

Chapter 3: Genesis Pseudepocryphon

As one of the first seven scrolls discovered in the Judean desert beginning in 1947, the Genesis Apocryphon is one of the more well-studied works among the Dead Sea Scrolls. When the scroll was initially analyzed by scholars, it could not be fully unrolled and only a small portion of the outer layer of the scroll could be read. These visible portions, however, written in Aramaic, referenced the ante-diluvian Lamech, the father of Noah, and his wife, Batanosh, known from the book of Jubilees. The text appeared to be written in the first-person from the perspective of Lamech leading Trevor to conclude that the scroll was a copy of the so-called “Book of Lamech” listed as an apocryphal work by a 7th century CE Greek canon list.¹ Once the scroll was completely unrolled, however, it became obvious that the scope of the scroll contained more than just a first-person account from Lamech and instead contained additional first-person accounts from figures found in the Genesis stories including Noah and Abram. Thus, the more descriptive title, *A Genesis Apocryphon*, was given to the scroll by Avigad and

1. This fact led Trevor to refer to the scroll as the “Ain Feshkha Lamech Scroll” and Milik to refer to it as the Apocalypse of Lamech for the publication of the fragment in DJD 1. See John C. Trever, “Identification of the Aramaic Fourth Scroll from ‘Ain Feshkha,” *BASOR* 115, 1949, 8–10 and “Apocalypse de Lamech” in DJD I, 86–87

Yadin in 1956 for the publication of its *editio princeps* in 1956.² While the name Genesis Apocryphon remains in wide use, it is notable that the name has been criticized and a number of, perhaps more descriptive, titles have been suggested. “Book of the Patriarchs”,³ “Memoirs of the Patriarchs”,⁴ and כתב אבהן.⁵ Fitzmyer suggests כתב אבהתא would be, perhaps, even more suitable.⁶ In this chapter, I will retain the “traditional” title Genesis Apocryphon.

Although much of the scroll was very badly damaged, illegible, or missing, enough survived for Avigad and Yadin to make the generalized observations that Genesis Apocryphon followed the basic order and events of Genesis from the Flood into the Abram narrative. The events are generally (though, not exclusively) narrated in a series of three first person accounts (what I will refer to as “memoirs”⁷) by Lamech, Noah, and Abram, respectively and show a clear

2. Hebrew: מגילה היצונית לבראשית. See Nahman Avigad and Yigael Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon: A Scroll from the Wilderness of Judaea* (1956).

3. Hebrew: ספר אבות. As suggested by Mazar in D. Flusser, review of *A Genesis Apocryphon*, by Nahman Avigad and Yigael Yadin, *KS* 32 (1956): 379–83 (379 n. 2).

4. as suggested by T. H. Gaster, *The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation*, 3 ed. (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1976), 358.

5. as suggested by Józef T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judea*, trans. John Strugnell (London: SCM Press, 1959), 14 n. 1.

6. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 3 ed., BO 18a (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 2004), 16.

7. I will use the term “memoir” throughout this chapter as a way of referring to the distinct

affinity with the roughly contemporaneous works of 1 Enoch and Jubilees.⁸ The literary relationship of Genesis Apocryphon to both 1 Enoch and (especially) Jubilees remains a matter of debate, with Avigad and Yadin suggesting that Genesis Apocryphon more probably preceeded Jubilees, while the prevailing opinion more recently seems to prefer the opposite.⁹

The name given to the Genesis Apocryphon in the *editio princeps* set the agenda for scholarly inquiry on the work into the modern era by connecting it to the biblical book of Genesis while simultaneously categorizing it as apocryphal. Much of the attention given to the Genesis Apocryphon, therefore, has focused on its literary genre and its relationship to the Bible and resemblance of the Targums and later midrashic works. As already noted, Vermes's

(mostly) first-person narratives found in the Genesis Apocryphon. This is simply a convenience term that highlights the formal characteristic of being written in the first person voice without any reference to the authenticity of the work and in alignment with the convention of referring to first-person narratives in the Bible as "memoirs" (e.g., the "Nehemiah Memoir" or the "Isaiah Memoir").

8. Avigad and Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon*, 16–37.

9. *ibid.*, 38; cf. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 20–21. Fitzmyer cites Hartman's suggestion, built on Fitzmyer's own work, that the similarity between Genesis Apocryphon's and Jubilees's chronology of Abram's life. Because the chronology seems to have been closely tied to Jubilees's more rigid calendar, it follows that Genesis Apocryphon drew from Jubilees. See Louis F. Hartman, review of *Qumran Cave 1, The Genesis Apocryphon*, by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *CBQ* 28 (1966): 495–98.

treatment of Genesis Apocryphon focused on the role that it played in showing the continuity between the interpretation of Jewish scripture during the Second Temple period and the aggadic traditions of early rabbinic Judaism. In Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies*, StPB 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1961), Vermes treats in detail the relationship between Gen 12:8–15:4 and Genesis Apocryphon cols. 19–22, ultimately declaring Genesis Apocryphon to be “the most ancient midrash of all” and the “lost link between the biblical and the Rabbinic midrash.”¹⁰ The result of this framing (whether one considers it appropriate or not) has been that much of the scholarly attention paid to Genesis Apocryphon has focused on its relationship to Genesis and especially how its author(s) may have been addressing exegetical issues found within the (later) biblical work. Yet, as Fitzmyer observes, the roots of biblical midrash are now generally accepted to be found within the Hebrew Bible itself. Together with the fact that a number of targums have been found at Qumran makes the presence of targumic and midrashic qualities in Genesis Apocryphon less remarkable and, I think, frees us from any obligation to try and fit it cleanly within either category.¹¹ However, the treatment of Genesis Apocryphon as primarily exegetical (or in the case of Vermes, as midrash) tacitly implies that the purpose of Genesis Apocryphon was to explain or interpret Genesis. Put another way, Genesis Apocryphon is often treated as if its purpose in antiquity was to say something *about how to read Genesis*. Placing Genesis Apocryphon under the rubric of “biblical interpretation,” for example, does not, to my mind, adequately appreciate the potential for Genesis Apocryphon

10. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition*, 124.

11. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 20.

to be a creative work in its own right.

What remains uncertain about the Genesis Apocryphon is what its function may have been for its original audience. I am in agreement with Fitzmyer that it seems unlikely that Genesis Apocryphon would have been used liturgically and that the general character of the work is “for a pious and edifying purpose,”¹² yet, I can not help but feel somewhat dissatisfied with this answer. How might Genesis Apocryphon have edified its readers? Works such as Jubilees and 1 Enoch, perhaps, have more obvious rhetorical aims, but for all its similarities to these texts, Genesis Apocryphon maintains a different character which has generally eluded commentators.

While I have no illusions that I will be able to offer a satisfactory answer to the question of Genesis Apocryphon’s specific purpose, approaching Genesis Apocryphon as an object of cultural memory, I believe, is a useful heuristic for addressing the problem holistically. The advantage that a memory approach has in addressing this problem is that it offers a way to talk about the manifold ways that Genesis Apocryphon both builds from its social location and speaks back into it at a number of “discursive levels.”

I have chosen to frame the discussion of Genesis Apocryphon around the ways that Genesis Apocryphon functions as social memory at three such discursive levels. First, and as a point of departure, I will discuss the ways that the Genesis Apocryphon engages with the biblical tradition. Second, I will discuss the ways that Genesis Apocryphon engages with its reader through the lens of genre and its shared formal characteristics with other similar texts.

12. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 20.

Finally, I will discuss Genesis Apocryphon as and work of pseudepigraphy and its direct engagement with the cultural memory of ancient Israel.

3.1 GENESIS APOCRYPHON AND BIBLICAL MEMORY

Although it is anachronistic to suggest that the “Bible” existed during the late Second Temple period, insofar as the texts and traditions that later formalized as the “Bible”—especially those contained in the Pentateuch—were certainly present in a reasonably stable and even privileged state, I think it is a mistake to jettison any discussion of RwB texts as they relate to the texts that would later become the Hebrew Bible. On the other hand, restricting our discussion to those later biblical texts would likewise not do justice to the wide variety of texts and traditions in existence during the Second Temple period which undoubtedly influenced Genesis Apocryphon. In an effort to strike a middle ground, therefore, I have opted to refer to “biblical memory,” by which I simply mean the confluence of stories and traditions which relate to those later formalized in the Hebrew Bible.¹³ In this section, therefore, I would like to discuss the ways that the Genesis Apocryphon participated in biblical memory.

13. I would like to emphasize that I am not suggesting that “biblical memory” represents a qualitatively unique form of memory, only that the scope of the traditions under consideration relate to texts that later became the Bible, and, in all likelihood, held at least some sort of special privilege within the memory of many Second Temple Jews.

3.1.1 What was the Genesis Apocryphon Rewriting?

Although the Genesis Apocryphon is generally touted as one of the more clear-cut examples of the Rwb, it is noteworthy that its relationship to the biblical text is not, in fact, entirely uniform.¹⁴

The Lamech Memoir (Cols. 0–5)

The earliest columns of the Genesis Apocryphon (cols. 0–5), which are narrated from the perspective of Lamech (the “Lamech Memoir” by my terminology), Noah’s father, essentially offer a rewriting of 1 Enoch 106–107.¹⁵ In this section, Lamech, recounts the birth of Noah and

14. Moshe Bernstein, “Genre(s) of the *Genesis Apocryphon*,” in *Aramaica Qumranica: Proceedings of the Conference on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran in Aix-En-Provence 30 June – 2 July 2008*, ed. Katell Berthelot and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, vol. 94, STDJ (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 317–43.

15. George Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 2 ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2005), 174. The birth of Noah seems to have been a matter of some interest; a number of other texts likewise discuss the exceptional qualities of Noah at his birth. See 4Q534 [4QBN^{a-d}], 1QNoah^a as well as James C. VanderKam, “The Birth of Noah,” in *Intertestamental Essays in Honour of József Tadeusz Milik*, ed. Zdzisław Jan Kapera, QM 6 (Kraków: Enigma, 1992), 213–31. Note also Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “The Lamech Narrative in the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen) and *Birth of Noah* (4QEnoch^a ar): A Tradition–Historical Study,” in *Aramaica Qumranica: Proceedings of the Conference on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran in Aix-En-Provence 30 June – 2 July 2008*, ed. Katell Berthelot and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, vol. 94,

Lamech's fear that his wife, Bitenosh, had conceived Noah by means of the עִירִין "Watchers." Despite Bitenosh's assurances, Lamech petitions his father, Methusaleh to ask *his* father, Enoch, for further assurance, which he ultimately gives. Although this section is fragmentary, its close resemblance to 1 Enoch 106–107 makes the scholarly reconstruction of the missing sections quite plausible. While it may be tempting to suggest that this section of Genesis Apocryphon represents a variant edition of 1 Enoch 106–107, rather than a rewriting, the fact that the version of the story preserved in Genesis Apocryphon is told in the first-person from the point of view of Lamech, while 1 Enoch 106–107 is told in the third-person, makes this suggestion highly unlikely. Moreover, because both 1 Enoch and Genesis Apocryphon were composed in Aramaic, the differences between the two tellings cannot be attributed to translational issues. In other words, although cols. 0–5 deal, nominally, with events in Genesis 5:28–29, for all intents and purposes, the story recounted in these columns is a retelling of events known from the Enochic tradition.¹⁶

STDJ (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 253–71.

16. It is not clear what the precise relationship between the Enochic traditions and the Genesis Apocryphon actually were. Here I have more-or-less assumed the priority of 1 Enoch, but I wish to leave ambiguous whether Genesis Apocryphon represents a rewriting of the *text* of 1 Enoch, or whether they simply draw on a common tradition. Thus, I have chosen to refer to the tradition "known from" 1 Enoch, rather than 1 Enoch itself. See Stuckenbruck's treatment of these traditions in Stuckenbruck, "The Lamech Narrative in the *Genesis Apocryphon*," 253–71; Nickelsburg's concise but thorough treatment of the similarities and differences in of these

The Noah Memoir (Cols. 5–17)

The second major section of Genesis Apocryphon begins with a superscription identifying What follows as a כתב מלי נוח [פרשגן] or “[A copy of] the Book of the Words of Noah” (5.29) and continues through col 17 (and, likely, onto the beginning of 18).¹⁷

Although this section accounts for the bulk of the scroll, significant portions are missing or unreadable. This “Noah Memoir” begins with a description of Noah’s righteousness¹⁸

texts is also quite helpful. See Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 173–74 as well as Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 122–23.

17. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 174–75; Regarding the superscription, see Richard C. Steiner, “The Heading of the ‘Book of the Words of Noah’ on a Fragment of the Genesis Apocryphon: New Light on a ‘Lost’ Work,” *JSS* 2 (1995): 66–71. On the topic of the existence of a so-called “book of Noah” see Devorah Dimant, “Two ‘Scientific’ Fictions: The So-Called Book of Noah and the Alleged Quotation of Jubilees in CD 16:3-4,” in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich*, ed. Peter W. Flint James C. VanderKam and Emanuel Tov, VTsup 101 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 230–49 and Cana Werman, “Qumran and the Book of Noah,” in *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the [Second] International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 12–14 January, 1997*, ed. Estelle Glickler Chazon, Michael Edward Stone, Avital Pinnick et al., STDJ 31 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 171–82.

18. vanderkam:righteousness-of-noah

(affirmed even in-utero) and his early family life (5.29–6.9), followed by a vision predicting the flood (6.9–7.9) which comes about due to the evil behavior of the Nephilim. Cols. 7–8 are highly fragmentary, but most likely described the events of the flood, while cols. 9–12 (which are slightly less fragmentary) describe the Ark's putting in on Mt. Ararat, God's instructions to and blessing of Noah (including the prohibition of consuming blood), and Noah's subsequent interest in viticulture. Cols 13–15 recount a dream-vision in which Noah is depicted as a cedar tree with shoots representing his sons, including a fragmentary explanation of the dream. Finally, cols. 16–17 describe the division of the land by Noah to his sons.

As with the Lamech Memoir, the Noah Memoir clearly draws from traditions outside of those preserved in Genesis. This fact was acknowledged even from the scroll's initial publication.¹⁹ Although the flood account in Gen 6:9–9:17 is a longer and more developed story in its own right than is the account of Noah's birth (which the Lamech Memoir takes as its point of departure), characterizing cols 6–17 of Genesis Apocryphon as *primarily* a rewriting of the Genesis flood story does not give due consideration to the additional traditions which influenced its composition. The mention of the Watchers (Aram: עִירִין) and the Nephilim in cols. 6–7 especially bear a thematic resemblance to the Book of Watchers in 1 Enoch 6–11.²⁰ and the explicit reference to the “the [Book] of the Words of Enoch” in col. 19.25 suggests that the Genesis Apocryphon was familiar with 1 Enoch, or at the very least a tradition of enochic

19. Avigad and Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon*, 38.

20. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 174.

writings.²¹

More plain, however, is the Noah Memoir's connection to the book of Jubilees, which seems to offer a consistent point of contact with this section of the Genesis Apocryphon.²² In fact, it was the explicit identification of Lamech's wife Bitenosh which first prompted Trevor's initial identification of the (unopened) scroll with the so-called Book of Lamech.²³ Although an exhaustive treatment of the parallels between Jubilees and Genesis Apocryphon is outside the scope of this chapter, it will suffice to note a few of the most significant points of contact between the Noah Memoir and Jubilees. James VanderKam has recently offered a detailed, yet concise, summary of these similarities and differences, which, while too long to reproduced in full, can be summarized as follows:²⁴

21. It is worth noting, of course, that this reference occurs in the latter Abram section which some have argued originates in a different source than the first two memoirs. See esp. Bernstein, "Genre(s) of the *Genesis Apocryphon*," 317–43 and Moshe J. Bernstein, "Is the Genesis Apocryphon a Unity? What Sort of Unity Were You Looking For?" *AS* 8 (2010): 107–34.

22. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 20.

23. Trever, "Identification of the Aramaic Fourth Scroll from 'Ain Feshkha," 8–10.

24. See James C. VanderKam, "Some Thoughts on the Relationship between the Book of Jubilees and the Genesis Apocryphon," in *Is There a Text in This Cave? Studies in the Textuality of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of George J. Brooke*, ed. Ariel Feldman, Maria Ciotatǎ and Charlotte Hempel, *STDJ* 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 371–84. For additional treatments of this topic, see also Daniel A. Machiela, *The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon: A New Text and Translation with In-*

1. Several personal and geographic²⁵ names which are never mentioned in the Bible show up in both Genesis Apocryphon and Jubilees (including Batenosh, which is a part of the Lamech Memoir).
2. Both Jubilees and Genesis Apocryphon utilize “Jubilees” as significant chronological unit (Genesis Apocryphon to a lesser degree than Jubilees).
3. Several shared stories, themes, and phrases such as 1) “in the days of Jared,” 2) Enoch remains accessible after his departure from normal terrestrial life, 3) Noah makes atonement for the “whole earth,” and 4) stories about Noah and his vineyard.
4. The “division of the earth,” while different in several specifics are strikingly similar and offer, perhaps, the most compelling case for a direct, genetic relationship between the

trodition and Special Treatment of Columns 13–17, STDJ 79 (Leiden: Brill) and James L. Kugel, *A Walk Through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of Its Creation* 156 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 305–42 previously published as James L. Kugel, “Which Is Older, Jubilees or the Genesis Apocryphon? An Exegetical Approach,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Contemporary Culture: Proceedings of the International Conference held at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (July 6–8, 2008)*, ed. Adolfo D. Roitman, Lawrence H. Schiffman and Shani Tzoref, STDJ 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 257–94

25. Mahaq Sea (16.9; Jub. 8.22), Tina River (16.15; Jub. 8.12), Mount Lubar (12.13; Jub. 5.28), Erythrean/Red Sea (17.7; Jub. 8.21), and Gadeira (16.11; Jub 8.26).

two texts.²⁶

The striking similarities between the Noah Memoir and Jubilees (and to a lesser degree, 1 Enoch) over and against the biblical text, again complicates the characterization of Genesis Apocryphon as *RwB* or strictly exegetical in nature. In other words if Genesis Apocryphon drew from Jubilees (or if they drew from some common source) I think it is fair to scrutinize whether this section of Genesis Apocryphon should be considered a rewriting of *Genesis* or of some other set of traditions.²⁷

The Abram Memoir (Cols. 19–22)

The final surviving columns of the scroll, cols. 19–22, represent the longest and most complete sustained narrative preserved in Genesis Apocryphon, here referred to as the “Abram Memoir.” More so than the previous sections, the Abram Memoir maps very closely onto the events narrated in Genesis. These columns parallel Genesis 12:10–15:14, retelling the stories of Abram and Sarai’s sojourn in Egypt (|| Gen 12:10–20), Abram’s subsequent conflict with Lot (|| Gen

26. See also Machiela’s extensive treatment of this section where he argues for the theory that both texts could be drawing from a shared cartographical source in Machiela, *The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon*, 105–30. See also Philip Alexander, “Notes on the ‘Imago Mundi’ of the Book of Jubilees,” *JJS* 38 (1982): 197–213.

27. Of course, if Genesis Apocryphon is the earliest (as Avigad and Yadin as well as Vermes supposed), we would simply be asking the same questions about the book of Jubilees with the same basic implications.

13:1–18), the Elamite campaign (|| Gen 14:1–24), and the beginning of Abram’s vision (|| Gen 15:1–4). Genesis Apocryphon’s retelling of these stories follows the chronology of Gen 12–15 very closely, but embellishes and augments the narrative throughout. Like the Lamech and Noah Memoirs, this section of the Genesis Apocryphon is largely written as a first-person narrative, this time in Abram’s voice. The transition between the Noah Memoir and the Abram memoir is missing, so there is no superscription or title for this section, however, the phrase “I, Abram” shows up a number of times, making it clear who the narrator is. This fact is complicated, however, by the fact that, although the narrative begins in the first-person, beginning in 21.23 the narrator transitions to the third person and remains so through the end of the surviving portion of the scroll.²⁸ This inconsistency, perhaps more than any other feature of Genesis Apocryphon, has complicated its generic classification.

The earlier portions of the Abram Memoir strike a balance between fidelity and innovation with regard to the *biblical* text that the other sections lack. For example, the narrative of Abram and Sarai’s descent into Egypt is clearly and recognizably built from the story preserved in the Hebrew Bible. The events and chronology of the story map directly onto Gen 12:10–20, but the Genesis Apocryphon offers—in addition to the first-person point of view—a number of expansions that seem plainly to be innovative or, as Vermes would put it

28. It is worth pointing out that the final surviving sheet of parchment was not the final sheet of the scroll originally. Avigad and Yadin note that although only four sheets of the work were present, the seam between the fourth and (what would be) the fifth sheets is visible on the edge of the fourth sheet. Avigad and Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon*, 14.

and example or prototype of “midrash.”²⁹ Numerous small additions and emendations occur throughout the retelling such as making explicit how long Sarai and Abram lived in Egypt prior to Sarai’s notice by Pharaoh’s princes, how long Sarai was with Pharaoh, numerous geographical and personal names, etc. A number of these details, as with earlier sections of Genesis Apocryphon, are also found in Jubilees, though, again, the direction of dependence is not clear (if present). More noticeable are the larger expansions present in the Genesis Apocryphon such as Abrams portentous dream (19.14–17), the *wasf* put on the lips of Pharaoh’s princes about Sarai (20.2–8), Abram’s prayer following Sarai’s abduction (20.12–16), the details of Pharaoh’s afflictions (20.16–21), Harkenosh’s discussion with Lot (20.21–20.24), and Abram’s intervention on Pharaoh’s behalf (20.24–32).³⁰

29. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition*, 124 Notably, the characterization of Genesis Apocryphon as RwB is typically based on an analysis of the Abram Memoir. Although the earlier portions of the scroll were known, Vermes’s treatment of Genesis Apocryphon only dealt with cols. 19–22. Together with the fact that these are the best-preserved and most complete columns, this reality has, I think, impacted the characterization of Genesis Apocryphon as a whole, perhaps unfairly. On the characterization pre-rabbinic texts as “midrash,” see Paul D. Mandel, *The Origins of Midrash: From Teaching to Text* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), GET PAGE RANGE; Paul D. Mandel, “The Origins of Midrash in the Second Temple Period,” in *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, ed. Carol Bakhtos, JSJsup 106 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 9–34.

30. Other changes from later in the memoir include a description of Abram walking the length and width of the land as well as a notable abbreviation of Abram and Lot’s conflict in

The explanation of these expansions, according to Vermes—which has been adopted by most treatments of Genesis Apocryphon—is as a means of “correcting” or otherwise supplementing the biblical text in order to engage the reader and to *explain* the biblical text.³¹

Vermes writes:

The author of GA does indeed try, by every means at his disposal, to make the biblical story more attractive, more real, more edifying, and above all more intelligible. Geographic data are inserted to complete biblical lacunae or to identify altered place names, and various descriptive touches are added to give the story substance...To this work of expansion and development Genesis Apocryphon adds another, namely, the reconciliation of unexplained or apparently conflicting statements in the biblical text in order to allay doubt and worry.³²

By contrast, the latter portion of the Abram Memoir, beginning at 21.23 at times borders on a word-for-word translation of Genesis into Aramaic with comparatively few significant changes. This quality provided occasion for a number of (especially early) scholars to compare Genesis Apocryphon with the Targums.³³ Although the change from first-person to

Gen 13:5–12.

31. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition*, 126.

32. *Ibid.*, 125.

33. Matthew Black, *The Scrolls and Christian Origins: Studies in the Jewish Background of the New Testament* (New York: Schribner's, 1961; repr., Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 193.

third-person is, perhaps, the most significant literary shift that occurs in the Genesis Apocryphon, other literary features of the Abram Memoir agree against the Lamech and Noah Memoirs in such a way that gives reason to suppose the Abram Memoir makes up a literary unit.³⁴ It is not clear, however, why there seems to be such a dramatic difference in narrative voice beginning in 21.23.

3.1.2 Exegesis and Memory

Thus, modern treatments of the Genesis Apocryphon have tended to speak about the work as “Rewritten Bible” as a third category somewhere between Targum and Midrash, with a

Though, he notably amended his opinion later Mathew Black, “Aramaic Studies and the Language of Jesus,” in *In memoriam Paul Kahle*, ed. Matthew Black and Georg Fohrer, BZAW 103 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1968), 17–28.

34. Specifically, Moshe Bernstein has noted based on the divine names that are use throughout the work that the primary division is between the Lamech/Noah Memoirs and the Abram Memoir; the earlier sections utilizing a specific set of divine titles and the latter section(s) using a different set. See Moshe Bernstein, “Divine Titles and Epithets and the Sources in the Genesis Apocryphon,” *JBL* 128 (2009): 291–310; See also Daniel K. Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts: Strategies for Extending the Scriptures among the Dead Sea Scrolls*, CQS 8; LSTS 63 (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 97. Regarding the genre(s) and unity of Genesis Apocryphon more generally see Bernstein’s later work Bernstein, “Genre(s) of the *Genesis Apocryphon*,” 317–43 and Bernstein, “Is the Genesis Apocryphon a Unity? What Sort of Unity Were You Looking For?” 107–34.

preference to the latter.³⁵

Yet, as I have illustrated, although portions of the Genesis Apocryphon relate clearly to the text of Genesis (notably, the Abram Memoir), much of the earlier portions of the scroll only nominally relate to Genesis, and instead show an affinity to the traditions associated with 1 Enoch and Jubilees. Thus, characterizing the work as a whole as focused primarily on the explanation of Genesis (as Vermes suggests), seems to me to be ill-founded. Indeed, the disjunction between the various parts of Genesis Apocryphon have been observed by numerous scholars, even by those who broadly accept the Genesis Apocryphon to be a literary unity, but such discussions still seem to focus on generic classification, which, I think is a

35. Craig A. Evans, "The Gensis Apocryphon and the Rewritten Bible," in "Mémorial Jean Carmignac" 13 (1988): 153–65; Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 19. Esther Eshel has proposed the term "narative midrash," but I am in agreement with Harrington and Bernstein in eschewing later categories such as "midrash" for these pre-rabbinic soruecs. See Esther Eshel, "The Genesis Apocryphon: A Chain of Traditions," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Contemporary Culture: Proceedings of the International Conference held at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (July 6-8, 2008)*, ed. Adolfo D. Roitman, Lawrence H. Schiffman and Shani Tzoref, STDJ 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 182–93; Cf. Daniel J. Harrington, "Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical Narratives and Prophecies I: The Bible Rewritten (Narratives)," in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg, BMI 2 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 239–47; Bernstein, "Genre(s) of the *Genesis Apocryphon*," 317–43 (327 n. 33, 328–29).

methodological dead-end for thinking about Genesis Apocryphon.³⁶

To illustrate this difficulty, I would like to focus on Moshe Bernstein's treatment of the "Genre(s)" of the Genesis Apocryphon.³⁷ Bernstein's basic thesis is to note that the Genesis Apocryphon, as a composite work, must be treated as multi-generic, rather than simply as "rewritten Bible" or "parabiblical" or the like because, as noted above, the Genesis Apocryphon does not relate uniformly to the biblical text. The difficulty, for Bernstein, comes when one must decide how to characterize the work as a whole. While works such as Jubilees and Pseudo-Philo could be viewed as works that have been uniformly "rewritten" (that is, that the entirety of the work is a single rewriting), works such as Genesis Apocryphon (he also includes the Temple Scroll) could be viewed as "a series of mini-rewritings of limited scope."³⁸

According to such a characterization, Bernstein writes, "we have no choice but to refer to Part I

36. Notably Bernstein, "Is the Genesis Apocryphon a Unity? What Sort of Unity Were You Looking For?" 107–34 and Falk, *The Parabiblical Texts*. Cf. Eshel, "The Genesis Apocryphon," 182–93.

37. As argued in Bernstein, "Genre(s) of the *Genesis Apocryphon*," 317–43.

38. *ibid.*, 336. I am reminded here of Nickelsburg's similar sentiment regarding the ways that 1 Enoch rewrites the flood story several times, arguing that the phenomenon of rewriting moved from smaller units of rewriting to larger, more systematic rewritings. See George W. E. Nickelsburg, "The Bible Rewritten and Expanded," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, ed. Michael E. Stone (Assen: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 89–156 (TODO: Get Pages).

[the Lamech and Noah Memoirs] as ‘parabiblical’ and Part II [the Abram Memoir] as ‘rewritten Bible’” based on the fact that, while the Abram Memoir rewrites portions of Genesis, the Lamech and Noah Memoirs really only take Genesis as a point of departure for their stories (and may, in fact, be rewriting other texts).³⁹ To refer to the entirety of Genesis Apocryphon as RwB or as two different kinds of RwB is, according to Bernstein, unacceptably imprecise. While I am happy to accept a multigeneric characterization of Genesis Apocryphon (and any number of other texts), I think Bernstein has sidestepped a more fundamental question by suggesting that the relationship between the Genesis Apocryphon and its sources is best addressed as an issue of genre. The assumption made by Bernstein is that there was a qualitative difference between the sources utilized by Genesis Apocryphon⁴⁰ which forms the basis of his characterization of Genesis Apocryphon as “multigeneric.” This pluriformity is in tension with his larger assertion affirming the unity of the work.

However, it seems to me that the situation may be better analysed in reverse, namely that the genre of Genesis Apocryphon is consistent and it is the assumed qualitative distinction between its sources that should be interrogated. After all, formally speaking Genesis Apocryphon is composed of three (broadly) first-person accounts told from the perspective of three significant patriarchs. In other words, rather than characterizing Genesis Apocryphon as a work that utilized both “biblical” and “non-biblical” sources, it is just as reasonable to begin

39. Bernstein, “Genre(s) of the *Genesis Apocryphon*,” 337.

40. While I am sympathetic to viewing Genesis Apocryphon as secondary to Jubilees and 1 Enoch, here, I am simply stating this as Bernstein’s position.

with the assumption that Genesis Apocryphon's method is consistent and that the use of "non-biblical" sources actually points to the possibility that Jubilees and 1 Enoch were just as legitimate sources as Genesis. One possible inference from this observation could be that these other works may have been on equal footing as Genesis and enjoyed some special "scriptural" (or otherwise authoritative) position for the author of Genesis Apocryphon or that such categories were not operative at this time.⁴¹ To be clear, the terminology of "RwB" is not what is at stake here, but rather the way that we imagine the relationship(s) between the Genesis Apocryphon and the traditions that surround it.

Although the scholarly consensus since the initial publication of Genesis Apocryphon has been that 1 Enoch, Jubilees, and Genesis Apocryphon all participate in overlapping or adjacent traditions,⁴² what remains unclear is the nature and directionality (if any) of these relationships. While Avigad and Yadin suspected that Genesis Apocryphon was a source for 1 Enoch and Jubilees,⁴³ it is now widely acknowledged that no definitive evidence has yet been assembled to argue one way or another.⁴⁴ Thinking about Genesis Apocryphon in terms of

41. SOMETHING, SOMETHING Eva Mrozeck.

42. Avigad and Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon*, 38; Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, 20–22; Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 110–16; Machiela, *The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon*, 8–19.

43. Avigad and Yadin, *A Genesis Apocryphon*, 38.

44. At the risk of over-simplifying the issue, Fitzmyer, Kugel, VanderKam, and Nickelsburg tend to see Genesis Apocryphon as secondary to Jubilees and Genesis Apocryphon,

cultural memory means thinking about its composition not simply in source-critical terms, but rather as the synthesis of traditions which, regardless of whether they were considered religiously “authoritative,” were operative within the *cultural discourse* of late Second Temple Judaism. In other words, viewing Genesis Apocryphon as the product of cultural memory means taking seriously the idea that the combination of traditions in Genesis Apocryphon should not primarily be understood as the genius of an author/editor, but rather that the author/editor should be viewed as the instrument by which cultural memory was codified as text. Of course, we must allow for singular, creative contributions of the author/editor of Genesis Apocryphon, but even those original contributions should not be treated as if they arose out of a vacuum. In some sense, then, it does not matter which *text* came first. What is clear is that the cultural memory that surrounded the book of Genesis—the biblical memory of Genesis—was more broad than the text of Genesis and included traditions that we know from Jubilees and 1 Enoch whether or not they were directly informed by the *texts* of Jubilees and 1 Enoch.

while Machiela and Segal have argued the reverse. See VanderKam, “Some Thoughts,” 371–84, Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*, Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 174, Kugel, *A Walk Through Jubilees*, 305–42. Cf. Michael Segal, “The Literary Relationship between the Genesis Apocryphon and Jubilees: The Chronology of Abram and Sarai’s Descent to Egypt,” *AS* 8.1 (2010): 71–88, doi:10.1163 / 147783510X571597, Machiela, *The Dead Sea Genesis Apocryphon*, 140–42.

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