

READING GENESIS, SEEING MOSES: NARRATIVE ANALOGIES WITH MOSES IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS

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Abstract: *While analogies between Moses and other figures in the Prophets, Writings, and New Testament have received a great deal of attention, no study has systematically explored narrative analogies with Moses in the Book of Genesis. This paper posits the presence of narrative analogies between the major figures in Genesis (God, Noah, Abram, Jacob, and Joseph) and Moses. Gaps in the analogous narratives in Genesis, moreover, suggest that a knowledge of the narratives about Moses in Exodus–Deuteronomy is required for the interpretation of Genesis.*

Key words: *narrative analogy, allusion, inner-biblical interpretation, compositional strategy, text-centered*

In his classic traditio-historical treatment of Moses, George W. Coats noted the critical role Moses plays for the structure of the Pentateuch. According to Coats, “Moses traditions lend unity to the narratives from Exodus through Deuteronomy.”¹ Coats then poses a question with respect to Genesis, a question I hope to answer in this paper:

What, then can be said concerning the relationship between the Moses narratives and Genesis? One of the pressing problems, as yet unresolved in the scholarly discussion of the Pentateuch, concerns the relationship between the patriarchs and Moses or between the “God of the Fathers” dimension of religion in the early tradition of Israel and the religious structure of Yahwism. The point at issue here, however, is not the relationship between the patriarchs and Moses but rather the structure of the Pentateuch/Hexateuch.²

In this study, I argue that Moses is not only the unifying figure in Exodus–Deuteronomy, but that his presence looms large in Genesis as well, in that the major characters in Genesis are literarily linked to Moses in Exodus–Deuteronomy by means of narrative analogies.³ In several cases, a knowledge of the analogous sto-

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¹ Coats, *Moses: Heroic Man, Man of God*, JSOTSup 57 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 38.

² Coats, *Moses*, 38.

³ Grossman defines a narrative analogy as follows: “An analogy is an intentional literary device which creates a dialogue between two texts, a figurative device that the author uses to express hidden meanings, and through which the reader is invited to reveal them: In many cases in Scripture, the closeness of motifs (and also in language) is so obvious between the two stories that one cannot escape the

ries about Moses in Exodus–Deuteronomy is required for the interpretation of the corresponding narratives in Genesis, suggesting that Genesis functions as a prologue to the life and work of Moses.⁴

In the first part of this study, I present evidence for narrative analogies linking God and Noah with Moses in the Primeval History, and Abram, Joseph, and Jacob with Moses in the Patriarchal Narratives.⁵ In the second part, I discuss some of the preliminary implications of these findings. By using the word “preliminary,” I acknowledge this study is intended to be a launching pad for further research. Though not everyone may agree with my preliminary conclusions about the directionality of the allusions and the role of Moses in the final form of the Pentateuch, this study represents the first systematic analysis of narrative analogies with Moses in Genesis, and therein lies its primary contribution to the study of the book.⁶

I. READING GENESIS, SEEING MOSES

1. *Moses in the Creation Narrative.* The parallel between the Tabernacle Narrative (Exod 25–40) and the Creation Narrative (Gen 1:1–2:3) has been noted by many scholars.⁷ Unique shared language and parallel plot structures abound, and one of the more prominent analogies between these texts can be summarized as follows:⁸

conclusion that one of its authors knew the other story and used it as bricks in the building of his story.” Jonathan Grossman, *Text and Subtext: On Exploring Biblical Narrative Design* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: HaKibbutz HaMeuchad, 2015), 339. All translations of Hebrew in this article are my own, apart from translations of Old Testament texts, which are from the NASB (1995) unless otherwise noted.

⁴ For more on narrative analogies in the Pentateuch, see Seth Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and the Tanakh* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011); Postell, “Abram as Israel, Israel as Abram: Literary Analogy as Macro-Structural Strategy in the Torah,” *TynBul* 67.2 (2016): 161–82.

⁵ A fuller presentation of the evidence is provided in the appendix of this article.

⁶ Much has been written on narrative analogies with Moses elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible and in the New Testament. Dale C. Allison Jr., *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); James D. Bales, *The Prophet like unto Moses* (Shreveport, LA: Lambert, 1973); J. Severino Croatto, “Jesus, Prophet like Elijah, and Prophet-Teacher like Moses in Luke-Acts,” *JBL* 124.3 (2005): 451–65; Axel Graupner and Michael Wolter, eds., *Moses in Biblical and Extra-Biblical Traditions*, BZAW 372 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007); Gordon P. Hugenberg, “The Servant of the Lord in the ‘Servant Songs’ of Isaiah,” in *The Lord’s Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*, ed. Philip E. Satterthwaite, Richard S. Hess, and Gordon J. Wenham (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 105–40; Rebecca G. S. Idestrom, “Echoes of the Book of Exodus in Ezekiel,” *JSOT* 33.4 (2009): 489–510; Josef M. Kastner, “Moses im Neuen Testament” (ThD diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich, 1967); Risa Levitt Kohn, “A Prophet like Moses? Rethinking Ezekiel’s Relationship to the Torah,” *ZAW* 114.2 (2002): 236–54; John Lieman, *The New Testament Moses: Christian Perceptions of Moses and Israel in the Setting of Jewish Religion*, WUNT 2/173 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah: Prophet like Moses*, Cascade Companions (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015); William Henry Marty, “The New Moses” (ThD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1984); H. McKeating, “Ezekiel the ‘Prophet like Moses?’,” *JSOT* 19.61 (1994): 97–109; Wayne Meeks, *The Prophet-King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology*, NovTSup 14 (Leiden: Brill, 1967); James Nohrberg, *Like unto Moses: The Constituting of an Interruption*, Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995); Joshua Matthew Philpot, “The Shining Face of Moses: The Interpretation of Exodus 34:29–35 and Its Use in the Old and New Testaments” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013); Jeffrey Stackert, *A Prophet like Moses: Prophecy, Law, and Israelite Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁷ David Carr, “Genesis in Relation to the Moses Story: Diachronic and Synchronic Perspectives,” in *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction, and History*, ed. A. Wénin, BETL 155 (Leuven: Leuven

	Consummation of Creation	Consummation of the Tabernacle
Role of the Spirit	The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God [רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים] was moving over the surface of the waters (Gen 1:2).	And He has filled him with the Spirit of God [רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים], in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship (Exod 35:31).
Inspection	God saw [וַיִּרְא] all [אֶת־כָּל] that He had made [עָשָׂה], and behold [וַהֲגִה], it was very good (Gen 1:31).	And Moses examined [וַיִּרְא] all [אֶת־כָּל] the work and behold [וַהֲגִה], they had done [עָשׂוּ] it (Exod 39:43).
Statement of Completion	By the seventh day, God completed [וַיִּכַּל] His work [מְלַאכְתּוֹ] which He had done (Gen 2:2).	Thus Moses finished [וַיִּכַּל] the work [הַמְּלָאכָה] (Exod 40:33).
Benediction	Then God blessed the [אֶת] seventh day [וַיְבָרֵךְ] and sanctified it (Gen 2:3).	So Moses blessed them [וַיְבָרֵךְ אֹתָם] (Exod 39:43).

A rather surprising detail in this analogy is that God and Moses are analogous by virtue of their roles in creation and the construction of the tabernacle.

It is essential to note the fact that an understanding of רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים in Genesis 1:2 requires a knowledge of the analogous narratives about Moses's construction of the tabernacle in Exodus. The role of רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים in the creation account is not explained in the immediate context,⁹ opening the door to an interpretive dilemma about the meaning of רוּחַ ("wind" vs. "spirit"). When viewed within the matrix of a God-Moses narrative analogy, however, this textual "clumsiness" (ungrammaticali-

University Press, 2001), 273–95; Peter Enns, *Exodus*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 550–52; Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken, 1979), 12; Peter J. Kearney, "Creation and Liturgy: The P Redaction of Ex 25–40," *ZAW* 89.3 (1977): 375–87; L. Michael Morales, *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus*, BST 15 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012); Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 110–14; Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009); Gordon J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," in *I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11*, ed. Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura, SBTS 4 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399–404.

⁸ This chart is a modified version of that found in Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 111.

⁹ For an argument that God and his Spirit are the speakers in Genesis 1:26, see Seth Postell, "Messianism in Light of Literary Strategy," *BSac* 177.707 (2020): 344–45.

ty)¹⁰ likely functions as a marker of allusion.¹¹ The most appropriate interpretation of רִיחַ אֱלֹהִים is possible only when the narrative analogy to Moses in Exodus is identified. Though Moses serves as the CEO of the tabernacle construction project, he works with a Spirit-filled COO to get the job done (Exod 35:31).

This analogy with Moses is critical, therefore, for interpreting רִיחַ אֱלֹהִים in creation, not as a great wind,¹² but as a personification of wisdom functioning as God's COO in the work of creation (see Gen 1:26; Prov 8:22–31; m. Ber. 55:1; *Rebenu b'chai* on Exod 25:2). The very first chapter of Genesis begins with a narrative analogy with Moses.

2. *Moses in the Flood Narrative.* Several scholars suggest that the Flood Narrative (Gen 6–9) and the Birth Narrative of Moses (Exod 2:3, 5) are intentionally linked by the word תִּבְיָה (“ark”), a word used in only these two narratives.¹³ Though a single word does not an analogy make, this unique word appears within the context of unique parallel plot structures. The protagonists in both narratives (Noah/Moses) are rescued from watery deaths in arks covered with pitch (Gen 6:14; Exod 2:3).¹⁴ I suggest this link establishes a beachhead prompting the reader to consider the presence of other narrative analogies between Noah and Moses.¹⁵

Rolf Rendtorff argues that the most significant connection between Noah and Moses involves their roles in the mediation of a covenant. Covenant mediation, moreover, links Moses to the two prominent characters in the two unique periods

¹⁰ By “clumsy,” I am referring to semantically and/or grammatically awkward language in an alluding text which was borrowed from an alluded-to text to signal the allusion. See Cynthia Edenburg, “How (Not) to Murder a King: Variations on a Theme in 1 Sam 24; 26,” *SJOT* 12.1 (1998): 72–73; Joanna Kline, “Intimations of Jacob, Judah, and Joseph in the Stories of King David: The Use of Narrative Analogy in 1 Samuel 16–1 Kings 2” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2018), 25; Hava Shalom-Guy, “Textual Analogies and Their Ramifications for a Diachronic Analysis of 1 Samuel 13:1–14:46 and Judges 6:1–8:35,” *JHebS* 16, art. 10 (2016): 4.

¹¹ Edenburg, “How (Not) to Murder a King,” 68–69; Jeffrey Leonard, “Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Intertextuality,” in *Literary Approaches to the Bible*, ed. Douglas Mangum and Douglas Estes, Lexham Methods Series 4 (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2017), 97–142; Leonard, “Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions: Psalm 78 as a Test Case,” *JBL* 127.2 (2008): 241–65; Michael Riffaterre, *Text Production*, trans. Terese Lyons (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 12, 51; Shalom-Guy, “Textual Analogies,” 16; Yohanan (Ian) Stanfield, “The Song ‘Ha’azinu’ and Its Presence in Isaiah 1–39” (Hebrew) (PhD diss., The Hebrew University, 2012).

¹² Contra Rashi; Ibn Ezra; Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Part 1: From Adam to Noah* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1959), 13; Nahum Sarna, *Genesis: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 6; E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, AB 1 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 3; Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed., OTL (Louisville: Westminster, 1972), 50; Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 76, 107–8.

¹³ Carr, “Genesis in Relation to the Moses Story,” 283n35; Gary Edward Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021), xxiv; Joshua Joel Spoelstra, *Life Preservation in Genesis and Exodus: An Exegetical Study of the Tebā of Noah and Moses*, CBET 98 (Leuven: Peeters, 2020).

¹⁴ The words “cover” and “pitch” are not the same in Genesis 6:14 and Exodus 2:3, but the actions serve similar purposes in the narratives.

¹⁵ Reading with an eye to more parallels is what Ben-Porat refers to as the “activation of the evoked text as a whole, in an attempt to form maximum intertextual patterns.” Ziva Ben-Porat, “The Poetics of Literary Allusion,” *PTL* 1 (1976): 111.

of time represented in the macrostructure structure of Genesis: Noah in the Primeval History, and Abraham in the Patriarchal History.¹⁶ In Rendtorff's words,

The concept of covenant "stands as the most widely used of the concepts, or analogies, to express the nature of the relationship between" God and Israel. It is mainly used with regard to the three points in God's history with humanity and with Israel in particular that are recorded in the Pentateuch: with Noah, with Abraham, and with Israel represented by Moses.¹⁷

The phrase *אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אֶקְמָהּ* ("I will establish my covenant"), in fact, is found only in the Pentateuch, and only with reference to Noah, Abraham, and Moses (Gen 6:18; 9:9, 11; 17:7, 19; Exod 6:4; see also Lev 26:9; Deut 8:18). Rendtorff likens the reestablishment of the Mosaic covenant after the sin of the golden calf to Noah's establishment of the covenant after the flood.¹⁸ Perhaps God's covenant with Abram in Genesis 17, following on the heels of Abram's lapse of faith in Genesis 16, ought also to be read within the context of an analogy to the making of the covenants following the flood and the golden calf narratives.

More parallels emerge between Noah and Moses when we consider the description of Noah's construction of the ark. Noah and Moses are the only individuals in the Pentateuch who are commanded to build structures (ark/tabernacle) based upon heavenly blueprints.¹⁹ In fact, the four words for measurement used in Genesis 6:15 (*אָמָה, אַרְבָּ, רַחֵב, קוֹמָה*) are used elsewhere only for measurements of Israel's sanctuaries (Gen 6:15; Exod 25:10, 23; 27:1, 18; 30:2; 37:1, 10, 25; 38:1, 18; 1 Kgs 6:2, 20; 7:2, 27; 2 Chr 4:1; 6:13). The phrase "inside out" (*מִבֵּית וּמַחוּץ*) in Genesis 6:14 is used only three other times in the Hebrew Bible, also in the context of Israel's sanctuaries (Exod 25:11; 37:2; 1 Kgs 7:9). God's command to Noah to bring ritually clean animals for sacrifice (Gen 7:2, 8; 8:20) is anachronistic (clumsy) within the Pentateuch's own narrative-historical timeline (see Lev 20:25) and likely serves as a sign of the allusion linking Noah's covenantal sacrifice on Mount Ararat (Gen 8:4, 20; 9:9) with Moses's covenantal sacrifice at Mount Sinai (Exod 24:4–6).

3. *Moses in the Abram Narratives.* In an earlier study, I argued that an extended narrative analogy exists between Abram in Genesis 11–16 and Israel in Exodus 5–24.²⁰ While I believe the literary evidence strongly supports this thesis, I here note two lacunae in my earlier research. First, though arguing for an analogy between Abram and Israel, I failed to see how some of these connections are better explained with reference to Moses. Second, though noting the presence of several

¹⁶ Rolf Rendtorff, "Noah, Abraham and Moses: God's Covenant Partners," in *In Search of True Wisdom: Essays in Old Testament Interpretation in Honour of Ronald E. Clements*, ed. Edward Ball, JSOTSup 300 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 128; see also Jub. 6:17–19; 14:20.

¹⁷ Rendtorff, "Noah, Abraham and Moses," 133. The quoted material is from R. E. Clements, *Old Testament Theology: A Fresh Approach* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1978), 96.

¹⁸ Rendtorff, "Noah, Abraham and Moses," 135; Rendtorff, "Covenant as a Structuring Concept in Genesis and Exodus," *JBL* 108.3 (1989): 389.

¹⁹ Spoelstra, *Life Preservation in Genesis and Exodus*, 98.

²⁰ Postell, "Abram as Israel," 161–82.

ungrammaticalities, I failed to consider the significance of the fact that they all are in Genesis.

From a bird’s-eye view, the Abram Narratives in Genesis 11–16 are analogous to Exodus 5–24.²¹

1. Building a city of bricks outside the land of Canaan and subsequent scattering (chart 1)	Gen 11:1–9	Exod 5:1–21
2. The protagonist goes down to and is miraculously delivered from Egypt (chart 2)	Gen 12:10–13:4	Gen 43–Exod 14
3. The protagonist overcomes an “in-house” conflict [מְרִיבָה] due to a lack of resources (chart 3)	Gen 13:5–18	Exod 15:22–17:7
4. The protagonist is involved in an epic battle involving “Amalekites” (chart 4)	Gen 14:1–16	Exod 17:8–16
5. The protagonist is blessed by a “non-Israelite” priest (chart 5)	Gen 14:18–20	Exod 18
6. The protagonist mediates a divine covenant (chart 6)	Gen 15	Exod 19–24
7. The making of the covenant is immediately followed by a lapse of faith (chart 7)	Gen 16	Exod 32–33

While scholars, both ancient and modern, have noted numerous lexical and plot-structural links between Abram’s exodus from Egypt and Israel’s exodus,²² little or no attention has been given to the specific links between Abram and Moses.²³ Pharaoh’s words to the midwives, for example, are virtually identical with Abram’s words to Sarai, creating a direct analogy between the salvation of both Moses and Abram from the hands of the Pharaohs:

²¹ Postell, “Abram as Israel,” 164–73. The appendix of this paper provides a modified version of the comparative charts that highlight the Abram-Moses narrative analogies.

²² See for example, Ramban on Gen 12:6, 10; Jonathan Grossman, *Abraham: A Story of Journey* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: Yedioth Ahronoth, 2014), 58.

²³ Haim Hayun, “Between Bible and Midrash: The Story of Abram and Sarai in Egypt (Genesis 12:10–20) and the Story of Moses’ Birth (Exodus 2:1–10)” (Hebrew), *Shnaton* 26 (2020): 41–56.

“And it will be that the Egyptians will see you [כי יראו אתך] and will say, ‘This is his wife.’ And they will kill me and will let you live [והרגו אתי ואתך יחיו]” (Gen 12:12).

“And the king of Egypt said to the midwives of the Hebrew women . . .” And he said, “When you are helping the Hebrew women give birth and see [וראיתן] upon the stones he is a boy, you shall put him to death. And if she is a girl, let *her* live [אם בן הוא והמתן אותו ואם ילדה, תחיה]” (Exod 1:15–16).²⁴

The dispute (ריב) between Abram’s and Lot’s shepherds over a lack of resources after their departure from Egypt (Gen 13:3, 6–8, 10) may be intended as a prelude to the dispute between Moses and the people over a lack of resources after their departure from Egypt (Exod 17:1–3, 7; see chart 3). Essential to note is the use of the word מְרִיבָה in Genesis 13:8. It was Nahum Sarna who pointed out how מְרִיבָה “refer[s] exclusively to the controversies and grumblings of the people against their leader and against God over the lack of water during the wilderness wanderings,”²⁵ with the sole exception being Genesis 13:8.

Immediately following the מְרִיבָה in Genesis 13 and Exodus 17:1–7 are battle narratives (Gen 14; Exod 17:8–16) in which the Amalekites are mentioned (see chart 4). The likelihood of an analogy between these two stories is strengthened by the reference to the Amalekites in the Abram Battle Story (Gen 14:7) since Amalek’s birth is not narrated until Genesis 36:12. This strongly suggests that the reference to “Amalek” in Genesis 14 is used to signal an allusion to its analogous story in Exodus 17. In both battle stories, the protagonist (Abram/Moses) assembles troops and wins a decisive battle (Gen 14:14–15; Exod 17:9, 11–13).

The juxtaposition of Abram’s encounter with Melchizedek, a “non-Israelite” priest, after a battle (Gen 14:18–20) is striking when we consider how closely it parallels the narrative sequence of Jethro the “non-Israelite” priest’s appearance after Moses’s decisive battle against the Amalekites (Exod 18; see chart 5). If it is correct to draw an analogy between Melchizedek and Jethro,²⁶ then it is equally correct to draw an analogy between Abram and Moses. Noteworthy is the absence of an explanation for Melchizedek’s sudden appearance to Abram in Genesis 14:18–20, and the presence of an explanation of Jethro’s appearance to Moses in the analogous text of Exodus 18:2.

Immediately following Abram’s encounter with Melchizedek, God makes a covenant with Abram (Gen 15). Once again, the narrative sequence is remarkably similar to the making of the Sinai covenant, which follows just after Moses’s encounter with Jethro (Exod 19–24; see chart 6). The shared language between these two narratives is extensive, as is the parallelism in the plot-structure. Several schol-

²⁴ Translation mine.

²⁵ Sarna, *Genesis*, 98.

²⁶ John Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 280–81; Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch: Revelation, Composition, and Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 368–74.

ars have noted the remarkable similarity between God's self-revelation to Abram in Genesis 15:7 and God's self-revelation to Moses in Exodus 20:2.²⁷ An obviously "clumsy" detail in God's self-revelation to Abram is the description of bringing him out of Ur of the Chaldeans (אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים). Nowhere in the preceding narratives is God described as bringing Abram out (הוֹצִיא) of Ur of the Chaldeans. On the contrary, God is the one who commands Abram to leave Haran (Gen 12:1, 4–5; see also 11:31). This term "bring out," however, is stock language within the Exodus Narrative (Exod 3:10–12; 6:6–7, 13, 26–27; 7:4–5; 12:17, 39, 42, 51; 13:3, 9, 14, 16; 16:6, 32; 18:1; 19:17; 20:2). Genesis 15:17 also describes the appearance of an "oven of smoke" (עֶשֶׂן) and a "torch" (לֶפֶיד) of fire, a word pair used only one other time in the Hebrew Bible: Exodus 20:18.²⁸ This imagery is not explained in the immediate context. Only when the reader identifies the parallel story in Exodus 19–24, the making of the Sinai Covenant, does the imagery in Genesis 15 make sense, and the one passing through the pieces (Gen 15:17) is positively identified.

The literary parallels linking the making of the Abrahamic and Sinai Covenants also lend themselves to be interpreted as an Abram-Moses analogy. Of interest is the disagreement between Jean-Louis Ska and John Van Seters as to whether Abram is portrayed like a prophet. While Ska argues that Abram is portrayed as a prophet like Moses,²⁹ Van Seters insists on the opposite conclusion:

So unlike Moses, who was sent to deliver his message to Pharaoh or to his own people, the patriarch's role is not prophetic in the least. Within the larger context of the patriarchal stories, there is nothing in Gen 15 that suggests that Abraham is to be understood as a prophet.³⁰

Could it be, however, that Van Seters fails to account for the larger matrix of analogies to Moses in Genesis 15, as well as the other Abram-Moses analogies in the larger context? I suggest that the textually "clumsy" presentation of Abram as a prophet (see Gen 15:1) strengthens the analogy between Abram and Moses.

4. *Moses in the Joseph Narrative.* Several links suggest that Joseph is depicted as a type of Moses. Jon D. Levenson lists eight literary and thematic parallels between Moses and Joseph.³¹ First, the description of Moses's vocation at the time when God calls him is, in the Hebrew text, "strikingly reminiscent of the beginning of the Joseph story" (compare Genesis 37:2b with Exodus 3:1a). Both men start as literal

²⁷ Joshua G. Mathews, *Melchizedek's Alternative Priestly Order: A Compositional Analysis of Genesis 14:18–20 and Its Echoes throughout the Tanak*, BBRSup 8 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013); Kenneth Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, NAC 1B (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 170; John Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Revised Edition, vol. 1: Genesis–Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 173; Sarna, *Genesis*, 114.

²⁸ Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 176.

²⁹ Jean-Louis Ska, "Some Groundwork on Genesis 15," in *The Exegesis of the Pentateuch: Exegetical Studies and Basic Questions*, FAT 66 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 67–81.

³⁰ John Van Seters, *The Yahwist: A Historian of Israelite Origins* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 219.

³¹ Jon D. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 144.

shepherds before they become metaphorical shepherds (Gen 37:2; Exod 3:1). Genesis 37:2 and Exodus 3:1 are the only two verses in the entire Hebrew Bible with this syntactical and semantic construction: “X [personal name] was shepherding [*gatal* 3 m.s. + participle m.s. + direct object marker + “flock”].” Second, Moses and Joseph are separated from their families at a young age. Third, both figures are survivors of plots to take their lives (הרג; Exod 2:15; Gen 37:20). Fourth, both are exiled from their people. Fifth, both marry daughters of a Gentile priest (Exod 2:16, 21; Gen 41:45). Sixth, both beget two sons in exile. And in both cases, the naming of the sons serves as a reminder of God’s comforting presence in exile (compare Exodus 2:22 and 18:3–4 with Genesis 41:50–52). Seventh, they both leave Egypt together, one dead, the other alive (Exod 13:19).

Levenson notes an eighth—and in his estimation, the most important—parallel between Moses and Joseph. He writes, “But most important, both of them are commissioned by God to lead and provision an unruly people with a pronounced proclivity to reject their leaders.”³² Levenson does not elaborate, but there is a marked resemblance between the antagonistic rhetorical questions emanating from Moses’s fellow slave and Joseph’s ill-intentioned brothers:

“But he said, ‘Who made you a prince or a judge over us?’” (Exod 2:14).

“Then his brothers said to him, ‘Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us?’” (Gen 37:8).

In both cases the shared antagonism toward the God-ordained ruler comes just prior to a physical separation from God’s people.

Several more parallels ought to be added to Levenson’s list. Moses and Joseph are the only two people in the Hebrew Bible who are described as “Hebrew youth” (נער עברי / מילדי העברים ... נער) who “come/are brought to Pharaoh/the daughter of Pharaoh” (ותבאָהוּ לְבַת־פַּרְעֹה / וַיָּבֹא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה) and given Egyptian names by Pharaoh/the daughter of Pharaoh (וַיִּקְרָא פַּרְעֹה שְׁמֵי־יוֹסֵף צְפֹנָת פַּעֲנֹחַ / וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ מֹשֶׁה).³³ Moses and Joseph are both described as good-looking (Exod 2:2; Gen 39:6). Both men are Hebrew slaves providentially raised up by God within Pharaoh’s court to become mighty rulers. Both men are Hebrews who are mistaken for Egyptians (Gen 42:8, 23; Exod 2:19). And finally, Moses’s rise to power begins after Pharaoh’s *third* attempt to stop Israel from multiplying in Egypt. Similarly, Joseph’s rise to power begins after a *third* set of dreams.

5. *Moses in the final blessing of Jacob.* The likelihood of an overarching literary strategy of Moses analogies in Genesis is bolstered by the presence of a narrative analogy with Moses in the final chapters of Genesis, serving as a frame/inclusio embracing the entire book. Genesis begins (1:1–2:3) and ends (47–50) with an

³² Levenson, *Death and Resurrection*, 144.

³³ Gen 41:12, 14, 45; Exod 2:5–6, 10.

analogy with Moses. Several scholars have pointed out the similarities between Jacob's and Moses's final testaments.³⁴ In Christophe Nihan's words,

Genesis and Deuteronomy are both closed by a blessing of the 12 tribes (Gen 49//Deut 33) followed by the death of the main character who pronounced the blessing (Jacob and Moses respectively) and a notice of his burial (Gen 50//Deut 34).³⁵

In addition to the abundance of shared language in the poems of Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33,³⁶ there are also several lexical and plot-structural parallels in the narratives themselves. As I stated in my earlier study,

Jacob and Moses both find themselves in exile with God's people at the end of their lives.... Both figures are aware they will soon die and be "gathered to their people" (Gen 49:29; Deut 32:50) and "lie down with their fathers" (Gen 47:30; Deut 31:16). Jean Pierre Sonnet and Nihan point to striking similarities between Gen 47:29 and Deut 31:14, where the "days of" (ימי) both men have "drawn near (ויקרבו) to die (למות)," an expression nowhere else attested in the Pentateuch.³⁷ Nihan and Sonnet fail to mention another parallel between Gen 47:29 and Deut 31:14: in both places, Jacob and Moses "call" (ויקרא) a new leader (Joseph/Joshua) to fill their places of leadership after their deaths. Both men speak of or are spoken to about the "land of Canaan" just prior to their deaths (Gen 49:30; Deut 32:49). Both men bless the tribes of Israel just before their deaths in the form of lengthy, macro-structurally strategic poems (Gen 49:1; Deut 33:1). The content of these blessings relates to the "last days" (Gen 49:1; Deut 31:29) and a coming king from the tribe of Judah (Gen 49:8–12; Deut 33:5, 7). Both poems share an enormous amount of inner-textuality. Both leaders are bitterly mourned at their deaths (Gen 50:10–11; Deut 34:8b) and are buried (Gen 50:5, 6, 7, 13, 14; Deut 34:6). Finally, Jacob is the first "Israelite" in the Pentateuch to die in exile and Moses is the last.³⁸

II. SOME PRELIMINARY IMPLICATIONS OF READING GENESIS, SEEING MOSES

In the second major part of this study, I consider three preliminary implications of reading Genesis and seeing Moses. The first has to do with the directionality of the allusions; the second has to do with the function of Moses in the macro-

³⁴ Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, trans. Mark Edward Biddle (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997), 450–51; Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus*, FAT 2/25 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2007), 71; Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 142–48, Konrad Schmid, *Genesis and the Moses Story: Israel's Dual Origins in the Hebrew Bible*, trans. James D. Nogalski, Siphut 3 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 84–85.

³⁵ Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 71.

³⁶ Hans Ulrich Steymans, "The Blessings in Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33: Awareness of Intertextuality," in *South African Perspectives on the Pentateuch between Synchrony and Diachrony*, ed. Jurie le Roux and Eckart Otto, LHOTS 463 (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 71–89.

³⁷ Jean-Pierre Sonnet, *The Book within the Book: Writing in Deuteronomy*, BIS 14 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 204–5; Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 71–72n11.

³⁸ Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 144–45.

structure of Genesis and in the macrostructure of the Pentateuch as a whole; and the final implication has to do with the importance of Moses for the theological interpretation of the Pentateuch.

In terms of directionality, we have seen how Moses is anticipated by every major figure in Genesis, from the first chapter until the last (God, Noah, Abram, Joseph, and Jacob). Noteworthy is the fact that the ungrammaticalities discussed in this study all appear in Genesis. Though Michael Riffaterre did not intend ungrammaticality to be used as an indicator of directionality, Cynthia Edenburg realized the potential of ungrammaticality for determining the direction of literary dependency.³⁹ Jeffrey Leonard summarizes Edenburg's work quite well.⁴⁰

1. Does an element of one text motivate the "shape, formula or topic" of the other?
2. Does the comprehension of one text depend on knowledge of the other?⁴¹

Based on these observations, it appears that Genesis is the alluding text.⁴² Consider the following. (1) The reference to **רִיחַ אֱלֹהִים** in Genesis 1:2 is not fully intelligible apart from its parallel story (Moses and Bezalel); (2) The reference to clean animals in the Flood Narrative (Gen 7:2, 8; 8:20) is meaningless apart from the parallels with Moses; (3) One can easily conceive of an abbreviated form of the Exodus Narrative that includes a reference to "plagues" in Genesis 12, but one would be hard-pressed to explain how a brief story about Abram's sojourn in Egypt could have birthed the entire Exodus Narrative;⁴³ (4) The reference to **מְרִיבָה** in Genesis 13:8 appears to be chosen specifically by the author to signal the allusion, considering that this word is used elsewhere only in connection with Israel's grumblings against Moses (Gen 13:8; Exod 17:7; Num 20:13, 24; 27:14; Deut 32:51; 33:8); (5) The anachronistic reference to the Amalekites in Genesis 14:7 (see Gen 36:12) is only explicable with reference to its purpose of signaling an allusion to Moses's defeat of the Amalekites (Exod 17:8–11, 13–14, 16); (6) Melchizedek's sudden and "clumsy" appearance in a narrative about Abram and the king of Sodom (Gen 14:18–20) is likely intended to mark an allusion to Jethro's meeting with Moses, the purpose of which is explained in the text (Exod 18:2); (7) God's self-identification as the one who "brought Abram out" of Ur in Genesis 15:7 makes no sense apart from the story of Israel's exodus; (8) The symbolism of the "torch" and "smoke" in Genesis 15:17 is left unexplained in the narrative and seemingly serves no other purpose but to mark an allusion to the parallel story of the making of the Sinai Covenant in Exodus (Exod 20:18).

³⁹ Edenburg, "How (Not) to Murder a King," 73–74.

⁴⁰ Leonard, "Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Intertextuality," 117.

⁴¹ Leonard provides a fuller list of criteria for determining directionality: "(1) Does one text claim to draw on another? (2) Are there elements in the texts that help to fix their dates? (3) Is one text capable of producing the other? (4) Does one text assume the other? (5) Does one text show a general pattern of dependence on other texts? (6) Are there rhetorical patterns in the texts that suggest that one text has used the other in an exegetically significant way?" Leonard, "Identifying Inner-Biblical Allusions," 258.

⁴² I am aware that more research needs to be done in the narrative analogies with Jacob and Joseph.

⁴³ See Kline, "Intimations of Jacob, Judah, and Joseph in the Stories of King David," 25–26.

The ungrammaticalities in Genesis are not only indicators of directionality, but also suggest that reading Genesis requires a knowledge of the stories about Moses to fill in the narrative gaps. The gaps in Genesis are an essential part of its textual strategy, which suggests that Genesis was never intended to be read in isolation from the rest of the Pentateuch.

Though more research must be done in terms of the implications of Moses's analogies in Genesis for source-critical theories (e.g., are the individual Moses analogies in Genesis limited to one supposed source, or do they cross the source-critical boundaries and depend on the redacted version of the sources, etc.?), it is difficult to ignore the all-embracing compositional nature of the Moses analogies in the final form of Genesis and the Pentateuch. Given that the book of Genesis is framed by narrative analogies with Moses (Gen 1; 47–50), we can say with a degree of confidence that the final form of Genesis was made with Moses in mind. Moreover, this study of narrative analogies in Genesis provides strong support for Rolf Knierim's thesis that Moses serves as the unifying figure of the entire Pentateuch.⁴⁴

What, then, is the relationship of these two parts? It should be evident that the "Pentateuch" focuses heavily on the time of Moses, and compared with this focus only preliminarily on the time before Moses. And since in its historical perspective both times are connected, the conclusion is inevitable that the "Pentateuch" as a whole is a work about the time of Moses in which Genesis, the time before Moses, is the introduction, the prelude, the preparation, or the prehistory. The book of Genesis is not the center of this work, nor is it equal in perspective to Exodus–Deuteronomy, much as it is read and discussed. Nor is it a work meant to be understood apart from the following main work. It is the introduction to the time of Moses and receives its meaning from Exodus–Deuteronomy.⁴⁵

A final implication I would like to discuss is the importance of Moses for the theological interpretation of the Pentateuch. It is worth pointing out that John Sailhamer's understanding of the theology of the Pentateuch, which has had a major influence on my own, puts much weight upon Knierim's conclusion regarding the biographical nature of the Pentateuch. According to Sailhamer, the Pentateuch

devotes its attention more to the individual Moses than to the nation of Israel. Hence its overall purpose in all likelihood should be understood in relationship more to the life of Moses per se than to the history of the nation. As such it is reasonable to conclude that the Pentateuch reads much like, and apparently aims to be, a biography.⁴⁶

But Sailhamer disagrees with Knierim about the role of Genesis. Sailhamer argues that the Primeval History (Genesis 1–11) and the Patriarchal Narratives (Genesis 12–50) do not belong to Moses's biography, but ought to be read as biographies

⁴⁴ Rolf Knierim, "The Composition of the Pentateuch," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1985 Seminar Papers*, ed. Kent Harold Richards, SBLSPS 24 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 395.

⁴⁵ Knierim, "The Composition of the Pentateuch," 395.

⁴⁶ Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 62.

“set over against the biography of Moses.”⁴⁷ In Sailhamer’s theological assessment, the contrast between Abraham (who lived before the law) and Moses (who lived under the law) becomes the central object lesson for the Pentateuch’s theology.⁴⁸ It is not clear, however, why the biographies of the people who lived before Abraham are not factored into his theological equation, nor why the biographies of Jacob and Joseph are excluded. This exclusion is quite surprising when we consider the fact that the *tôledôt* of Jacob (Gen 37:2–50:26 = 8535 words) is considerably longer than that of Terah (Gen 11:27–25:11 = 7220 words).

Though I concur with Sailhamer about the importance of the contrast between Abraham’s faith (Gen 15:6) and Moses’s lack of faith (Num 20:12) for the theology of the Pentateuch,⁴⁹ this paper has shown that his focus only on the differences between these two figures needs further qualification. No doubt narrative analogies have a variety of functions, one of which is to critique the analogous figure.⁵⁰ Yet more attention must be given to the numerous similarities between Moses and Abraham as well. Moreover, and more specifically tied to the findings of this study, any assessment about the meaning of the Pentateuch must factor in the parallels and the contrasts to all the key figures in Genesis with Moses as well. The story of Moses plays a significant role throughout the book of Genesis, both in the Primeval History and in the Patriarchal Narratives.

Time and space prohibit me from proposing a theology that takes seriously the enormous role Moses plays in the canonical Pentateuch. What I hope this article does make clear, however, is that reading Genesis requires Moses to interpret all its narratives correctly and to appreciate the meaning of the Pentateuch in its final form. Considering the importance of Moses in Genesis, I can also say with some measure of confidence that the final books in the Hebrew Bible provide a more accurate title for the “Pentateuch” than all other scholarly suggestions to date: “Then they appointed the priests to their divisions and the Levites in their orders for the service of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in **the book of Moses** (Ezra 6:18; see Neh 13:1; 2 Chr 25:4; 35:12).

⁴⁷ Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 66.

⁴⁸ Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 92.

⁴⁹ Hans-Christoph Schmitt, “Redaktion des Pentateuch im Geiste der Prophetie,” *VT* 32.2 (1982): 170–89.

⁵⁰ Yair Zakovitch, *Through the Looking Glass: Reflection Stories in the Bible* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: HaKibbutz HaMeuhad, 1995); Seth Postell, “Potiphar’s Wife in David’s Looking Glass: Reading 2 Samuel 11–12 as a Reflection Story of Genesis 39,” *TynBul* 71.1 (2020): 95–113.

APPENDIX: COMPARISON CHARTS OF ABRAM AND MOSES

What follows presents a modified version of charts I produced earlier⁵¹ that highlight unique language and/or common words in identical plot-structures.

Chart 1: Building a city of bricks outside the land of Canaan and subsequent scattering

<p>“And each person said to his fellow, ‘Let us make bricks [נלבנה לבנים] and fire them by fire.’ And they had the brick for stone and bitumen for mortar” (Gen 11:3).</p>	<p>“And you must not continue giving the people straw for making bricks [ללבן הלבנים] as days past. Let them go and gather straw for themselves” (Exod 5:7).</p>
<p>“And the LORD scattered them from there upon the face of all the land [ויפץ היה אתם משם על פני כל הארץ] and they ceased building the city” (Gen 11:8).</p>	<p>“And the people scattered in all the land [ויפץ העם בכל ארץ] of Egypt” (Exod 5:12).</p>

Chart 2: The protagonist goes down to and is miraculously delivered from Egypt

<p>Famine in the land precipitates a sojourn in Egypt</p>	<p>“And Abram took [ויקח] Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions they had acquired [ואת כל רכושם אשר רכשו], and the people they acquired in Haran, and they went out to go to the land of Canaan. And they came to the land of Canaan.... And there was a famine in the land. And Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, because the famine was severe in the land [כבד הרעב בארץ]” (Gen 12:5, 10).</p>	<p>“And all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.... And the children of Israel came to buy among the others who came because the famine was in the land of Canaan.... And the famine was severe in the land [והרעב כבד בארץ].... And they took [ויקחו] their livestock and their possessions they had acquired [ואת רכושם אשר רכשו] in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him” (Gen 41:57; 42:5; 43:1 46:6).</p>
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⁵¹ Postell, “Abram as Israel,” 164–73.

<p>The male protagonist is threatened, and the woman is permitted to live</p>	<p>“And it will be that the Egyptians will see you [כי יראו אתך] and will say, “This is his wife.” And they will kill me and will let you live [והרגו אתי]” (Gen 12:12).</p>	<p>“And the king of Egypt said to the midwives of the Hebrew women.... And he said, “When you are helping the Hebrew women give birth and see [וראיתן] upon the stones he is a boy, you shall put him to death. And if she is a girl, let <i>her</i> live [אם בן הוא והמתן אותו ואם בת היא וחייה]” (Exod 1:15–16).</p>
<p>People of promise are taken against their will into Pharaoh’s service</p>	<p>“And the princes of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh’s house” (Gen 12:15).</p>	<p>“And they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. And they built store cities for Pharaoh, Pithom and Raamses” (Exod 1:11).</p>
<p>God afflicts Pharaoh with plagues, and the people of promise are sent away from Egypt</p>	<p>“And the LORD plagued [וינגע] Pharaoh with great plagues [נגעים] and his house, because of Sarai, Abram’s wife.... And Pharaoh put him in the care of men, and they sent him away [וישלחו] with his wife and all that he had” (Gen 12:17, 20).</p>	<p>“And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Still one more plague [נגע] I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will send you away [ישלח] from here. When he sends you away [כשלאחז], he will drive you away from here completely” (Exod 11:1).</p>
<p>The people of promise and others with them go up from Egypt to the Land of Promise with the wealth of Egypt</p>	<p>“And Abram went up [ויעל] from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him [ולוט עמו], to the Negeb. And Abram was very heavy in livestock, in silver, and in gold [כבד]” (Gen 13:1–2).</p>	<p>“And the people of Israel did as Moses told them, and they requested from the Egyptians silver [כסף] and articles of gold [זהב] and clothing.... And a mixed multitude [ערב רב] also went up [עלה] with them, and flocks and herds, very heavy in livestock [מקנה כבד מאד]” (Exod 12:35, 38).</p>

Chart 3: The protagonist solves a conflict [מריבה] over a lack of resources

<p>“And he went by daily marches [וילך לַמַּסְעִיּוֹ] from the Negeb ... and the land could not support them to dwell together.... And there was a dispute [ריב] between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock.... And Abram said to Lot, “Let there be no strife [מריבה] between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are brothers.”... And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that all of it was well watered—before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah—like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt [כארץ מצרים] as you go to Zoar” (Gen 13:3, 6–8, 10).</p>	<p>“And all the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by daily marches [למסעיהם] ... [ויסעו], by the LORD’s command, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. And the people disputed [וירב] with Moses and said, ‘Give us water to drink.’ And Moses said to them, ‘Why do you dispute with me? Why do you test the LORD?’ And the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, ‘Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt [ממצרים], to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?’... And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah [מריבה], because of the dispute [ריב] of the people of Israel” (Exod 17:1–3, 7).</p>
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Chart 4: The protagonist wins a decisive battle involving the Amalekites

<p>“And the Horites [החרי] in their hill country of Seir as far as El-paran bordering the wilderness. And they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh) and struck all the country of the Amalekites [ויכו אתיכל-שדה העמלקי], and also the Amorites who were dwelling in Hazazon-tamar” (Gen 14:6–7).</p>	<p>“And Joshua did as Moses told him, to fight with Amalek [בעמלק], and Moses, Aaron, and Hur [חור] went to the top of the hill” (Exod 17:10).</p>
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Chart 5: The protagonist is blessed by a “non-Israelite” priest

<p>Appearance of a gentile priest after a successful military campaign and prior to the making of a covenant (Gen 14:18–20; Exod 17:16–18:1)</p>	<p>“And the king of Sodom went to meet him after his return from defeating Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, to the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the Valley of the King). And Melchizedek,</p>	<p>“The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. And Jethro, the priest of Midian [כהן מדין], Moses’s father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel</p>
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	king of Salem, brought out [הוציא] bread and wine, and he was priest of God Most High” (Gen 14:17–18).	his people, that the LORD brought Israel out [הוציא] of Egypt” (Exod 17:16–18:1).
Gentile priest offers bread to the victorious party (Gen 14:18; Exod 18:12)	“And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread [לחם] and wine, and he was priest of God Most High” (Gen 14:18).	“And Jethro, Moses’s father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices to God; and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread [לחם] with Moses’s father-in-law before God” (Exod 18:12).
Gentile priest blesses God for protecting the victorious party (Gen 14:19–20; Exod 18:9–10)	“And he blessed him and said, ‘Blessed [ברוך] be Abram to God Most High, who created the heavens and the earth. And blessed be God Most High who handed over your enemies into your hand [-וברוך אל עליון אשר-].’ And he gave him a tenth from everything” (Gen 14:19–20).	“And Jethro rejoiced about all the good which the LORD did for Israel, how he saved him from the hand of Egypt [הצילו מיד מצרים]. And Jethro said, ‘Blessed [ברוך] is the LORD who rescued you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of Pharaoh, who rescued the people out from under the hand of Egypt. [הציל אתכם מיד מצרים ומיד פרעה אשר הציל את־העם מתחת יד־מצרים]” (Exod 18:9–10).
Gentile priest presents an offering in honor of the divine victory (Gen 14:18; Exod 18:12)	“And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine, and he was priest of God Most High” (Gen 14:18).	“And Jethro, Moses’s father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices to God” (Exod 18:12).
Gentile priest granted a more authoritative role than the victorious party (Gen 14:20; Exod 18:24)	“And he gave him a tenth from everything” (Gen 14:20).	“And Moses obeyed his father-in-law and did all that he said” (Exod 18:24).
Both passages share the root שלם (Gen 14:18;	“And Melchizedek, king of Salem [שלם], brought	“And each asked the other of their welfare

Exod 18:7, 23)	out bread and wine” (Gen 14:18).	[לשלוֹם] and went into the tent” (Exod 18:7). “And all this people also will go to their place in peace [בשלוֹם]” (Exod 18:23).
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Chart 6: The protagonist mediates a divine covenant

Both “covenant narratives” emphasize the importance of “believing” (Gen 15:6; Exod 19:9)	“And he believed the LORD [והאמֵן ביהוה], and he reckoned it to him as righteousness” (Gen 15:6).	“And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Behold, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you [בְּךָ יֵאֱמִינֶנּוּ] forever” (Exod 19:9).
Both “covenant narratives” include a unique statement of God’s self-revelation (Gen 15:7; Exod 20:2)	“And he said to him, ‘I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans [אני יהוה אשר הוצאתיך מאור] to give you this land to possess” (Gen 15:7).	“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt [אנכי יהוה אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ], out of the house of slavery” (Exod 20:2).
In the making of the covenant, the reciprocal party experiences terrible dread and darkness (Gen 15:12, 17; Exod 20:18, 21)	“As the sun was setting, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him.... When the sun had set and there was darkness” (Gen 15:12, 17).	“And all the people saw the thunder and the lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, and the people saw and trembled, and they stood far away.... And the people stood far away, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness” (Exod 20:18, 21).
In the making of the covenant, God appears to the reciprocal party in fire, smoke, and a torch (Gen 15:17; Exod 19:18; 20:18)	“When the sun had set and there was darkness, behold, a fire pot of smoke [תנור עשן] and a torch of fire [לפיד אש] passed between these pieces” (Gen 15:17).	“And Mount Sinai was engulfed in smoke [עשן] because the LORD descended upon it in the fire [אש], and its smoke [עשן] ascended like the smoke of a kiln [כעשן]

		<p>הכבשן].... And all the people saw the thunder and lightning [לפידים] and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking [עשן]” (Exod 19:18; 20:18).</p>
<p>The making of the covenant itself</p>	<p>“On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram” (Gen 15:18).</p>	<p>“And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you”’ (Exod 24:8).</p>