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AN OVERLOOKED ASPECT OF JUDAH'S SPEECH IN GENESIS 44:18–34

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Abstract: *Judah's speech at Genesis 44:18–34 prompts the climactic moment of the Jacob* tôledôt *(37:2–50:26): Joseph's self-revelation (45:1). Thereafter the plot-structure enters its dénouement, with the reconciliation of the family (45:3, 10) and the blessing of Jacob's sons (48:15–16, 20; 49:3–27). Occupying such a pivotal place in the narrative, the question of efficacy becomes central: why was Judah's speech so powerful? Previous attempts to analyze the speech have employed various rubrics derived from the domain of literary criticism. However, none has properly acknowledged the salient feature of the speech: metadiegetic narrative. This article contends that through Judah's extensive use of this elevated narrative level, Judah creates a thematic correspondence with the prevailing context. Specifically, his speech forms a mirror image with Joseph's test. By unknowingly reciprocating the harsh treatment of his brother, Judah successfully prompts the end of the ordeal and Joseph's self-revelation. This overlooked aspect of Judah's speech serves to elucidate further both the theological themes of the Jacob* tôledôt *and the means by which plot-structures are construed within Hebrew narrative.*

Key words: *Judah's speech, Jacob* tôledôt*, Joseph, rhetoric, persuasion, metadiegesis, metadiegetic narrative, quoted-direct speech*

It is difficult to overstate the contribution of Judah's speech (Gen 44:18–34) to the plot-structure of the Jacob *tôledôt* (37:2–50:26).[1] As the patriarch's fourth-born son stands before the Egyptian lord, the narrative has reached a point of maximal tension. Beyond the immediate need for provisions (43:1–2), the prospect of Benjamin's incarceration (44:10, 17) and Jacob's demise (42:38) project a bleak future for the patriarchal line. For the reader, this tension is compounded by an awareness of the vizier's true identity. The protracted testing and desperation of the brothers have been engineered by the sibling whom they attempted to banish, Jo-

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[1] Genesis 37:2–50:26 is herein labelled as the Jacob *tôledôt* (rather than the Joseph Story), as an attempt to acknowledge the dynamics of the plot-structure, one that tells the story of the patriarch and his sons. Though Joseph is certainly a central figure in the narrative, it is not possible to comprehend the plot-structure without giving proper attention to Judah and Jacob among others. Regarding the textual division at 37:2, the *wayiqtol* clause at 37:1 (וַיֵּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן) forms a conceptual parallel with 36:8 (וַיֵּשֶׁב עֵשָׂו בְּהַר שֵׂעִיר), and the asyndetic clause at 37:2 (אֵלֶּה תֹּלְדוֹת יַעֲקֹב) indicates a new beginning. Furthermore, scholarship has affirmed the *tôledôt* formula as the primary structuring element of Genesis. An argument for this break is aptly made by Wido van Peursen, "Delimitation Markers, Chapter Division, Syntax and Literary Structure: The Case of Genesis 37:1–2," in *Textual Boundaries in the Bible: Their Impact on Interpretation*, ed. Marjo C. A. Korpel and Paul Sanders, Pericope (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 6–13.

seph. Thus, in a narrative whose primary concern is to establish the heir of Jacob,[2] the confrontation in Genesis 44 becomes representative of the issue that drives the story forward: will the favored-son or the fourth-born prevail?[3] Or, more broadly, will familial strife prohibit the appointment of Jacob's chosen heir?[4]

The success of Judah's speech is self-evident. Accomplishing more than the intended effect (44:33), his rhetorical efforts prompt the self-revelation of Joseph and reunification of the family (45:3, 10). His words precipitate the narrative's turning point, propelling the plot toward its dénouement. Therein Jacob will bless his sons and project a future for the patriarchal hope (48:15–16, 20; 49:3–27). Specifically, he will promise a future reign for the line of Judah (49:8–12). Rarely in biblical narrative is a singular event so determinative in the resolution of a crisis. Judah's speech forces the pivot about which the Jacob *tôledôt* swings, from potential disaster to assured prosperity.[5]

Of primary importance in the analysis of 44:18–34 is the question of efficacy: why were Judah's words so persuasive? Or, what about his speech endues it with such power? The question is important as it relates to our understanding of the Jacob *tôledôt*: a greater perception of the story's contours may elucidate further its theological truth. The issue also pertains more broadly to the consideration of plot and narrative continuity.[6] As scholarship continues to contest the readability of the

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[2] This understanding of the Jacob *tôledôt* derives in part from the emphasis afforded to the seed in Genesis. Noted well by Alexander, the establishment of זֶרַע as a *Leitwort* suggests a narrative concern to perpetuate the line of promise, beginning at 3:15. See T. Desmond Alexander, "Genealogies, Seed and the Compositional Unity of Genesis," *TynBul* 44.2 (1993): 255–70.

[3] That Joseph and Judah are the primary contenders to receive the firstborn blessing is implied by previous events pertaining to the first three sons of Jacob. Reuben forfeited his birthright by sleeping with his father's concubine (35:22; cf. 49:3–4). Similarly, Simeon and Levi dishonored their father through excessive violence (34:30; cf. 49:5–7). This renders Judah next-in-line to receive Jacob's special blessing, but Joseph is the favored son (37:3). This dynamic accounts for the prominence of Judah throughout the narrative, not least in the inclusion of Gen 38. With paratactical freedom the narrator introduces the Jacob *tôledôt* with a story of two brothers: the fourth-born of Jacob who must contend for the position of heir, and the first-born of Rachel who experiences of the crisis of exile.

[4] Notwithstanding the question of who will receive the blessing of the firstborn, Joseph's exile (as an outworking of fraternal strife) presents a crisis that beseeches resolution. Though many scholars have given attention to the theme of familial discord, it should be viewed as subservient to the greater question of Jacob's heir and the perpetuation of the line of the זֶרַע.

[5] Though not concerned to interpret the speech with reference to the prevailing plot-structure, von Rad, Sternberg, and Alter all pay heed to its narrative significance. Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 397; Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 308; Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 218.

[6] "Narrative continuity" is used here to refer to the perceived consistency developed across the sequential episodes of a story. Pentateuchal scholarship has typically identified it by virtue of repetition (of words or actions) or persistence (of a character or theme). However, the influence of literary criticism has prompted an interest in plot and its relationship to narrative continuity. See, for example, Jean Louis Ska, "What Do We Mean by Plot and by Narrative Continuity?," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America*, ed. Jan C. Gertz et al., FAT 111 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 201–22; Todd L. Patterson, *The Plot-structure of Genesis: "Will the Righteous Seed Survive?" in the* Muthos*-logical Movement from Complication to Dénouement*, BIS 160 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 1–11.

Pentateuch,[7] the imperative remains to understand better how its stories work. Probing the question of why Judah's speech was so effective may shed more light on the nature of biblical plot-structures, and the mechanisms by which narrative continuity is achieved.[8]

I. RECENT APPROACHES TO JUDAH'S SPEECH

Recent attempts to understand Judah's speech have employed various rubrics derived from the domain of literary criticism. Foremost among these include Grossman's use of therapeutic narrative theory,[9] Joosten's application of classical rhetoric,[10] and Bridge's use of linguistic politeness analysis.[11] Each approach subjects Judah's words to an externally derived hermeneutic in an attempt to understand its persuasive power. Notwithstanding the value of some conclusions drawn by these studies, the constraints of each theory prohibit an inductive assessment of the speech's form. Specifically, the aforementioned rubrics fail to give heed to the salient feature of the text: metadiegetic narrative.

By way of an introductory definition, metadiegetic narrative refers to a heightened level of narration, whereby a secondary story is constructed within the main plot-structure.[12] With respect to 44:18–34, the metadiegetic narrative takes the form of quoted-direct speech: Judah recounts the words of Jacob, Joseph, and him-

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[7] See for example, Baruch J. Schwartz, "Does Recent Scholarship's Critique of the Documentary Hypothesis Constitute Grounds for Its Rejection?," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research*, ed. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 3–16; Joel S. Baden, "Why Is the Pentateuch Unreadable?—Or, Why Are We Doing This Anyway?," in Gertz et al., *The Formation of the Pentateuch*, 243–52. Though recent attempts to revive the Documentary Hypothesis employ a different interpretive rubric than that of traditional source-critical efforts, the conclusions remain largely the same. The unity of the text is still contested, and by inference, its readability.

[8] Forster's often-used definition—"A plot is also a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality"—is insufficient to account for the complexity of stories in the Hebrew Bible. E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (1927; repr., London: Penguin, 2005), 87. Though chronology and causality are the primary mediators of plot, consideration should be given to the possibility of nonlinear mimetic modes. Increased understanding of ANE plot-structures will surely elucidate features of narrative continuity that have thus far been largely suppressed by the burdens of diachronic methods. Recent contributions that have espoused a more nuanced understanding of plot in Hebrew narrative include Barbara Green, "Enacting Imaginatively the Unthinkable: 1 Samuel 25 and the Story of Saul," *BibInt* 11.1 (2003): 1–23; Richard J. Clifford, "Genesis 38: Its Contribution to the Jacob Story," *CBQ* 66.4 (2004): 519–32; Brian O. Sigmon, "Shadowing Jacob's Journey: Gen 47:13–26 as a Sideshow," *BibInt* 19.4–5 (2011): 454–70; Peter Bekins, "Tamar and Joseph in Genesis 38 and 39," *JSOT* 40.4 (2016): 375–97.

[9] Jonathan Grossman, "The Story of Joseph's Brothers in Light of the 'Therapeutic Narrative' Theory," *BibInt* 21.1 (2013): 171–95.

[10] Jan Joosten, "Biblical Rhetoric as Illustrated by Judah's Speech in Genesis 44:18–34," *JSOT* 41.1 (2016): 15–30.

[11] Edward J. Bridge, "Polite Rhetoric: Judah's Plea to Joseph in Genesis 44:18–34," *JSOT* 43.4 (2019): 571–87.

[12] Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 231–34.

self in order to tell the story of the family's demise.[13] Often employed for persuasive effect,[14] it is instructive to note that eleven of the seventeen verses in Judah's speech sit at this elevated level of narration. Furthermore, it is significant that as Judah concludes his recounting of the past, a third level of narration is employed: the fourth-born quotes Jacob, quoting himself (44:28b). This preponderance of metadiegetic forms commends itself to the question of efficacy. As a primary feature of the speech, the careful manipulation of narrative levels should be examined for its rhetorical capacity.

To be sure, Savran draws attention to the extensive use of metadiegesis in his analysis of the text.[15] Though he is not concerned primarily with the question of persuasion, his observations give insight as to the significance of the speech's form. Building on Savran's work, this article contends that through the use of metadiegesis, Judah forms a thematic correspondence with Joseph's test. His speech creates a mirror image with aspects of the preceding narrative, thereby subjecting the vizier to an equivalent emotional ordeal. This thematic correspondence is an overlooked contributing factor to Judah's persuasive power. Before giving a defense of this claim, a brief review looks at conclusions drawn by Grossman, Joosten, and Bridge.

1. *Grossman and therapeutic narrative theory*. Grossman's analysis of Judah's speech sits within a broader examination of Genesis 42–45. He observes how various aspects of the family history are recounted five times, by different characters, during the brothers' journeys to and from Egypt. Grossman resists the traditional interpretive tact of comparing each speech with the narrator's version of events so as to reveal the hidden agenda of the speaker. Rather, he suggests, the multiple retellings of the past represent (and enable) a process of emotional change within the speaker. By offering a selective version of previous events, each character dispenses with agonizing details and preserves a more satisfactory history—one that equips him to flourish in the future.[16]

Grossman's approach draws from therapeutic narrative theory, a derivative of modern psychotherapy. According to this approach, the patient's reconstruction of history is viewed as an indicator of his emotional state. Moreover, each "new narrative" serves as a mechanism for dispensing with the "old narrative," thereby ena-

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[13] Savran's work remains the most extensive study of quoted-direct speech in the Hebrew Bible. His definition is helpful: "A character actually or purportedly speaks certain words in the course of a story; at a later point in the narrative those words are quoted aloud by the same character or by another, with specific reference to the original locution and the original speaker." George W. Savran, *Telling and Retelling: Quotation in Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 7.

[14] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 233; Jean Louis Ska, *"Our Fathers Have Told Us": Introduction to the Analysis of Hebrew Narratives*, SubBi 13 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1990), 52.

[15] Savran's initial analysis focuses on the two levels of "textual reality": the perspective of the characters and that of the reader. By virtue of Judah's role as a temporary narrator, a discrepancy between the two perspectives is created, which endues the speech with much of its significance. George W. Savran, "The Character as Narrator in Biblical Narrative," *Prooftexts* 5.1 (1985): 1–17. This work was later included in a more comprehensive study on quotation in biblical narrative, wherein his emphasis on the character-reader differential was less. Savran, *Telling*, 58–63, 87.

[16] Grossman, "Therapeutic Narrative," 175–77.

bling a progression in the therapeutic process.[17] Thus, Grossman suggests that the variations between Judah's version of events and the narrator's represent a deep emotional process in the fourth-born son.[18] Judah has released himself of previous fears and is now able to highlight Jacob's favoritism without anger or resentment. This progression then allows for the conclusion of the speech: Judah offers his life in place of Benjamin's (44:33).

Undoubtedly, Grossman should be commended for his efforts to explain the recapitulatory nature of Genesis 42–45 and to account for the various textual deviations. However, his commitment to therapeutic narrative theory causes him to overlook certain features of the plot-structure. First, by viewing Judah as the patient, the speech is rendered as an invitation to analyze his character. However, insomuch as Genesis 38 charted Judah's process of maturation,[19] the primary concern at Genesis 44 is no longer his immoral disposition, but the fate of the brothers in light of Joseph's testing. This should drive the analysis away from efforts to characterize and toward questions of persuasion. Second, therapeutic narrative theory predisposes Grossman to focus on variations between Judah's account of the past and the narrator's. Certainly, the recapitulatory nature of the speech warrants consideration. But Grossman neglects to consider other prominent features of the speech, not least its form. As such, he overlooks Judah's extensive use of quoted-direct speech.

2. *Joosten and classic rhetoric*. Joosten, acknowledging the persuasive intent of Judah's speech, proposes an analysis in accordance with the rules of classical rhetoric. He rightly notes the importance of the prevailing context and suggests that the *inventio* of speech is that of pleading the clemency of the court. For this reason, *pathos* is the determinative rubric: Judah intends to manipulate emotions rather than

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[17] Grossman, "Therapeutic Narrative," 175–77. In turn, Grossman is drawing from the work of Spence, who leads with the assumption that a patient is incapable of recounting objective, neutral knowledge. Rather, he or she constructs a "therapeutic narrative," born out of a desire to recover from an agonizing past. Donald P. Spence, *Narrative Truth and Historical Truth: Meaning and Interpretation in Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 1982), 27.

[18] Specifically, Grossman focuses on three differences between the narrator's version of events and that given by Judah. He notes that (1) Judah's opening gambit—"my lord asked his servants, saying, 'Do you have a father or brother?'" (44:19)—is nowhere previously mentioned; (2) likewise, Joseph's promise—"I shall keep my eye on him" (44:21)—is not previously reported; and (3) Judah neglects to mention Joseph's accusation against the brothers and his imprisonment of Simeon as critical reasons prompting their return to Egypt. Grossman, "Therapeutic Narrative," 187–89.

[19] Though the meaning and significance of Genesis 38 has been the subject of much debate, Patterson rightly notes a growing consensus: within the Jacob *tôledôt*, the episode portrays Judah's character development, which in turn serves the reconciliation of the family. Patterson, *Plot-Structure*, 188. For proponents of this view see, in particular, Anthony J. Lambe, "Judah's Development: The Pattern of Departure-Transition-Return," *JSOT* 24.83 (1999): 53–68; Clifford, "Genesis 38," 519–32; Hans-Georg Wünch, "Genesis 38—Judah's Turning Point: Structural Analysis and Narrative Techniques and Their Meaning for Genesis 38 and Its Placement in the Story of Joseph," *OTE* 25.3 (2012): 777–806. To this interpretation I would add that Judah's character transformation qualifies him to receive the blessing of the firstborn, since righteousness is a salient characteristic of the promised line throughout Genesis. See Alexander, "Genealogies," 264–65.

plead Benjamin's innocence or articulate a series of mitigating circumstances.[20] With respect to structure, Joosten finds close alignment between the speech and that prescribed by classical rhetoric: *exordium* (44:18), *narratio* (44:19–29), *confirmatio* (44:30–32), *peroratio* (44:33, 34). Similarly, concerning style, Joosten suggests that the precision, clarity, and adornment of Judah's argument further substantiate the interpretive rubric.[21]

Joosten is careful to highlight certain features of the text that have no counterpart in classical rhetoric, namely: (1) the omission of seemingly important details, (2) Judah's frequent invocation of his father, and (3) his willingness to communicate details contrary to fact. Joosten attempts to explain these aspects of the speech by appealing to the norms of biblical oratory. He reasons that Judah's reticence is a deliberate effort to win his interlocutor. If certain implications are left unstated, they must become a matter of "self-discovery" for the vizier. As such, he is less likely to find them offensive and will more readily embrace them. Joosten explains the frequent references to Jacob as an appeal to a "significant third." Predicated on the familial background of biblical speeches, Joosten suggests Judah is trying to develop a personal relationship with the vizier. By frequently invoking another party, he compounds the pathos of his words, and draws the vizier into the family circle. Finally, Joosten explains Judah's deviation from the facts by expounding the dialectic between persuasion and truth. In both biblical and classical rhetoric, a priority is placed on the intended communicative effect. As such, the facts are presented in such a way that the judge will be persuaded to accept the claim. Thus, Judah's speech is oriented toward the truth, but with the purpose of persuasion.[22]

Joosten's analysis is compelling, not least because of his insightful application of classical rhetoric. Questions pertaining to the date and origin of the Jacob *tôledôt* aside, it would seem that several features of Judah's speech do indeed adhere to the principles laid down by Aristotle. Furthermore, Joosten is commended for his efforts to explain those aspects of the text that appear alien to the persuasive techniques of Greek and Latin texts. Unlike Grossman, Joosten's appeal to biblical rhetoric ensures that the question of efficacy remains central. However, Joosten's analysis of the speech's form is lacking. Though he gives attention to the issues of precision, clarity, and adornment, his commitment to the rules of classical rhetoric prohibits a proper consideration of other features. Specifically, Joosten fails to account for Judah's propensity to quote others. This persistent stylistic accent should be examined as a possible contributing factor to the persuasive power of the speech.

3. *Bridge and linguistic politeness analysis.* Bridge attempts to build on Joosten's analysis by focusing more directly on form. Affirming the observations offered by classic rhetoric, Bridge analyzes the speech afresh, employing a theory of linguistic politeness. Specifically, he uses a model derived by Brown and Levinson that centers on the idea of "face-saving," and attempts to connect the public perception of

[20] Joosten, "Biblical Rhetoric," 21.
[21] Joosten, "Biblical Rhetoric," 22.
[22] Joosten, "Biblical Rhetoric," 23–30.

oneself with linguistic expression.[23] Stated simply, politeness is viewed as a mitigation device, used to preserve (or change) the view of the speaker held by others. As such, various expressions of deference become a means of persuasion.

Bridge suggests that the primary politeness strategy used by Judah is that of "master-slave deference," whereby the fourth-born son continually addresses the vizier by referring to "your servant/s—my lord" (44:18, 19, 33), "we—my lord" (44:20, 22, 24), or "your servant—you" (44:21, 23). Judah also issues a form of apology: "do not be angry with your servant" (44:18), and he exaggerates the extent of Joseph's power: "for you are equal to Pharaoh" (44:18). Regarding grammar, Bridge suggests the use of the jussive, with the particle of entreaty (יְדַבֶּר־נָא 44:18) and the additional בִּי (44:18), further point toward Judah's politeness. Finally, in the closing portion of the speech, Judah's use of first-person direct language and a question (44:34) ensure the perpetuation of his mitigating efforts.[24]

Though many consider Brown and Levinson's model outdated, Bridge's application of it provides an important supplement to the work of Joosten.[25] As with other pragmatic models, politeness theory prompts a consideration of the manner in which a speech is delivered. Bridge rightly notes that persuasion can be a derivative not only of content, but also of form. However, by adhering to Brown and Levinson's categories of positive and negative politeness, Bridge—like Grossman and Joosten—fails to give heed to the prevailing feature of the speech. By employing a predefined model, Bridge's deductive approach is too limited to account adequately for the complexity of the speech. Specifically, he overlooks the heightened levels of narration employed by Judah throughout.

II. METADIEGETIC NARRATIVE DEFINED

Narrative studies have long drawn attention to the difference between mimesis and diegesis: the representative (or imitative) act and the event of narration (or description), respectively. Concerning the latter, an important question is that of narrative level: where is the narrator in relation to the narrative world? Genette's categorization of the various possibilities is helpful: extradiegetic narrative portrays the narrator as being external to the story, intradiegetic narrative depicts him within the world he describes.[26] Despite a marked difference in style between these narration levels, they both portray a "one-dimensional" form of diegesis. The narrator describes the world that is before him or around him.

Occasionally a heightened form of narration occurs, whereby a character from within the story goes beyond a description of his surroundings. He recounts a

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[23] Bridge, "Polite Rhetoric," 574–79. Cf. Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 61–83.

[24] Bridge, "Polite Rhetoric," 581–85.

[25] Bridge acknowledges the subsequent research and criticism offered in response to Brown and Levinson's model. However, he contends for its applicability to Judah's speech based on a correspondence of taxonomies. Specifically, the face-saving model accounts for social relationships in which an inferior makes a request of his superior. Bridge, "Polite Rhetoric," 579–80.

[26] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 227–31.

previous event or tells a tale. He temporarily assumes the role of narrator and creates a second-level narrative that sits above the original story. Jesus's parables serve as a ready example; Jesus, not the Gospel narrator, tells the story, which itself goes beyond a mere report of the immediate context. First labelled by Genette as metadiegetic narrative, this form provokes a new question, namely, what is the relationship of the second-level narrative to the first? Or, how does the moment of metadiegesis interlock with the prevailing diegesis?

Considering its use within the Western tradition, Genette proposes three types of relationship: (1) the metadiegetic narrative explains the diegetic level, (2) it forges a thematic correspondence, or (3) no discernible relationship exists between the first and second-level narratives.[27] Though it is certainly possible to refine these categories further, they are sufficient as a starting point from which to understand the purpose of metadiegesis. If the second-level narrative is of the first variety—explaining the diegetic level—it usually does so in a causal manner. It attempts to understand how preceding events have led to the present situation. As such, the second-level narrative focuses on action (not character), expounding the plot-structure to the immediate audience. Metadiegesis of the second variety tends to be more metaphoric in nature, and it often possesses a didactic or persuasive intent. If the audience perceives the thematic correspondence, it is usually appended with a rhetorical punch. This kind of second-level narrative brings action and character together. Ideational parallels imply moral exhortation. Finally, metadiegesis of the third kind shifts attention from action to the character. Since the content bears no relation to the prevailing plot-structure, the metadiegetic speaker becomes the focal point. The immediate audience fixates on him, not his message.[28]

Mapping this rubric from Western literature to Hebrew narrative, a high level of correspondence is found. The Old Testament regularly makes use of second-level narration, as a character tells a story to those around him. Frequently the metadiegesis explains the diegetic level (e.g., Gen 24:34–49; Deut 1:6–3:29; Josh 4:6–7), sometimes it forges a thematic correspondence (e.g., Gen 41:17–24; Judg 9:8–15; 2 Sam 12:1–4).[29] Going beyond Genette's analysis, a particular form of metadiegesis can be noted in Hebrew narrative, one that arises from its propensity for repetition. As the Old Testament regularly develops its plot-structures through the recapitulation of ideas, themes, and motifs, so its characters often repeat words previously spoken. If such restatements take the form of quoted-direct speech, a second-level narrative is formed. Metadiegesis of this kind is often brief, in which case its significance to the prevailing plot-structure is slight. However, on occasion its use is extensive. Judah's speech serves as an example: eleven of the seventeen verses draw upon words previously spoken. Considering the aforementioned rhetorical capacity of metadiegetic narrative, this feature of the speech should not be

[27] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 232–34.

[28] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 232–34.

[29] Seemingly, there are no instances in the Old Testament of the third variety. Every second-level narrative bears some identifiable relationship to the prevailing diegesis.

overlooked.[30] By probing the relationship between first and second level narrations, the persuasive intent of the speech may be more fully understood. Indeed, proper consideration of Judah's metadiegesis evidences a thematic correspondence with the prevailing diegesis that sheds further light on the efficacy of his speech.

III. JUDAH'S SPEECH

The confrontation between Judah and Joseph in Genesis 44 comes after a prolonged period of testing for the brothers. The Egyptian vizier has accused his siblings of coming to spy on the land (Gen 42:9, 12); incarcerated them collectively (42:17), and Simeon individually (42:24); planted money in their sacks (42:25; 44:1); and engineered the permanent servitude of Benjamin (44:2, 10, 17). Acting as a leader amongst the brothers, Judah approaches Joseph to plead for an alternative. His goal is the release of Jacob's youngest son (44:33); the outcome is the self-revelation of Joseph (45:1).

Undoubtedly, the efficacy of Judah's efforts can be attributed in part to what he says. Judah compares the vizier to Pharaoh (44:18) and repeatedly juxtaposes אָדוֹן (44:18 [x2], 19, 20, 22, 24, 33) with עֶבֶד (44:18 [x2], 19, 21, 23, 24, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33). Judah also refrains from potentially negative insinuations about Joseph, neglecting to mention his false accusations (cf. 42:9, 12, 14; 43:4–5, 10, 15, 17) and harsh treatment of the brothers. However, another factor contributing to the persuasive nature of Judah's speech is surely its form. To make his case, Judah recounts the past, quoting words spoken by each major party. By retelling events in this way, the speech becomes an extended and comprehensive second-level narrative—the longest in Genesis.

Regarding the type of metadiegetic narrative, the fourth-born of Jacob is certainly explaining how events have led to the present situation as he rehearses previous interactions. However, at the same time, his persuasive intent is clear. Judah attempts to change the vizier's mind concerning the fate of Benjamin (44:33–34).[31] Thus, in accordance with Genette's definitions, it seems Judah's second-level narrative is a hybrid of categories 1 and 2, in that he forges both a causal chain and a thematic correspondence with the prevailing plot-structure.[32]

To understand better the rhetorical power of Judah's speech, the exact nature of this thematic correspondence should be explored. Can an analogous relationship be affirmed? If so, what nature of influence does it assert on the vizier? Closer

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[30] Savran draws attention to the unusual length of Judah's speech, noting that most cases of quoted-direct speech are 2–4 verses in length and cite only one or two previous discourses (e.g., Gen 42:30–34; Exod 32:22–24; 1 Kings 2:42). By contrast, Judah's 11 verses represent nine distinct acts of speech. The only other comparable metadiegetic narrative is that of Abraham's servant (Gen 24:34–49), where 11 verses of second-level narrative draw from eight prior discourses. Savran, "Character as Narrator," 3.

[31] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 307; Ska, *Our Fathers Have Told Us*, 52.

[32] In support of this assertion, Ska rightly notes how the persuasive metadiegetic narrative is often employed to offer a solution at a critical point in the narrative. Ska, *Our Fathers Have Told Us*, 52. Similarly, though he does not employ Genette's categories for metadiegetic narrative, Savran suggests a twofold purpose to Judah's speech: to explain his responsibility for Benjamin and to arouse in Joseph a sense of duty toward Jacob. Savran, *Telling*, 59.

analysis suggests that the speech creates a mirror image of Joseph's test. By leveraging the properties of quoted-direct speech, the fourth-born of Jacob subjects Joseph to an ordeal similar to that experienced by the brothers. The specific features that create this thematic correspondence are: (1) Judah's authoritative role as the narrator, (2) his prerogative to revise the family history, and (3) his use of a third-level narrative (meta-metadiegesis).

1. *Judah becomes the narrator.* As discussed above, the formation of a second-level narrative indicates a temporary shift in the role of the narrator. It is no longer the omniscient, authoritative voice from outside the narrative world that organizes and presents the action. Rather, the responsibility of composing the story is entrusted to a character from within. For the reader, this shift is understood according to the economy of the plot-structure: the character is but a pseudo-narrator, his authority is not genuine. As he recounts his narrative, his choices continue to be those of the original narrator. However, for the immediate recipients of the metadiegesis, the effect is real. Whereas they do not normally feel the presence of a narrator, the metadiegetic moment makes manifest his presence. The character, to whose story they are listening, sits in a position of authority over them. To him they must submit, as he assumes the power and the privileges of a storyteller.[33]

Certainly, each occurrence of a second-level narrative should be examined to assess the significance of this shift. In many instances, the transfer of authority from narrator to character, though real, is not emphasized. The metadiegesis is given in such a manner that its originator presents himself as a peer to his listeners. However, such is not the case with Genesis 44:18–34. Certain characteristics of Judah's speech appear to emphasize his temporary role as authoritative narrator.

First, of the three different types of quoted-direct speech, Judah employs all of them. He quotes himself (X quoting X to Y: 44:20, 22, 26, 32), the vizier (X quoting Y to Y: 44:19, 21, 23), and Jacob (X quoting Z to Y: 44:25, 27–29). Such variance not only creates an eclectic tableau of voices but also draws attention to Judah's authority over them. His is the prerogative of recounting the past and deciding how the testimony of each party is recorded. On this note, particular attention should be given to the second variety of quoted-direct speech. Savran rightly observes that a heightened form of confrontation is created when the speaker quotes the listener to himself.[34] Judah's willingness to recount Joseph's words as part of his speech draws attention to his authority in the moment.

Second, Judah gives a stylized version of the past. His rehearsal of prior events deviates in several ways from their original reporting.[35] As many have drawn

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[33] Savran, "Character as Narrator," 10.

[34] Savran, *Telling*, 25. Savran observes that most occurrences of the XYY confrontation constitute a demand to know how or why a character said such a thing (e.g., Gen 26:9a: "How could you say, 'She is my sister'?"). Certainly, Judah's quotations of Joseph are not of this variety. Nevertheless, his willingness to cite the vizier implies an assuredness derived from his authority as the narrator.

[35] As discussed above, Judah omits negative aspects of their history, namely Joseph's false accusations and the incarceration of the brothers. Additionally, Judah alters certain elements of the story so as to present them in a more positive light. He recalls the first meeting as a cordial encounter, rather than one where the brothers were attempting to prove their innocence (44:19; cf. 42:13). He presents Jo-

attention to this fact, a variety of explanations have been given.[36] However, it is important to note that Judah's manipulation of the facts is not contested by Joseph. The vizier knows the past, and he does not object to his brother's version of events. This would suggest that Judah's motive was self-evidently not that of deceit. By neglecting to correct his brother, Joseph tacitly acknowledges Judah's role as an authoritative narrator, whose artistic license permits a degree of stylization.

Finally, Judah's elevated influence as the storyteller is seen by virtue of the temporal shortening inherent to his speech. Though he focuses on events in the immediate past, he also reaches back to the time of Joseph's departure (44:28; cf. 37:33). Thus, Judah draws from the extended family history, and skillfully collapses it into eleven verses. The effect of this temporal shortening is to draw attention, again, to Judah's role as the narrator. He is in control of the narrative, making choices about how the family history should be understood.

Taken together, the cumulative effect of these features should not be underestimated. When Judah steps forward to address the Egyptian vizier, he assumes a position of authority over him. With subtle irony, he reverses the dynamics of submission: rendering Joseph vulnerable to his leading. This initial play permits a second feature of Judah's metadiegetic narrative: an emphasis on Jacob's suffering.

2. *Judah revises history*. In his role as the narrator, Judah rehearses the past in a manner that contributes to his persuasive efforts. Specifically, the fourth-born of Jacob constructs a plotted sequence of events, subtly shifting the emphasis of the story. Certainly, Judah's version of events aligns with the prevailing context as he draws attention to the brothers' desperate situation. However, Judah also invokes his father, doing so fifteen times throughout the speech (19, 20 [x2], 22 [x3], 24, 25, 27, 30, 31, 32 [x2], 34 [x2]). He thereby draws attention to Jacob's misery as a result of Joseph's test. Going beyond mere stylization, this subtle shift in emphasis presents Jacob as the primary sufferer in the ordeal, not the brothers.[37]

It is difficult to overstate the rhetorical pertinence of this change. Previously, Joseph tested his brothers: falsely accusing them, incarcerating them, detaining Simeon, and now threatening permanent imprisonment for Benjamin. Many have noted the metaphoric nature of the ordeal: by careful manipulation Joseph recon-

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seph's request to bring Benjamin as a desire to see him, rather than as a means to prove the brothers' trustworthiness (44:21; cf. 42:15, 16). And he suggests that the brothers warned Joseph of their father's probable demise, but the text does not record such words (44:22).

[36] By way of example, O'Brien suggests that the differences between Judah's speech and the preceding narrative contribute indirectly to a powerful characterization of Joseph. Mark A. O'Brien, "The Contribution of Judah's Speech, Genesis 44:18–34, to the Characterization of Joseph," *CBQ* 59.3 (1997): 433–47. Leaning on the dictates of classical rhetoric, Joosten suggests Judah is presenting "a truth that transcends the facts," in order to persuade. Joosten, "Biblical Rhetoric," 29–30. And Grossman, employing therapeutic narrative theory, suggests the discrepancies are representative of the deep emotional progress Judah has undergone. Grossman, "Therapeutic Narrative," 190.

[37] Several have drawn attention to the prominence of Jacob in Judah's speech. See for example, Savran, *Telling*, 60; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, WBC 2 (Waco, TX: Word, 1994), 425; Joosten, "Biblical Rhetoric," 26–27. With Joosten, undoubtedly, Judah's introduction of a "third party" gives his words something of a familial background, by which he is able to plead for compassion. However, more significant is the distress it causes Joseph as his beloved father is characterized according to his suffering.

structs the past, forcing his siblings to tread first his path, then their own.[38] Now, as Judah subtly changes the focal point—from the brothers to Jacob—he impresses upon Joseph a similar ordeal. The Egyptian vizier listens to Judah's version of events, and he too is made to revisit the past. However, he is subjected to a rendering of the family history wherein his beloved father is the object of distress.

Of course, the fourth-born of Jacob is oblivious to this reversal. He does not know the vizier's true identity. But that does not lessen its effect on Joseph.[39] Whereas a rehearsal of the brothers' plight would not trouble him, a new version of events—with his father as the primary sufferer—creates significant distress for the favored son. Thus, Judah's second-level narrative forges a thematic correspondence, whose shift in emphasis carries persuasive power. Just as the vizier sought to leverage the past to his benefit, so does his counterpart, with unanticipated results.

3. *Judah lets Jacob speak*. Building on the previous point, a final feature of the speech that contributes to its efficacy pertains to Judah's representation of Jacob. As he reaches the climactic moment in his presentation of the past, Judah recounts the words of his father once more (44:27–29). He notes how Jacob recounted his two sons by Rachel (44:27) and the loss of one (44:28a). Then, Judah rehearses his father's response when he was confronted with the bloodied tunic (44:28; cf. 37:33). Notably, Jacob's distress is reported in the first person—Judah quotes the patriarch, quoting himself: וְאָמַר אַךְ טָרֹף טֹרַף. This unique form (X quoting Z, quoting Z, to Y) creates a brief, yet potent, third-level narrative. Drawing on the discussion above, as Judah employs meta-metadiegesis, the role of the narrator shifts again. Momentarily, Jacob becomes the storyteller, presiding over the Egyptian vizier. Stated otherwise, the voice of Joseph's father temporarily enters the narrative.

Considered in light of the context, the effect of this third-level narrative is powerful. Judah's speech forces Joseph into a position of vulnerability and impresses on him a revised version of the past, with his beloved father as the primary victim. Now he hears Jacob's voice, affirming that testimony. Consideration of the specific words spoken by the patriarch further reinforces the significance of the moment. Until this point, everything spoken by Judah is known (or expected) by the vizier. Joseph listens to a rehearsal of his previous interaction with the brothers (44:19–23) and how they then recounted that to their father (44:24–26). However, as Judah forms a third-level narrative, he reveals new information to his brother:

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[38] The primary correspondences begin with the accusation that the brothers are spying out the nakedness of the land (42:9, 12), which creates a conceptual parallel with the accusation of Joseph by Potiphar's wife (39:14–18). Their time of incarceration (42:17) replicates Joseph's time in prison (39:20), and detaining Simeon (42:24) represents the scene of Joseph in the pit (37:24). For those who have drawn attention to the these parallels, see James S. Ackerman, "Joseph, Judah, and Jacob," in *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives*, *Volume 2*, ed. Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis, with James S. Ackerman (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982), 90–93; Sternberg, *Poetics*, 288–91; Laurence A. Turner, *Announcements of Plot in Genesis*, JSOTSup 96 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 156; Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 408.

[39] Several have drawn attention to the irony of the speech, as Judah consistently speaks better than he knows. See in particular, Jean Louis Ska, "Judah, Joseph, and the Reader (Gen 42:6–9 and 44:18–34)," in *Das Alte Testament—ein Geschichtsbuch? Beiträge des Symposiums "Das Alte Testament und die Kultur der Moderne" anlässlich des 100. Geburtstags Gerhard von Rads (1901–1971), Heidelberg, 18.–21. Oktober 2001*, ed. Gerhard von Rad et al. (Münster: Lit, 2005), 38.

namely, Jacob's response to the disappearance of his favorite son. By way of meta-metadiegesis, Joseph learns for the first time of his father's distress when he was exiled from the family home. Undoubtedly a moment of intense pathos, its significance is increased as the news comes from Jacob himself.

As before, it is important to note that Judah is unaware of the rhetorical force of his words. Oblivious to Joseph's true identity, the fourth-born of Jacob utilizes a third-level narrative to his benefit. However, as before, Judah's relative ignorance does not nullify his words' pertinence. His speech has temporarily robbed the vizier of his authority. Moreover, it has confronted him with the possible death of his father. Now, by way of a heightened narrative level, Joseph is forced to hear Jacob's cry. Unintentionally, Judah forges a confrontation of rhetorical brilliance. His use of meta-metadiegesis creates a moral imperative, akin to the one with which Joseph has confronted his brothers. The Egyptian vizier constructed a scenario that held Benjamin's future in the balance. Now Judah reciprocates, by drawing attention to Jacob and implying that Joseph must act to preserve his life.[40]

IV. CONCLUSION

At Genesis 45:1, the Jacob *tôledôt* reaches its point of climax: the Egyptian vizier breaks down, weeping, and reveals his true identity to the brothers. In Aristotelian form, this moment of anagnorisis prompts a concomitant peripeteia—Joseph assures his siblings everything is going to be all right (45:4–15). Thereafter, the plot-structure advances toward its dénouement. Jacob joins his sons in Egypt (46:1–7) and ensures continuity of the patriarchal hope through the blessing bestowed upon them (48:15–16, 20; 49:3–27). Specifically, the aging father rewards his fourth-born son with the promise of a future reign (49:8–12). Notwithstanding the blessing given to Joseph (49:22–26), the eventual preeminence of Judah's line should be seen as the outworking of his efforts to secure the safety of the brothers in chapter 44. Stated otherwise, Judah's speech is the catalyst that precipitates the dramatic shift within the Jacob *tôledôt*. His words bring the end of Joseph's testing, the anticipation of a better future, and the promise that Judah's line will prosper. As such, the question of persuasion becomes preeminent in any analysis of the speech.

Previous efforts to understand Judah's rhetoric have taken a deductive approach, without fully considering salient features of the text, particularly the distinguishing characteristic of the speech: metadiegetic narrative. By considering Judah's extensive use of quoted-direct speech, a thematic correspondence with the prevailing narrative emerges. Unknowingly, the fourth-born of Jacob forges a mirror image of his brother's testing, thereby playing Joseph at his own game. Just as the vizier had orchestrated affairs from a position of authority, Judah's use of metadiegesis renders him as dominant over Joseph. Just as the vizier had forced his siblings to relive the past, Judah subjects Joseph to the realities of history. Noticeably, Ju-

[40] Though Savran makes no mention of the third-level narrative, he notes the ethical dilemma forced upon the vizier: "the obligation to prevent Jacob's death rests on Joseph's shoulders alone." Savran, *Telling*, 61.

dah shifts the focal point, making his beloved father the primary victim. And just as the vizier had impressed an ultimatum upon his brothers: bring Benjamin or die, so Judah creates an equivalent imperative: release Benjamin, or Jacob will die. Significantly, the reality of this demand is substantiated with a third-level narrative, from the mouth of the patriarch himself.

This equivalence between Judah's efforts and Joseph's test is an overlooked aspect of the speech that contributes to its rhetorical force. As Genette asserts, when the thematic correspondence between narrative levels is perceived by the immediate audience, an influence is exerted on the diegetic situation.[41] Though Judah is unaware of the parallels he is forging, Joseph must feel them acutely. Within seventeen verses, the Egyptian lord experiences the same impotence he wrought upon his brothers. He too is traumatized by revisiting the past. And, like his siblings, he faces a decision that holds the life of a loved one in the balance. As Joseph perceives the measure-for-measure reality of the confrontation, he cannot escape. The only reasonable response is to end his test, as a means of terminating Judah's. From a position of helplessness, the vizier declares, אֲנִי יוֹסֵף (45:3).

By giving attention to the use of metadiegesis in Judah's speech, its persuasive power is more fully understood. Two further observations can be made, relating to the plot-structure of the Jacob *tôledôt*, and more broadly, the mimeticism of Hebrew narrative. First, regarding the Jacob *tôledôt*, by noting the parallels between Judah's speech and Joseph's test, the theological truth of the narrative is further affirmed. Many have drawn attention to the notion of dual causality throughout the story: the machinations of man work conjointly with the guiding hand of God. Various circumstances are the result of human efforts and divine providence.[42] During the period of Joseph's testing, this principle elucidates itself by way of two axes, or learning curves. The brothers progress primarily in their sense of moral culpability, as Joseph's test causes them to acknowledge their failings (42:31–34; 43:20–22). By contrast, the favored son learns a different truth, as he demonstrates an increased awareness of God's providence (45:5, 7, 8; 50:19, 20).[43] The speeches given on either side of the climax testify to these learning curves. Judah's words focus on the responsibility of the various family members. Joseph's emphasize the simultaneous truth of divine guidance. The two speeches form a theological pair.

Extending this observation, it may also be said that the principle of dual causality is evidenced through the pairing of Joseph's test with Judah's second-level narrative. The former appears as a series of mysterious happenings, with explanation given by appealing to the providence of God (42:28; 43:23; 50:19). The latter appeals exclusively to human volition. Joseph is confronted with the reality of his

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[41] Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 233.

[42] See in particular Yairah Amit, "The Dual Causality Principle and Its Effect on Biblical Literature," *VT* 37.4 (1987): 385–400; Frederick J. Gaiser, "'You Meant Evil against Me; but God Meant It for Good': Thinking Genesis 50:20," in *God, Evil, and Suffering: Essays in Honor of Paul R. Sponheim*, ed. Terence E. Fretheim and Curtis L. Thompson (St. Paul: Luther Seminary, 2000), 40, 46; Carleen Mandolfo, "'You Meant Evil against Me': Dialogic Truth and the Character of Jacob in Joseph's Story," *JSOT* 28.4 (2004): 449–50.

[43] Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 174.

conduct, and the way forward is couched as a responsibility that rests with him alone. While Joseph's test emphasizes the sovereignty of God, Judah's speech belabors the efforts of man. Certainly, it is true that the plot-structure of the Jacob *tôledôt* is often summarized according to the divine aspect of the principle of dual causality. This is due, in part, to the fact that Joseph gets the final word and repeats what he has learned: what you meant for evil God meant for good (50:20). Closer analysis of the story's contours demonstrates that both sides of the equation are affirmed. And pairing Judah's second-level narrative with Joseph's test further highlights this reality. Thus, by understanding more fully the persuasive power of the speech, the narrative's plot-structure and resultant theology are more fully seen.

Second, concerning the mimeticism of Old Testament narrative, understanding the persuasive power of Judah's speech highlights something of the means by which Hebrew stories are told. Though the rise of literary criticism within Pentateuchal scholarship has contributed much to an affirmation of narrative continuity, the mechanisms by which its plot-structures emerge are still being explored. Beyond expressions of causality and chronology, the logic of Hebrew narrative is borne out through a multitude of literary tools. Foremost amongst these is recapitulation. The plot-structures of Genesis (and beyond) are consistently derived through the intentional repetition of words, actions, motifs, and themes.

Though Judah's speech has not traditionally been a point of contention when assessing the readability of the Jacob *tôledôt*, the principle of repetition is affirmed yet again by paying heed to the manipulation of narrative levels. Judah's second-level narrative forms a thematic correspondence with Joseph's test, recapitulating the ideas of authority, suffering, and moral responsibility. It is by way of such repetition that the persuasive power of the speech is manifest. In turn, this thematic recycling prompts the climactic moment of the narrative and pushes the plot toward its dénouement.

By giving attention to this overlooked aspect of Judah's speech, an implicit appeal arises to consider further the logic of Hebrew stories as a function of repetition. Without rejecting the importance of chronology and causality, attention should be given to the manifold way in which a cohesive plot-structure can emerge. At a surface level, the reoccurrence of a word or action is rarely incidental. At an ideational level, a thematic correspondence may convey narrative significance. It is possible that the profundity of a story is ensconced in a montage of repetitions. Judah's speech serves as an example. Through the extensive use of metadiegetic narrative, a complement is formed to Joseph's test. This aspect of the speech testifies both to the brilliance of the plot and to the profundity of the message.

Further, it suggests the need to examine more carefully other examples of metadiegesis. When a character recounts the past (Gen 24:34–49), retells a dream (Gen 37:6–7, 9; 41:17–24), or instructs by way of a parable (Judg 9:8–15; 2 Sam 12:1–4), the presence of a second-level narrative should be noted. By probing the the relationship between the moment of metadiegesis and the prevailing diegesis, thematic correspondences or theological accents may emerge that would otherwise remain overlooked. As efforts continue to understand the mimeticism of Hebrew stories, it is important to consider the use and effect of second-level narratives.