 and 6:18. See also Murphy (1986).
[54] Murphy (1996, 246) and Engler (2012) who discusses reward and punishment in LAB.
[55] Jacobson (1996, 242).
[56] Feldman (2004, 276) clarifies in the conclusion that this is a reference to Dinah.
[57] Bader (2008, 98). The tradition of Dinah marrying Job is found in Test. of Job 1:6, Targum on Job 2:9, B.T. Baba Batra 15a and Gen. Rab. 19.
[58] Murphy (1993, 51).
[59] Halpern-Amaru (1991, 91).

It is poignant to note that LAB includes narratives of lies and deceit in the rewriting, yet the narrative of Dina is one which he chooses to minimize but not omit.

3.3 Conclusions

The biblical narrative of Dina which involves trickery and lies was interpreted in different ways. Whilst Gen. 34 clearly involves deceit, both in its vocabulary and plot, the versions I have examined have softened these motifs. Josephus and the Testament of Levi make no reference to deceit. In ALD, Levi is distanced from deceitful actions. Jubilees regards the deceit as being a positive trait and that the actions of Simeon and Levi were reinforced by God's approval. LAB presents the shortest version of the narrative and ignores the deceit. It appears that LAB is more concerned with the aftermath of Dina. In a chapter that begins with Abraham and ends with Joseph's descendants and the descent of Jacob's family to Egypt, the focus is not on the intricacies of the narrative but rather a genealogical summary with some anecdotal episodes. LAB is not concerned here with major characters or leaders and as such does not develop these stories. The reporting of this story is important as LAB develops positively female characters and so the deceit and lies are omitted.

Biblical Narratives in which LAB adds lying

In this chapter I will examine narratives in which LAB adds a motif of lying or changes the lie itself. Joshua 22 reports the tension between the tribes as the Transjordanian tribes are allowed to return home following the fulfillment of their promise to Moses. Upon their return they build an altar which becomes the subject of a confrontation and suspected deceit. The narrative of Deborah is covered by Judges 4-5. A central part of this narrative is the fatal meeting between Jael and Sisera in which Sisera is killed. This meeting is filled with deceit and lying. The end of the book of Judges sees a civil war with Benjamin in which God deceives the Israelites. In all three of these episodes LAB has added or changed the theme of lying and has also changed the focus of the narrative.

4.1 The Transjordanian Altar (Jos. 22)
4.1.1 The Altar in the Biblical Narrative (Jos.22)

As the book of Joshua reaches its conclusion and following the conquest of the land, Joshua recalls the Transjordanian tribes in order to permit them to return to their own territory as they have fulfilled their promise to assist in the conquest of the land (Jos.

22).[1] Joshua implores the Transjordanian tribes to adhere to the Torah as Moses did. The Transjordanian tribes built a large altar to be seen by all. The altar was built as a symbolic altar, like the real altar, as a witness. It was meant as a sign for the future generations of the Transjordanian tribes to remind them that they are a part of the tribes of Israel and that they recognize this. The building of the altar led to consternation amongst the Cisjordanian tribes. They viewed the altar as a declaration of rebellion against the altar in Shiloh. Civil war seems imminent. However, before the Cisjordanian tribes attack a delegation, headed by Phinehas, is sent to warn the Transjordanian tribes of the severity of their actions. The Transjordanian tribes' explanation for the construction of the altar appeased the delegation and civil war was avoided. The altar is named "witness" and remains standing. There is no mention of lies or deceit in this narrative.

4.1.2 The Altar in LAB 22

LAB makes several changes in his rewriting of the narrative.[2] Joshua is presented as being a powerful religious leader who successfully negotiates the crisis.[3] Christopher Begg suggests that the narrative is given a new context.[4] In the biblical narrative the account of the altar is reported between the dismissal of the Transjordanian tribes (Josh. 22: 1-8) and Joshua's farewell speech (Josh. 23).[5] LAB 21:7-10 parallels Josh. 8:30-35 and the events at Mt. Ebal.[6] This is followed by LAB 22: 1-7 and the altar narrative. LAB does not continue with Joshua's first farewell speech but rather relates to the movement of the Tabernacle and cultic matters.[7] The timing of the narratives is different. Joshua

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[1] Soggin (1972,3) regards this chapter as part of an appendix to the book. Woudstra (1981,316) and Ahituv (1995, 3) sees the chapter as a fitting conclusion to the book which begins with the Transjordanian tribes aiding their brethren to conquer Israel and so ends with the return home of those tribe. Assis (2004) shows that, from a literary point of view, the chapter is an integral part of the book of Joshua which stresses the unity of the tribes.

[2] Phinehas has no role in the LAB version. Murphy (1993, 243) discusses Phinehas' role briefly in LAB as being the continuation of priesthood. In the biblical narrative the explanation of the Transjordanian tribes is accepted and the narrative moves on. In LAB the tribes are further questioned after their explanation and are still regarded as sinners. Joshua has a more prominent role in LAB than in Joshua. For other differences see Murphy (1993, 104).

[3] Farber (2016, 184-185) shows that Joshua is absent from the biblical account and a military threat was evident. In Josephus's version of the account, Joshua is the leader of the delegation and military action is explicit.

[4] Begg (1997, 12).

[5] Josephus Ant.5 100-114 has a similar context.

[6] Jacobson (1996, 687) notes that LAB combines the narratives of Josh. 4:20 and 8:30-35.

[7] The transferal of the Tabernacle from Gilgal to Shiloh is not mentioned in Joshua. Murphy (1993, 106) and Jacobson (1996, 706) and Begg (1997, 13 nt. 25) suggest that there is a problem with the text.

22:4 implies that the Transjordanian tribes are permitted to return home as the task of conquering the land is complete. LAB 22:2 implies that the task has not been completed.[8] The location of the assembly is moved to Shiloh (LAB 22:1) and does not occur in the land of Gilead (Josh. 22:15).

The cultic context of the narrative is stressed by LAB's change to the role of the altar. The biblical account stresses that the altar was not built for sacrificial usage (Josh. 22:23) but rather as a witness.[9] LAB stresses that the altar was used for sacrificial purposes and that there existed a priesthood (LAB 22:1). The Transjordanian tribes felt the necessity of an active altar to feel a closeness to God.

At the conclusion of the biblical account the altar remains standing (Josh. 22:24) whereas, in the account in LAB, Joshua orders the destruction of the altar (LAB 22:7). Begg claims that LAB presents the altar narrative as an illegitimate altar/cult story sandwiched between legitimate ones.[10] The altar is destroyed in order to show its illegitimacy. This may also explain the stress that LAB places on the importance of learning and teaching Torah. Joshua (Josh. 22:17, 20) mentions the sins of Baal Peor and of Achan whereas LAB (22:5) refers to the sin of the golden calf and the giving of the law. The way to be close to God is through the studying of His law and not through sacrifices.

LAB 22:6 makes an addition to the biblical text. Joshua orders the destruction of the altar and the teaching of Law to their offspring. He also invokes God as a witness that the tribes have not acted out of cunning.[11] Jacobson translates LAB 22:6:

> "God will be a witness and a judge between me and you and between my heart and your heart, that if you have done this deed out of cunning, you will be punished…"[12]

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[8] Jacobson (1996, 697) suggests that the implication in LAB is not that the event happened earlier but rather Joshua is questioning the fact that the altar was built so soon after their return. He regards Num. 32 as the basis for LAB 22:2.

[9] Feldman (1971, CVIII) points out that the biblical narrative stresses four times that no sacrifices were offered (Josh 22: 23, 26, 28, 29).

[10] Begg (1997, 17) and Farber (2016,189). See also Begg (1997, 18) where he suggests that this passage may support those who point to post 70 A.D. as the time of composition. Jacobson (1996, 702) follows a similar line and stresses the study of the law over sacrificial activities. Farber (2016, 184) suggests that Joshua is clearly in the "Torah-study-as-Jewish-future" camp as a reflection of Josh 1:8.

[11] In Josh 22:34 the altar remains standing as a witness and LAB has God as the witness and the altar is destroyed. Josephus does not refer to any cunning or deceit (Ant. 5:100-114).

Deceit and suspicion are prevalent in the narrative. Joshua and the elders are upset by the altar built in Transjordan and accuse the Transjordanian tribes of corruption which is already having adverse effects upon Israel. The Transjordanian tribes immediately seek to show that they acted out of pure motives and that they are not attempting to deceive anybody. Jacobson regards the opening phrase of LAB 22:3 as being difficult:[13]

> "The children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh said to Joshua and to all the people of Israel, 'Behold now, God has implanted the fruit of the womb of men and set up a light that they may see what is in the darkness, because He himself knows what are the hidden places of the abyss and the light abide with him'…"

The gist of the phrase is that the tribes begin their response by stating that God knows their intentions and motives for erecting the altar.[14] Joshua's response implies that he remains unconvinced by the claims of the Transjordanian tribes. Joshua refers to the sin of the golden calf. This suggests a parallel that just as the Israelites had performed idolatry in the absence of Moses so to the Transjordanian tribes have built an idolatrous altar in the absence of or because of their distance from Joshua or the tabernacle. Joshua informs the Transjordanian tribes that only through God's mercy were the Israelites saved following the episode of the golden calf.[15] At this point the altar is to be destroyed, as was the golden calf, and Joshua warns the Transjordanian tribes that if they have not been truthful regarding their motives then God will punish them and if their motives were ignorant then God will have mercy. All the tribes respond to Joshua's warning and agree. I think Joshua remains unconvinced concerning the sincerity of the altar builders as he now instigates a communal sacrificing and praying before he sends them back to Transjordan. This would not have been necessary had Joshua believed them. The fact

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[12] Jacobson (1996, 128). James (1971, 139) translates the phrase "if ye have done this thing in subtlety" Hartum (1967) has כי אם במרמה.

[13] Jacobson (1996, 698).

[14] Jacobson (1996, 699, 700) suggests that there is a connection to the problem that at some point the altar in Jerusalem would be too far for people to come regularly to sacrifice (Deut. 12:20).

[15] Jacobson (1996, 702) points out that "mercy" is not present in the Exodus narrative of the golden calf. In later texts it becomes a prominent motif. See (Neh. 9:17-19).

that, following their compliance to Joshua's directions, they fast and pray expressing their pure motives also implies that they still feel that they are suspects.

4.2   Yael - A Story of Deceit (Jg. 4-5)
4.2.1   Yael in the Biblical Narrative (Jg. 4-5)

Judges 4 and 5 narrate the events concerning Deborah, the prophetess.[16] Following twenty years of slavery to Jabin, the King of Canaan and his Commander in Chief, Sisera, the Children of Israel cried out to God. During this time Deborah was judging Israel. Deborah summons Barak in order that he should save Israel. Barak agrees to go to war on condition that Deborah accompanies him. Deborah agrees to the condition but informs Barak that as a result of the condition he will not be regarded as the victor but rather that Sisera will be defeated at the hand of a woman. The battle takes place in the region of the Kishon brook and mount Tabor. The Canaanites are defeated and flee. Sisera dismounts from his chariot and flees on foot towards the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, in an attempt to find refuge. Jael invites Sisera into the tent and subsequently murders him. The prose version is followed by a poetic version of the narrative known as "Deborah's Song" (Jg. 5).[17] The two versions have common parts but also have differences.[18]

This narrative differs from the standard structure in the Book of Judges as the identity of the savior appointed by God to save Israel from Canaanite subservience is unclear.[19] Furthermore there are an abundance of female characters at the forefront of events. The text begins with "a prophet-woman, wife of Lappidoth". As a result of Barak's hesitance to accept his role in the prophecy he is informed that "in the hand of a woman the Lord

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[16] For an explanation to the different roles of Deborah see Assis (2006).

[17] Scholars are at odds as to the relationship between the two chapters. Danna Fewell and David Gunn suggest a coherent narrative of Judges 4 – 5 in "Controlling Perspectives: Women, Men and Violence in Judges 4-5", *JAAR* 58, 1989, pp.389-411. Jacob Wright suggests that Judges 5 reflects an early battle victory song that was expanded on the basis of Judges 4 in "Deborah's War Memorial: The Composition of Judges 4-5 and the Politics of War Commemoration", *ZAW*, 123, 2011, pp. 516-534. Robert Alter (2013, 131) regards the poem as one of the oldest texts in the Bible which may have been composed not long after the battle it reports. See also Mark S. Smith "Why Was 'Old Poetry' Used in Hebrew Narrative? Historical and Cultural Considerations about Judges 5", in *Puzzling Out the Past: Studies in Northwest Semitic Languages and Literature in Honour of Bruce Zuckerman*, eds. Steven Fine, Marilyn Lunberg, Wayne Pitard, Leiden, 2012, pp. 197-212.

[18] See Amit (1999, 109-111).

[19] See Amit (1999, 199-203) and also Assis (2005).

will deliver Sisera". "Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite" has a pivotal role in the narrative as she addresses both Sisera and Barak. Finally, Sisera's mother is mentioned in Deborah's song (Jg. 5:28-30) awaiting his triumphant return from the battle.

The longest and most detailed section of the narrative reports the interactions between Jael and Sisera and Jael and Barak (Jg. 4:17-24) whereas the battle between the armies is reported only briefly (Jg. 4: 14-16). It is the narrative of Jael that concerns deceit.

Ironically, Sisera, the mighty Commander in Chief of nine hundred iron chariots is portrayed as a soldier fleeing on foot. Sisera flees to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber, in search of refuge from an ally.

A close reading of the narrative shows that both Jael and Sisera are employers of deceit. Jael leaves her tent in order to invite Sisera to enter her tent. Alter regards the use of alliteration of sibilants by Jael in Jg. 4:18 as soothing and reassuring.[20] The verse states:

ותצא יעל לקראת סיסרא ותאמר אליו סורה אדני סורה אלי אל תירא ויסר אליה האהלה ותכסהו בשמיכה

> And Jael came out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me, do not fear". And he turned aside to her, to the tent, and she covered him with a blanket.

Amit also regards the words סורה סורה/ "turn aside" as a play on words of Sisera's name.[21] Sisera accepts the invitation, enters the tent and is covered by a blanket.

Once they are inside the tent, Jael does not speak. Sisera requests a drink of water, and his hostess complies but presents him with milk and again covers him up. Sisera now orders his hostess to be dishonest and to respond negatively if someone inquires as to whether or not there is a man in the tent.[22] Sisera exhausted from the battle and from drinking the milk falls asleep. Jael takes a mallet and a tent peg and kills Sisera.[23] Sisera demanded that Jael lie in order to protect and save him from the pursuing Barak. Sisera was completely unaware that this request played into the hands of Jael who, once he was comfortable and hidden, murders Sisera.

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[20] Alter (2014, 128). See also Ginzberg (2003, 868) "and her voice was the most seductive ever a woman possessed". See BT Megilla 15a.

[21] Amit (1999,89).

[22] The repetition of the word "man" (*'ish*) plays against the previous repetitions of "woman" as the man speaking will shortly be undone by a woman in accordance with Deborah's prophecy.

[23] The repetition of the word "wife" plays against the word "man" used earlier.

Jael emerges a second time from her tent and approaches Barak. She had been instructed to conceal the presence of a man in her tent, yet she immediately volunteers this information to Barak. Barak enters the tent and discovers that Sisera is dead.

The song (Jg. 5) praises Jael for her actions. Again, Jael is referred to as the wife of Heber. There is no dialogue here but rather a list of actions. In the song it appears that Sisera began the dialogue by requesting water. It appears that Jael killed Sisera while he was standing and as a result of the blow to the head he fell.[24]

What where Jael's motives for killing Sisera? Why did Jael deceive Sisera?

Prouser suggests that the deception was twofold.[25] Jael initiated the ritual of hospitality by going out to greet Sisera. Secondly, Sisera assumed that Jael would be his ally (Jg. 4:17) and she reinforced this assumption. As for her motives for murdering Sisera, Prouser claims that this is unclear. It may be deduced that she wanted to help the Israelites. Yee regards Jael as a temptress and deceiver.[26] Assis concludes that Jael's motives are purposefully unclear as the focus of the narrative is to show that there is nothing political in her actions, but that Jael simply fulfils the prophecy of Deborah.[27] Jael acts as the hand of Deborah. Her deceit is part of the Divine plan and Jael simply fulfils the prophecy of Deborah. I agree with Assis as the text does not express why Jael acted as she does, and her actions conclude the story as the enemy is defeated in fulfilment of the prophecy.

4.2.2   Yael in Jewish Antiquities (5:198-209)

Josephus's rewriting of Judges 4-5 is explicit and shortened. Josephus omits a large amount of the narrative. The narrative spans Ant. 5:198-209.[28] The victory song (Jg. 5) is missing although the weather conditions that impeded the Cannanites (Jg. 5:4) are mentioned. Barak is restored to a prominent position and the encounter between Jael and Sisera is shortened.[29]

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[24] Following his fall, the text reports sexual innuendos (Judg. 5:27). BT Yev. 103a explains that Jael had intercourse with Sisera seven times to tire and weaken him so that it would be easier for her to kill him.
[25] Prouser (1994,24).
[26] Yee (1992, 117)
[27] See Assis (2005)
[28] Mason (2005, 47-50).
[29] Brown (1992, 71-74) presents Josephus as generally not being positive about women.

Sisera upon realizing that his army had been defeated fled and "until he reached a certain woman of the Kenites, whose name was Jael. When he requested to be hidden, she welcomed him" (Ant. 5:207). The Kenites have not been mentioned earlier in the section and it remains unclear as to why Sisera ran specifically to the Kenites. Jael is not introduced as a married woman. As opposed to Jg. 4 where Jael came out to greet and meet Sisera and to inform Barak of Sisera's death, in Ant. 5: 207 Sisera requests from Jael to hide him and she agrees. Following the murder scene, the body of Sisera is shown to Barak's company and not only to Barak as in Jg.4:22. There appears to be no lying or deceit on the part of Sisera. Jael, however, appears to be deceiving as Sisera requested to be hidden yet Jael reveals him to Barak following the murder. Here too, as in Judges, Jael's motives remain unclear. There is also an absence of explicit eroticism.[30] I think that Jael simply fulfills a functional role in the fulfillment of the prophecy of Deborah that a woman would be credited with the victory.[31]

4.2.3 Judith as an Improved Jael

Before I examine the narrative of Jael in LAB it is necessary to understand the narrative of the book of Judith. LAB utilizes the book of Judith in his rewriting of Jael.[32] The book of Judith is a fictitious work probably written in Hebrew.[33] The book was composed at the end of the second or at the beginning of the first century BCE.[34] The narrative begins by relating the rise and threat of Nebuchadnezzar, the Assyrian king, and his approach to the village of Bethulia. Judith, a Jewish widow, through deceit integrates into the enemy camp, befriends the general and cuts his head off with a sword. There are a number of similarities between the Jael narrative and that of Judith. Sidnie White Crawford shows that the narratives are similar in that:[35]

    a. A heroine slays an enemy of Israel singlehandedly, by attacking his head.

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[30] This is an interesting point given that Feldman (1998, 369-373) suggests that Josephus tends to enhance the eroticism of a text.

[31] See also Conway (2017, 33).

[32] Wills (2019, 2) and Jacobson (1996, 226).

[33] Nickelsburg (1984, 48,50 and 52) and Wills (2019, 9) regard the composition as fiction. Regarding the language Nickelsburg (1984, 52) suggests that it is generally agreed that Hebrew was the original language. Wills (2019, 17-23) reviews the different opinions and shows that there is evidence for "a Semitizing Greek" but it is more likely that it was written in a Semitic language.

[34] For a summary of the opinions regarding the dating of Judith see Wills (2019, 14-16).

[35] Crawford (1992, 5-7)

b. The structure of the stories: it begins with a political struggle between the Israelites and a foreign power and moves to a private scene between the heroine (Jael/Judith) and the enemy (Sisera/Holofornes) which concludes with the enemy's death. This is followed by a victory song (Jg. 5, Jdt. 16:1-17).

c. The heroine enters the narrative at a relatively late stage in the narrative (Jg. 4:17, Jdt. 8).

d. Both Jael and Judith act independently. In both narratives their husbands are named but, for one reason or another, are absent (Jg. 4:17, Jdt. 8:2).[36]

e. The male victims die with attacks to their head after they have drunk and fallen asleep (Jg. 4: 19, 21, Jdt. 13:2, 8).

f. The motif of "the hand of a woman" is prevalent in both narratives. (Jg. 4:9, 21, 5:26, Jdt. 8:33, 9:10, 13:14)

Shemesh explained further similarities between the narratives:[37]

a. Both Jael and Judith go out to meet the opposing military leader.

b. Both Jael and Judith gain the trust of the military leader using deceit and trickery (Jg. 4:18, Jdt. 11: 5-19).

c. Both Jael and Judith spend time alone with the military leader before the murder.

d. The victory songs relate between the rout of the enemy and sexual abuse of women (Jg. 5:30, Jdt. 16:5).

e. The dead body is presented (Jg. 4:22, Jdt.13:15).

f. Both heroines receive words of praise following the event (Jg. 5:24, Jdt. 13:18).

The differences between the two narratives shed light on the Jael narrative. Shemesh suggests that the differences present Judith as an amendment of Yael's character.

The question of ethnic identity is different in the narratives. Jael's tribal affiliation is uncertain, but she is not an Israelite.[38] Judith is quite explicitly a Judean as her name also indicates. Furthermore, when Judith is introduced (Jdt. 8:1), her genealogy is listed back to "Simeon" and to "Israel" which stresses her 'Jewishness'.[39] Shemesh implies that Jael's

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[36] Deborah is also identified as "the wife of Lappidoth" and her spouse is also absent from the narrative.

[37] Shemesh (2006, 169-173)

[38] In Judg. 4:11 her connection to the tribe of Moses's father-in-law is stressed.

[39] Judith's connections to Simeon also appears in Judith 9:2. Wills (2019, 247 and 281) regards the genealogical connection to Simeon as metaphorical. Moore (1985, 180) and Wills (2019, 282) regard the reference to Simeon as a rehabilitation of the tribe of Simeon.

identity may lead to an expectation of promiscuous behavior as many foreign women in the bible are seductresses.[40]

Jael is a married woman whereas Judith is a widow who, in honour of her dead husband, remains celibate. Jael is the hostess who provides refuge for Sisera whereas Judith is searching for refuge and finds it in the tent of Holofernes. The murder of Sisera occurs in the tent of the hostess and the murder of Holofernes occurs in his own tent. Jael provides Sisera with milk whereas Holofernes attempts to make Judith drink wine. Jael does not pray before she acts whereas Judith prays and beseeches God (Jdt. 9: 1-14, 12: 6-8, 13: 4-5, 7) and also blesses and thanks God after she is successful (Jdt. 13:11, 14, 16: 1-17). Judith behaves stringently regarding dietary laws and ritual purity (Jdt. 10: 5, 12:1-2, 9, 19) Jael arrives on the scene following the defeat of the Canaanite army and only the general is still alive whereas Judith has to deal with a more difficult situation of infiltrating the enemy camp and performing a decisive act.[41] Jael's external features are not described whereas Judith's beauty is stressed and she puts these features to good use. In contrast to Jael, Judith's sexual modesty and chastity are stressed throughout the narrative (Jdt. 8: 5-7, 16:22). Shemesh is of the opinion that the Jael narrative exhibits sexual connotations, but these do not necessarily mean that there were sexual relations between Jael and Sisera.[42] However, concerning Judith, where the sexual connotations are more overt the narrative stresses that Holofornes did not touch Judith (Jdt. 13:16).[43]

In Judith the question concerning the motivation for her actions of deceit and seduction are made clear. Judith informs the elders of her plan and states "the Lord will deliver Israel by my hand" (Jdt. 8:33, 9:10 and 13:14) echoing Judges 4:9, 21, 5:26 and Esther 4:16. Judith wishes to save her city and her people whereas Jael's motives are unclear.

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[40] Shemesh (2006, 163).

[41] Esler (2001, 76-66) regards Jael as an opportunist whereas Judith plans the event.

[42] Shemesh (2006, 168)

[43] Niditch (1989, 50). For references to sexual connotation sin the narrative see also BT Yevamot 103a, Zakovitch Y., "Siseras Tod", *ZAW* 93, 1981, pp.364-373; Alter R., *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, New York, 1985, pp. 46-49; Bal M., *Murder and Difference: Gender, Genre and Scholarship on Sisera's Death*, Bloomington, 1988, pp. 62-63, 101-107; Fewell D. N. and Gunn D. M., "Controlling Perspectives: Women, Men and Violence in Judges 4-5", *JAAR 58*, 1989, pp. 392-394, 404-405; Assis (2004, 83-84); Roitman and Shapira (2004).

Crawford regards Judith as being modeled on the narrative of Jael and Deborah.[44] Shemesh goes further and suggests that the story of Judith rectifies the Jael narrative on a national, religious and sexual ethical level.[45]

Philip Esler examined deceit in Judith.[46] Two forms of deceit are employed by Judith: outright lying and the allure of her beauty. Esler suggests that the narrative be read in the context of the ancient Mediterranean culture. In a group-oriented and honour obsessed cultural setting lying and deception can be legitimate and honourable actions. In Judith 9:2-3, Judith prays to God that her plan be successful. In her prayer she refers to the action of Simeon and the deceit he employed.[47] Judith celebrates the revenge taken by Simeon and she, as his descendant, will continue in this vein. The lies and deceits are celebrated in this story. Judith makes an addition and suggests that there was punishment measure for measure as the Hivites also deceived (Judith 9:3). Shechem defiled Dina in his bed and so he was killed in his bed as he recovered from the circumcision. Judith uses lying tactically in order to advance the interests of her particular group, the people of Bethulia and of all of Israel. Lying is not only permissible but also necessary in order to ensure victory. In order to defend the honour of one's group this behavior is permissible and necessary.

Esler lists no less than thirteen lies that Judith employs and other ambiguous statements:

1. Judith lies to the Assyrian scouts and informs them that she is fleeing from the Israelite camp (Jdt. 10:12)

2. She informs the scouts that she is on her way to Holofernes to deliver him an important message (Jdt. 10:12).

3. She will show Holofornes a road that he can follow in order to capture the area without losing a single soldier (Jdt. 10:12).

4. She offers a wish of long life to Nebuchadnezzar (Jdt. 11:7).

5. Judith tells Holofornes that death is about to fall upon her people (Jdt. 11:11).

6. Judith implies that her people will die as punishment for the sin of eating from food dedicated to God (Jdt. 11:11).

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[44] Crawford (1992, 5, 13-14).
[45] Shemesh (2006, 168).
[46] Esler (2001, 91-98).
[47] This is a reference to the events in Gen. 34. It is interesting to note that Levi is ignored.

7. She ran away from Bethulia because she heard that they were planning to eat these holy foods (Jdt. 11:16).

8. Judith requests permission to pray nightly to God so that he may inform her when the people will sin (Jdt. 11:18). She only intends to bathe.

9. Judith will inform Holofornes when the people have sinned once God informs her (Jdt. 11:18).

10. Judith will place Holofornes on the throne in Jerusalem (Jdt. 11:19).

11. Judith foresees that Holofornes will lead the Israelites like sheep (Jdt. 11:19).

12. Judith presents herself as a prophetess sent to inform Holofornes of these events (Jdt. 11:19).[48]

13. Judith informed Bagaos prior to being alone with Holofornes in his tent that she would be going out to pray (Jdt. 13:3).

Judith also uses ambiguous statements with a double meaning. Judith informs Holofornes that "I will say nothing false to my lord this night", he would think that Judith is referring to him whereas she means the Lord God (Jdt 11:5). Judith is happy to drink wine with the lord as this is a very happy day (Jdt. 12:18). Holofornes is again misled by her words.

Judith uses her beauty as a form of deception. She deceives Holofornes with her face (Jdt. 13:16, 16:6) and brings about his death. In the final chapter of Judith (16:8-9) her beauty is described as a weapon.

Developing the ideas of Bruce Malina, Esler explains Judith as embodying a "central social dynamic of ancient Mediterranean culture – a pattern of challenge and response".[49] The ancient Israelite would have enjoyed this narrative and would have regarded it as a great success in a challenge and response interaction. They would have learnt and understood how God deals with and helps the Israelites. God endorses the deceit and lying in order to secure a victory.

David deSilva, in a similar vein to Esler, shows Judith as a truly moral character and a woman of God in an ancient Mediterranean setting.[50] Judith is deceitful, and this is

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[48] Wills (2019, 322) suggests that there is irony in Judith's prophetic role. Judith is prophesying to a foreign general who is an enemy of Israel and even though she is lying this surprisingly makes it acceptable. This is a false prophecy in order to save Israel.

[49] Esler (2001,68) and Malina (2001, 27-56).

[50] deSilva (2006, 59-60).

praiseworthy. Deceit, when used against the enemy or the outsider is morally acceptable and desirable but inwardly it is wrong and should be avoided.

Judith is presented as an improved Jael. Shemesh and Crawford do not deal with the exaggerated number of lies and double meanings that are present in the narrative. I think, like Esler, that this use of deception and lies in such an overt fashion, even praying to God to allow her plan to succeed, suggest that the audience expected this kind of behaviour. Similarly, the use of her beauty and the explicit sexual allusions, even though Judith is regarded as being chaste, lend to an understanding that this behavior is culturally acceptable under the circumstances. This is also evident in Judith's prayer (Jdth. 9:13)

> "Grant that my deceptive speech wound and maim those who plotted cruel things against your covenant…"[51]

4.2.4   The Influence of Judith on LAB 31-33

LAB's narrative of Deborah is substantially longer than Judges 4-5 and occupies chapters 30-33. Chapter 30 describes the period of no leadership following the death of Zebul and the subsequent descent into consorting with Amorite women and idolatry. An angel is sent to rebuke the people and that "a woman will rule over them for forty years" (LAB 30:2). Jabin, the King of Hazor, and Sisera, his chief of staff, and their army cause Israel great fear. Israel decides to fast for seven days as a form of repentance. God sends Deborah to rebuke and encourage them and remind them of the cyclic events of history.

The author of LAB is familiar with the book of Judith.[52] Nickelsburg regards this narrative (LAB 31) as being influenced by the story of Judith – which itself was inspired in part from Judges 4-5. Feldman pointed out some of the similarities between Judith and LAB.[53] Both Judith and Jael adorn jewelry (Judith 10: 3-4 and LAB 31:3). Judith and Jael are described as very beautiful (Judith 10:7, 14, 19, 23 and LAB 31:3). These motifs are

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[51] Moore (1985, 190) renders "grant me a beguiling tongue for wounding and bruising those who have terrible designs against your covenant…" See also (1985, 194) where in some circumstances, according to Judith, deceit and lying, for the sake of God, is permissible.

[52] See Nickelsburg (1980, 55), Bauckham (1983, 50) and van der Horst (1989, 36). See also Lindars B. "Deborah's Song: Women in the Old Testament" *BJRL 65*, Manchester, 1983, pp. 158 – 175, esp. 174.

[53] Feldman (1971, CXVII).

not evident in Judges 4.[54] Both Judith and Jael give their enemy wine to drink and he subsequently falls into a deep sleep (Judith 12: 16-20, 13:2 and LAB 31:6) and this motif is also absent in Judges 4 and 5. Furthermore, both narratives have erotic connotations. Whilst in Judges 4 there is very little, if any, erotic motif, Judith and LAB's narratives concerning Jael are filled with erotica and seduction.[55] In Judith, Holofernes desires to seduce Judith (Judith 12:12) and the roles are reversed as he was seduced and killed by her. In LAB 31, Jael sets out to seduce Sisera in what appears to be a successful plan. However, Sisera also harbours desires to seduce Jael and is unsuccessful like Holofernes. A further connection is the role of the bed. Judith 10:21 describes Holofernes's bed as "under a canopy that was woven with purple and gold, emeralds and other precious stones" which seems to present the room as a harem chamber. The bed also appears in chapter 13 as the setting for the murder scene. Similarly, in LAB 31:3, Jael's bed is described as having roses scattered over it and this would spur Sisera's erotic expectations. In both Judith and LAB 31 the enemy is pushed or rolled off the bed in the former the enemy is already dead and in the latter this happens before the murder takes place. The 'bed' motif does not appear in Judges. A further connection is the use of prayer.[56] Judith would leave the camp each night in order to go and bath and pray for God's assistance and direction (Judith 12: 7-9). Furthermore, when Judith was alone with the drunken Holofernes she prays "O Lord God of all might, look in this hour to the work of my hands in the exaltation of Jerusalem. Now indeed is the time to help…and to carry out my design to destroy the enemies who have risen against us" (Judith 13: 4-5). Following this prayer Judith moves closer to Holofernes to decapitate him and again she prays "Give me strength today, O Lord God of Israel!" (Judith 13:7). LAB also inserts prayers into the narrative of Jael. Following Sisera's arrival and request for a drink, Jael persuades Sisera to rest. Sisera falls asleep and Jael goes to milk the cows. Here she prays

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[54] Jael's beauty is prominent in the *midrashim*. See Vayikra Rabba 23:10 where there is a comparison between Joseph, Jael and Paltiel who withstood situations of sexual temptation.

[55] The rabbinic literature finds erotica in Judges 5:27 as is explained in BT Yebamot 103b, BT Nazir 23b and Horayot 10b. Here Sisera is thought to have had sexual relations with Jael seven times on the day he fled from the battle. BT Nidda 55b explains that Jael gave Sisera milk from the breast to drink. Vayikra Rabba 23:10 regards the word שמיכה/blanket (Judges 4:18) as having an erotic nature. See also Roitman and Shapira (2004, 135). For a discussion concerning the use of spaces such as fortresses, tents, rooftops, and houses as having narrative and symbolic functions in Judith see Reinhartz (2000, 325-333).

[56] There is also a prayer in Judith 9 which may be compared to that of Jael in LAB 31:4-5.

to God and requests a sign "when he has drunk, he will grow weary, and afterwards I will kill him.[57] This will be the sign that you will perform for me, Lord, that, when I enter while Sisera is asleep, if he on awakening will ask me immediately, saying "Give me water to drink" then I know that my prayer has been heard" (LAB 31:5). Following the fulfillment of the first sign, Jael requests a second sign immediately prior to the murder. Jael will roll Sisera off the bed and if Sisera remains asleep then this is a sign that God is with her. Following the fulfillment of the second sign Jael, like Judith, prays "Strengthen in me today, Lord, my arm for your sake and the sake of your people and those who trust in you" (LAB 31:7).[58] The prayer motif is not found in Judges. A final comparison between Judith and LAB is evident in the presentation of the victim by the murderess. Having left the camp of Holofernes, with the decapitated head of Holofernes in a bag, Judith upon arrival at her home produces the head and proclaims "See here, the head of Holofernes, the commander of the Assyrian army, and here is the canopy beneath which he lay in his drunken stupor. The Lord has struck him down by the hand of a woman…it was my face that seduced him…he committed no sin with me to defile and shame me" (Judith 13: 15-16).[59] Similarly in LAB 31:9 Jael presents a dead Sisera to Barak and he declares "Blessed be the Lord, who sent his spirit and said "into the hands of a woman Sisera will be delivered". On saying these words, he cut off Sisera's head…"

In his reworking of Judges 4-5 the author of LAB was influenced by and used similar motifs to those in the book of Judith.

4.2.5   Summary of LAB 31-33

The narrative of Deborah is reported over three chapters in LAB.

Chapter 31 reports that Deborah summons Barak to fight against Jabin and Sisera with the help of God. This is followed by an extended version of the Jael and Sisera narrative.

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[57] Jacobson (1996, 854) prefers to parallel the second prayer of Jael (LAB 31:7) to the prayer of Judith.
[58] Halpern Amaru (1991, 102 n.56) appreciates the similarity but stresses that Jael and Judith differ as Jael prays for sings and reassurance whereas Judith seeks God's assistance. I think that there is a strong similarity here and that both Jael and Judith pray in a similar fashion before the murder.
[59] See also Judith 9:9-10 where she pleads with God to give the enemy into the hand of a woman and thus echoing Judges 4: 9.

Chapter 32 tells of the victory song of Deborah, Barak and all the people. The song is different to that of Judges 5.[60] Mention is made of many historical events: the tower of Babel, the binding of Isaac, the Exodus, the giving of the Law at Sinai, Joshua's victory aided by the sun and the moon and Deborah's victory over Sisera aided by the stars. The song is followed by the offering of sacrifices.

Chapter 33 records Deborah's testament and death. Deborah teaches the people that their actions are important in this world and once a person dies, they are unable to do anything about their actions here. Deborah receives the accolade of "a mother…a holy one" (LAB 33:6) and is mourned for seventy days.

4.2.6   Yael in LAB 31

In the most part Judges is characterized by a cyclic pattern.[61] This pattern has four stages: the people are idolatrous, God punishes the people by making them subservient to an enemy, the people cry out to God in response to the subservience and then the judge or savior appears and fights the enemy victoriously. In Judges 4 the stage of God providing a rescuer for Israel is missing and the text simply informs that "she it was who judged Israel at that time" (Jg.4:4). LAB provides the background to the rise of Deborah. Following the death of Zebul, Israel descended into consorting with Amorite women and idolatry as a result of the lack of leadership. An angel appears and rebukes Israel and informs the people that they have forsaken the covenant.[62] It is interesting to note that the angel states that "a woman will rule over them and enlighten them for forty years" (LAB 30:2). The role of women in the Deborah narrative is important.[63] Van der Horst points out that "enlighten" (illuminabit) is a common phrase used mainly with regards to God or Moses.[64] The author is putting Deborah's leadership on a high level.

In the ensuing battle with Sisera the role of women is also stressed. LAB 31 opens with Deborah summoning Barak and telling him "gird your loins like a man and go down and attack Sisera". The discussion between Deborah and Barak in Judges 4:8-9 is

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[60] Murphy (1993, 144).

[61] Amit (1992, 35).

[62] The appearance of angels in the book of Judges is not uncommon. See Jdg. 2:1, 6:11 and 13:3.

[63] Josephus minimizes the role of women in this narrative. Feldman (1998, 162) regards this as part of his misogynist views.

[64] See Van der Horst (1989, 34-38). Also, Brown (1992,43) develops the importance and significance of this phrase.

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circumvented. Barak will not appear again until after the war (LAB 31:9). This shifts the stress of the narrative. In Judges the focus is the removal of the glory of victory from Barak as a result of his reluctance to fight alone. LAB shifts the focus so that the defeat of Sisera by a woman becomes a direct punishment for his desire to capture Israelite women.[65] This paradigm shift leads to a different reading of the Jael narrative.

There are several differences in the LAB narrative.

The narrative is built around an inclusio. In LAB 31:1 Deborah states, concerning Sisera, "he himself would fall at the hands of a woman" and this is echoed in LAB (31: 9) in the words of Barak "into the hand of a woman Sisera will be delivered". Both Jacobson and Murphy show that LAB is employing the idea that the punishment must fit the crime.[66] Sisera boasts concerning three matters: "I will go down to attack Israel with my mighty arm", "I will divide their spoils among my servants", "I will take for myself beautiful women as concubines".[67] As a result of his bragging he will be punished in three ways: "the arm of a weak woman would overcome him", "girls would take his spoils", and "he himself will fall at the hands of a woman" (LAB 31:1).

LAB employs irony in his retelling of the Jael narrative. As opposed to Jud 4:17 where the mighty Sisera flees on foot in LAB 31:3 Sisera remains on his horse.[68] There is irony here as the warrior who has subdued Israel now flees. Furthermore, upon seeing Jael, who is described as being beautiful, Sisera thinks that his luck has changed for the better. However, he is not to know that here he will meet his downfall.

In Judges 4, as I have shown, the covenantal relationships of the Kenites are ambiguous. In LAB there is no mention of a covenant between the Kenites and the Canaanites and Sisera does not purposefully make his way to the tent of Jael. The identity of Jael is also unclear. She is simply described as the "wife of the Kenite".[69]

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[65] Jacobson (1996, 844).

[66] Jacobson (1996, 246, 844) and Murphy (1993, 140, 247-8).

[67] Tosefta Sota 3:14, Bemidbar Rabba 9:24 also recall Sisera's boasting.

[68] Ginzberg (2003, 871) suggests that ברגליו be translated "alone" as opposed to "on foot" in order to reconcile Judges 4:15,17.

[69] Jacobson (1996, 848) notes that in manuscript P the name of Heber appears as the husband of Jael, but this is the only place. Klein claims that Jael was an Israelite who married a Kenite who acted in favour of her people's interest and not in the interest of her husband, Lilian R. Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges* (Bible and Literature Series 14; Sheffield 1988) pp.43. Also, Josephus does not name Jael's husband.

Jael is cognizant of what she is going to do from the outset. In Judges this is less clear. Jael dolls herself up and is described in LAB as being beautiful (LAB 31:3). Furthermore, Jael's interaction with Sisera is changed. In Judges, Sisera is simply invited in and implored not to be afraid. LAB presents a larger air of hospitality. Jael invites Sisera to come in and eat and sleep. Jael promises that her servants will accompany him later and Sisera can repay her later. LAB 31:3 contains erotica implying that Jael has planned to seduce Sisera from the outset – "roses scattered on the bed". The reference to fear is omitted. The dialogue, actions and order of events are reversed. In LAB Jael directs the actions and instructs Sisera. The request of Sisera that Jael lie and explain that there is nobody else in the tent is omitted. Here, LAB adds a religious aspect to the scene. In her prayer, Jael stresses the idea that Israel are the chosen people and seeks the approval of God before she acts. She requests a sign that when she enters the tent Sisera will awaken and request a drink again and the sign is fulfilled. Now Jael takes wine and mixes it with the milk from the flock in a further act of deception. Sisera drinks and sleeps.[70] This sleep, not present in Judges, allows Jael to request a further sign and adds dramatic effect to the story. Jael requests that before she assassinates Sisera that she will roll him off the bed and he will not be stirred. Sisera is rolled off the bed and Jael prays that God should help her perform the act of murder. The scene is also ironic: as he dies, Sisera turns to Jael and informs her "behold pain has seized me, Jael, and I die like a woman". The one who planned to capture women now falls at the hand of a woman. Jael gloats "Go, boast before your father in the underworld and tell him you have fallen at the hands of a woman".[71]

The irony continues with an interlude from Sisera's mother. Unlike Judges, she is named Themech and is not looking out of the window in waiting.[72] LAB portrays Themech as a positive confident character who encourages other women to join her in going to meet her

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[70] Perrot (SC 230, 168) notes that *Midr. haGadol* 1, 336 also claims that Jael got Sisera drunk. He remarks on the similarity of the Hebrew words for" cream" (חמאה; see Judg 5:25) and "wine" (חמר). Jacobson (1996, 853) suggests that this explanation is misguided as "חמרא" is Aramaic and not Hebrew.

[71] The reference to Sisera's dead father is probably an inference from Judges 5:28 that Sisera's mother is awaiting his return and also LAB 31:3 which reports that if Sisera is saved he will go to his mother and Jael will become his wife.

[72] This is also the name of Cain's wife (LAB 2:1). Ginzberg (2003, 871 n 87) interprets her name significantly as meaning "she will be destroyed" (תמך = תמחה).

victorious son. She is certain that he has accomplished his stated purpose, but the reader knows the sad truth.

Barak returns disappointed at not having found Sisera. LAB has Jael going out of her tent to greet Barak and she uses similar language to that of her approach to Sisera. However, she refers to Barak as "you blessed by God". Barak, upon seeing Sisera, acknowledges the fulfillment of the earlier prophecy that "into the hand of a woman Sisera will be delivered." The irony continues with a further addition to the Judges narrative as Barak severs Sisera's head and sends it to Themech, his mother, with the message: "Receive your son, who you hoped would come with spoils." This also exhibits the concept of moral causality – the punishment fits the crime.

The impact of the reconstructed narrative is the transformation of an independent biblical heroine, Jael, into a shrewd, but less autonomous instrument of divine vengeance. Nevertheless, each step of the way her actions are supported by God who is directing the scene. Van der Horst regards Jael in this reconstruction as "a model of piety and trust in God".[73] I agree with Bletsch that LAB transforms the story to serve the needs of his audience. Palestinian Jews of the first century CE would comprehend the similarities between this narrative and their own predicament under foreign rule. The glorious past that the Jews had learnt about seemed to be only a lesson in history. LAB portrays the situation of Israel as being dire. The enemy has eight thousand chariots and is defeated by two untrained women who possess great faith and serve as the agents of God.[74] Jael's actions are directed by God and appear to be less deceitful or personal. This is like the interpretation of Assis to the biblical narrative.[75] God has a plan and an eternal covenant with Israel, and He will not abandon them. To ensure the fulfillment of the plan it is permissible to lie and deceive.

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[73] Van der Horst (1989, 37).
[74] An exaggeration of the nine hundred chariots in Judges 4:3. Josephus has three thousand chariots.
[75] Assis (2005)

4.3 The Civil War with Benjamin (Jg. 19-21)
4.3.1 The War in the Biblical Narrative (Jg. 19-21)

The end of Judges (19-21) narrates the story of Benjaminite affair of the concubine and its civil, political and military repercussions.[76] I will focus on Jg. 20 as this will become a scene of God deceiving the tribes.

Judg. 19 concludes with the Levite sending pieces of his dissected concubine to all the tribes in Israel.[77] This causes the desired effect of outrage amongst the tribes. Jg. 20 has five main scenes: the assembly at Mizpah (1-11), an attempt at negotiations with the tribe of Benjamin (12-14), preparations for war and the first inquiry of God followed by defeat (15-21), the second inquiry of God followed by defeat (22-25), the final inquiry of God followed by triumph (26-48).

The chapter begins with the assembly of all of Israel at Mizpah. The effects that the pieces of the dissected concubine had on Israel portrays irony. The results of the events in Gibeah lead to the unity of the tribes, a unity that none of the Judges had achieved until now.[78] The tribes and their leaders come prepared for war.

The Levite presents his story in an exaggerated and enthusiastic manner. He re-describes the events of Jg. 19. The Levite does not relay the events that led up to his arrival in Gibeah. He puts the blame upon the people of Gibeah as opposed to the "worthless men" (Jg. 19: 22). His version appears to include a lie in order to make the events appear more severe. In Judges 19 the men of Gibeah did not seek to kill him rather they sought to have sex with him, a detail that the Levite prefers to omit. He omits the fact that he thrust his concubine out of the door and into the hands of the people of Gibeah. The Levite challenges the people to act in light of the events and his response is met positively.

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[76] Boling (1975, 277) argues that this narrative presents Israel as being leaderless and overreacting to the events. Soggin (1981, 5) suggests that the end of Judges (17-21) consists of two narratives containing a strong monarchical tone. The narrative of the civil war also contains the positive attributes of tribal leadership. Amit (1992, 315) regards the final three chapters of Judges as a positive presentation of the historical period as opposed to the rest of the book. Amit also regards this narrative as a polemic against the tribe of Benjamin and as such as anti-Saul and pro Davidic. Webb (2012, 509) presents Jdg. 19-21 as a piece of social criticism of a moral nature. Hospitality, warfare, justice and politics were all debased as a result of the moral blindness of its citizens and institutions.

[77] Alter (2013, 208) shows a parallel to the mutilation and violence in Judg. 1 with the chopping off of thumbs and big toes.

[78] The unity is stressed by use of the word כל/all three times in Judg, 20:1-2 and the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" and "as one person".

Before declaring war on Benjamin, the tribes attempt to solve the issue by negotiating.[79] There is an irony in the narrative as the tribes' demand that the perpetrators be handed over and punished. This is an ironic reversal of the events in Jg. 19 where the perpetrators demanded that the guests be handed over to them. Also, just as the perpetrators would not listen to the reasoning of the Ephraimite (Jg. 19:25), the Benjaminites also reject the legal demands of the tribes. The failed negotiations are followed by the escalation of events.

The Benjaminites assemble their troops in preparation for a civil war. The other tribes travel to Bethel and inquire of God as to who shall lead them in the battle, and He answers Judah. The tribes choose their troops by casting lots. The decision to ask God echoes the opening chapter of Judges.[80] As in Jg. 1, God replies that Judah should go up first. The difference is that in Judg. 1 the war is with the Canaanites and in Jg. 20 it is against the tribe of Benjamin. Matthews regards this inquiry as an inclusion tying themes and events together.[81] The Benjaminites are being equated with the Canaanites and similarly the struggle against them is not a great success.

The following day the war begins, and the tribes suffered many casualties at the hands of the Benjaminites. The tribes weep and again inquire of God if they should continue in the battle, and He replies positively.[82] On the second day of the battle the tribes again suffer many casualties. The tribes reassemble at Bethel, cry, fast and offer sacrifices to God. On the third occasion, God informs them that they should continue to battle and promises that this time they will be successful. The tribes change their strategy on the third day and set up an ambush in order to defeat the Benjaminites. The Benjaminites are defeated, their cities burnt, and their cattle are slaughtered.

Interpreters have questioned why God allowed the tribes to be defeated in the first two battles when it appears that they acted correctly. God appears to mislead the tribes. Some suggest that the reason the tribes were defeated in the first two battles is a result of them

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[79] There is a parallel here to Josh. 7: 16-26 as both stories relate the purging of evil from Israel: the tribes assemble, the tribes are confronted with a criminal act and a military defeat, the tribes cast lots to separate the perpetrators, and this is followed by a collective action of destroying property and people.

[80] Alter (2013, 211) states that it was standard procedure throughout the ancient Near East to inquire of an oracle before battle.

[81] Matthews (2004, 195).

[82] See also Josh. 7:6-9 following the first battle at Ai.

tolerating the idolatrous behaviour of Micah and the tribe of Dan (Jg. 17 and 18).[83] Others suggest that the reason for defeat is to be found in the question itself. The tribes did not ask whether they should go to war but who should lead the troops.[84] As a result of their over-confidence or their arrogance in thinking that they could co-opt God in service to their plans.[85] These answers may explain the first defeat, they do not explain the defeat in the second battle. It is only on the third attempt that God allows the tribes to defeat Benjamin. This is a clear example of God lying to the people.

4.3.2 The Civil War in LAB 45-47

In order to understand the rewriting of this narrative in LAB it is necessary to begin with the story of the Levite and his concubine (Jg. 19, LAB 45). The retelling begins in the middle of a journey.[86] The Levite, named Beel, and his concubine are travelling to Gabaa and as the sun set.[87] He is unable to find a place to stay in Gabaa and so the Levite suggests that they continue travelling to the city of Nob.[88] The Levite finds the people of Nob to be inhospitable until he is recognized by another Levite, Bethac. LAB has the local Levite, urge Beel to enter his house quickly because the people in Nob are as wicked as Sodom.

Despite entering Bethac's house, no respite is found, as the people of the city surround the house and demand that the host surrender his guests. Bethac pleads with the people of Nob but to no avail. The people of Nob force their way into Bethac's house and drag Beel

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[83] B.T. Sanh. 103b, Pirke R. El. Ch 38. See also Rashi, R. David Kimche, and Abarbanel who also explain in this way.

[84] See R. Y. Kara and Ralbag

[85] Sasson (2008, 159).

[86] LAB here does not relay the events that led up to the journey in Judg. 19. Beasley (2014, 105) suggests that this is an ironic retelling by LAB. The reader would recognize the omissions and realise that LAB reflects a very singular (and biased) point of view, one whose consequences would be catastrophic for the people.

[87] Feldman (1971, CXXVIII) points out that LAB is unique in naming the two Levites in the story. Jacobson (1996, 1030) shows that LAB may not be so unique in naming the Levites.

[88] LAB transfers the sin from Gibea to Nob. Murphy (1993, 177) suggests that the change of the cities expresses the gravity of the Benjaminites behavior. Instead of avoiding an idolatrous town of Jebus, the Levite fails to find lodgings in two Benjaminite cities. Nob may also be a reference to the priesthood and so LAB is criticizing the priesthood for lack of loyalty to fellow Israelites. The narrative stresses that a fellow Levite helps Beel and so the theme of insiders versus outsiders is stressed. Jacobson (1996, 1028-9) explains that most of the commentators understand this to refer to the city of Gibeah and not Givaon, given the central role that Gibeah plays in the original Biblical account. Jacobson notes that both in Latin sources, Gabao has been rendered both Gabaon as well as Gabaa; LXX sources also render Gibeah as Γαβαων in 2 Sam. 21:6, 2 Chron. 13:2; while the city of Nob can be rendered Nob, Nobe and Noba in Latin. Regev (2001,99-102) suggests the transfer to Nob is the result of a geographical error of an eyewitness report of the author of LAB.

and his concubine out. Beel is released, but his concubine is raped all night until she dies. LAB makes an interesting addition explaining that the concubine's death was deserved as she had committed adultery with an Amalekite.[89] In the morning, Beel discovers the dead body of his concubine outside and he takes her to Kedesh.[90] Beel dissects her body into twelve pieces, and sends a piece to each tribe of Israel, demanding justice.[91] In his retelling of the events, the Levite lies in order to make the events appear even more serious. He claims that his life was threatened, and he was prevented from helping his concubine. The Levite's actions have the desired effect and all the tribes gathered in Shilo in order to decide how to respond to the events in Nob.[92] The chapter concludes with an addition to the biblical narrative that takes place in the heavenly sphere. This also sets up the background for God deceiving the tribes. In LAB 45:6, God describes to the adversary, who is probably Satan, that the tribes had been foolish in following Micah who had craftily led them to idolatry.[93] The reader is exposed to the thinking of God that led to the defeat of the tribes in the first two battles.

In LAB 46-47 the civil war is reported. The tribes are convinced that they are morally correct and that their plan will succeed.[94] At this stage there are no negotiations with Benjamin. The tribes humbly approach God to inquire as to whether they should begin a civil war and to discover if they have divine backing for their endeavors. LAB alters the biblical narrative. In Judg. 20 the tribes ask God before the first battle who should lead them, and God responds. Prior to the second battle they inquire as to whether they should continue with the war and God answers affirmatively. God does not inform them that they will be victorious until the third battle. From the outset, LAB makes it explicitly

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[89] Judg. 19:2 implies that the concubine had been unfaithful to the Levite, so Feldman (1971, CXXVIII). Jacobson (1996, 1033) suggests that Judg. 19:2 does not suggest sexual infidelity. See also Alter (2013, 203).

[90] For an explanation of the identity of Kedesh see Jacobson (1996, 1034).

[91] LAB 45:4 combines Judg. 20:6 with Judg. 19:29.

[92] LAB has moved the meeting of the tribes from Mizpah to Shilo. See Jacobson (1996, 1036).

[93] The adversary is unnamed elsewhere in LAB. Both Murphy (1993, 179), Feldman (1971, CXXVIII) and Jacobson (1996, 1037) identify the adversary with Satan. See Job 1: 6-12, Zech. 3:1-2 and I Timothy 5:14.

[94] Murphy (1986, 13) connects four narratives: The Tower of Babel (LAB 6-7), Amram and the Elders (LAB 9), the Exodus (LAB 10) and our current narrative (LAB 44-47) in stressing the will of God over the plans of humans.

clear that God is deceiving the tribes. LAB 45:6 and 46:1 make it very clear that God is deliberately deceiving the people as a punishment:[95]

> The Lord said to the adversary..."And so, because they were not zealous then, therefore let their plan turn out badly and their heart be confused…" (LAB 45:6)

> The Lord answered them saying "Go up, because I will deliver them into your hands." But He led them astray so that he might fulfil his words. (LAB 46:1)

This change highlights the contrast between the tribes and God and expresses the gap that exists between them at this point.[96]

LAB stresses the deception by God against all the tribes. In LAB 46:2 the tribes suggest that they will inquire as to whether they will be victorious in the battle with their brothers. In the subsequent brief negotiations, the Benjaminites respond that they are unwilling to hand over their brothers. This also stresses that the Benjaminites are united as opposed to all the tribes. The first two battles are like the biblical narrative, though they differ in the number of casualties and some details are omitted. The focus of the events is shifted from the battlefield to Shilo. In addition to the deception, LAB also stresses the emotions of the tribes as they approach God following their defeat and they also question God's actions (LAB 46:4). The reader is fully aware of the sin of the tribes and understands God's actions, yet the tribes remain unaware and consider God to be acting unjustly. Erich Gruen shows that the word "*seducere*/to deceive" appears three times in the words of the tribes and Phinehas and the same word is used regarding Micah.[97]

The deception by God is enhanced by the reference to other biblical narratives.[98] The reference come from the narrator's clarification after God's first communication to the people that He would "'deliver them [the Benjaminites] into your hands.' But He deceived them, that He might accomplish His word" (LAB 46:1). The phrase "but He deceived them", "*seduxit eos*" in the original Latin, can be understood as either 'He misled them'

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[95] Jacobson (1996, 1041) points to I Kings 22 as a similar narrative.

[96] Josephus's rewriting in AJ 5:151-159 expresses his uneasiness with the portrayal of divine deception. There is no dialogue between the tribes and God before the first two battles.

[97] Gruen (2016, 483-4).

[98] Jacobson (1996, 1041, 1043-1044)) points to Josh. 7 and I Kings 22.

(להטעות) or 'He enticed them' (לפתות). If the former, it would refer to an instance where King Menasseh leads the people astray (II Kings 21:9). The latter seems more appropriate as it alludes to other usages of this verb where God actively entices people to their doom by deception. In I Kings 22:20-22 the word 'to entice' (לפתות) is used three times. Prophets are sent to draw Ahab into a battle that he will lose. A similar use of the word is found in Ezek. 14:9 concerning the false prophet: God seemingly deceives the false prophet and leads him to destruction.

Following the second defeat against the Benjaminites, LAB 46:3 describes the state of the tribes as "and the heart of the people was altogether melted". This phrase does not appear in Judg. 20 but is taken from Josh 7:5 following the defeat of Israel at the hands of Ai. The responses to both defeats are similar. In Judges 20 the people fast and pray yet they do not ask God why the catastrophe has occurred. LAB's rewrite includes motifs from Joshua 7. The people tear their clothes and question the ways of God before the ark. Joshua challenges God to explain how the calamity occurred, and how can it be explained without profaning the Divine name. The parallels between Joshua 7 and Judges 20 are clear; both accounts have the people legitimately believe in their innocence, unaware that there is an individual in their midst whose guilt endangers the entire community. They expect Divine assistance and favour but find themselves the victims on the losing end of battles. Shaken of confidence, they turn to God. In Judges 20 their request is limited to ascertaining whether they should continue to attack the Benjaminites, and do not delve into theodicy. LAB 46:1 suggests that the justification of God's ways is the focus here. As a result, LAB uses Josh. 7 as it portrays the people as being repentant and praying along with Joshua's cry to God to explain how such a tragedy occurred.[99]

LAB 47 greatly expands the biblical text through Phinehas' prayer and God's response. The description of the final battle is like the account in Judges with the addition of the list of survivors from the tribe of Benjamin.[100] The chapter ends with the death of Micah and his mother followed by the statement "just as the Lord had said concerning them" (LAB 47:12).[101]

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[99] Gruen (2016, 483).

[100] Some of the list corresponds to I Chron 8.

[101] See also LAB 44:9 where God announced that this would be their punishment.

Phinehas' role is extended in LAB.[102] In Judges 20, he appears only after the second defeat of the tribes whereas LAB introduces him before the first battle. LAB 46:4 has Phinehas praying before the third battle and he enquires as to why God has deceived them. LAB 47 has Phinehas pray to God but here his language is softer, and he changes his direction of argument. Phinehas does not accuse God of lying and deceit but suggests that there has been a sin that God has not forgiven. The blame is on the people and not on God. He makes a parallel between events of his youth. Phinehas had killed Zimri and Kozbi who were sinners (Numb. 25: 6-8) and he challenges God to explain why this calamity has happened. He expresses to God that the people are saying that the Urim and Tumim are lying. God sees that Phineas' prayer is sincere, and states that He remains bound to the covenant that he swore.[103] He then explains his behavior and plan through a fable that Phineas is to convey to the people. The fable, unique to LAB, consists of two parts, one that refers to Micah's idolatry and the second to the rape and murder of the concubine.[104] In the fable, a mighty lion entrusted with the well-being of the animals of the forest remains silent while wild animals devour their young. However, the lion and the other animals react when another small animal devours the small cub of another wicked animal. Finally, the old lion is killed, and a new one is appointed. The parable is used by God to explain why He deceived the tribes.[105] Perrot suggests that the lion is a reference to the "lion of Judah" (Gen 49:9) or the "lion cubs" (Ps. 34:10) but the context of these references is different in LAB.[106] More recently Tavis Bohlinger has suggested a parallel to Jer. 5:6-9.[107] He suggests a context of divine rebuke of the people for the sins of idolatry and adultery. This context of Jeremiah is copied in LAB in these chapters. Prior to the fable, LAB presents the sin of idolatry through Micah and his mother and the sin of rape and murder regarding the Levite's concubine. In Jeremiah 5, God promises punishment for the people's sins of idolatry and sexual immorality; in L.A.B. 47, he

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[102] It is interesting to note that in LAB 22 (parallel to Josh. 22), Phinehas has no role. Nicklesburg (1980) does not refer to Phinehas as a leader in LAB yet here his role is increased and important. For a study of Phinehas role in Philo, Pseudo Philo and Josephus see Feldman (2002, 315-345).

[103] Jacobson (1996, 1049) discusses the oath of Phinehas.

[104] Feldman (1971, LXXV and CLXVII) points to the uniqueness of the fable.

[105] Murphy (1993, 182) follows the close reading and interpretation of the parable suggested by Perrot in SC 230, 207-8. Jacobson (1996, 1053) sees this close explanation as improbable.

[106] Perrot in SC 230 (207-8).

[107] Bohlinger (2019, 57-58)

explains the defeat of the Tribes in synonymous terms. Jeremiah 5 begins and ends with

שקר/lies (Jer. 5: 2 and 31) forming borders to the chapter and teaching the prophet that all

the people are sinners.

4.4   Conclusions

In this chapter I have examined narratives in which LAB adds or revises deceit and lies.

The narratives of Jael and of the civil war at the end of Judges reveal that God is not

averse to lies and deceit. Sisera, who had planned to take beautiful Israelite women as

captives and concubines, is assassinated by a beautiful gentile woman whom he desired

as a wife. Jael achieves this through deceit which is directly guided and approved of by

God. In the narrative of the civil war LAB accentuates that the events are driven by

God's desire to deceive in order to teach the Israelites a lesson. God deceives and, in

some cases, approves of deceit.

Lie Narratives Reported out of Context

LAB employs the use of "flashbacks" on many occasions.[1] The reader's knowledge of

the Biblical narrative is assumed by the author of LAB and this allows him to introduce

narratives out of context. LAB uses this technique sophisticatedly and refers to earlier

biblical events that were not retold in their chronological position. In this chapter I will

examine two narratives that LAB reports out of context which include deceit: Judah and

Tamar (Gen. 38) and Korah's revolt (Numb. 16-17).

5.1   Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38)

5.1.1   Judah and Tamar in the Biblical Narrative (Gen. 38)

Following the sale of Joseph to Egypt, Judah leaves his brothers and settles in Adullam.

He marries a Canaanite woman and they have three children: Er, Onan and Shelah. The

children grew up and Judah found a wife, Tamar, for his oldest son. Er dies as a result of

his wickedness before God. Judah instructs Onan to take Tamar as his wife and to do the

duty of a brother-in-law. Onan does not comply with the wishes of his father and refused

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[1] Jacobson (1996, 240-1) lists examples of 'flashbacks'. See also Fisk (2001, 17-18) and Murphy (1993, 14-18, 56).

to do his duty. Consequently, Onan is viewed as wicked by God and he also dies. Judah is reluctant to allow Tamar to marry his youngest son and sends her back to her father's house until Shelah has grown up. Judah is widowed and following the period of mourning he goes to celebrate the shearing at Timnah. At this point Tamar takes the initiative. She poses as a prostitute. Judah approaches her and proposes intercourse. She agrees and there follows a discussion of the price. Judah and Tamar have sexual intercourse. Tamar leaves with the pledge that she demanded, and she becomes pregnant. Judah sends the payment in order to receive his pledge back, but his messengers fail to find the prostitute. About three months later Judah is informed that his daughter in law, Tamar, is pregnant. Judah sentences her to death. As Tamar is going to her death, she sends the pledge to Judah and announces that the owner of this pledge is the father of the child. Judah realizes that he is the father and admits that he was at fault for not allowing her to marry his third son, Shelah. Tamar gives birth to twins and Judah does not have intercourse with her again.

The narrative appears in the Joseph story following the sale of Joseph to Egypt, Gen. 37 and it is at this same point that Gen. 39 continues. The narrative breaks the continuum of the Joseph story.[2]

This narrative is filled with lies and deceit. Firstly, Onan is not prepared to marry Tamar as he is aware that the child will not be considered his, but he does not inform his father of his actions and to the outside world Onan has relations with Tamar. Furthermore, Onan also deceives his deceased brother as he refuses to give a child to his brother. This deceit is met with a response from God and Onan dies.

Secondly, Judah implies to Tamar that she will be married in a matter of time to Shelah, but it is clear to the reader that Judah has no intention of fulfilling his promise as he fears for the life of his third son. There is no direct response to this deceit, but Judah does admit his mistake in Gen.

Thirdly, Tamar deceives Judah and seduces him as a prostitute. Tamar realizing that Judah had not fulfilled his promise that she would marry Shelah takes matters into her

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[2] Speiser (1962, 299), Von Rad (1963, 356) and Emerton (1975, 347) all regard the narrative as being unconnected to the Joseph story. Alter (1981, 3 – 12), Fokellman (1996), and Grossman (2015, 264-280) show connections between the narrative and Gen. 37 and 39. See also Gen Rab 84:19 and Rashi to Gen 38.1.

own hands to ensure that she would have offspring. Once it is revealed that Tamar is pregnant, and her father-in-law sentences her to death, she reveals that she has deceived Judah and that he is the father of the child. The fact that immediately following there meeting the narrative states "she became pregnant by him" may be regarded as a sign that the divine providence accompanied Tamar and her action is to be regarded as a positive one.

Finally, the narrative of the birth of the twins also contains attempted deceit. Peretz seizes the opportunity to be borne before Zerach who retracted his hand after he began to be borne. Here too, there is no response to the deceit but the fact that Peretz is the father of the Davidic line implies that this is considered a positive move.

In addition to the deceit in the biblical narrative the passage contains terms relating to lying and deceit. As Shelah is born the text informs us that Judah "was at Chezib when she bore him" (38:5). The word "Chezib"/כזיב is from the √כזב which means "to lie".[3] Similarly, the name Shelah has connotations of deceit.[4]

Diane Sharon suggests that the narrative teaches the importance of integrity and that righteousness in both appearance and reality must be present in order for there to be continuity of lineage.[5] Grossman pursues a more complex approach to the narrative which is contra Sharon. He identifies pairs of conflicts and their structure.

> A deceit between brothers (Onan and Er)
>> B Yehuda deceives Tamar
>> B' Tamar deceives Yehuda
> A' deceit between brothers (Peretz and Zerach).

Grossman shows that the first two cases (A and B) are the subject of criticism within the narrative whereas the latter two cases (B' and A') are supported. The first two cases are situations where the deceiver is actively preventing the formation or continuation of a family and the latter two cases are an attempt by the deceiver to perpetuate the family. Thus, the narrative teaches that deceit is permissible in cases where the perpetuity of the family is at stake.[6] Shemesh also shows that the biblical narrative views Tamar's behavior

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[3] See II Kings 4:16, Psalms 115:11, Michah 2:11.
[4] See II Kings 4:28
[5] Sharon (2005, 301-306 and 313).
[6] Grossman (2015, 269-270)

in a positive light as her motive was to secure that which was hers by right. Judah justifies her actions and Tamar is also rewarded with the birth of twins from whom the tribe of Judah is established.[7] Avigdor Shinan and Yair Zakovitch conclude that the message of the narrative is anti-Judaean. The aim of the narrative is to mock Judah and the house of David: the one who deceived his father and daughter in law and tried to be clever is in turn deceived and outdone.[8] I think that the positioning of the narrative is important. Joseph has been taken to Egypt and so the focus moves to Judah. Judah's family is in danger of extinction and is saved by Tamar through acts of deceit and lies. The fact that Tamar is exonerated and that the focus of the story is upon her implies that her behaviour and actions are positive. Also, the mention of Tamar as a positive role model in Ruth 4:12 suggests that the Bible regards her as a positive character.[9]

5.1.2   The Narrative in the Pseudepigrapha

Such a narrative would demand interpretation. Kugel raises some of the questions that would have troubled early readers of the story.[10] How could Judah have married a Canaanite woman? Why is it necessary to record such a sordid incident about a man sleeping with his daughter in law? The phrase "She is more righteous than me" is very dubious as both Judah and Tamar do not appear to be righteous characters at all in the story. I think that readers may also have been troubled by the deceit and lying that is prevalent throughout.

5.1.2.1   **Judah and Tamar in Jubilees 41**

The author of Jubilees changes the context of the narrative.[11] Genesis 38 is inserted between the narrative of the sale of Joseph (Gen. 37) and the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39). There is no definite temporal indicator in Gen. 38 and thus it is unclear when these events occurred. The events of Gen. 38 occurred over many years to allow for the birth of the Judah's children and their arrival at marital age. Segal suggests

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[7] Shemesh (2002, 84).

[8] Shinan and Zakovitch (1992, 220) and Menn (1997, 35-41).

[9] Grossman (2016, 324,5).

[10] Kugel (2006, 170).

[11] Concerning the number of authors of Jubilees see Segal (2007, 14-35), Kugel (2012, 11-16), Werman (2015, 44) and Vanderkam (2018, 25-28).

that the events in Gen. 38 occurred at the same time as Gen. 37 and Gen. 39.[12] Jubilees employs a chronological principle in the order of the biblical narratives. The Judah and Tamar narrative is located in Jub. 41, after Joseph has already risen to power in Egypt. In Jubilees the narrative occurs over a five-year period, 2165 to 2170, during the years of plenty in Egypt. The relocation of the narrative removes any doubts concerning the chronological reading of the story.[13] Werman opines that in Genesis the Judah story breaks the continuum of the Joseph narrative as an anti-Judean ploy and to present Joseph in a positive light. In Jubilees the opposite is the case as Judah is presented more favorably than Joseph and this explains the mention of Joseph in Jub. 41. Vanderkam suggests that the narrative is relocated to a point following Joseph's rise to power in Egypt and after he has successfully resisted the advances of Potiphar's wife. The portrayal of Joseph as being successful and adhering to the law provides the background for the Judah-Tamar narrative.[14] He agrees with Werman that Jubilees, having made Levi the worthy priest, Jub. 31-32, now presents Judah as the ancestor of the Davidic kings.[15]

Jubilees 41 begins with Judah finding a wife for his son, Er. No mention here is made of Judah separating from his brothers or of his marriage and entrance into fatherhood, as in Gen. 38.[16]

The narrative begins with Judah marrying his firstborn son, Er, to Tamar, an Aramean.[17] Er would prefer to marry a Canaanite, like his mother, but Judah will not allow this. Er is wicked and as a result is killed by God. Onan refuses to fulfil the levirate obligation and he too is killed by God. Unlike Genesis, the obstacle preventing Tamar from marrying the third son, Shela, is Bathshua, Judah's wife.[18] It appears that Judah did not desire to deceive Tamar. The catastrophes that befall Judah appear to be the result of his marriage

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[12] Segal (2007, 47 n.1)

[13] Segal (2007, 59).

[14] Vanderkam (2018, 1037).

[15] Vanderkam (2018, 1037 and 1049 n.66).

[16] Rashi (Gen 38: 1) regards the narrative as a punishment for Judah because of his leadership in the sale of Joseph. Jubilees removes this idea of punishment.

[17] Jub. 34:20 reports that Levi married Melcha from Aramean descent from Terah's family. Similarly, Judah's descendants will be from Tamar, an Aramean.

[18] Shinan and Zakovitz (1992, 74), Werman (2015, 492) and Segal (2007, 69).

to Batshua, a Cannanite.[19] Jubilees vehemently opposes intermarriage with Canaanites. Judah, to correct his wrongdoing, arranges for his son to marry an Aramean, Tamar.[20] Following the death of his wife and a period of mourning, Judah goes alone to shear his sheep and at this point Tamar disguises herself as a prostitute and sets out to seduce her father-in-law.[21] As Batshua, the one who prevented the marriage of Tamar to Shela has died, Judah could move forward and allow the marriage. Judah falls for Tamar's plot, and she becomes pregnant by her father-in-law. The discussion concerning payment occurs before the sexual act.[22] Both Tamar and Judah go their separate ways. Like Genesis 38, Judah attempts to send the prostitute payment by way of a messenger, but the prostitute is not found. Subsequently, Tamar's pregnancy is revealed. Judah travels to the house of Tamar's father and orders her father and brother to bring her out to be burned as she has done something impure. Tamar calmly sends the three items that she took from Judah as an assurance of pay when she was a prostitute and informs him that the owner of these items is the father of the child. Judah states that Tamar is more righteous and adds that she will not be burnt and because of her actions she will not be given to Shela. This is a legal outcome of her having become pregnant by Judah as opposed to an explanation as in Gen. 38. The birth of the twins is described without the intrigue of Gen. 38. Jubilees concludes the narrative with two additions to the biblical story. Firstly, Judah repents. He repents his behavior with Tamar and requests forgiveness. Judah is told, in a dream, that he has been forgiven. This part of narrative presents Judah as being a penitent who acknowledges his sin, regrets his actions, and resolves not to repeat the sin. Secondly, there is a halachic ruling forbidding sexual relations between a person and his mother-in-law or daughter in law. Jubilees concludes that Judah acted without knowing.

Michael Segal suggests that most of the differences incorporated into the rewriting are intended to soften Judah's guilt.[23] James Vanderkam proposes that the author of Jubilees is interested in establishing Judah as the ancestor of the Davidic line and so presents

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[19] This marriage is reported in Jub. 34:20. See Halpern-Amaru (1999, 113-114) and Kugel (2012, 182).

[20] Vanderkam (2018, 934-5) suggests that Gen. 38:12 teaches that despite the problem of the marriage between Judah and the daughter of Shua contrasting with the purity of the Abrahamic line and direction nevertheless no children were born from the three sons of Judah.

[21] Judah is alone as Jubilees frowns upon relations with Canaanites. See Vanderkam (2018, 1041), Werman (2015, 493) and Kugel (2012, 183).

[22] Werman (2015, 493) and Kugel (2012, 182).

[23] Segal (2007, 60).

Judah is a positive light.[24] This approach accounts for some of the alterations made in Jubilees. Judah is presented in a more positive light. Judah desires his family to be built in the family tradition and not from the Canaanites. Judah is not responsible for the delay and prevention of the marriage between Tamar and Shela but rather his wife, Bathshua. Concerning his meeting with the prostitute, Judah is described as attempting to act in the correct way and attempts to send her the promised payment. Judah acknowledges that Tamar is more righteous than he is, and he realizes the severity of his actions and he is forgiven. Jubilees exonerates Judah of sin. Er and Onan are presented as lying and deceiving as they did not consummate their marriage with Tamar and did not inform their father of these actions. Thus, Tamar was still a virgin when she seduced her father-in-law and because of this action she prevents herself from being married to Shela.[25] Judah justifies Tamar's actions, and she also appears to be innocent of any misdemeanor. Tamar is a tragic figure in that she seals her own fate by seducing her father-in-law and now she will not be with Judah nor with Shela. Jubilees does not express an opinion concerning Tamar's actions and following the birth of the twins she disappears from the narrative. In Jubilees Tamar deceives Judah and yet she is also forgiven. Tamar's motives seem to be her desire to have children. Having married into Judah's family she remains a childless widow and as the barrier to her marrying Shela is no longer alive she resolves to seduce Judah. Jubilees seeks to justify her behavior. The fact that the narrative ends with "for this reason his descendants were established for another generation and would not be uprooted" (Jub. 41:27) implies that Perez and Zerah were accepted children. Numbers 26:20 enumerates the two children as the continuation of Judah and Ruth 4:12 presents the union between Judah and Tamar and the resulting birth in a positive light. This chapter may also be presented as an attempt to purify the Davidic line through Judah. Judah's marriage to Bathshua, reported in Jub. 34, came to nothing. Judah should not have married this Canaanite woman. Jub. 41 teaches that no descendants emerged from

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[24] Vanderkam (2018, 1037) who argues that Jubilees seeks to glorify the image of Judah as the ancestor of the Davidic Kings. See also, Wassen (1994, 362).
[25] Rothstein (2005, 120-122).

this union. Er and Onan were killed by God and Zerah and Perez are considered as Judah's children and not those of Er.[26]

5.1.2.2   Judah and Tamar in the Testament of Judah

The Testament of Judah is the fourth of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.[27] This is the longest of the Testaments and focuses upon Judah's status as the patriarch from whom the king and future messianic leader will descend.[28] Judah, in his last will and testament to his children warns them of the problems caused by excessive drinking and the desire for money. These themes are the vices which caused Judah problems during his lifetime and as such he warns his children to avoid them.[29]

The story of Tamar appears in chapters 8, and 10-12. Here too is a unique presentation of the biblical story. In chapter 8, Judah informs his children how he initiated his own marriage to Bathshua following a drinking party with her father. The birth of the three children is reported as is the death of Er and Onan. Here there are no details as to why the children died. In chapter 10, Tamar is introduced. Unlike the biblical story it is Er who brings Tamar from Aram as a wife.[30] Both Er and Bathshua are presented as wicked characters. Er is concerned about exogamy and encouraged by his mother, he does not consummate the marriage to Tamar. This theme continues as Judah orders Onan to marry Tamar. Onan, also adhering to his mother's wishes, refrains from consummating the marriage. Judah orders Onan to have relations with Tamar but "he let his semen spill out on the ground, as his mother ordered him" (T. Judah 10:5). Bathshua also is responsible for preventing Shela from marrying Tamar. Judah has not lied or tricked anybody. Chapter 11 continues with Bathshua deceiving Judah. He admits having intercourse with Bathshua in a drunken state and reports that Bathshua brought Shela a Canaanite wife while he was away.[31]

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[26] See Gen. 46: 22, Num. 26: 19-22 and I Chr. 2: 3-4 and 4: 1 where the sons born from Tamar are the children of Judah and not of Er.

[27] See pp. 33 for background to the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.

[28] Nickelsberg (2005, 209).

[29] These vices are not evident in the Biblical narrative but maybe connected to specific verses. See Kugel (2006, 172-174).

[30] Kugler (2001, 58) and Kugel (2013, 1755). See also the discussion above concerning Jubilees 41 on pp.67.

[31]   A marital bond is affected by sexual intercourse. Werman (2015, 490, 494).

Menn explains that Judah reports the events as two separate events. The first incident concerns his marriage to Bathshua and his subservience to her. He admits that marrying a Canaanite was a mistake, but he was overcome by wine and her beauty. Judah, upon hearing about the marriage of Shela, cursed his wife and caused her death. Two years later, in chapter 12, Tamar takes control of her situation. Judah will again fall at the hands of a woman through drink and beauty.[32]

The narrative in the Testament is shorter that the biblical version. Tamar adorns herself in order to trap Judah. Judah, again being drunk, fails to recognize Tamar and is also blinded by her beauty.[33] Judah initiates the interaction with Tamar and she demands to know what he will pay her. Judah parts with three items and has sexual intercourse with Tamar. Tamar becomes pregnant. Judah's discovery of Tamar's pregnancy is immediate, and he wishes to kill her. Tamar sends the three items to Judah and he realizes that he is the father. Judah is not initially convinced by Tamar. However, once she reports to him the special words that he said to her in his drunkenness he accepted that this was all part of God's plan.[34] Judah does not repeat his actions with Tamar as he regards them as an abomination. Tamar disappears from the narrative and the birth of the twins is omitted.

Cecilia Wassén points out that in this version of the Judah and Tamar story the narrator is Judah. Tamar's role is diminished, and her motives are of little concern. Judah's wife, Bathshua, is named and given a role in the narrative.[35] Tamar is presented as an active temptress thus placing her in a negative light.[36]

Er and Onan are presented as wicked and their deceit results in their death. Judah does not lie but considers himself to be deceived and is suspect of Tamar's behavior.

Kugel suggests that there is a connection between Chezib (Gen. 38:5) and "the waters of Kozeba" (T. Judah 12:3). These are probably the same place.[37] This is an obvious reference to deceit. This theme of deceit was known to the author of the Testaments. The superfluous information provided in Gen. 38:5 was a hint to Judah's state of mind

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[32] Menn (1997, 150) and Rosen-zvi (2006, 80 n.58).

[33] On the strange tradition reported in T. Judah 12:2 describing Tamar's actions as being an Amorite custom regarding widows, see Menn (1997, 151-153) and Himmelfarb M., "R. Moses the Preacher and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs", *AJS Review* 9 (1984), pp. 55-78.

[34] Concerning the special words that Judah expressed in his drunken state see Kugel (2006. 180 – 185).

[35] Wassen (1994, 355).

[36] Wassén (1994, 357-8).

[37] See I Chron. 4:22

concerning his marriage to Bathshua. The word כזב/deceit is used by Judah in T.Judah 11: 1-2 as a reason for his marriage and he similarly became drunk with the waters of deception when he had relations with Tamar.[38] Judah is therefore partially to blame for his problems with Tamar as he was drunk.

Kugel also addresses the suggestion that Judah was not sure that he had sinned. He was unclear as to whether the woman involved had been Tamar and there were no other witnesses who had seen a prostitute. Judah omits the phrase "she is more righteous than I" which leaves Tamar as a liar and a prostitute who was just performing the plan of God. Thus, the testaments are sympathetic towards Judah as he did little wrong whereas Tamar is portrayed as a seductress and a liar.[39]

5.1.2.3 Judah and Tamar in LAB 9

LAB's rewriting of the narratives of Genesis are concise. LAB 8 recounts Genesis 12 – 50 forming a bridge from the election of Abraham to the birth of Moses. LAB chooses not to report the narrative of Gen. 38 in its context. However, a reference to the event is made in LAB 9 concerning the birth of Moses. This is another use of a flashback.[40] LAB mentions Tamar in the knowledge that the readers are aware of the story. Amram states (LAB 9:5):

> Now therefore I will go and take my wife, and I will not consent to the order of the king…for when our wives conceive, they will not be recognized as pregnant until three months have passed, as also our mother Tamar did…when going to her execution she stopped and said, 'the man to whom belong this staff and this signet ring and the sheepskin, from him I have conceived.' Her purpose saved her from all danger.

Murphy divides LAB 9 into two sections: LAB 9:1-9 Amram, father of Moses and LAB 9: 10-16 the birth of Moses.[41] LAB 9: 1-9 begins with the slavery of the Israelites in

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[38] Kugel (2006, 177-8).

[39] Menn (1997, 110) suggests that the narrative of Gen. 38 is the basis for the second part of T. Judah and as such it must be read in the context of the entire testament. The first part of T. Judah illustrates his virtues as a royal leader of his brothers. The second part based upon Gen. 38, illustrates his weaknesses especially involving women and alcohol. Finally, Judah repents and is forgiven. Gen. 38 is an account of the downfall of the great warrior king of which Tamar's deceit is if importance.

[40] Jacobson (1996, 240), Fisk (2001, 17-18) and Murphy (1993, 14-18, 56).

[41] Murphy (1993, 52, 59),

Egypt. The stages of subservience are shortened, and Pharaoh directly instructs that all male newborns will be cast into the Nile and female newborns will live. The Egyptians suggest that the females be given to them as wives to create more slaves. A discussion between the elders of Israel and Amram follows concerning how to react to the Egyptian decrees: the elders propose celibacy and Amram proposes relying on God's covenant and continuing to procreate. In response to Amram's proposal God decides that Moses will be born to him. LAB 9: 9-16 reports the birth of Moses. Miriam has a vision which she reports to her parents concerning Moses's role, but her parents do not believe her. Following his birth, Moses is placed into an ark and into the Nile. The elders mock Amram and remind him of his great plan. The ark and Moses are discovered by Pharaoh's daughter. She brings Moses up as her own son and his future promises to be great.

The opening of LAB 9 is similar to Exod. 1:6-8 as there is a new Pharaoh who does not know Joseph. Pharaohs plan to prevent the increasing Israelite population involves the throwing of the Israelite male children into the Nile and allowing the females to live.[42]

The desire to use the female children to create more slaves for the Egyptians through marriage appears to be unique to LAB. LAB adds that God disapproves of the Egyptian decrees.

LAB 9:2-8 fills in the gap in the Biblical text and explains how the Israelites reacted to the decree. Exod. 1:22 explains that all newborn children would be thrown into the Nile and Exod. 2:1 reports the birth of an Israelite. The apparent dissonance between these two verses is behind the narrative between Abraham and the elders.[43] The elders' response is celibacy. This will ensure that their sons will not be murdered and that their daughters will not become idolatrous.[44] This will be their plan until God intervenes. At this point Amram appears with no introduction and presents a different response to the Egyptian

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[42] The MT of Exodus 1:22 implies that also the Egyptian male children were cast into the Nile as the word העברים is omitted. The word העברים appears in LXX, the Samaritan text and in the Targumim (Neofiti, Onqelos and Jonathan). See also Exod. Rab. 1:18 and B.T. Sotah 12a where the interpretation follows the MT and includes Egyptian children. This is clearly not the case in LAB.

[43] The elders play an important role in the opening chapters of Exodus. See Exod. 3:16, 4:29 and 12:21.

[44] Feldman (1971, XCI) points to parallels in B.T. Baba Bathra 60b and Tosefta Sotah 15:10 of cases where celibacy is preferred over having children who will be forbidden to keep the Torah.

decrees. Amram exhibits trust in the covenant that God will not desert his people.[45] Amram argues that all current events are part of God's plan. His reference to Gen. 15:13 is a prediction of the slavery in Egypt as being planned by God and in inference to the elders that they should not act but rather let the plan run its course.[46] Amram refuses to follow the opinion of the elders and informs them that he does not intend to be celibate, nor does he intend to observe the decree of Pharaoh. This is a unique explanation of Amram's behavior. In rabbinic texts Amram persuades the elders to be celibate and it is Amram's daughter who persuades him to take back his wife.[47] Amram continues to explain the rationale behind his disagreement with the elders. Once a woman becomes pregnant there is a period of three months until it is noticeable and during this time God may intervene. It is at this point that Amram refers to Tamar. Tamar hid her pregnancy for three months. Her actions saved her and Amram suggests that if Israel continue to have children, then maybe God will also save them. The elders do not respond to Amram's argument, but his ideas are deemed favorable by God. As a result of his ideas, God promises that Amram will have a son who will be very auspicious and close to God. The second part of LAB 9 describes how Amram has a child with Jocheved. Miriam has a dream about the child before its birth concerning the future that awaits him, but her parents do not believe her. After three months, it is no longer possible to hide the child and so Jocheved prepares an ark and places the child in the Nile. The elders ridicule Amram and reproved him for having a child. Nevertheless, Amram remains unmoved by the elders. Pharaoh's daughter moved by a dream comes to the Nile and adopts the child as Moses. Moses grows and fulfils his destiny as a savior of Israel.

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[45] Murphy (1986, 10-12) and (1993, 53-58) suggests a pattern like that of LAB 6, Abraham and the Tower of Babel. In each a group of men is presented as faithful to God and adopting a particular plan. But one man stands apart from the group by virtue of his absolute, unyielding and uncompromising confidence in God. Because of this he refuses to take part in the plan. Polaski (1995, 85-88) suggests a different structure. See also Descamp (2007, 206) for a rejection of Murphy's suggested structure.

[46] The exact period of four hundred years predicted in Gen. 15:13 is the subject of much debate. For some sources and a brief discussion see Feldman (1971, xci), Jacobson (1996, 406-407) and Murphy (1993, 54).

[47] See B. T. Sotah 12a, Mek. R. Shim. 3, Exod. Rab. 1.13, Pesiq. R. 43, 180 a-b, Num. Rab. 13:20, Eccl. Rab. 9:17, Midr. Hag. 11:12-13

5.1.2.4 The Role of Genesis 38

In the retelling of the Judah and Tamar story in LAB 9:5 it is Tamar who is the hero.[48] Judah is not mentioned by name and Tamar is regarded in a very positive light. Like Abraham in LAB 6, Tamar is presented as a model of one who trusts in God and the covenant.

Grossman shows that there are many connections between Ruth and the narrative of Gen. 38.[49] He agrees with Zakovitch that the analogy between these narratives presents the characters of Ruth in a positive light as they do not use deceit. The explicit positive mention of Tamar reflects the praise that is already granted her in Gen. 38. Ruth 4:12 presents Tamar as an exceptional character worthy of imitation.[50]

Van der Horst points to the fact that Tamar receives the accolade "our mother Tamar" as unique.[51] This is an unparalleled accolade.[52] This positive attitude towards Tamar is stressed by the parallels made to Abraham through the phrase "our father Abraham" (Josh. 24:3). LAB is different in that the rewriting is not interested in justifying Judah's behavior but rather it is Tamar who is regarded as exemplary.[53]

The second connection between Tamar and Moses is based upon the motif of "three months". Tamar's pregnancy becomes known after three months (Gen. 38:24) and Moses's mother hides him for three months after he is born (Exod. 2:2). LAB combines these two traditions. Bauckham suggests that this amalgamation of the two verses is not to offer a parallel between the two narratives but rather in order to interpret a difficulty in the text of Exodus. If Pharaoh had decreed that all males were to be cast into the Nile at birth how was it possible for Jocheved to hide her child for three months? LAB interprets

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[48] Halpern Amaru (1991, 92) suggests that LAB depicts Tamar as a male hero.

[49] Grossman (2016, 46).

[50] Grossman (2016, 50, 325).

[51] Van der Horst (1989, 31). Jacobson (1996, 409) sees this as remarkable considering B.T. Berakhot 16b which suggests that only four women were to be given the title "mother": Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah. The exception may have been made as Tamar is ancestress of the Davidic line.

[52] Van der Horst (1989, 31) remarks that Deborah is described as a "mother from Israel" (LAB 33:7) as a near parallel.

[53] Concerning the role of women in LAB see

the concealment of the child was during the first three months of the pregnancy and Gen. 38:24 is used as a proof that pregnancy may be hidden for three months.[54]

Amram presents a new insight on the Tamar narrative. In order to persuade the elders to adhere to his plan of action against the decree of Pharaoh he introduces motives to Tamar's actions. Amram states in LAB 9:5

> "For her intent was not fornication but being unwilling to separate from the sons of Israel she reflected and said, 'It is better for me to die for having intercourse with my father-in-law than to have intercourse with gentiles.' And she hid the fruit of her womb until the third month. For then she was recognized. And on her way to be put to death, she made a declaration saying, 'He who owns this staff and this signet ring and the sheepskin, from him I have conceived.' And her intent saved her from all danger"

Amram presents Tamar as a model to be emulated. Tamar adopted her plan as she had no choice. She is presented not as a prostitute but rather as a woman with a plan that was ultimately approved by God.[55] Polaski and Murphy discuss the rhetoric used by Amram.[56] Polaski explains that Amram removes most of the Genesis narrative in order to distance Tamar from being regarded as a prostitute and rather presents her actions and motives as pure in order to support his argument. Tamar is not presented as doing anything wrong. Rather she deliberates between sinning by having sexual relations with her father-in-law rather than having to marry a gentile.[57] Amram's argument is not persuasive. The elders are concerned that because of the decree their male children will be killed in the Nile and the female children will marry Egyptians and become idolaters and slaves. Amram suggests following Tamar's positive example of continuing to procreate but this will not overcome the decree and children will be born. Amram is convinced however that just as Tamar's plan was successful and she was saved so too God will intervene in Egypt. In order to create this convincing interpretation of Tamar, Amram must go to great lengths

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[54] Bauckham (1983, 55). For different interpretations of the difficulty in the Exodus narrative see Tg. Jon. Ex.2:2 and Exod. Rab. 1:20. For explanations of the first trimester see Gen. Rab. 85:10, B.T. Sotah 12b. See also Feldman (1971, xciii) who suggests that LAB 9:12 has missing words due to homoeoteleuton.

[55] In Gen 38 it is Judah who thinks that she is a prostitute. Tamar simply set out to seduce Judah. Later midrashim suggest that God was behind Tamar's behavior. See Gen. Rab. 85 and P.T. Sotah 1:4.

[56] Polaski (1995), Murphy (1986, 10-12) and (1993, 56-57).

[57] Intermarriage is an important motif in LAB. See LAB 18:13, 21:1, 30:1, 44:7 and 45:3. It is first raised by Tamar.

to reinterpret her character. Thus, she is regarded as "our mother" (LAB 9:5). She is presented as being courageous and acting in a time of danger with pure motives. Extreme motives are permissible in order to avoid intermarriage with gentiles.

5.2   Korah (Num. 16-17)
5.2.1   Korah in the Biblical Narrative (Num. 16-17)

Korah's rebellion and aftermath are reported in Numbers 16 -17. Korah led a revolt against Moses, his cousin. He was successful in attracting numerous followers and would probably have succeeded in overthrowing Moses, but God intervened, and Korah was swallowed up by the earth (Num. 16:32).

Ancient interpreters were puzzled as to the cause of the rebellion in the first place.[58] The Bible suggests that the behavior of Moses and Aaron were the cause (Num. 16:3). Moses and Aaron had "actually lord it over us" above everyone else. Kugel suggests that this answer did not satisfy the ancient interpreter as prior to the rebellion the Bible states that "And the man Moses was very humble, more than any person on the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3).[59] Therefore, the cause of the rebellion must have been different. A second cause evident in the narrative is one of jealousy and discontent (Num. 16:10). Korah and his followers appear to be complaining about the fact that they are only Levites and not fully-fledged priests. In response, Moses proposes a test to identify those who are chosen by God to be conducted by the offering of incense (Num 16:6-7). Korah and his supporters agreed to the test. Korah and his household were swallowed up by the earth on the following day.

Korah did not act alone in the rebellion as he received support from Dathan and Abiram from the tribe of Reuben. The role of the Reubenites in the rebellion also raised the question of their motives. Kugel suggests that the Reubenites were jealous that Moses had become the leader of the people. They regarded themselves as the descendants of Reuben who was the firstborn son of Jacob and as such the descendants of their tribe should have been made the leaders.[60]

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[58] For a summary of ancient interpretations see Luther (2011, 20-26), Feldman (1998, 91-109) and Kugel (1998, 783-792).
[59] Kugel (2007, 330).
[60] Kugel (2007, 331).

5.2.2   Korah in LAB 16-17 and 57

The revolt of Korah appears in numerous ancient sources.[61] LAB refers to the revolt on two occasions: LAB 16-17 is a rewriting of the narrative in its biblical context and LAB 57 mentions Korah in passing and out of context as Samuel presents King Saul to the people.

LAB 16-17 significantly altars the narrative omitting many details of the biblical version and introducing other themes. The narrative provides flashbacks to Cain and Abel (Gen. 3) and to Jacob's breeding of the flocks (Gen. 30: 37-42). Korah's sons play a role in the narrative (LAB 16: 4-6).

LAB suggests that the cause of the revolt is found in the preceding biblical narrative (Numb. 15: 37-41). The preceding biblical narrative describes the law that requires Israelites to wear a special blue fringe on the corner of a four cornered garment. Korah states that this law is unbearable (LAB 16:1). This is a unique interpretation as the laws of the fringes are easy to follow and simple. The Rabbinic versions that follow this line of thought do not mention that the law is unbearable.[62] Kugel regards the tradition expressed here in LAB as being the forerunner of the rabbinic versions.[63] LAB simply explains a connection between the opening of the Korah narrative and the preceding law concerning the fringes. Someone who wanted to rebel because the laws are unbearable could have focused on any law. Since the law that precedes the revolt is the law of the fringes this became the subject of the unbearableness. This law caused people unnecessary work adding seemingly pointless fringes to a garment. From this point the motif of the fringes causing the revolt evolved.

Less attention has been made to the reference to Korah in LAB 57. In this chapter LAB rewrites I Sam. 12, the presentation of king Saul to the people by Samuel.[64] Samuel presents Saul as the people's king expressing his negative attitude towards the monarchy. Having presented the monarch to the people, LAB reports Samuel's farewell speech to the people. LAB 57:3 alters the background to his speech. Samuel seeks the approval and

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[61] Luther (2011, 24) has listed the appearances in both Jewish and Christian sources.

[62] B.T. Sanh. 110a, Num. Rab. 18:3, P.T. Sanh. 10:1, Targ. J. Numbers 16:1,2 connect the rebellion to the laws of the fringes.

[63] Kugel (1998, 789-790). Jacobson (1996, 554) suggests that the original exposition has been abridged and the point of the sentence is thus unclear.

[64] Jacobson (1996, 1156) suggests that LAB combines I Sam 10:17 with I Sam 12.

admission of the people that their request for a monarch is not connected to his leadership as a prophet. This connection is not explicitly biblical. LAB 57:2 refers to Korah. This connection is based upon a similarity between Moses and Samuel's speeches. Samuel's speech (I Sam. 12 1-3) resembles that of Moses (Num. 16:15) and so there is a relevance in mentioning Korah.[65] LAB 57:2 implies that Korah and his followers accused Moses of stealing from the people and Moses vehemently denies this. As a result of this blatant lie, Korah and his followers are swallowed by the earth. Murphy claims that the reference to Korah lying concerns his claim that Moses had appointed a new priestly group even though all the people are holy. However, it should be noted that LAB presents the Korah narrative differently to his presentation in chapter 16. In chapter 16 Korah is presented as rebelling against God and in chapter 57 his rebellion is against Moses, as a parallel to the people's rebellion against Samuel. LAB 57:2 quotes Moses as having made this speech to the people whereas in Num. 16:15 he speaks to God. Jacobson credits LAB with effective dramatization of the narrative and describes the motif of lying as being curious and interesting.[66] The idea that Moses and Aaron are accused of forms of thieving appears in various midrashim.[67] The background to their stealing is found in Num. 16:15 as Moses states that he has taken nothing from the people which could be read as a response to an accusation that he had. From here LAB dramatizes the situation and Samuel reports that Korah's horde accused Moses of being a thief and Moses' response was to call them liars. This is an example of LAB using "overkill".[68] In the context of the Saul story it suits LAB to represent Korah's horde as being liars. This sets up a parallel between the hordes who requested a king during the period of Samuel the prophet. Samuel saw this as a threat to his leadership and through the parallel seeks justification for his continued leadership.

I think that LAB may be indirectly stressing the importance of the study of Torah. LAB assumes his readers have knowledge of the bible and early interpretations. Feldman argues that the main point stressed by the rabbinic tradition of Korah is his attack on the

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[65] Samuel is paralleled with Moses in LAB 51:6 and 53:2. See also Feldman (1971, CXXXVI) for rabbinic references that compare Samuel and Moses.

[66] Jacobson (1996, 1158).

[67] Midr. Agg. Numb. 16:19, Midr. Ps. 1: 15

[68] Kugel (2006, 7). LAB is familiar with independent explanations as to the reason for Korah's rebellion and this accounts for the difference in explanations between LAB 16-17 and LAB 57.

Torah and especially its divine origin.[69] The midrashim that suggest that Moses and Aaron stole set out to prove how unfair unbearable and invalid the Torah is.[70] As a result of Korah's false claims he and his crowd were swallowed up by the earth. The punishment of Korah and his crowd show that their claims were false, and that the Torah is not unbearable and is divine.

5.3   Conclusions

In this section I have examined two lie narratives that LAB uses out of context. LAB assumes that the reader is familiar with the original narrative and cleverly uses it in a different context. The case of Judah and Tamar elicits much tension as both characters use deceit. Tamar in Gen. 38 is presented in a positive light as she sought to secure that which was hers by right. Jubilees presented a version that clears Judah of wrongdoing and seeks to show Tamar positively. The Testament of Judah presents the narrative from Judah's point of view and Tamar is shown to be a seductress and a liar. In contrast, LAB mentions the episode in a flashback and presents the deceitful Tamar as a hero. The motive for Tamar's lie is altered and she receives an unparalleled accolade of "our mother Tamar". Her actions are regarded as positive and to be emulated. Lying, like Tamar, is permissible in a different context. The flashback to Korah accusing Moses of being a liar (LAB 57:2) demonstrates the dangers of lying. As a result of Korah's lie he and his followers were punished by God for rebelling against Moses. Korah is not a character to be emulated. These narratives show the difference between the motives of the perpetrator. Tamar had positive motives whereas Korah had negative ones. Tamar is exalted and Korah is killed by God.

Original Narratives Containing Lies

LAB varied its usage of the original Biblical text in its retelling, expanding certain sections, skimming over and even omitting others entirely, and making several large-scale additions to the narrative not found in the original text. Murphy provides a useful division of rewritten passages from LAB into four categories, based on the distance between them and the original text: [71]

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[69] Feldman (1998, 94-97).
[70] See note 10 and P.T. Sanh. 10:1, Tg. Ps.-J. Numb. 16:34.
[71] Murphy (1993, 20).

"1. Passages that depend heavily on quotations of Biblical passages … [LAB's] interpretation depends upon small-scale changes in the text.

2. Passages that quote the Bible to set up the situation of a passage or to constitute the structure of an incident, but in which there is extensive rewriting, often with the addition of lengthy passages. For example, Abraham and the fiery furnace (LAB 6-7).

3. Passages built around a biblical figure [or event] but consisting of material not found in the Bible. For example, the narrative of Zebul (LAB 29) and the narrative of Jair (LAB 38).

4. Passages with no counterpart in Scripture. For example, the narrative of Aod the Midianite magician (LAB 34)".

In this chapter I will examine two narratives that contain lies and deceit that are not Biblical. LAB's version of Abraham in the fiery furnace and his rewriting of the judge Jair. LAB uses lies and deceit in narratives which he creates around characters. It is permissible to lie and deceive.

6.1 Abraham and the Fiery Furnace in LAB

An example of a narrative created by LAB may be found in LAB 6-7. Here the author presents a narrative combining the motif of Abraham escaping from the fire and the Tower of Babel.[72] In this narrative the two main characters, Joktan and Abraham, tell lies.

6.1.1 The Tower of Babel (Gen. 11: 1-9)

The narrative of Genesis 11: 1-9 reports how following the flood the children of Noah increased and prospered. The people journeyed to the land of Shinar and began to erect a great city with a high tower. God was displeased with this development and He descended in order to put an end to their plans. He confused the language of man in order to prevent them from continuing with this project and dispersed them across the earth. The city was named Babel.[73]

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[72] For references to the motif of Abraham in the fire see Vermes (1973, 85-90), Kugel (1998, 252-254) and Tohar (2010). Levine (1993: 61-62) suggests that Josephus AJ 1:72-103 and 1:111-113 has also connected two narratives: the flood narrative and the tower narrative through the use of hubris. This also is a connection not evident in the Bible.

[73] On the unity of the text see Gunkel (1997, 94) who suggested that this is a narrative of two traditions: 'a city' version and a 'tower version'. Westermann (1985, 537) rejected Gunkel's explanation as "an almost desperate excision". Speiser (1964, 75 and Cassuto (1965, 161) also reject this opinion and regard 'city' and 'tower' as hendiadys. Breuer (1998, 206-222) presents two traditions: 'the confusion of languages' and 'the dispersal of mankind'. Kiel (1997, 290) and Fokkelman (1975, 45) regard the text as a unity.

The subject of this narrative is unclear. Early exegesis read the narrative as a story of crime and punishment.[74] This reading came about as an attempt to explain God's reaction to the tower building. It may be that the attempt to build a tower up to the heavens was regarded as problematic.[75] Some regarded the tower as an attempt to wage war with God.[76] Others explained that the tower was connected to idolatry and so God intervened.[77] There are also some who connect the tower to the Mesopotamian ziggurats.[78]

6.1.2 Summary of LAB 5-7

LAB 5 details the descendants of Noah. Each of Noah's sons appointed a leader over their tribes. The three leaders agreed that their families would live together peacefully.[79] LAB adds a non-biblical census which has a military tone to it.[80] Each section of the census concludes with a summary of the number of soldiers present implying a foreknowledge of an ensuing war or disagreement. It is notable that the descendants of Shem, from who will emanate Abraham, are the predominant and strongest group.

LAB 6 opens with biblical material. LAB 6:1-2 interprets Gen 11: 1-4 and explains the peoples reasoning for the building of the tower. This is followed by a non-biblical narrative of Abraham and the furnace in LAB 6:3-18.

LAB 7 opens with a restatement of the desire of the people to build a town and a city in spite of the events of LAB 6: 3-18.[81] LAB 7 continues 7:2-5 with a rewriting of Gen 11:

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[74] Greenstein (2009, 290-303) points out that there are numerous readings of this narrative, and they depend on the question asked by the commentator and upon the focus he places upon the narrative.

[75] See Jubilees 10:19, 3 Baruch 3: 7-8, and later BT Sanh. 109a.

[76] See Tg. Neof. Gen. 11:4.

[77] See Tg. Neof. Gen. 11:4, Gen. Rab. 38:8

[78] Sarna (1995, 63-77) and Alter (1996, 46-47).

[79] Jacobson (1996, 347-348) suggests that this is an attempt to remedy a flaw in the biblical narrative. Genesis 10 lists the genealogies of Noah's family and implicitly explains their geographical distribution across the world. Genesis 11 opens with the indication that humanity dwells together in one place and thus the narrative of the Tower of Babel leads to their dispersal. Thus, LAB suggests that following the dispersal of Genesis 10 the people reassembled in order to perform a census. They remained together only to be dispersed by God following the attempt to build a tower. Murphy (1993, 39-40) offers other interpretations.

[80] Nickelsburg (1980, 60-62) explains LAB's preoccupation with leaders and leadership. There is a similarity here to the census in Num 1. Also, 2 Sam 24 indicates that a census of the people should only be undertaken with the approval of God, but we see no negative response to the census in LAB. Josephus AJ 1:110 also predicts that the generation of the Tower of Babel would wage war against one another.

[81] Jacobson (1996, 373-4) suggests that there were two distinct traditions of the tower building stories which have been joined together by the author of LAB. Murphy (1993, 20 and 41) asserts that the two traditions reflect different methods of rewriting: See also note 2 above for traditions of the tower narratives.

5-9. Within this rewriting there is the addition of the choosing of Abraham and his descendants as the chosen people.

6.1.3 The Rewriting

LAB 6:1 begins with the biblical idea of a unified humanity travelling from the east and settling in a valley. Here LAB makes his first alteration and appears to grant the builders foreknowledge of the future. In the biblical version the idea to construct a tower appears before the reasoning behind the building. LAB 6:1 reverses the order: "Behold it will come about that we will be scattered from each other and in later times we will be fighting each other. Therefore, come now, let us build for ourselves a tower…"[82] There is irony here as LAB 5:2 reported that the families "were at peace" and they now build a tower in order to avoid being dispersed yet this construction will lead directly to their dispersal.[83] The exact purpose of the tower remains unclear. If the motive is to prevent the people from being scattered, then how will the tower help? The people seem to have knowledge of a future scattering that will take place. Maybe the tower was to serve as a monument for future generations and will teach them that it was once possible for humanity to live together in peace.

A further addition is made to the rationale for building the tower. The biblical version reports the desire to build a city and a tower that reaches the heavens and to make a name for themselves in order to prevent their dispersal. LAB also adds the desire of "and a glory upon the earth". Jacobson regards this addition as exegetical.[84] Murphy agrees and regards the pursuit of glory as a recurrent theme in LAB.[85]

LAB 6:2 continues with an addition that the builders said, "let us take bricks and let each of us write our names on the bricks and burn them with fire; and what will be burned will serve as mortar and brick." The latter part of the verse is biblical. However, the beginning of the verse is an expansion which places increased focus upon the production of the bricks. Everyone who participates in the building of the tower will inscribe his name upon a brick. This will ensure that the contributors will be remembered forever.

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[82] In chapter 6 LAB mentions the building of a tower and makes no reference to the building of a city. See also Josephus AJ 1:114 where mention is made only of a tower and not of building a city.

[83] Murphy (1993, 42) points out further uses of irony here.

[84] Jacobson (1996, 354) – probably from שם ותפארת.

[85] Murphy (1993, 42) points to LAB 44, 64:1.

Furthermore, in light of the continuation of the story, it will be clear who participated and who refused to participate in the endeavor.

From this point onwards LAB creates a narrative concerning the refusal of Abraham and eleven others to co-operate in the building of the tower. Abraham and eleven others refuse to participate in the building of the tower because they worship "one Lord".[86] The builders bring these twelve people before the princes. The princes sentence them to death in the furnace.[87] Joktan, the leader of the Shemites, schemes to gain custody of the twelve for a week in order to save them from the anger of the people. Joktan makes plans to send them away into hiding in the mountains along with provisions and guards. Abraham alone refuses to comply with Joktan and verbally place his trust in God. After seven days the people and the two other leaders, Fenech and Nimrod, demand that the twelve men be punished.[88] Joktan explains that the twelve had broken out at night and that he has sent a hundred men to search for them. Abraham, who had not fled, is brought out.[89] A furnace is built, stones are thrown in and Joktan throws Abraham into the furnace. God sends an earthquake and fire that burned 83,500 people and Abraham escaped unscathed. The furnace collapsed after Abraham came out. Abraham brings back the other eleven people from the mountains and they rejoiced. The chapter ends with the naming of the place of the furnace in honour of Abraham.[90]

These events did not deter the builders and LAB 7 begins with the people reconvening and reiterating the will to build. At this point the aim is not only to construct a tower but also a city. The motive is different. The people state "Let not the people ever be defeated.

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[86] Ginzberg (2003,161) suggests that the eleven men were relatives of Joktan and, with the exception of Abraham, Nachor, Lot, and Reu, the names correspond to the names given in Gen. 10. 26–29. This is interesting as Joktan has a primary role in the narrative.

[87] LAB 6:4 implies that the sentence is simply the fulfilment of the words of the twelve: "even if you throw us into the fire with your bricks, we will not assent to you."

[88] LAB does not single out one main leader in this plan. Feldman (1971, lxxxix) and Vermes (1973, 90) incorrectly stress here the role of Nimrod in LAB.

[89] See Josephus AJ 1:157 where Abraham is described as being opposed by the Chaldeans and Mesopotamians.

[90] Jacobson (1996, 371) suggests that this final phrase of LAB 6 may be corrupt. Many commentators assume that this is a reference to Babel, but this is unclear. Ginzberg (2003, 161) explains, in the Chaldean language, Deli, "quod interpretatur deus", is very likely a haggadic interpretation of *Ur* (read *Uri* instead of *Deli*) and also compares Eupolemus 418d, where instead of biblical *Ur*, the form *Uria* is given which is most likely a corruption of "the light of God". Josephus, AJ 1.160, also knows the tradition of a place named after Abraham. There is a similarity between Josephus' and LAB's place as the names are applied following a narrative in which Abraham finds disfavor in the eyes of others.

And now let us come together and build ourselves a city and a tower that will never be taken away." As in the biblical narrative God responds at this point. LAB 7:2 adds to the biblical narrative the idea that both the heavens and the earth will not tolerate the fulfillment of the designs of the people.[91] This is an ironical addition as LAB 6:1 suggests that they desired to build "a tower whose top will reach the heavens…a name and glory upon the earth." Not only do they not succeed in reaching the heavens nor do they create glory on earth but the heavens and earth bear witness against them. LAB 7: 3-4 are to be read together. Abraham is compared to the rest of mankind. God decides to scatter mankind and to confuse the languages of the people.[92] Man will live in caves and straw huts in order that they will not attempt to repeat this type of things. God then choses Abraham and his descendants from amongst mankind and geographically separates him from everyone. Abraham will reside in the chosen land, the land that was spared the deluge.[93] The chapter ends with God dispersing the people and examples of the misunderstandings between them that resulted as a result of the confusion of languages. This chapter also ends with the naming of the place as *Babel*, the place where God confused the languages of the people.

6.1.4   The 'Fiery Furnace' Motif

In order to understand these chapters of LAB it is important to note the starting point of the 'Abraham in the fiery furnace' motif.[94] Using "reverse engineering"[95], a process by which engineers examine a finished project and attempt to recreate the thought processes and procedures that led to the structure of the final project, I will show where this *midrashic* motif originated. The ancient interpreter was probably troubled by the sudden appearance of Abraham in Gen 12 and the subsequent commandment from God that he leaves his homeland, move to a foreign land and be blessed by God.[96] Why was Abraham chosen? What had he done to merit all these blessings and promises? Why did he have to

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[91] Murphy (1986,49) notes that heaven and earth as witnesses to human action is found in Deut 4:26, 30:19 and 31:28.

[92] LAB 7:5 adds to the biblical narrative a motif "of face changing". God changed the appearance of the builders. For a discussion about this motif see Kugel (1998, 237-238) and Jacobson ((1996, 384).

[93] BT Zevachim 113a, Shir HaShirim Rabba 1:15 and Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer 23 express traditions that the flood did not affect Israel.

[94] For reference see footnote 1.

[95] A phrase coined by Kugel (1994, 9 and 251-253)

[96] Abraham's name is mentioned in passing in Gen 11:27-31but the narrative about him begins in Gen 12.

leave his homeland?[97] Why does the narrative of Abraham follow shortly after that of the Tower of Babel story?

Gen 15:7 states:

<div dir="rtl">

אני ה' אשר הוצאתיך מאור כשדים לתת לך את הארץ הזאת לרשתה

</div>

"I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldees to give you this land to inherit."[98]

This statement would also have puzzled the ancient commentator. Abraham and his family lived in a place named 'Ur/אור' but this word also means 'fire' of 'flame'. This was not regarded as a coincidence and so ancient interpreters developed an idea of Abraham being saved or brought out from a dangerous situation involving fire.[99]

In addition to Genesis, Isaiah 29:22 states:

<div dir="rtl">

לכן כה אמר ה' אל בית יעקב אשר פדה את אברהם

</div>

"Therefore, thus said the Lord, who redeemed Abraham to the house of Jacob".

The word 'פדה/redeem' can take the meaning of 'being ransomed'[100] or 'taken out of captivity'.[101] Isaiah may be suggesting by this phrase that God in fact rescued Abraham from a difficult situation. If Abraham had denied polytheism and shown publicly that idolatry was foolish then it would be easy to assume that he was a *persona non grata* in his homeland.[102] God stepped in and saved Abraham.

A number of traditions concerning fire developed:

  a. God sent fire down from heaven to save Abraham and he is instructed to leave his homeland. For example, the Apocalypse of Abraham (8:1-6) states:

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[97] Kugel (1998, 243 – 274) points to a number of *midrashic* motifs that emerged as answers to these questions. I will focus here on the motif of the 'fiery furnace' as it is pertinent to our understanding of LAB. The motif of 'Abraham – the monotheist' may also be of importance to understand LAB's narrative here.

[98] See also Neh. 9:7 for a similar phrase.

[99] Sherman (2013, 134-135) tentatively suggests a superfluous phrase in Gen 11:3 concerning 'burning' as the source for an un-told affair within the Babel narrative.

[100] For example, Exod 13:13, Exod 34:20, Numb 18:17.

[101] For example, Deut 13:6, Job 5:20, Psalms 78:42.

[102] For examples of this see Judith 5:8-9, Jubilees 12:6-7, AJ 1:157.

And it came to pass, while I was considering such things with my father Terah in the courtyard of [his] house, that the voice of the Almighty came down from the heavens in a stream of fire saying aloud 'Abraham, Abraham!' and I said, 'Here I am' and He said 'You are searching in your mind and the thoughts of your heart for the God of gods and the Creator: I am He. Leave Terah your father and go forth from this house so that you will not be killed because of the sins of your father's house'. So I went out. And it came to pass, when I went out, that I had not even gotten as far as going beyond the doors of the courtyard when the sound of great thunder came forth and burned him and his house and everyone in the house to a distance of forty cubits.[103]

b. The Chaldeans set up a furnace to burn Abraham to prevent him spreading his heretical views. For example, the targum Neofiti Gen 11:31 states:

And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot and his daughter-in-law Sarai, Abram's wife, and [he] went out with them from the Chaldeans' fiery furnace to go to the land of Canaan. [Later, God said to Abraham:] "I am the Lord who took you out of the fiery furnace of the Chaldeans to give you this land to inherit:'[104]

c. Haran, not Abraham, was burnt in the furnace. For example, Jubilees reports:

And in the sixtieth year of the life of Abram ... Abram arose by night and burned the house of the idols, and he burned all that was in the house, and no man knew it. And they [the Chaldeans] arose in the night and sought to save their gods from the midst of the fire. And Haran hastened to save them, but the fire flamed over him, and he was burnt in the fire, and he died in Ur of the Chaldeans before Terah his father.[105]

LAB presents an original interpretation of this 'motif' and is one of the earliest known.[106] The connection of the narrative of Abraham and the 'fiery furnace' and the tower of Babel is unique to LAB.[107]

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[103] Apoc. Ab. 8:1-6 in Kulik (2013, 1461).

[104] Tg. Neof. Gen. 11:31. See also Tg. Neof. Gen 15:7, Vulg. Neh. 9:7, Gen Rab. 38:13

[105] Jubilees 12:12-14 and Tg. Neof. Gen. 11:28. For a discussion on the development of the motifs concerning Abraham and Haran in the fire and which was earlier see Kugel (1998, 268-270)

[106] Jubilees 12:12-14 has a tradition of Haran being burnt in a fire as a direct translation of Gen 11:28. See Werman (2015, 275), Kugel (2012, 89) and Kister (1994, 6-7).

[107] Feldman (1971, LXXI). Kugel (1998, 258) points to a reference in Wisd. 10:5 that may suggest a motif of Abraham had bravely refused to join in the tower building and as a result God had made promises to him

6.1.5 Allusions to Other Biblical Stories

Scholars have pointed to a number of Biblical stories that are alluded to in the rewriting:

    a. Daniel 3.[108]

    b. Joshua 2.[109]

    c. Exodus 32.[110]

6.1.5.1 Daniel 3 (and 6)

Many commentators have noticed a connection with the narrative in Daniel 3.[111] There are many similarities between the narratives:

    a. Fiery furnace – the 'perpetrators' are cast into a fiery furnace and are saved by God.

    b. Geographically – both events occur in a valley in Babylon

    c. Linguistic diversity – Dan 3:4, 31 refers to "peoples, nations and languages" like the narrative of the tower.

    d. Unity – Dan 3 discusses the unification of the people in worshipping the idol and this parallels the reading of the tower of Babel as a narrative of idolatry.

Murphy shows that the narratives exhibit a "trial form" in motion.[112] The narratives share similar elements:

    a. A third-party report to the leader that there are people disobeying the leader's command.

    b. The offenders are interrogated by the leaders.

    c. The offenders stand firm and acknowledge that they will be punished.

    d. The leader angrily sentences the offenders to punishment.

    e. The punishment is given.

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and arranged for him to leave the area. This idea soon became amalgamated with the motif of Abraham being opposed to the idolatry involved in the tower narrative.

[108] Nickelsburg (1980, 51-52), Bauckham (1983, 41-43), Sherman (2013, 131

[109] Jacobson (1996, 363). Sherman (2013, 142 n.63) regards this as an example of a parallel that is not demonstrated clearly.

[110] Jacobson (1996, 373) and Fisk (2001, 145-152).

[111] Feldman (1971, LXXXIX), Vermes (1973, 90), Bauckham (1983, 41-43), Nickelsburg (1980, 52), Murphy (1986, 5-10), (1993, 43) and Sherman (2013, 132-135). Interestingly Jacobson does not stress the influence of Daniel 3. Furthermore, Gen. Rab. 44:13 and BT Pesahim 118a also connect the Abraham and Daniel narratives and a furnace.

[112] Murphy (1993, 43). It is also present in LAB 16:38, 2 Macc. 6,7.

f. Some of those who mete out the punishment are themselves punished in the way that they meant to punish the offenders.

g. The offenders are saved by miraculous means.

There are also differences between the narratives. Bauckham stresses that the version of Abraham in the fiery furnace of LAB is not to be confused with the prevalent Nimrod stories.[113] Of the three leaders, Joktan, Fenech and Nimrod, mentioned in LAB none behave like Nebuchadnezzar. Nickelsburg points to other variances: In Dan. 3 all three of the offenders speak together and are willing to die together whereas in LAB 6 all refuse to worship idolatry but only Abraham is willing to die and the eleven others go along with Joktan's plan.[114] Murphy points to the greater role of God in LAB. Abraham is saved by God whereas in Daniel they are saved by an angel. In LAB anyone within the area of the furnace dies whereas in Daniel only those who brought the offenders to the furnace are killed. Abraham sees the furnace collapse after he is saved which is not the case in Daniel.[115]

While it is clear that LAB 6 is influenced by Daniel 3, I agree with Bauckham that Daniel 3 is not the beginning or the sole factor that leads to this rewriting.[116] The influence of the play on words of Isaiah 29:2 and Genesis 15:7 and the adjacency to the tower of Babel narrative are also important.

Nickelsburg adds an important dimension by suggesting that the purpose of the narrative is to provide an answer to the question of 'why Abraham?'[117] Both Daniel and LAB 6 present individuals who express their devotion to God from the outset and thus defy death. This interpretation shifts the focus of Abraham's faith and trust from the *akeda* narrative to the beginning of his narrative.[118] Abraham becomes a character exhibiting faith from the outset.

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[113] For a review of the stories concerning Nimrod see Kugel (1998, 230-231, 253), van der Toorn and van der Horst (1990, 16-29) and Kiel (2015).

[114] Nickelsburg (1980, 52).

[115] Murphy (1986, 5-10).

[116] Bauckham (1983, 43).

[117] Nickelsburg (1980, 51-52).

[118] Nickelsburg (1980, 52) stresses Abraham's leadership in the LAB narrative and explains his election in LAB 7 as a reward for the trust that he placed in God. Sherman (2013, 140) counters that Abraham leads nobody in the narrative nor is he presented as a model to be emulated.

6.1.5.2 Joshua 2

Jacobson suggests a connection to the story of the spies and Rahab.[119] Both Joktan and Rahab hide the heroes when the enemy approaches. Both compose false stories about the escape of the heroes. Both Joktan and Rahab declare their belief in one God and the cause of the heroes. The escape planned for the heroes is at nighttime. I would add that there is a similar setting to the narratives: both occur as the chosen people are about to enter the chosen land.

6.1.5.3 Exodus 32

Jacobson has pointed out the similarities between LAB 6 – 7 and the narrative of the sin of the golden calf in Exodus 32.[120] The similarities are:

    a. A rebellion against God

    b. An object created through fire (LAB 6:2,4,5; 12:3 and Exod. 32:24).

    c. The sinners are motivated through anxiety.

    d. LAB 12:3 connects the two events.[121]

Fisk expanded the connection between the narrative of the tower of Babel and the sin of the golden calf.[122] He shows linguistic and thematic connections between the narratives.[123] Thematically, Fisk adds that in both narratives God shows his intention to judge. LAB's rewriting of Genesis 11 explains that the reason that the twelve men did not want to co-operate was due to the fact that they deemed this act as idolatrous which is the sin that occurs with the golden calf.

6.1.6 Understanding the Authors' Rewriting

The narrative created is rife with lies. The main characters, Joktan and Abraham, lie or deceive throughout.

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[119] Jacobson (1996, 363).

[120] Jacobson (1996, 373 and 485).

[121] Pirqe R. El. 45 suggests that the 'princes' of each tribe did not participate in the sin of the golden calf which may parallel LAB's twelve dissenters.

[122] Fisk (2001, 141-152).

[123] The word עם/people in Gen 11:6 and Exod 32:1, God ראה/sees in Gen 11:5 and Exod 32:9. Exod. Rab 41:7 shows that ישב/sit or dwell connects the narratives and 42:5 the connection is ירד/descend. Midr. Tanh. 2:28 connects the narratives with ועתה/and now.

Jacobson questions the rationale of the narrative in LAB.[124] He suggests that the usual *midrashic* motivations that appear in the tower narrative, namely a desire to battle against God who is in heaven or an instrument of idol worship, are not apparent in LAB 6.[125] I would suggest that it is clear that LAB regards the tower narrative as being concerned with the sin of idolatry. The author of LAB is aware that his readers are familiar with the biblical text. His use of "flashbacks" throughout the work provides an example of this.[126] Furthermore, the context is one of idolatry. LAB 4:16 concludes the list of Noah's descendants with the birth of Terah's family and states "then those who inhabited the earth began to gaze at the stars and started to prognosticate by them and to perform divination and to pass their sons and daughters through fire. But Serug and his sons did not walk in accord with them".[127] Abraham and the eleven protesters continue to oppose idolatrous practices and refuse to throw bricks engraved with their names into the fire. Their rationale is "we know the one Lord and him we worship" (LAB 6:4).[128]

Murphy has suggested that the author follows a pattern contrasting between divine plans and human plans.[129] The Tower of Babel is an example of this pattern. There is a tension between Joktan and Abraham. Both characters are described as "servants of the Lord" (LAB 6:6, 11). Joktan is presented as a positive character that endeavors to save his fellow tribesmen with an active plan. This plan also leads to a tension between the eleven protestors and Abraham as they are willing to follow Joktan's plan whereas Abraham is not. Abraham's silence (LAB 6:11) delays the fulfillment of Joktan's plan and his speech (LAB 6:11) exhibits his blind faith in the Lord.[130]

The narrative is rife with lies. Both main characters, Joktan and Abraham, lie or deceive. Joktan, like Reuben (Gen 37:22), instigates a plan to allow the protestors seven days reprieve. The author informs us of Joktan's motives to save the protestors. Joktan goes to

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[124] Jacobson (1996, 355-6).

[125] Wadsworth (1981,11) and Murphy (1988, 276)

[126] Jacobson (1996, 240-1) lists examples of 'flashbacks'.

[127] A different tradition is evident in Jubilees 11:6 as Serug is described as the beginning of idolatry and stresses the fact that Abraham emerged from a family entrenched in idolatry. Apoc. Abr. 1-8 reports that Terach was an idol maker and is destroyed by fire.

[128] Zsengellér (2016-17, 367) and Murphy (1993, 252).

[129] Murphy (1986, 5-10).

[130] Nickelsburg (1980, 52) suggests that this narrative is different to the blind faith exhibited by Abraham in Gen 12: 1-5 and Gen 22:1-19 because Abraham's actions are contrasted to other apparently god fearing people.

great lengths in order not to be caught out by Nimrod and Fenech. There are many lies in Joktan's plan:

a. LAB 6:6 a seven-day reprieve to reconsider their actions is a cover for Joktan's plan to create an escape story.

b. LAB 6:9 Joktan will lie to Nimrod and Fenech by explaining that the protestors escaped by night.

c. LAB 6:9 Joktan will lie to Nimrod and Fenech by reporting to them that he has sent out a search party for the protestors.

d. LAB 6:12 Joktan commands the leader of the search party to lie. He is to return and report that the protestors have not been found.

e. LAB 6:14 Joktan lies to Nimrod and Fenech who discover that the protestors have disappeared. He lies and tells them that they escaped at night and that a search party has been sent out and should they be found, they will be dealt with in a severe manner.

The author supplies Joktan's motive for lying as "he was of their tribe and served God" (LAB 6:6). The plan appears to be fueled by moral motives. The leader of the sons of Shem would naturally desire to save members of his own tribe. His speeches are touched with his trust in God. Joktan may have had other motives. He may have sought a way to become the leader of all the descendants of Noah. After all he was the leader of the largest group (LAB 6:6). If he would be successful in preventing the protestors or in persuading the other leaders not to react to the protestors he could be seen as the leader. This argument could be supported by the reference to Gen 37:22 and Reuben's motives for attempting to thwart the brothers' plans to kill Joseph.

Abraham lies to Nimrod and Fenech (LAB 6:15). Abraham is questioned as to the whereabouts of the other eleven protestors and responds, "I was asleep during the night; when I awoke, they were not there." (LAB 6:15). Abraham is fully aware of the plan instigated by Joktan and he knows where the eleven protestors are yet he chooses not to tell the truth in order to protect them and maybe even Joktan.[131] Abraham had refused to participate in Joktan's plan as he trusted blindly in God. Abraham's lie allows Joktan to continue with his plan and also protects his fellow protestors.

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[131] Murphy (1993, 48) suggests that Abraham says nothing false, yet he misleads the interrogators.

LAB 6:16 presents a climax as Joktan helplessly leads Abraham into the fiery furnace. Joktan, who appeared to trust in God, takes Abraham, who trusted in God, and throws him with the bricks, presumably the bricks of idolatry, into the fire. The image portrays Abraham as victorious and points to the blind faith of the servant of God emerging unscathed from the fire. The furnace and the bricks collapse, and a multitude are injured as God intervenes. It is worth noting that Joktan no longer appears in the narrative. LAB 6:18 concludes the chapter with Abraham journeying to the mountains to find the eleven protestors and they all rejoice. The protestors are saved as a result of Abraham's actions and not through the plan of Joktan.

6.1.7   Conclusions

It is noticeable that this is the longest narrative about Abraham in LAB. Although the Akedah, the narrative about faith, is mentioned in LAB, it is not recounted in the narratives concerning Abraham.[132] The author has combined two narratives in an attempt to resolve the question as to "why God chose Abraham?" Despite the prophecy in LAB 4:11 and the description of Serug and his descendants not partaking in idolatry in LAB 4:16 the author is looking for the attributes of Abraham which led to him being chosen.[133] Abraham is presented as someone who has faith in God. This faith leads to him being saved by God. In some ways the Abraham narrative begins by presenting Abraham as the ideal worshipper and one who is willing to give up his life for his belief. Abraham lies in order not to incriminate his fellow protestors or Joktan. This complies with Pilch's explanation of lies in defense of kin and fictive kin.[134] His reward for this behavior and actions in LAB 6 is that he is chosen to be the founder of the chosen people. The author wants to present Abraham as the ideal God- fearing character from the outset and not from the final biblical narrative concerning him.

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[132] LAB 18:5, 32:1-4 and 40:2. See Bohlinger (2016) for a survey on the Akedah in LAB.
[133] Docherty (2019, 69) argues that LAB seeks to present Abraham as being righteous from the outset. LAB 4:11 and 7:4 predict his birth and future role.
[134] Pilch (1992, 139). Abraham lies in order to protect the group who were with him. Had he told the truth and betrayed them and Joktan he would have weakened their friendship.

6.2 Jair (Jg. 10:3-5)

6.2.1 Jair in the Biblical Narrative (Jg. 10:3-5)

The book of Judges is usually explained as being cyclical: the Israelites sin, they are punished, they cry out to God, God sends a Judge/savior and then there is a period of peace. However, within the book there are two sections (Jg. 10: 1-5, 12: 8-15) describing the minor judges which do not fit into the cycle. The structure of these sections is not cyclical. They contain the following components: the identity of the judge, his tribe, clan or region, the period he judged, his death notice, his burial place and a personal detail. Victor Mathews suggests that the minor judges contrast the other judges as they represent a period of quiet which allowed these judges to judge. The smooth transition between these judges implies that they were part of the tribal establishment. Their appointment is not described as being as a savior sent by God.[135] Amit suggests that the difference between the judges and the minor judges is simply the material that describes them and the period in which they judged. Simply put the narratives concerning them were shortened or not told.[136]

The second minor judge is Jair. His narrative is brief and innocuous (Jg. 10: 3-5). The text informs us of his identity (from Gilead), the length of his reign (twenty-two years), his descendants and (thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys, and they had thirty towns), his death and place of burial (Camon).[137] This description is neutral neither denouncing nor praising Jair.[138]

6.2.2 Jair in LAB 38

Jair judged Israel after the death of Abimelech. Jair built a temple for Baal and he deceives the people into worshipping the Baal. Seven people refuse to comply with Jair and continue to worship God. Jair sentences the seven to death by fire. The angel of fire saves the seven and burns those who placed them in the fire. When Jair arrives at the

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[135] Matthews (2004, 112-114).

[136] Amit (1999, 182-184). Amit also suggests that the minor judges are an extended period of peace before the repetition of the cycle. Furthermore, she suggests a connection to the impending monarchy that will replace the judicial system.

[137] The Septuagint numbers his descendants as thirty-two.

[138] Schneider (2000, 157-158) reads an implicit condemnation of Jair in Judg. 10:4. Hauser (1975, 198 and 200;1979, 296 and 301) read a positive interpretation of leadership into the Jair narrative. Ultimately, I regard the text as being neutral even though Judg. 10:6 states "ויוסיפו"/"and they continued to do evil in the eyes of God" immediately following the death of Jair.

place of the fire, he too is burnt together with the Baal. Before he dies, the angel informs him that he is being killed as a punishment for his deceit of the people.

The Jair encountered in LAB 38 bears very little resemblance to the Jair in the Biblical narrative or in Josephus (Ant. 5:254).[139] In LAB 38 the narrative is extended and presents Jair negatively and in a unique account.[140] Jair is presented as the paradigm of a negative leader: a judge who became corrupt and corrupted others.[141] Jair is an ardent worshipper of Baal who wishes to destroy the seven remaining Israelites who refused to sacrifice to Baal. The seven who refuse to sacrifice to Baal respond to Jair with reference to "Deborah, our mother" (LAB 38:2) who instructed the Israelites to remain firm in their beliefs and accuse Jair of deceiving the people. Jair's response to their accusations is to sentence the dissenters to death by fire. Supernatural intervention permits the seven men to escape while Jair (LAB. 38:4) and his servants (LAB. 38:3) are burned in the fire instead. Before Jair's demise, "the angel of the Lord" reveals to Jair the nature of his punishment (LAB. 38:4). Because he had "corrupted" God's covenant, "deceived" God's people, and attempted to "burn up God's servants" the angel of the Lord states that Jair will have a post-mortem "dwelling place" in the fire in which he will soon die.

There is a parallel between LAB 6 and LAB 38. Just as Joktan ordered those who refused to take part in the construction of the tower thrown into the fiery furnace so, too, Jair promised to throw into the fire all those who refused to sacrifice to Baal.[142]

Josephus presents Jair in a positive light (Ant. 5.254). The brief narrative of Tola, the first minor Judge (Jg. 10: 1-2), is omitted and he proceeds directly from the Abimelech narrative into that of Jair. Christopher Begg points out that Josephus presents Jair in a more positive light that that of the biblical narrative.[143] Josephus adds the following positive aspects to Jair: his tribal affiliation, he is blessed, his sons are valiant, his sons

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[139] Begg (2007,13) regards this as deliberate in order to create a continuity of two bad leaders: Abimelech and Jair. Murphy (1993, 162) suggests that Abimelech and Jair are to be contrasted. Abimelech was not a legitimate leader in the same way that Jair was as the latter was chosen and raised by God. In my opinion this is less convincing as the rise of Jair is missing in LAB.

[140] There is a lacuna at the beginning of LAB 38 and the name of the builder of the altar is missing. See James (1971, 187), Feldman (1971, cxxi) and Jacobson (1996, 939) who suggest that there is a lacuna and dismiss Spiro (1951, 31-32 n. 66).

[141] Bauckham (1983, 52) suggests that Jair is made responsible for the national apostasy recorded in Judges 10:6. See note 4.

[142] Murphy (1993, 161) points to a structural parallel. The parallels suggested concerning Abraham in LAB 6-8 are also relevant here.

[143] Begg (2007, 11-13).

are excellent horsemen, he dies of old age, had a blessed existence and an honorable burial.[144]

6.2.3 The Meaning of the rewriting

The reason for the transformation of a neutral character into a Baal worshipping enemy of the God of Israel is not apparent.[145] Ginzberg suggested that the transformation was based upon a "haggadic interpretation of Jair's burial place "in Kamon/בקמון" (Jg. 10:5) which is taken to mean "furnace/קמין" from καμίνιον.[146] Thus, the biblical text implies that Jair perished in fire. Jacobson and Zakovitch also point to the name of the judge, Jair, as being connected to אור/fire.[147] Engler suggests that further negative attributes are associated with Jair as a result of the parallels with LAB 6 and Joktan and a hagaddic treatment of Dan. 3.[148] Zakovitch suggests that this narrative is also built upon the Septuagint's additions to Daniel 3, Daniel 6 and the rabbinic tradition of Abraham in the fiery furnace.[149] Zakovitch argues that Jair is portrayed as the ultimate wicked leader and the motivation of LAB in presenting him as such is simply the desire to explain the names "Camon" and "Jair" as having meaning. The juxta-positioning of Jair (LAB 38) to that of Gideon (LAB 36) as the former erects an altar to Baal and the latter destroys one adds to the connection and the characteristics of Jair.[150] Jacobson refers to an anti-Christian notion that moved LAB to describe Jair in such a negative fashion.[151]

Jair makes a second appearance in LAB. Jair's fate of dwelling in fire is linked to the fate of "Doeg the Syrian" (LAB 63:4).[152] In LAB Doeg simply informs King Saul of David's

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[144] The tribal affiliation is probably from Num. 32:41 and Josh. 17:1.

[145] Nickelsburg (1980, 57).

[146] Ginzberg (2003, 874 n.104). It should be noted that LAB does not refer to Jair's burial place as Kamon.

[147] Jacobson (1996, 940), Zakovitch (1994, 152 and nt. 47) and Shinan and Zakovitch (2009, 247).

[148] Engler (2012, 197) and Bauckham (1983, 52).

[149] Shinan and Zakovitch (2009, 239-240). They also point to references to Judg. 6: 25-32, I Kings 18 and II Kings 10: 18-28 as being sources for LAB 38. They analyze ten components of the Jair narrative with the sources and parallels mentioned.

[150] Zakovitch (1994, 154). He explains that the narrative of Abimelech is a continuation of the Gideon account. In addition, the use of "fire" is apparent in LAB 37: 3-4 and in LAB 38 as a punishment. There is also a tribal connection: Elijah, who fought against Baal worship, is from Gilad (I Kings 17:1) as is Jair. Jair is probably a member of the tribe of Menasseh (Numb. 32:41, Deut. 3:14) as is Gideon (Judg. 6:15) who fought against Baal worship.

[151] Jacobson (1996, 940).

[152] Doeg's nationality varies in Jewish literature and in the versions of the Jewish Scriptures. In the MT text of 1 Sam 21:8, 22:9, 18, 22; Ps 52:1, Doeg is an "Edomite" (אדומי). In the Septuagint text of the same verses, Doeg is a Syrian (Σύρος) and in Josephus, Ant. 6:244, 254, 259. In the Vulgate text of the same verses, Doeg is an Idumean (Idumeus).

actions but there is no account that Doeg slaughtered the people of Nob (I Sam. 22: 18-19). Nevertheless, the association of Jair with Doeg increases the negative approach towards him.

Jair is portrayed by those who refuse to worship Baal as "deceiving" the people.[153] I agree with Zakovitch that the narrative should be read in the context of the Gideon account. Following his victory in battle, Gideon requests that the people present him with their gold jewels which he forms into idols, and he worshipped them (LAB 36:3). Gideon is not punished as he has the merit of destroying the altar of Baal to his name and God wishes to avoid a situation where the people suggest that he dies as the result of the interference of Baal. Thus, Gideon lives to a ripe old age and the punishment for idolatry will come later. LAB 37 is a very brief rewriting of the account of Abimelech. There is no report of Abimelech's battles nor of his ruling of Shechem. The parable of Jotham is reported, not in the name of Jotham nor as a parable. This is followed by the death of Abimelech (LAB 37:5). The next character is Jair and is an opposite character to Gideon. Gideon destroyed the altar of Baal and Jair builds the altar of Baal. The motif of fire connects the three chapters. Jair is punished not only for his actions but also for the idolatry of Gideon.

6.3   Conclusions

In this chapter I have shown that LAB in passages of extensive rewriting creates scenes in which there are lies and deceit. In an extensive rewriting in LAB 6-7, answering the question as to why Abraham was chosen, we encounter an original narrative presenting Abraham in a situation of lies and deceit. LAB 38 develops a creative narrative around the judge Jair which concerns deceit. Both original narratives are based upon details from the biblical narrative concerning Abraham and Jair and other parallels in LAB and in the Bible. Both narratives have a connection to idolatry Jair deceives the people into idolatry and pays for his actions with his life whereas Abraham is presented as an ideal worshipper who is not connected to idolatry. Jair uses deceit in order to entice the people to idolatry and Abraham lies in order to save his friends and receives a just reward.

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[153] The latin uses the verb *seducere* twice in the chapter which is connected to the idea of idolatrous behavior.

Summary and Conclusions

"Six things are there that the Lord hates…haughty eyes, a lying tongue…"

(Prov. 6: 16-17)

In LAB, as I have shown, lies are surprisingly present in many of the narratives. They are perhaps more present than we had noticed. In this study I have examined some of the lies in the Biblical narrative and their interpretation or rewriting in the Biblical Antiquities and other Second Temple literature.

LAB refrains from reporting many of the lies in Genesis. This is not surprising considering the structure of the work. Of the sixty-five chapters only eight are devoted to the Genesis narratives. The focus of LAB seems to be upon reporting the narratives of Joshua through to Samuel. Halpern-Amaru points out that there is a distinct difference in style within LAB.[1] The rewriting of the Pentateuch and Joshua is presented in the form of a rapid and very selective review into which are inserted some original material. Freund is of the opinion that this style of review may be regarded as an attempt to present the characters and their families in a more idealistic yet realistic picture.[2] However, the fact that LAB does report lies and deceit and even creates original stories with these motifs suggests that the topic of lies is a complex issue.

LAB's narrative and exegetical techniques are important. Jacobson examines many of them: knowledge and use of the Bible, the use of names, the use of intertextuality on a thematic, linguistic and plot level, the use of original material, the use of "overkill", the avoidance of unpleasantries, reading backwards and the use of flashbacks.[3] Kugel regards intertextuality as being a more rabbinic methodology. He writes "as compared to other early exegetical sources, rabbinic texts have a striking interest in connecting one biblical text to another…it is interesting – striking, really – that one almost never finds such gratuitous integration of distant texts in prerabinnic sources".[4] Fisk stresses that intertextuality or the use of "secondary scripture" is an important contribution of LAB

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[1] Halpern-Amaru (1991, 84).
[2] Freund (1991, 61).
[3] Jacobson (1996, 224-241). See also Murphy (1993,9-25).
[4] Kugel (1994, 261). This does appear to be a generalization as there are cases where quotations from other texts can and do appear in Second Temple rewritings.

and places it as a bridge between pre and rabbinic works.[5] I agree with Murphy that the omniscient author writes in an ironic mode as the reader is often privy to information before the characters.[6]

The narratives that I have examined may be summarized in the following tables:

Lie Narratives in which the Lie is Omitted

Narrative	Biblical	Motive for Lying	Post Biblical	LAB	Gender
Gen. 4	Cain lies to God	a. To conceal his failure. b. To outmaneuver God. c. Through ignorance of God.[7]	Jubilees 4 The story of Cain and Abel is reported but this dialogue is omitted.	LAB 2 The lie is not reported.	Male
Gen. 34	Jacob's sons lie and deceive the Shechemites.	a. To save family pride as Dinah has been defiled b. To save Dinah from captivity in Shechem	Jewish Antiquities 1:337-341 No deceit is reported Jubilees 30 Deceit is acknowledged but played down Test. of Levi the brothers do not lie ALD 1:1-3 Levi is distanced from the deception	LAB The lie is not reported	Male

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[5] Fisk (2001, 16). See above pp.7. Descamps (2007, 195) is contra Fisk and suggests that the use of intertextuality is primarily to provide legitimacy to the text and to the author of LAB.
[6] Murphy (1993, 266).
[7] Byron (2011, 63-75).

In these narratives LAB is aware of the deceit and lies in the biblical text, yet he interestingly omits this aspect of the narrative in his retelling. The other literature that I have examined also prefers not to report the deceit. In the Cain narrative LAB is aware of the narrative and the murder. Since the character of Cain is not going to be developed as his genealogical line is doomed, LAB does not develop the narrative and simply summarizes the events with little, if any, reinterpretation. Similarly, concerning the Dina narrative. The biblical narrative is clear that deceit is involved in this story yet, in the Second Temple literature that I have examined, this motif is removed or less pronounced. The literature concerning Levi is usually presented in a positive light as he is given a position of importance as the Levite/Priest. As this is the intent of the narratives, Levi is distanced from the deceit. LAB does not rewrite the Dina narrative but rather refers to it in passing in chapter 8 which acts as a bridge over most of Genesis and shows somewhat less interest in the role of Levi.

Biblical Narratives to which LAB adds Lies

Narrative	Biblical	Post Biblical	LAB	Gender
Josh. 22	No deceit or lying		LAB 22:6 The tribes are accused of deceit in establishing an altar and appointing Priests.	Male
Motive for Lying			The text is unclear.[8]	
Judges 4-5	a. Jael lies and deceives Sisera and	Jewish Antiquities 5:198-209 a. Jael deceives Sisera and kills him.	LAB 31 a. Jael's lies to Sisera and kills him	Female

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[8] See Jacobson (1996, 695) and Safrai (2018, 412) suggest that the motives in this narrative are to belittle the role and importance of sacrifices in the post Temple era and to stress the role of the sages and the importance in Torah study.

	kills him b. Sisera orders Jael to tell a lie.	b. Sisera does not ask Jael to lie.	b. Sisera's request to lie is omitted.	
Motive for Lying	Jael's motives are not explicit. She may have wished to help a political ally or may be to enhance her position. Sisera is trying to save himself.	Jael's motives are not explicit, but she is presented as fulfilling Deborah's prophecy that victory would be gained by a woman.	Jael's lies and actions are all premeditated and endorsed by God.	
Judges 19-21	God deceives the tribes twice telling them to fight Benjamin		LAB 45-47 God explicitly deceives the tribes.	God
Motive for Lying	The motive is not explicit		God deceives them as a punishment for tolerating the idolatry of Micah.	

These three narratives are diametrically opposed to the first section. Here there is no attempt to idealize the characters but rather the opposite is true, and they are presented as being deceitful. The tribes are accused of deceit and being untruthful in their explanation for building the altar. Jael's behaviour transforms her into a deceitful heroine whose actions are endorsed by God. Finally, in the civil war at the end of Judges, it is God Himself who is deceitful and lies. Here LAB clearly endorses deceit and lying and is not merely interested in presenting the biblical characters in a positive light.

Lie Narratives Reported out of Context

Narrative	Biblical	Post Biblical	LAB	Gender
Gen. 38	a. Judah lies to Tamar. b. Tamar deceives Judah.	Jubilees 41 Tamar is deceitful but is forgiven Test. of Judah Tamar is a seductress and a liar.	LAB 9 Tamar deceives Judah. Judah's actions are not mentioned.	Female
Motive for Lying	Judah's motives are to protect his family as two sons have already died. He may also be scared. Tamar's motives, whilst not explicit, are her desire to become a mother and her honour.	In Jubilees and the Testament of Judah, Judah does not deceive Tamar. Tamar, a childless widow, desires to become a mother.	Tamar's motives are to avoid contact with the gentiles and to remain with the Israelites.	
Numb. 16-17	There is no deceit		LAB 57 Korah is accused of lying about Moses.	Male
Motive for Lying			Korach's motives are not explicit, but this is an attempt to discredit Moses and advance himself.	

In this section I have discussed the use of "flashbacks" by LAB. The author assumes that the reader is familiar with the biblical narrative and refers to earlier biblical events that he has not rewritten in LAB. The narrative of Judah and Tamar is used in Amram's speech in the retelling of the birth of Moses. The deceit in the biblical narrative is rewritten and interpreted in the Second Temple literature. LAB's interpretation presents Tamar as being

deceitful, but her action is sanctioned by God. Korah, on the other hand, who lied concerning Moses, is punished severely.

Original Narratives Containing Lies

Narrative	Biblical	Post Biblical	LAB	Gender
Abraham	Abraham is involved in several narratives with lies (4, 5, 8, 10 and 11)		LAB 5-7 Abraham lies. Joktan lies	Male
Motive for Lying			Abraham lies in order not to inform on Joktan and to protect those who protested with him. Joktan's motives are moral and express a will to save members of his tribe. He may also have wished to become the leader of the descendants of Noah.	
Judges 10	No deceit.		LAB 38 Jair deceives the Israelites to idolatry.	Male
Motive for Lying			The motive is unclear	

In this section I looked at two original narratives in LAB in which characters lie. LAB 5-7 presents an original narrative about the beginnings of Abraham. Abraham and Joktan both lie. Abraham's behavior is not condoned nor opposed by God but nevertheless he is

not truthful. The narrative of Jair is also original, and the corrupt deceiving judge meets his death by fire. LAB is not averse to lies and deceit.

Nickelsburg examined the emphasis of prominent leadership within LAB.[9] He stresses the covenantal status of Israel and the flagrant problem of idolatry. In his categorization of leaders, Nickelsburg refers to their obedience of the covenantal laws and their trust in God which leads to actions. The leadership sets a good public example both to the people and to God. The leaders exemplify trust in God. I agree with this analysis, but at the same time these leaders are permitted to lie and be deceitful in pursuit of their aims. LAB's leaders can lie. God can lie too.

Whilst it is the case that many of the lie narratives that appear in the Bible have been omitted, I do not think that LAB set out to simply present the leaders in a more positive light. In the biblical narrative of Abraham, for example, there are many lie narratives, and these are omitted in LAB. However, in LAB's midrashic explanation as to the reason why Abraham became the leader he is presented as lying to save his friends. In some situations, therefore, it is permissible to lie, and this does not take away from the leadership of Abraham nor from his being appointed by God. Whilst many of the lie narratives of Genesis are omitted, LAB is aware of these narratives and will refer to them out of context when necessary. The use of the Tamar narrative in Amram's speech is an example of this. Tamar is to be emulated because her plan and actions were successful and supported by God despite her being deceitful and lying.

Halpern Amaru and Van der Horst examined the women presented in LAB.[10] Women act as the instruments or active agents of God. They possess the role of parent, villainess, or leader of Israel. Halpern Amaru presents LAB as being well disposed to women and there may be a touch of feminism.[11] Van der Horst suggests that the presentation of several biblical women points to the fact that LAB sought to ascribe a greater role in Israel's history to women. Tamar, Deborah, Seila and Jael are presented with leadership qualities.[12] In Brown's study she suggests that women were significant leaders in community life and that LAB had its genesis in a charismatic community in which

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[9] Nickesburg (1980).
[10] Halpern Amaru (1991) and Van der Horst (1989). See also Murphy (1993, 258).
[11] Halpern Amaru (1991, 102-103).
[12] Van der Horst (1989, 45).

women were held in high esteem.[13] Jacobson thinks that this analysis may be too generous to LAB as the matriarchs are fundamentally ignored and no new female non-biblical characters are created.[14] However, in contra to Jacobson's explanation, LAB omitted large amounts of the Genesis narratives and not specifically because of a disinterest in the matriarchs.[15] The non-creation of new female characters is not relevant as an aim of LAB is "rewritten Bible" and not to invent an entirely new narrative.[16] The female leaders and characters of LAB are permitted to lie as active agents of God. Both Tamar and Jael's acts of deceit are endorsed by God. LAB presents God, men and women as lying. Sometimes the deceitful behavior is approved by God and sometimes it is simply human behavior. Tamar's motives for lying are presented in LAB 9 as being opposed to intermarriage.[17] It may be permissible to lie in order to prevent fraternization with the gentiles. There is little to be added to the presentation of women in LAB through the subject of lies and deceit.

It is interesting to note that the characters who lie and deceive are generally positive ones. Jael and Tamar are presented as both positive and as having leadership roles. Abraham in the original narrative of his selection does not tell the truth. The Transjordanian tribes are accused of deceit by Joshua, but they plead innocence. God lies to teach the tribes a lesson. The two negative characters who lie in LAB are Korah and Jair. I agree with Nickelsburg's explanation that LAB is preoccupied with Israel's covenantal obedience or lack of, but LAB focuses on the leaders and their positive and negative attributes and characteristics.[18] Deceitful behavior is not necessarily a sign of a negative character. One can still be true to God and lie or deceive.

A major theme in LAB is idolatry.[19] Idolatry is explained in a broad sense. It is not simply the worship of idols but rather represents faithlessness towards God. In the narratives I have examined several are connected to idolatry. The Transjordanian tribes build an altar and are accused of deceit and being unfaithful to God. Jael's deceit appears

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[13] Brown (1992, 216).
[14] Jacobson (1996, 251).
[15] See page 22.
[16] Descamps (2007, 312-313) also refutes Jacobson
[17] This theme also occurs in LAB 18:13, 21:1, 30:1, 44:7 and 45:3.
[18] Nickelsburg (1980, 60-61).
[19] Murphy (1988a, 275) and Jacobson (1996, 246).

as part of the longer Deborah narrative in which Israel are punished for following the Amorite gods. The civil war between the tribes is presented as the result of the idolatry of Micah. Amram recalls Tamar's deceit in light of the fear of the elders that their children will be idolatrous. The narrative of Abraham's deceit is set within the refusal to renunciate idolatry in the building of the tower of Babel. Jair's deceit is rooted in his desire to make Israel idolatrous.[20] In the face of idolatry deceit is permissible. Deceit is prevalent in the actions of the leaders who face idolatry and remind Israel of God's covenantal promise and their trust in Him.[21]

I agree with Horn Prouser that deception and lies are considered a legitimate and praiseworthy form of action for a weaker power against a stronger power.[22] The narratives that I have examined show this to be the case. The Transjordanian tribes being a weaker and smaller group were accused of lying. Jael lied to and seduced Sisera, a mighty warrior, in order to overcome and kill him. Tamar lies in the name of preventing intermarriage and to ensure she has a child. Abraham, in a seemingly desperate position in prison, overcomes Joktan deceitfully. In these situations, the weaker party uses lies, and their actions are often expected, not considered immoral and even endorsed by God.

In his rewriting, LAB felt that he was capable, and that it was permissible for him, to extend and expand the Biblical narrative. He made the narratives more accessible and relevant to his listeners. He assumes knowledge of the biblical text and weaves textual understandings and midrashic explanations into his rewriting. The appearance of lies and deceit was not out of the ordinary but was to be expected by the reader.

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[20] The Jair narrative is different as he is a negative leader using deception to promote idolatrous behavior.

[21] Murphy (1988a, 276) notes the connection between "to deceive" with the meaning "to cause to commit idolatry". Here we have seen that deceit is also used to oppose idolatry and to convince Israel to remain faithful to God.

[22] Horn Prouser (1991, 6).

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תקציר

שייקספיר כתב: "אֲדֹנָי, אֲדֹנָי, כמה שהעולם הזה מכור לשקרים!" (הנרי הרביעי חלק א, מערכה ראשונה, תמונה רביעית, שורה 148). שקרים ודברי מרמה מצויים כעפר. שֶׁכתובו של המקרא בספר קדמוניות המקרא - מאדם הראשון ועד מות שאול - אינו יוצא מכלל זה. השֶׁכתוב מגוון. חלק מהסיפורים מושמטים או מעובדים בנוסח אחר, ואילו אחרים זוכים להרחבה ואפילו נבראים מחדש. בחינת גישתו של המחבר לסיפור המקראי באמצעות ניתוח האופן שבו הוא מטפל בסיפורים של השקר עשויה לשפוך אור נוסף על ספר קדמוניות המקרא.

קריאה מדוקדקת בסיפורים מקראים אלה בהשוואה למקביליהם המופיעים בקדמוניות המקרא ובחיבורים אחרים בני אותה תקופה מפתחת עוד יותר את ההבנה של היבטי מתודולוגיה פרשנית שבה משתמש פסוידו-פילון. על-מנת להקל על ניתוח הסוגים השונים של סיפורי שקר, הסיפורים מוינו לחמישה חלקים:

1. סיפורים של שקר מקראי שאינם מוזכרים;

2. סיפורים שמהם מוטיב השקר מושמט;

3. סיפורים שלתוכם יוצק ה-LAB שקרים חדשים משלו;

4. סיפורים של שקר המסופרים בהקשר אחר;

5. סיפורי מקור חדורי שקרים.

ספר קדמוניות המקרא מנגיש את הסיפורים השקריים והופך אותם רלוונטיים יותר עבור קוראיו, אשר שקרים ומרמה לא היו זרים להם.

הפרק הראשון של עבודה זו מציג את ספר קדמוניות המקרא וכולל סקירה כללית של דברי ימי חיבורו ומסירתו. נבדק הוויכוח האקדמי סביב מועד כתיבתו, ובפרט בשאלה האם היה זה לפני חורבן בית-המקדש, בשנת 70 לספירה, או אחריו. הפרק מסכם את המחקר הקודם על ה-LAB, החל מסוף המאה התשע-עשרה, מזהה את החיבורים העיקריים שנכתבו על קדמוניות המקרא ומדגיש את מגמות המחקר של היבטים בו הראויים לתשומת לב. הפרק דן גם בייעודו של LAB, מציג את תפיסת השקר וההונאה במישור הפילוסופי והתיאולוגי, ועוסק גם בנראות של סיפורי השקר במקרא ובמרכיביהם. באחרית הפרק מוצג סיכום של חקר השקרים המקראיים במסורות המקראיות והבתר-מקראיות.

הפרק השני של עבודה זו יבחן את הסיפורי השקר המרובים שאותם בוחר קדמוניות המקרא שלא לספר בשכתובו. רבים מסיפורי השקר בספר בראשית ושמות זוכים להתעלמות ואינם מדווחים. האבות מוצגים באור חיובי יותר מאשר בסיפור המקראי עצמו. חלק גדול ממעשי השקר והמרמה שלהם מושמטים לחלוטין.

בפרק השלישי נבחנים שני סיפורים שבהם מושמט מוטיב השקר בLAB. שני הסיפורים הם: השקר של קין (בראשית ד), ואונס דינה (בראשית לד). ספר קדמוניות המקרא מפגין מודעות לקיומם של שקרים והונאות, אך משמיט היבטים אלה מהאופן שבו הוא בוחר לספר מחדש על אודות האירועים. הסיפור של קין מקוצר, כדי להימנע מהקושי הכרוך בכך שהאל נחזה, לכאורה, כמי שאינו יודע-כל, מעצם הפניית השאלה "אֵי הֶבֶל אָחִיךָ" לקין (בראשית ד, ט). סיפור אינוס דינה מושווה ומנוגד לשכתובים אחרים של בראשית לד. הסיפור מושווה לזה המובא בספר היובלים, חיבור לוי הארמי, צוואת לוי וקדמוניות היהודים. רבים מהשֶׁכתובים מרככים את

מעשה המרמה או משקפים אותו כתכונה חיובית. ספר קדמוניות המקרא נוטה להשמיט את מוטיב המרמה בגרסתו כאשר הוא מפתח דמות נשית חיובית, או כי המרמה אינו רלוונטי להקשר המסופר.

הפרק הרביעי של עבודה זו ינתח את הסיפורים שבהם מחדיר ספר קדמוניות המקרא שקרים לתוך הסיפור המקראי או משנה אותם. הסיפורים הנחקרים הם יהושע כב ובניית המזבח בידי שבטי עבר הירדן המזרחי, שופטים ד-ה (ובפרט המפגש בין יעל לסיסרא), ושופטים יט-כא ומלחמת האחים בין שבטי ישראל.

הסיפור על אודות יעל וסיסרא מושווה לסיפור המובא בספר קדמוניות היהודים ובספר יהודית. מלחמת האחים החותמת את ספר שופטים היא דוגמה לכך שהאל משקר ומרמה את העם. בכל המקרים נידונה שאלת נחיצותם של השקרים ומניעיהם.

בפרק החמישי נדון ב,תפקידן של שני סיפורי מרמה ש-LAB מציג מחוץ להקשרם. ספר קדמוניות היהודים מתייחס לעתים קרובות לאירועים מקראיים מחוץ להקשרם ומניח כי הסיפור המקראי מוכר לקוראים. נדון בשני סיפורים מקראיים: בראשית לח - סיפור יהודה ותמר: במדבר טז-יז - סיפור מחלוקת קרח ועדתו. נערכת השוואה בין הסיפור בבראשית לח לשכתוביו המופיעים בספר היובלים, צוואת יהודה וקדמוניות היהודים. LAB מציגה את תמר כמודל לחיקוי, שמעשה המרמה שלה זכה לאישורו של האל. במקרים מסוימים מותר לשקר.

הפרק השישי מוקדש לשני סיפורים מקוריים המכילים שקרים: סיפורו של אברהם וסיפורו של השופט יאיר. בהרחבה מדרשית המסבירה את בחירתו של אברהם, LAB יוצר סיפור מקורי המחבר בינו לבין סיפור מגדל בבל. סיפור זה מספר על מחלוקת בין אברהם לְיָקטן בן עֵבֶר ומפרט דוגמאות של אמירת שקרים. אברהם משקר כדי להגן על חבריו, ואף-על-פי-כן נבחר לרשת את ארץ ישראל. הסיפור הנרחב של יאיר מציג אותו כשופט רמאי המשלם בחייו על מעשי ההונאה שלו.

הפרק האחרון מסכם את ממצאי קודמיו ומציג כמה מסקנות. למרות שההסברה היא כי חלק ניכר מהשְכתוביםֹ המקראיים עורכים אידיאליזציה של הדמויות, הוכחתי שזהו נושא מורכב יותר בספר קדמוניות המקרא: מחד גיסא הדמויות מבראשית מוצגות באור חיובי גם אם בחטף ומאידך גיסא הן גם מתעתעות ומשקרות. המנהיגים הכריזמטיים החזקים המוצגים ב-LAB מפגינים ביטחון ואמונה איתנים באל, התנהגותם ומעשיהם מהווים דוגמה ומופת, אך גם הם עשויים לשקר ולהונות. קדמוניות המקרא מקדם את תפקידן של נשים בתולדות ישראל. גם הן משקרות ומרמות, ומעשיהן זוכים לאישור האל. מוטיב השקר ניכר בקשר עם סיפורים העוסקים בעבודה זרה.

יש לקוות שעבודת גמר זו תוסיף נדבך חדש של הבנה לאופן שבו בוחר ספר קדמוניות המקרא לשכתב את הסיפור המקראי, ותשפוך מעט אור על המתודות הפרשניות שלו ועל גישתו לשקרים ולמרמה.

ב

גישתו של בעל קדמוניות המקרא לשקרים במקרא

וורן קיי

רמת גן   תשפ"ב